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August 29, 1939.

Dear Friend Heineman:

Mr. Alley of Auchincloss, Alley and Duncan called me on August 21 on the telephone and gave me your message with regard to the meeting which was to be held in Brussels at the instance of King Leopold. I was very much interested in what he had to say and immediately on receiving the message, which was about 11:40 in the morning, I made a transcript of our conversation and talked it over with the Under Secretary, Mr. Welles, who was at the time Acting Secretary. Secretary Hull, just at that time was at White Sulphur Springs where he was taking a very much needed and only too brief rest. Mr. Welles assured me that he would see that your message received full consideration in the appropriate places. The President was not here at the time your message came but I am confident that it was taken up with him then and on his return here shortly afterwards.

I think it will be interesting for you to know that Mr. Alley called me at 11:40 in the morning of August 21. I immediately dictated a brief memorandum of our conversation covering fully your message and without any delay took it to Mr. Welles. I suppose I must have got to his office by twelve. Just before I went in to see Mr. Welles, Mr. Alley called me on the telephone from New York and got me in Mr. Welles' anteroom and said that he had just talked with you over the telephone and had a bit further clarifying information. As I went into Mr. Welles' office, I got a press message which had come over the ticker (I do not know whether it was Ap or Up) which gave a fairly full story of King Leopold's plans. I am merely telling you the foregoing to indicate that it is almost impossible to keep anything from or out of the press these days. It was quite obvious that already at the moment when Mr. Alley was conveying your message to me over the telephone some of the press

services

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*Heineman
 D. N.*

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*They must have got this
news on the other
side.*

services had already released messages in this country with respect to King Leopold's plans for this meeting.

As I said before, we were very much interested in the King's initiative and I was very glad you brought it to my attention in the way you did. We were prepared to cooperate and did in as complete a manner as we could. You will realize that things happened so fast that the King's initiative could not have the effect that it ordinarily would. The press handled it very well but, of course, in view of the nature of the situation, the initiative did not have the effect which was to be hoped. I have given you the foregoing information merely to let you know that we were prepared to cooperate and did to the extent that the circumstances permitted.

We have just had word that Chamberlain has made his speech before the Commons and that the German reply to the message conveyed by Henderson is expected hourly. Thank God that the British have stood firm. It may bring war but I am convinced that there are even worse things than war. Hitler has made up his mind to dominate Europe and Danzig is merely a pawn in the game. To give way on Danzig now would mean the partition of Poland and that would mean six months from now, and perhaps even less, England and France would have to fight Germany anyway. It would have been much better to have met the issue at the time of Munich. It can still be met successfully now and we can rid the world of this scourge. If the situation is not met now, war will not have been averted in the end and who knows what the result of it would be if it has to be fought six months hence. I feel that if anyone gives way now, it will have to be Hitler, and if he does there is a chance of war being averted. The next hours will tell the story and I need not tell you that we here are hoping that it may not be war but at the same time are hoping that there will not be a purchase of peace at a sacrifice which we know it is too great for the world to pay and which we know would mean that we would in the end be faced by war ourselves.

I am busy many hours of the day and have many varied responsibilities which I am meeting as best I can. I am still hoping that you and Mrs. Heineman will be able to come over in September as you have planned. This is a very brief and unsatisfactory note but I wanted you to know that I got your message.

With every good wish,

Cordially yours,

A-M:GSM:VNG