

Berlin, Germany, May 22, 1933.

Dear Mr. Carr:

I want to tell you how much I appreciate your letters of April 25 and May 11. I knew you would be glad to see Mr. Van Cauwelaert and to see that he was well taken care of in Washington. I had a letter from Mr. Phillips saying that Ambassador May took Mr. Van Cauwelaert to the White House where they had some twenty minutes with the President and came away much pleased with their reception. I am sure that through what you and Mr. Phillips did Mr. Van Cauwelaert will come back with the happiest impressions which is so important in view of the part he plays in Belgium. One of my friends from Belgium who is one of the leading men in the country, came to see me a few days ago and said that unfortunately they had to telegraph Mr. Van Cauwelaert to cut his trip short as there was a possibility of a cabinet crisis in Belgium on account of the situation there which also is none too happy for financial reasons. They wanted him back as whenever there is a cabinet crisis in Belgium it is really essential that Mr. Van Cauwelaert should be there for there is always a possibility that he may have to take the helm as Premier although my personal view is that he is not quite prepared to take it as yet. He wishes to put off taking the Premiership until the moment is really opportune to

do

do things which are of primary importance. He is so basically friendly towards us and I know that the policy which he has in mind for Belgium is one which is really constructive and which would fit in very much with our own ideas.

I knew that you would do everything in your power to bring in the most effective way to Congress the need for relief for our officers in the field from the loss by exchange, and the news in your letter of May 11 that the outlook seems at the moment to be very encouraging, is most interesting and heartening. I think our men here in Germany are probably struck more than in any part of the field, in fact I know they are on account of the particular and unique situation which prevails in Germany. The men, however, have been behaving splendidly, for they have confidence that their situation will receive adequate attention. I know what burden this additional problem has been to you in connection with all else that you have to do of so primary importance, and I need not tell you that we all appreciate fully, as I think most of us have in the past, all the splendid things that you have done for the Service. It is far too heavy a load which you are carrying and I often wonder how you do it. You are blessed with a calm, equitable temperament and with a cheerful optimism, and these I think are as fine gifts as one can have in a position where there is so much that is harrassing as in yours.

I am particularly grateful for your having arranged that I go to Vienna to the meetings of the International Chamber. I have not been away from here since I came back from home leave early last summer. I do not like to leave here even though things are somewhat easier, for there is something turning up still almost every hour of the day that requires careful and quick decision and prompt action. We have, however, been able to establish such

satisfactory

satisfactory relations with the new Government and with the leading people in it, that I find our task is much easier. Geist has been extremely helpful and is able to take the burden from me in some of the Ministries with which we have to deal all the time, and he has shown much aptitude for, and capacity in this work. He is a splendid type of officer who must, when the opportunity offers, receive adequate recognition. In the meantime of course, it is quite essential that he remain here as he is more helpful here than he could possibly be anywhere else and I could not do without him. He is of course quite happy to be here.

I had a letter from Mr. Strawn who had heard from the Department that I was going to the Vienna meeting, and he seems to be very much pleased that I am going to be there. I shall probably be away from here from the 25th May until about June 8th as I shall take a little leave going and coming.

I am exceedingly hopeful that the President's reorganization program which can bring about such useful and necessary savings, will go through before long. I have been a bit disturbed as I saw in a recent press notice from home that the program "may" be submitted to Congress before it adjourns. So far as Commerce is concerned, I feel that if nothing is done now it may never be done, at least not in the adequate and thorough way which the situation requires. I know from various sources that pressure is being brought to bear at home to retain the offices in the field which are not at all necessary, and I think most of the men who bring this pressure are really suffering from the delusion that these offices of Commerce abroad are useful. I sometimes think that it will still be necessary to bring some of the bald facts before the public before we get adequate action.

Here

Here in the consular establishments in Germany under the plan for decentralized control which we are trying out, we had brought down the number of foreign clerks from 149 in 1930 to 125 now, and with the recent cut of 13 clerks which the Department has ordered as effective from July 1, we shall be down to 112. In many respects we are doing more work than we did in 1930. On the other hand the Commercial Attache has five or six Americans on his staff here and about a score of clerks, and I can quite assure you that outside of the Attache, Groves himself, there isn't one of his men who puts in a day's work in a week. Most of them spend their time "promoting" trade in some of the hotel bars of the city, and the large clerical staff which he has is really doing nothing. It is of course a situation which is well known to everybody in the Government service here and is little short of a public scandal. If the Commercial Attache's office in Berlin is not reduced to a staff of let us say two Americans and three or four clerks, then all the rest which will be maintained will be sheer waste. The men here in the Commercial Attache's office realize that the place ought to be cleaned out and that they are not doing anything and that there is no place for them in the scheme of things, and they are expecting to lose their places and are entirely prepared for it. They are, of course, intensely interested in the fight which some mistaken people at home are still making for them, and hope that they may be retained; but it is really quite a commentary that when these men know that they are useless and are really prepared to go, there should be so many people at home still who are apparently convinced that they are very useful. It is all due, of course, to these well-disposed people at home believing that the Commerce men are doing what we really are doing. Let us hope that the action taken now will really be adequate and settle once and for all this really serious question. I have been told that the original plan was for

closing

closing practically all the Commercial Attaches' offices in Europe except three or four and cutting down these seriously. This is the only worth-while solution and everybody, including the interests to be served, will be much the best off by this solution.

I know what a serious time you have been having and the tremendous burdens which are resting on you, and I often think of you.

With all good wishes to you from Marion and myself, and deeply appreciative of your having taken the time to write me, believe me

Faithfully yours,

The Honorable
Wilbur J. Carr,
Assistant Secretary of State,
Department of State,
Washington, D.C.

