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120 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK

January 8, 1940.

Hon. George S. Messersmith,  
Washington,  
D.C.

My dear Mr. Messersmith:

I felt very happy when I read of your going to Cuba because I am under the impression that this will suit you very well. I imagine it is a post which will from time to time involve considerable hard work, while at other times it should not be so very absorbing and the somewhat "mañana" attitude of the country should be a great relief from the tremendous activity that you were involved in. Mrs. Baerwald and I only spent a few days in Havana several years ago on a cruise but we were very much impressed, and I imagine life there can be very pleasant for you and Mrs. Messersmith.

While I had intended to have this only a very personal note of good wishes for your new post, I am afraid I have to ask your advice on a matter connected with our work. I do not want to address you at the State Department and I am therefore taking the liberty of breaking into your time at your home.

Our organization in German occupied Poland has functioned to a certain extent even during the worst chaotic days at the beginning of the war. We are now giving probably in the neighborhood of 50,000 meals a day in Warsaw and also meals in other parts of Poland. We have not been able to secure permission for any of our American workers who are abroad to get into German occupied Poland. Mr. Troper has made efforts in various ways to get such permission. What is required is a visa from the German authorities. We know that both the Polish Commission and the Red Cross have had difficulties in getting anybody into German occupied Poland except for a very short stay and for what may perhaps be no more than a casual supervision over the distribution of the materials consisting of medical supplies, clothing, shoes, etc., which they are sending. It is reported today that one of the representatives of the Red Cross is expected to arrive in Cracow within a few days. It will be a great relief to have an American in Cracow for this work, but our own Joint Distribution Committee, which all over that country is so well known as the "Joint" and to which these many, many people in distress look for help and assistance, should have its own representative there. You can well imagine that there is great clamor from so many of our constituents in this country to have such

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personal representative in Poland. No doubt a great many of them realize the difficulties, but they also know that in the past we have always been able to overcome many difficult situations and they expect us today to find a way.

Can you make a personal suggestion to me? While I hate to bother you, I would very much appreciate it. If you send me a line to my house at 9 East 88th Street or to my office at 120 Broadway, it will not get into anybody else's hands.

I enclose copy of recent correspondence with the Under Secretary, which may interest you.

With kindest regards and again with our best wishes,

Faithfully yours,



Paul Baerwald