

Subject: The German Crown Prince and his son Louis Ferdinand.

*Berlin*  
From the beginning of our stay in Berlin in the early 1930's my wife and I made it a practice to go to the golf club at Waansee some distance outside of Berlin. We usually went there after a late breakfast on Sunday morning and remained a good part of the day. It proved increasingly a pleasant refuge from the work in the city which became more and more harassing. The Club was frequented by Germans as well as by many of the Americans and British and other foreigners resident in the city.

The one thing which began to mar our week-ends, that is, our Sundays at Waansee was the circumstance that the Crown Prince, who lived in a villa in Waansee, came to the Club almost every Sunday. He was invariably accompanied every Sunday by a new young woman. He kept himself very much apart, to the satisfaction of the Germans as well as the foreigners. The young women whom he brought there, we found, were shop girls from the city. It was not surprising that he should have his mistresses but it was not pleasant for any of us that he should bring them to the Club and only a few miles distant from the villa where he lived with the Crown Princess. History tells us enough about the Crown Prince. Occasionally, of course, some of us who knew him had to speak to him.

In marked contrast to the Crown Prince was the Crown Princess. She was an amiable and kindly lady and was as respected by the German people as he was held so generally in disrespect. In marked contrast too was his, I believe, second son, <sup>Prince</sup>/Louis Ferdinand. He was a fine looking boy at that time in his early twenties. We learned to know him quite well and he came to our house in the Drakestrasse frequently and would drop in unexpectedly for meals. He talked English as he did German. He was completely without any pretensions and seemed to like Americans. He spoke frequently of his grandfather, the former Emperor Wilhelm, and of his mother.

We had first met Louis Ferdinand in Buenos Aires while I was Consul General there. He was working in the Ford assembly plant in the city. The head of the Ford assembly plant in the Argentine was an American by the name of Griffiths, who had a heart of gold and tried to hide it with a somewhat rough exterior at times. We were very good friends and had lunch together frequently at the American Club where a group of Americans would meet around the luncheon table four or five times a week. One day Louis Ferdinand came to see me and said that he did not know what Griffiths had against him but he was not treating him with very much consideration. I asked him what he meant. He said that when he arrived in Buenos Aires to work in the Ford plant Griffiths had obviously not been pleased. He didn't seem to want him there. He had put him to work knocking down empty packing cases; he had been there for months and was still doing the same kind of work. He quite appreciated that he should have to do this kind of work as an apprenticeship; he thought he was being kept on this kind of thing because Griffiths hoped he would give up in disgust. Louis Ferdinand said that he would not mention the matter to me except that his mother was coming to Buenos Aires to make him a visit. He did not like her to find him still engaged in knocking down packing cases. I told Louis Ferdinand that I would see what I could do.

A few days later I had lunch with Griffiths at the Club. He was an excellent businessman. He was one of the most respected and best liked of the Americans in Buenos Aires and we had a very large and responsible group of Americans there. I told him about Louis Ferdinand and about his mother coming and said I wondered whether the boy hadn't really learned by this time to knock down packing cases. Griffiths, who was usually so kind and understanding and generous, said that so far as he was concerned Louis Ferdinand could keep on knocking down packing cases

forever. He had no intention of giving him any other kind of job. I told Griffiths that he was always telling us how he had made his way in the world, how he had had nothing to begin with, how difficult he had found it to go from job to job. I told him that so far as he was concerned we all had such a high opinion of him, we knew how he had made his way. Louis Ferdinand might be a princeling and he might be a German but at least he was trying to make an honest living and had certainly shown a lot of patience. I said that we would all think a lot more of him, or at least maintain our good opinion of him, Griffiths, if he gave Louis Ferdinand a chance. I think what really influenced Griffiths to do something was that the boy's mother was coming to make him a visit. Louis Ferdinand came to see me some days afterwards and told me with much pleasure that he had been given a raise and a new job.

Louis Ferdinand stayed with the Ford company for some time. When I was in the United States during 1937 to 1940 in the Department of State, Louis Ferdinand was still with the Ford Company in Detroit and occasionally came to see us at our home in Georgetown. He was, I think, genuinely attached to our country and admired it and our people. He would probably have preferred to make his home in the United States. He returned to Germany, I think, some time before the war started. We have heard nothing more from him since.

(I will insert at an appropriate place in the preceding memorandum the following paragraph).

Before the Hitler regime came in Louis Ferdinand used to speak freely to us, when in our home, of the dangers of what he saw coming for his country and the possibility of repercussions in the rest of the world of what was likely to happen in Germany. One day he said he would like to have us meet some of his family in Berlin. By that time he had been given some quarters in one of his grandfather's palaces near the

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large imperial palace. I recall a small pleasant luncheon or dinner; asked me how well I knew it was during that meal that he/~~said that he would like to~~ Potsdam, and I told him that I had been there on a number of occasions and had been through most of the rooms. He said that he was sure that there were some of the private apartments of his grandfather which I had not seen as they were not open to the public at all and he would like to take me out there. Some days afterwards we drove out to Potsdam and he took me through these private rooms of his grandfather's which were not open to the public, and he had some very pointed remarks to make with regard to the discomfort in which his grandfather had lived there. He showed me some of the intimate conveniences of the private apartments and laughingly observed, "Think of the Emperor of all the Germans having to live like this". I never heard him speak about his father but he spoke often about his mother and of his grandfather, the Emperor, and he always spoke of them in terms of affection, and of the Emperor he spoke in a realistic but affectionate way. There is no doubt that if he had been prepared to go and live with the ex-emperor Wilhelm at Doorn in Holland that he would have made him his principal heir.

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