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June 28, 1938.

Personal

Dear Wiley:

I have your letter of June 8 with which you send me a copy of the report made by Sir Wyndham Deedes for the British Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. I have read this with interest but, of course, it tells us nothing new for I am convinced that in this, as in a good many other matters, we are perhaps even better informed than our British friends. What Deedes says in his report is, of course, true and I believe sound, but our organizations in this country interested in matters of this kind and this Department have, of course, much more complete information. Your own reports certainly give us a better and more complete picture of the situation than anything which Deedes has said in his.

I have noted that you still believe that "an American version of Sir Wyndham Deedes should come quietly and unobtrusively to Vienna". I confess that I am not quite able to see what useful result you would anticipate from such a visit. So far as information is concerned, we have, as I have already indicated, from you and others more specific and on the whole more helpful information than anything there is in the Deedes report you have sent me. From that point of view, therefore, I see no object to be gained. From the point of view of contact with the local authorities, I doubt whether this would in any way be helpful. Certainly the authorities have not shown any disposition to talk reasonably about this matter and when James McDonald used to try to talk with them about the Berlin situation, he could make no progress whatever. As what they are doing in Austria far exceeds anything in ferocity than what they did in Germany, I think they would be even less inclined to talk to anyone now than they were

to

John C. Wiley, Esquire,  
American Consul General,  
Vienna, Germany.

Wiley,  
John C.

to McDonald. It is true that they had a certain prejudice against McDonald in those days, but I think they would have prejudice against anyone who would come to talk about this matter in a reasonable way. A person who would go unofficially would, I think, find himself in a very difficult and ineffective position, and, of course, we cannot conceive of anyone going to talk about this matter at this stage in an official, or even semi-official, capacity.

The only thing that is helpful to the International Committee is to have a knowledge of the situation and that, I think, it has through the reports which the Consulate General has been furnishing and through the reports which it has from other sources and informed persons. We suggested to Mr. Taylor that if he so wished he could have Mr. Geist from Berlin and Mr. Frost from Zurich come to see him in Paris so that they might give him verbally certain information he may wish. We did not suggest his asking you to come to Paris because I doubt whether you should leave there at this time and, in any event, if you were to go they would know why you went and I do not know that this would help the situation at this point. If at any time Mr. Taylor desires first-hand information, I am sure that he will let us know and we shall be glad to make whatever arrangements to that end which may seem feasible and advisable.

I have read what you say with regard to the raising of money by private organizations and I think undoubtedly something in this direction will have to be done, but it is indeed a very broad question involving many factors which will have to be carefully considered. I am very glad indeed that the matter has been kept in abeyance so far because we are very much of the opinion that we should first see what the Evian meetings may do. It is our intention that the first meetings at Evian shall be rather of a confidential character because it is only in that atmosphere that the question can be explored usefully at this stage. We have done everything possible to keep down publicity for we are convinced that publicity at this stage is as dangerous as it is undesirable. We have done everything in our power here to try to steer this matter along a course from which we can expect some useful results. I think the beginning is good and I am still hopeful that out of the Evian meeting, and the ones to follow, we will get something constructive. The important thing is to avoid publicity and really to try to work out constructive, long-range solutions.

There

There is a very real desire in this country to be helpful and I am sure that in any constructive plans which may be undertaken our country will be found in the foreground. On the other hand, we cannot undertake the solution by ourselves and we cannot be pushed into the making or breaking of the conference. It is a general and not a specific responsibility. We are really the only country which is following on the whole a humane policy. Unfortunately there are those who are beginning to question as to whether our own policy may not be too liberal. I think you know my own views on this subject and how definitely I have always felt that we must maintain our liberal immigration practice. I must confess that even a person like myself has had some rude shocks recently. There are an increasing number of these refugees who seem to feel that the United States owes them a debt of some kind and that we of all countries are the one chosen to be their savior and that we owe it to them to give them an opportunity to start lifewhere they left off in Europe, or perhaps even on a better scale. I have had some of the most extraordinary letters from professors and others who seem to be very resentful that we are not giving them on a golden platter a position which native born Americans would be glad to get at the end of a long and hard fought career. I get other letters from really intelligent people abroad who are seeking immigration visas who are already highly critical of everything that is happening in this country and who are telling me how we ought to run things here. I get other letters from persons who have been admitted into this country and who are not yet American citizens who tell us just how we ought to run the country, how we ought to change our laws and what we owe to the rest of the world. Unfortunately that these people are doing these things and saying these things is beginning to become known in certain quarters in this country and it is not doing any good. Just as the rich and more or less already protected Jews in Hungary did not hesitate to almost force on the Government there a law to protect their interests while it left the poorer Jews out in the cold, so we have among some of these refugees a group who consider themselves privileged and who are doing things the repercussions of which may be very dangerous in the end for less fortunate ones. In any event, this problem is not as simple as it seems. Because some people are foolish, unreasonable, prejudiced and bitter, this is not any reason for us to change our liberal views and practice. It is, however, a situation with which we have to reckon for I am glad to say that this country still belongs to the native born American and I am hopeful that

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too kind a  
statement,  
but I think  
you mean  
what I  
mean.

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the ideals of our native born Americans may continue to control.

I know that you have a very real interest in these problems and I shall always be very glad to have any thoughts you may have with regard to the International Committee. It is really unspeakable what Germany is doing to these people and I am one of those who believe that this movement towards discrimination will not be eliminated until this regime in Germany is eliminated.

Very sincerely yours,

P.S. Professor Elliott came back with glowing accounts of all that was done to help him in Vienna and in Berlin.

G.S.M.

A-M:GSJ:VNG