





Auswärtiges Amt

Politische Abteilung

# Vertrag

*Erklärung der Deutschen Regierung und der  
Tschechoslowakischen Regierung über die Über-  
nahme des Schutzes deutsch-tschechischer Völker  
durch das Deutsche Reich, unterzeichnet in Berlin  
am 15. März 1939.*

Verträge *Tschechoslowakei.* Nr.

*3*

DOCUMENTS ON  
GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY  
1918–1945

FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE  
GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTRY

UNITED STATES  
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<sup>1</sup>This list shows the composition of the Board of Editors at the time of the final editorial work on this volume (autumn 1950). Former editors, all of whom contributed to the preparation of this volume, were:

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DOCUMENTS ON GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY  
1918-1945

SERIES D (1937-1945)

VOLUME IV

THE AFTERMATH OF MUNICH

October 1938-March 1939

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

In June 1946 the British Foreign Office and the United States Department of State agreed to publish jointly documents from captured archives of the German Foreign Ministry and the Reich Chancellery. Although the captured archives go back to the year 1867, it was decided to limit the present publication to papers relating to the years after 1918, since the object of the publication was "to establish the record of German foreign policy preceding and during World War II." The editorial work was to be performed "on the basis of the highest scholarly objectivity." The editors were to have complete independence in the selection and editing of the documents. Publication was to begin and be concluded as soon as possible. Each Government was "free to publish separately any portion of the documents."<sup>1</sup> In April 1947 the French Government, having requested the right to participate in the project, accepted the terms of this agreement.

The three Governments realized the unique nature of the enterprise. Captured enemy documents had been published in the past, and especially by the Germans themselves, but only documents which supported a propaganda thesis. Never had three victorious powers set out to establish the full record of the diplomacy of a vanquished power from captured archives "on the basis of the highest scholarly objectivity."

The editors wish to state at the outset that they have not only been permitted, but enjoined, to make their selection on this basis alone. In the selection of documents for publication, and in the editing of the documents, the editors have had complete freedom. No effort has been made at any time by any of the participating Governments to influence their work. The editors, therefore, accept complete responsibility for the volumes as published.

## II

The archives of the German Foreign Ministry came into Anglo-American custody partly as a result of planning, partly by accident, but chiefly through the incomplete execution of orders to destroy the most important portions. During hostilities, the Allied military

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<sup>1</sup> It was in accordance with this provision that the Department of State, in January 1948, published the volume of documents entitled *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941*.

forces were instructed to keep close watch for enemy archives, and teams of experts were assembled behind the lines so that the examination of captured documents might begin without delay. In April 1945 units of the United States First Army discovered more than 300 tons of Foreign Ministry papers in various storage places in the Harz Mountains. The Anglo-American experts were immediately summoned. They located other parts of the archives in the Harz Mountains and Thuringia. Their most important discoveries were a box containing memoranda summarizing conversations of Hitler and Ribbentrop with foreign statesmen, and a quantity of German microfilm which, when made into continuous rolls and printed at the Air Ministry in London, was found to record some 10,000 pages of the working files of the Foreign Minister (*Büro RAM*).

Under the supervision of the Anglo-American experts, the captured archives were assembled at Marburg Castle, in the American zone of Germany. Later the collection was moved to Berlin. Finally, in the summer of 1948, the archives were moved to England, where they are to remain until conditions in Germany become more stable. Between 1945 and 1948 the collection was augmented by many tons of Reich Chancellery documents and other smaller collections.

### III

When the Foreign Ministry archives were captured in April 1945, the question was considered whether they had been deliberately placed in the path of the Anglo-American armies and spurious documents added to the collection, with the purpose of sowing discord among the enemies of Germany. Documentary evidence and interrogation of surviving German officials have completely dispelled these suspicions. Actually, the German Government made efforts to prevent the capture of the documents, both by moving them from place to place and by ordering the destruction of the files for the Nazi period only a few days before the arrival of the American First Army.

The dispersal of the archives began in 1943, when the air attacks on German cities had become intense. It was then decided to keep only a skeleton staff and the current files of the Foreign Ministry in Berlin; the rest of the staff with their files were moved to less vulnerable parts of Germany. Most went to Krummhübel, a resort in the Riesengebirge, but some branch offices were sent as far away as Lake Constance. The archives were also dispersed to castles in the Harz and south and east of Berlin. In the summer and autumn of 1944 the Soviet advance enforced the transfer of those archives which had been stored south and east of Berlin to the Harz region. Orders were given for the destruction of the nonessential secret documents at Krummhübel and for the removal of the remainder to Thuringia. It

is impossible to determine with precision what was destroyed by accident or design in the hurried movement which followed. It is known that these transfers were not entirely completed before the arrival of Soviet troops. Only in the early months of 1945, therefore, were the Foreign Ministry archives concentrated in the west.

By spring the German armies were in full retreat. Early in April 1945 the evacuation center at Meisdorf received a list of categories of documents which were to be prepared for destruction. These included all important files for the Nazi period. On April 10 an order was received by telephone to commence immediately the destruction of these categories. When the American troops arrived a few days later, only a small fraction had actually been destroyed.

#### IV

Including the accessions received since April 1945, the captured documents now in the joint custody of the United States Department of State and the British Foreign Office weigh about 400 tons. The tens of thousands of bundles of papers have been repeatedly packed, moved by train, truck, or plane, and then unpacked and shelved. The packing, the moving, the unpacking, and the shelving were done hurriedly, under war conditions. Until the contents of every bundle in the collection have been examined, therefore, it will not be possible to be certain that the selection for publication has been made from all the surviving documents on a particular problem or year.

An analysis of the files in Anglo-American custody is appended to volumes I (p. 1177) and II (p. 1021) of this series. A summary of this analysis reveals the following situation: For the years from 1867 to 1920 the collection seems complete; there are gaps in the files dealing with 1920-1936, but they appear to be relatively unimportant. Thereafter, the gaps become increasingly a problem. Fortunately many copies were made of most documents, and it is possible to find enough papers in other files to fill in the significant lines of the picture. This or that document may be lost completely, but other documents give the essential material. That is not always true, but until 1940 it is usually true. After 1940, and until 1943, one is continually reminded of a half-finished picture: the outlines are obvious; some parts are completed with minute detail; other parts are only sketched in; there are blank spaces. From 1943 the materials are fragmentary, but peculiarly valuable because there is so little other evidence on these years.

The most important defect of the captured archives for the period from 1936 is the absence of the registers and journals in which were recorded the departmental file number and the distribution of each paper, with a summary of its contents. The captured Foreign Min-

istry archives are not a single, coherently organized file of the Ministry as a whole. They are the working files of officials, such as the Foreign Minister and the State Secretary; of parts of the Ministry, such as those of the Political Department and the Legal Department. The documents in these captured files are arranged so as to facilitate the work of these individual departments and officials: sometimes the arrangement is alphabetical (by countries, by subjects, or by individuals), sometimes it is chronological, sometimes it is topical. Sometimes secret papers are segregated; sometimes they are not. The captured documents do not, therefore, constitute a central Ministerial file, and there is no uniform filing system. There is no place where, for instance, all the telegrams from the Embassy in London may be found. Ten or twenty copies of one telegram may be found in various files; the only surviving copy of another telegram may be found in the file of another mission abroad to which it was sent for information (bearing the departmental file number, and not the telegram number given in London); occasionally no copy can be found.

Theoretically, the registers and journals could be reconstructed by collating the surviving files, but the resources for this gigantic task are not available. As their work in the Foreign Ministry archives progresses, the editors are learning from experience which departments, individuals, and missions abroad were likely to receive copies of papers, and where the papers were likely to be filed. Beginning with series D, volume III, it is possible to make a clear distinction between papers which are not printed because unimportant, and papers not printed because not found. In volumes I and II of series D it was not possible to make this distinction with confidence, so the footnote "Not printed" was used for both categories of omission.

Some of the documents missing from the Foreign Ministry archives are in the possession of the Soviet Government, but the extent of its collection is not known. Beginning in June 1946 the Soviet Government published several volumes of German Foreign Ministry documents. Usually, but not always, other copies of these documents are in the Foreign Ministry files, together with other much more voluminous material on the same subject.

## V

The editors learned only by trial and error the limitations of the available material and the difficulties inherent in exploiting disordered and incomplete archives. The filming of the Foreign Ministry archives, begun in 1945 by American and British experts for intelligence purposes, and continued by historians representing the three Governments participating in the publication of these records, will facilitate scholarly investigation in the future. More than a million

pages of the most important documents for the years from 1914 to 1945 have by now been preserved on microfilm.

At the outset, the selection of documents for publication was made from these microfilms by historians working in London, Paris, and Washington. It was found, however, that this method was too cumbersome, and all except the final selection is now made by an international team of American, British, and French historians working on the original files. In the work of the tripartite team, and in the periodic conferences of the editors-in-chief, the international character of historical scholarship is convincingly demonstrated.

## VI

In selecting documents for publication the fundamental test has been their value for an understanding of German foreign policy. Since the German estimate of the policy of other powers was one of the most important factors shaping German policy, these estimates have been included. They should, of course, be viewed with caution. Very often German diplomats wrote what they thought would please Hitler. Even those who wished to convey unpleasant truths used language which would carry conviction to the Nazi Party leaders.

Even so far as German foreign policy is concerned it is necessary to remember the peculiar characteristics of Nazi diplomacy. A large proportion of the officials in the Foreign Ministry and of the German representatives abroad were career diplomats who were kept at their posts only because Hitler found them indispensable. He did not trust them, sometimes with reason, and he often kept them in ignorance of his intentions. The attentive reader will frequently see evidence of this situation and will realize that their reports and instructions do not always reflect the actual policy of the Reich.

Two categories of evidence which bulk large in the archives of the German Foreign Ministry find little place in these volumes: the press summary and the intelligence report. Undoubtedly a minute examination of the material in the press summaries and of the rumor and gossip set down in tens of thousands of reports by confidential agents will some day yield results of significance for an understanding of German policy. But such an examination requires study of all the evidence, and all the evidence would fill hundreds of volumes. This is true also of the analyses produced by the prolific and imaginative members of Ribbentrop's private information service, the Dienststelle Ribbentrop. The editors have agreed, therefore, that press summaries, intelligence reports, and the analyses prepared in the Dienststelle Ribbentrop will be included only where there is clear evidence that they directly influenced German policy.

Even after excluding all but a few examples from this material, the sheer mass of evidence presents baffling problems. In this age of shorthand and the typewriter, documents grow in number and length. Bismarck's conversations were usually summarized in a few hundred words; the summaries of Hitler's conversations often run to thousands of words. When Embassy reports are dictated, a lengthy report requires less thought and time than a brief report. The editors have often been tempted to summarize, or to print excerpts, but they have decided to do neither. Except in a few cases, which are clearly indicated, every document has been printed without omissions or alterations. In every case, too, significant material such as file numbers and marginal comments have been included. Where there is no important difference between the preliminary draft and the dispatch as sent, the latter has been preferred; where there are differences, they have been described. To save space the telegraphic summary has been used if it includes all essential points; otherwise, the detailed report has been used; if the telegraphic summary is not complete, but action was taken before the report was received, both the telegram and the report are printed.

The order in which documents should be presented in a collection such as this has long been a disputed subject among historians. The editors agreed that documents should be grouped by topics, but within each topic they are presented in the chronological order in which they originated. It should be borne in mind that a report from a mission abroad might be received after action had been taken in Berlin, although the report bears an earlier date than the document recording the action. Where the date of receipt in Berlin can be determined, it is given. Each document is preceded by an editorial heading and by reference to the serial number of the film and the frame number on the film.<sup>2</sup> A list of film serial numbers is appended to each volume, showing the description of the corresponding German Foreign Ministry file; this permits identification of the location in the archives of the copy of the document published. As each volume is published, the pertinent films will be made available for study by scholars so that the specialist may be able to fill in the details of the record.

Because the immediate origins of the Second World War, and the course of the war, are of most immediate interest and of most obvious importance, the editors have decided to begin their work with the fourth series (D). This series will include documents dating from 1936 or 1937, the starting point depending on the topic, and continuing through the war. The three series of volumes to be published subsequently will include the documents for the earlier years.

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<sup>2</sup> For an explanation of these terms, see appendix II.

## VII

After the joint selection of documents to be included in a volume is completed, the task of preparing the editorial notes is entrusted to the editors in one of the three capitals, subject to review by the other editors. Similarly, the task of preparing the English translation is divided by volumes, or sections of a volume. Each volume will contain a statement on responsibility for the preparation of notes and translations.

Translation from the German presents peculiar difficulties, particularly since, under Hitler, there was no one style of diplomatic German, as there had been under Bismarck. Some of the writers use "Nazi German," which conveys only a foggy impression in German and translates into completely opaque English. The translation is therefore often inelegant, but the editors believe that where the meaning is clear in German the English can be understood. In general, they have preferred to sacrifice grace to precision. Paraphrase has been used only where the German is clear but exact translation resulted in ambiguity.

The parallel series in German, giving the original text of the documents, will enable those interested to check the translation.

In printing the translated version of the documents the editors have not aimed at giving a facsimile reproduction of the German original as regards arrangement and spacing. All important notes and marginalia are, however, included either in the text or as footnotes, the only exception being purely routine notations.

The editorial notes have been kept to the minimum necessary for the factual elucidation of the text. They do not attempt interpretation except where this is necessary to establish the date or identity of a document. No attempt is made to correct German reports by reference to other sources, even when the German reports present a false or one-sided picture. It is as a source-book for the study of history, and not as a finished interpretation of history, that these documents are presented.

## PREFACE TO VOLUME IV, SERIES D

This volume embraces Germany's relations with the Great Powers from immediately after the signature of the Munich Agreement to Hitler's seizure of Czechoslovakia in March 1939. Throughout this period the eyes of the world were focused on the way in which Hitler would treat the small Slav state on his southeastern border.

Shortly after noon on September 30, 1938, Foreign Minister Kamil Krofta received the British, French, and Italian Ministers in Prague and announced to them the submission of the Czechoslovak Government to the Munich decisions, made without its concurrence. He concluded with the following prophetic words:

"I do not know whether your countries will benefit by these decisions taken at Munich, but certainly we shall not be the last. After us, others will meet with the same fate."

Within six months Hitler showed his hand and rudely shattered the hopes created in the minds of European statesmen as to his peaceful intentions.

The editors of this volume have, therefore, devoted most of its space to those documents illustrating Germany's relations with Czechoslovakia, which form the first chapter. The growing suspicions as to Hitler's real objectives gradually caused Britain and France to doubt the permanence of the Munich arrangement. Germany's relations with these countries are dealt with in chapters II and III. It was during this period that Ribbentrop's diplomacy over the Vienna Award and the Franco-German declaration caused Mussolini some concern. Italy's relations with Germany, therefore, form the next chapter, followed by Germany's relations with the other world powers less closely concerned.

It was probably the surrender of the Western powers at Munich which encouraged Stalin to consider an accommodation with Hitler, and it is in the period covered by this volume that we see the first signs of a reorientation of German-Soviet relations, which are dealt with in chapter VI. The new order arising in Europe naturally caused the United States of America to view the political horizon with apprehension and with increasing watchfulness, as is shown by the documents in chapter VII; in fact, in January 1939 Ribbentrop ordered the cessation of all social relations between his subordinates and the American Embassy in Berlin. Germany's relations with the

Vatican, not of major importance during this particular period, have been treated separately in chapter V; they are, perhaps, more closely connected with Germany's relations with the Great Powers than with the minor powers, dealt with in volume V.

The documents in this volume were selected jointly by the British, French, and United States editors. The responsibility for editorial work and footnoting rests with the British and United States editors-in-chief. The translation has been made by the British translating staff, and the responsibility for this part of the work rests with the British editor-in-chief. He wishes to record his gratitude to Mr. E. J. Passant, Director of Research and Librarian at the Foreign Office, and to Miss A. C. Johnston for their cooperation and assistance.

Since this volume was originally printed in the United States, American orthography has been adopted throughout.

# ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS <sup>1</sup>

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1938 Sept. 29	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> The Japanese Admiralty has stated that, if Japan remains neutral, the Chinese Government will do likewise and that hostilities against German ships in Chinese territorial waters are out of the question. Japan is also prepared to hinder British or French attacks on German ships.	529	680
Sept. 30	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Affairs</i> Hencke transmits to the Czechoslovak Government the text of the Munich Agreement and additional protocol and conveys the German Government's invitation to send two Czechoslovak representatives to the meeting of the International Commission in Berlin.	1	1
Sept. 30	<i>Minutes of the First Meeting of the International Commission held in Berlin on September 30, 1938</i> Military subcommittee formed to organize the evacuation of zone I; arrival of Czechoslovak delegation; report by military subcommittee; second subcommittee to be formed to define plebiscite areas.	2	2
Sept. 30	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Italian Minister in Czechoslovakia advises acceptance of Munich agreements, and on behalf of Ambassadors in Berlin of Britain, Italy, and France asks that Mastny be appointed Czechoslovak delegate. In an interview with the British, French, and Italian Ministers, Krofta states his Government's submission to the conditions of the Munich Agreement.	3	4

<sup>1</sup> The list has been arranged chronologically by date, the documents for each day following the order of the eight chapters of the volume. For the convenience of readers who wish to trace one of the chapter topics through the list, the following summary of document numbers by chapters is given:

<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%;">Chap.</td> <td style="width: 10%;">I . . . . .</td> <td style="width: 10%;">Nos.</td> <td style="width: 10%;">1-246</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">"</td> <td style="text-align: center;">II . . . . .</td> <td style="text-align: center;">"</td> <td style="text-align: center;">247-331</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">"</td> <td style="text-align: center;">III . . . . .</td> <td style="text-align: center;">"</td> <td style="text-align: center;">332-398</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">"</td> <td style="text-align: center;">IV . . . . .</td> <td style="text-align: center;">"</td> <td style="text-align: center;">399-463</td> </tr> </table>	Chap.	I . . . . .	Nos.	1-246	"	II . . . . .	"	247-331	"	III . . . . .	"	332-398	"	IV . . . . .	"	399-463	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%;">Chap.</td> <td style="width: 10%;">V . . . . .</td> <td style="width: 10%;">Nos.</td> <td style="width: 10%;">464-475</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">"</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VI . . . . .</td> <td style="text-align: center;">"</td> <td style="text-align: center;">476-496</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">"</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VII . . . . .</td> <td style="text-align: center;">"</td> <td style="text-align: center;">497-528</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">"</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VIII . . . . .</td> <td style="text-align: center;">"</td> <td style="text-align: center;">529-551</td> </tr> </table>	Chap.	V . . . . .	Nos.	464-475	"	VI . . . . .	"	476-496	"	VII . . . . .	"	497-528	"	VIII . . . . .	"	529-551
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Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1938 Sept. 30	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>The Czechoslovak Deputy Foreign Minister asks for the cessation of German press and radio propaganda against Czechoslovakia and emphasizes his Government's desire for good German-Czechoslovak relations.</p>	4	5
Sept. 30	<p><i>The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>American reaction to the Munich Agreement.</p>	497	633
Oct. 1	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Krofta informs Hencke of Poland's demand for the cession of Teschen and Freistadt by October 2 and asks Germany to exert pressure on Poland to observe time limit fixed by four Great Powers.</p>	5	6
Oct. 1	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>The French Ambassador points out the difficult situation created by Poland's ultimatum, which is in contradiction to the Munich Agreement, and asks the German Government to draw Poland's attention to this.</p>	6	6
Oct. 1	<p><i>Note Verbale from the British Embassy</i></p> <p>Chamberlain regards Polish ultimatum as being contrary to the spirit of the Munich Agreement and asks Germany to urge Poland to defer action. Britain is making representations in Warsaw.</p>	7	7
Oct. 1	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>Weizsäcker's recommendations to Count Csáky for the fulfillment of Hungarian claims on Czechoslovak territory.</p>	8	7
Oct. 1	<p><i>Circular of the Director of the Political Department</i></p> <p>Yugoslav Prime Minister said to have informed Hungarian Government that, while he was willing to support Hungarian claims to Hungarian-inhabited areas of Czechoslovakia, he could not agree to cession to Hungary of Slovak and Ruthenian territory. Rumania also opposed to Hungary's claims to territory inhabited by non-Hungarian population. Hungary denies aggressive intentions toward Yugoslavia.</p>	9	8

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1938 Oct. 1	<p><i>Minutes of the Second Meeting of the International Commission Held in Berlin on October 1, 1938</i></p> <p>Proposals of military subcommittee for military operations in zones I and II agreed to; discussion on removal of war matériel; formation of subcommittees for (a) financial and economic questions, (b) plebiscite and frontiers; discussion on composition of international formations; British observers being sent to Prague.</p>	10	9
Oct. 1	<p><i>Minutes of the Third Meeting of the International Commission Held in Berlin on October 1, 1938</i></p> <p>Adoption of proposals of military subcommittee for military operations in zones I-IV; agreement on removal of Czechoslovak war matériel in zones I and II; German answer on zones III and IV to be awaited; international formations to be composed of ex-service-men.</p>	11	12
Oct. 1	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i></p> <p>Discussion between Hitler and Chamberlain (on September 30) of the problems awaiting settlement after the Munich Agreement: Spain; limitation of air warfare; economic relations. Anglo-German Declaration submitted to Hitler.</p>	247	287
	<p><i>Editors' Note</i></p> <p>Spelling of place names.</p>		14
Oct. 2	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i></p> <p>Meeting between the Führer and the German members of the International Commission; plebiscites to be dispensed with in certain areas, but other areas to be included; plebiscite areas to be occupied by ex-servicemen's organizations.</p>	12	15
Oct. 2	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>The Hungarian Minister to hand to the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister a note inviting the Czechoslovak Government to enter into negotiations for the granting of the right of self-determination to the Hungarian minority.</p>	13	16
Oct. 2	<p><i>The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Czechoslovakia</i></p> <p>The German Government supports the immediate initiation of direct negotiations between Czechoslovakia and Hungary.</p>	14	17

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1938			
Oct. 2	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i></p> <p>British proposal for a mixed German-British-Czech Commission to insure order in evacuation areas not to be considered for the present.</p>	15	17
Oct. 3	<p><i>Circular of the State Secretary</i></p> <p>The Munich Agreement represents a success for the Führer's general policy, and German representatives abroad are asked to deny any political or territorial aims by Germany in Czechoslovakia.</p>	16	18
Oct. 3	<p><i>Unsigned Memorandum</i></p> <p>The Führer's decisions on areas in which plebiscites are to be held and on areas which are to be given up; Godesberg line to be adhered to in the future; question of Oderberg to be discussed with the Poles.</p>	17	19
Oct. 3	<p><i>Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Cultural Policy Department</i></p> <p>Members of foreign minorities living in Germany to be excluded from military service and from the civil service; influence exerted on German groups outside Germany to be of purely cultural nature.</p>	18	20
Oct. 3	<p><i>Note Verbale from the Czechoslovak Legation</i></p> <p>The Czechoslovak Government states its interpretation of the terms of the Munich Agreement regarding evacuation of property.</p>	19	21
Oct. 3	<p><i>Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the International Commission Held in Berlin on October 3, 1938</i></p> <p>Subcommittee A's proposals for maintenance of order in the neutral zone submitted; incidents reported in the neutral zone; Czechoslovak gendarmery to be responsible for order in this zone; further discussion on the nature of the international formations; report on the work of subcommittee C (plebiscite and frontiers).</p>	20	22
Oct. 3	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>Weizsäcker reports to Ribbentrop on the discussion in the International Commission on the sending of regular troops or ex-servicemen to the plebiscite areas. German opposition to the use of regular troops.</p>	21	24
Oct. 3	<p><i>The Chargé d' Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Hungarian note handed to the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry demanding certain measures before the beginning of the Czechoslovak-Hungarian negotiations and proposing that the latter should begin on October 6.</p>	22	25

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Oct. 3	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Review of events in Britain prior to and immediately following the Munich conference.	248	293
Oct. 3	<i>Counselor of Embassy Tippelskirch to Counselor of Legation Schliep</i> In view of the failure of Litvinov's policy and the collapse of the policy of pacts and alliances as revealed after Munich, Tippelskirch thinks a return to the revolutionary Comintern line on the part of the Soviet Union is likely; the Soviet Union will seek to increase its military strength and examine its foreign policy; he feels that present circumstances offer opportunities for greater economic agreement with Russia.	476	602
Oct. 4	<i>Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the International Commission Held in Berlin on October 4, 1938</i> Discussion on the demarcation of zone V; in view of divergence of opinion on percentage, question to be discussed by the five heads of delegations; demarcation line of area adjoining zone I accepted by the Commission; report by chairman of subcommittee B; heads of delegations fail to agree on terms of reference for work of subcommittee C.	24	27
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Oct. 6	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>Czechoslovak Ministers inform Weizsäcker (on October 5) that Beneš' resignation is imminent and state that the only course for Czechoslovakia is one of close cooperation with Germany.</p>	36	37
Oct. 6	<p><i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Conversation with Chvalkovsky, the new Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, who is anxious to be received by the Führer or the Reich Foreign Minister, in order to obtain guidance. He emphasizes the value of a German guarantee, which Mackensen says is dependent on the settlement of all outstanding questions.</p>	37	37
Oct. 6	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i></p> <p>Woermann gives an evasive answer to the Hungarian Minister's contention that Hitler had promised Pressburg to Hungary and that the only solution for Slovakia was the Hungarian one.</p>	38	39
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Oct. 7	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with Lord Halifax: hope for improved Anglo-German relations on the basis of Munich; Halifax's anxiety about the fate of Sudeten Germans not belonging to the SDP; British attitude toward Soviet Union's participation in guarantee of Czechoslovakia; Anglo-Italian discussions on Spain.	249	302
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Oct. 8	<p><i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>British Government informs Hungarian Government that it is morally bound to guarantee Czechoslovakia and warns Hungary against making harsh demands.</p>	47	50
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Oct. 12	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Subjects to be discussed with the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister: Czechoslovak foreign and domestic policy, military and economic questions, matters affecting transport, cultural relations, and the press.	54	56
Oct. 12	<i>Ambassador Dirksen to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Dirksen forwards a memorandum by Dr. Fritz Hesse on a conversation with Chamberlain's press chief, who emphasized Chamberlain's sole responsibility for the Munich decisions and pointed out the bitter feeling of the Foreign Office against Germany. He recommended that Germany should avoid giving publicity to the Opposition by attacking them, and should stress her trust in Chamberlain and her desire for friendship with Britain. He further advised restraint in the colonial question.	251	305
Oct. 13	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> In his conversation with Ribbentrop, Chvalkovsky states the new Government's desire for close cooperation with Germany, outlines Czechoslovakia's new foreign and domestic policy, involving the end of the Moscow-Prague-Paris alliance and the dissolution of all political parties; the Czech Army to be greatly reduced; Jewish émigré problems to be settled; Reich Germans in Czechoslovakia to have political freedom, and minorities to be protected.	55	60

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Oct. 13	<p><i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Conversation with the Hungarian Prime Minister, who states that the reincorporation of Carpatho-Ukraine in Hungary would reinforce the front against Bolshevism, and affirms his Government's policy toward the Axis.</p>	57	66
Oct. 13	<p><i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Hungary to order mobilization unless Czechoslovaks make satisfactory proposals; in view of breakdown of Komárom negotiations, Hungary is to appeal to the four Great Powers.</p>	58	67
Oct. 13	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>The French Ambassador suggests that during Ribbentrop's proposed visit to Paris a nonaggression pact and a consultative agreement should be drawn up and agreement reached for negotiations on the currency question.</p>	338	436
Oct. 13	<p><i>Ambassador Dirksen to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i></p> <p>Dirksen reports a conversation with Kennedy, U.S. Ambassador in London, who expressed the desire to visit Germany and to talk to the Führer, as he believed this would be advantageous for U.S.-German relations. He further recommended a U.S.-German trade agreement and stressed the need for disarmament and the sympathy felt for Germany by the average American.</p>	498	634
Oct. 13	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i></p> <p>The Chinese Chargé d'Affaires asks about the accuracy of the published text of a telegram from the Führer to the Japanese War Minister in which hope for the success of the Japanese campaign is expressed. After inquiries Woermann ascertains that the telegram was couched in general terms.</p>	532	682
Oct. 14	<p><i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>No public announcement of Hungarian partial mobilization to be made until German and Italian attitude is ascertained.</p>	59	67

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1938 [Oct. 14]	<p><i>Communication from the Italian Embassy</i></p> <p>Copy of a letter from Ciano to Attolico, informing him of the Duce's approval of Hungary's intention to mobilize and to appeal to the four Great Powers, and requesting him to inform the German Government accordingly.</p>	60	68
Oct. 14	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i></p> <p>Conversation between the Führer and the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister: Chvalkovsky asks for Germany's support for Czechoslovakia's new policy; Hitler reviews the possibilities open to Czechoslovakia, states the conditions to be fulfilled by her in order to reach a satisfactory relationship with Germany, and advises solution of Hungarian-Czechoslovak question by direct negotiation.</p>	61	69
Oct. 14	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i></p> <p>Conversation between the Führer and Darányi: Hitler warns Hungary of the consequences of a conflict and of the doubtful nature of the outcome of a four-power conference and advises against forcing a plebiscite on the Slovaks; Czechoslovakia to be urged to give Hungary a just frontier.</p>	62	73
Oct. 14	<p><i>Memorandum by the Minister to Hungary</i></p> <p>Hungarian proposals for frontier delimitation conveyed to the Reich Foreign Minister; Chvalkovsky told that Germany agrees with Hungary's view of Czech proposals and that, unless Hungary's minimum demands were fulfilled, Germany could not guarantee the new Czechoslovak frontier.</p>	63	77
[Oct. 14]	<p><i>Communication from the Italian Embassy</i></p> <p>In a note to Attolico, Ciano asks him to inform the German Government that no Hungarian request for a four-power conference will be made, but that if direct negotiations fail an arbitral award by the Axis Powers is recommended.</p>	64	78
Oct. 15	<p><i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Report on the situation in Britain after the September crisis; in spite of divided feeling toward Germany, there is the desire for an Anglo-German settlement; strength of Chamberlain's position.</p>	252	308

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1938 Oct. 17	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>The Hungarian Minister handed over a note asking the German Government to urge Prague to make new proposals to Hungary and stating that, in the event of their being unsatisfactory, Hungary would leave the matter to the arbitration of Germany and Italy; Weizsäcker says that the decision must come from the Reich Foreign Minister.</p>	65	79
Oct. 17	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>The Czechoslovak Foreign Minister conveys the request of the Slovak Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior and the Carpatho-Ukraine Minister for audience with the Reich Foreign Minister before submitting new proposals to Hungary.</p>	66	81
Undated	<p><i>Unsigned Memorandum</i></p> <p>Mastny describes change in Czechoslovak foreign and domestic policy, while Göring stresses the Führer's power to make demands on Czechoslovakia and indicates possible economic influence.</p>	67	81
Undated	<p><i>Unsigned Memorandum</i></p> <p>Slovak Deputy Prime Minister expresses gratitude to Germany and states that Slovakia wants independence, not union with Hungary; Göring agrees that Slovak efforts for independence should be supported.</p>	68	82
Oct. 17	<p><i>Under State Secretary Woermann to Consul Druffel</i></p> <p>Woermann informs Druffel of the substance of the talks between Göring and the Slovak leaders and says that Germany officially supports Slovak autonomy with orientation toward Prague. He hints that DNB reports from Pressburg are too anti-Hungarian in tone.</p>	69	83
Oct. 17	<p><i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Dirksen</i></p> <p>Weizsäcker states that the German press campaign on British rearmament was deliberately undertaken in order to split public opinion in Britain.</p>	253	311
Oct. 17	<p><i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Dirksen</i></p> <p>Weizsäcker is reluctant to forward Dirksen's letter and Dr. Hesse's memorandum to the Foreign Minister, as the arguments expressed therein no longer prevail in Germany.</p>	254	312
Oct. 17	<p><i>The Director of the Press Department to the Embassy in Great Britain</i></p> <p>In order to cause a split in British public opinion and to put obstacles in the way of the rearmament campaign, German correspondents in Britain are to attack the rearmament program.</p>	255	313

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Oct. 18	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb</i> Two maps are being dispatched to the Reich Foreign Minister, one handed to Woermann by the Hungarian Minister, the other containing the compromise line traced by the Reich Foreign Minister. Czechs asked to state whether they accept this compromise line as a basis for negotiations before reception of Slovak Ministers. Czechs have stated their willingness to do so.	70	84
Oct. 18	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb</i> Having received confirmation from Prague that the line proposed by him is accepted as the basis of negotiations, the Reich Foreign Minister states his readiness to receive the Slovak Ministers.	71	85
Oct. 18	<i>The DNB Correspondent in London to the DNB in Berlin</i> Hesse states that British Government plans for rearmament are less extensive than is reported by the sensational press; no likelihood of inclusion of Attlee, Churchill, Eden, and Sinclair in the Cabinet.	256	3
Oct. 19	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i> Slovak opposition to the Hungarian plan, which is based on 1910 census; request for help from Germany. Ribbentrop stresses the importance of a settlement and outlines Germany's attitude. Discussion of the Carpatho-Ukraine problem.	72	86
Oct. 19	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i> Further conversation between the Reich Foreign Minister and the Slovak Ministers, who outlined the possibilities facing an independent Slovakia.	73	92
Oct. 19	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Encloses a memorandum on a conversation between Sir Frederick Leith-Ross and two members of the Economic Policy Department of the Foreign Ministry. Leith-Ross proposals for economic cooperation between Germany, Britain, France, and Italy.	257	314
Oct. 19	<i>Ambassador Dirksen to Minister Aschmann</i> Dirksen asks for an interpretation of instructions regarding the method to be adopted for attacking the British rearmament campaign and points out that the latter is more of a defensive measure.	258	317

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Oct. 19	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Welczeck reports desire on the part of Bonnet and Daladier for a direct settlement of all questions outstanding with Germany and for friendly relations with her.	339	437
Oct. 19	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Ambassador von Bergen is to remain at his post until further notice.	465	592
Oct. 20	<i>Memorandum by the Ambassador in Italy</i> Report of a telephone conversation with Altenburg; Ciano, when informed of the talks with the Slovak and Carpatho-Ukraine representatives, expressed his agreement. Mackensen asked to urge Italy to exert influence on the Hungarians.	74	93
Oct. 20	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> When informed of the acceptance by the Czechs and Slovaks of the frontier proposed by Ribbentrop, the Hungarian Government finds it impossible to agree.	75	94
Oct. 20	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Hungarian Government cannot agree to renunciation of certain towns and is considering an appeal to the Axis Powers.	76	95
Oct. 20	<i>Counselor of Legation Rüter to Counselor of Legation Clodius</i> Report on the economic mission's negotiations in London and Dublin; Leith-Ross suggestion for a stronger economic cooperation endorsed by the mission; preliminary discussions in Dublin.	259	318
Oct. 21	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> The Hungarian Minister hands over two memoranda stating that further negotiations with the Slovaks would be fruitless and asking Germany and Italy to act as arbiters.	77	95
Oct. 21	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Hungary</i> It is to be stressed that the Slovak proposal is based on the line agreed upon by the Reich Foreign Minister and Darányi.	78	97
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Oct. 21	<p><i>Directive by the Führer for the Wehrmacht</i> Preliminary preparations for the liquidation of the remainder of the Czech State.</p>	81	99
Oct. 22	<p><i>Minister Erdmannsdorff to Under State Secretary Woermann</i> Erdmannsdorff points out that the solution discussed with the Slovak Ministers was not in fact based on the Darányi line.</p>	82	100
Oct. 22	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> A summary of the procedure envisaged for the future treatment of the Hungarian-Czechoslovak frontier question.</p>	83	102
Oct. 22	<p><i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> In view of the Hungarian Government's refusal to accept the Darányi line, Germany regards direct mediation as being at an end. Hungary requests an answer to proposal for German-Italian arbitration.</p>	84	104
Oct. 22	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with François-Poncet, who stated that his Government was favorably disposed to plans for Franco-German negotiation and would welcome the immediate formulation of a German draft treaty.</p>	340	438
Oct. 22	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Legal Department</i> Conversation with Attolico on plans for Franco-German agreement. Attolico had gathered from conversation with François-Poncet that such an agreement should be submitted to Britain and Italy for recognition, thus reviving the idea of the four-power pact.</p>	341	439
Oct. 23	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Survey of the attitude of various elements in Czechoslovakia toward the new policy of dependence on Germany.</p>	85	104
Oct. 23	<p><i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> In view of a new Czech proposal, the Hungarian Government is prepared to resume negotiations. Hungarian counterproposal communicated to Berlin, Rome, and Warsaw.</p>	86	108

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Oct. 24	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i> The Führer has decided that Czechoslovak frontier adjustments should, if possible, be in keeping with the wishes of the General Staff, and certain areas must be secured for Germany.</p>	88	109
Oct. 24	<p><i>Note by an Official of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop</i> Abetz reports on conversations with Reynaud and Bonnet on the possibilities for Franco-German agreement.</p>	342	440
Oct. 25	<p><i>The President of the Slovak Government to the German Foreign Minister</i> As agreement cannot be reached between the Slovaks and Hungarians; Germany and Italy are asked to act as arbiters.</p>	89	110
Oct. 25	<p><i>The Foreign Minister to the Minister in Hungary</i> Darányi is to be informed of German support for Hungarian point of view on Kaschau.</p>	90	111
Oct. 25	<p><i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Welczek</i> In Weizsäcker's view the two suggestions most likely to be realized concerning Franco-German agreement are those for recognition of the Franco-German frontier and for joint consultation. Other questions discussed include a Franco-German guarantee of Belgium, the humanizing of warfare, and currency agreement. Strict secrecy is to be observed.</p>	343	441
Oct. 26	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Referring to the possible inclusion of Poland in the arbitration, the British Chargé d'Affaires points out that the four Great Powers have the final say in the frontier settlement.</p>	91	111
Oct. 26	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Czechoslovak note to the Hungarian Government states that, since Hungary regards Czech proposals as unsatisfactory, Czechoslovak Government agrees to submit the matter to arbitration.</p>	92	112

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Oct. 26	<i>Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> German-Italian economic relations; increase in trade, favorable progress in inclusion of Austria in German-Italian trading; incorporation of the Sudeten-German territory; German interest in acquiring the Styrian Electricity and Danube Steam Navigation Companies; negotiations on the settlement of the ownership of the former Austrian Southern Railway Company; secret German-Italian discussions on economic cooperation in the event of war.	399	514
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Oct. 28	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Czech note handed to Hungarian Government expressing satisfaction on agreement for German-Italian arbitration.	94	114
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Oct. 29	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> In an <i>aide-mémoire</i> the Czechoslovak Government requests the Reich Government to undertake the role of arbiter and asks that, if Poland is to be included, Rumania should also participate in the arbitration.	95	115
Oct. 29	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Analysis of the Japanese attitude toward the Czechoslovak crisis.	534	684
Oct. 30	<i>The Legation in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Hungary agrees to the conditions under which Germany is willing to serve as arbiter, namely, that the award be accepted as final and that it be carried out without delay.	96	115
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Oct. 31	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> From conversations with British statesmen, Dirksen concludes that Britain is anxious for a settlement with Germany.	260	319
Oct. 31	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> In view of the left-wing reaction to the outcome of Munich, Bonnet stresses the need to stabilize Franco-German relations by official recognition of the frontiers and joint consultation agreement.	344	443
Nov. 1	<i>Ambassador Welzeck to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> François-Poncet has informed Welzeck that his suggestions for Franco-German understanding were sympathetically received by the Führer. Welzeck believes that the putting forward of colonial demands by Germany at present would prejudice Franco-German agreement.	345	444
Nov. 1	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Japan's attitude toward the European crisis; Japanese friendship for Germany strengthened during the crisis; conclusion of the war with China would transform desire for anti-Comintern policy into economic and political cooperation with Germany.	535	685

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Nov. 2	<i>Ambassador Dieckhoff to Ambassador Dirksen</i> Dieckhoff doubts Kennedy's ability to influence Roosevelt in favor of Germany as a result of his proposed visit.	499	637
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Nov. 3	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> In view of Mussolini's anxiety to improve relations between the Axis Powers and the Catholic Church, Ribbentrop has asked for a report on possible measures.	468	594
Nov. 3	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen</i> Weizsäcker hints that Munich may not represent the final settlement with England.	401	520
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Nov. 4	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> In view of Germany's raw-materials position, Göring's office has demanded that an attempt be made to increase raw material imports from Russia. Instructions are requested whether discussions can take place with the U.S.S.R. trade delegation.	479	608
Nov. 5	<i>Circular of the Director of the Political Department</i> By the Vienna Award the Axis has again proved itself as a factor for peace and order in Europe.	106	135
Nov. 5	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in France</i> In response to Bonnet's request the German Government has drawn up a formula for a Franco-German agreement, but points out at the same time that it does not represent an offer to France and that Germany does not wish to take the initiative for an agreement. The draft text is enclosed.	346	445
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Nov. 6	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with Chvalkovsky, who promises loyal observance by his Government of the Vienna Award in spite of sacrifices imposed on Slovaks and Carpatho-Ukrainians; he hopes to discuss frontier guarantee with the Reich Foreign Minister. Hencke gives a warning against alleged plans by Czechoslovak General Staff for new frontier fortifications and stresses the necessity for good treatment of <i>Volksdeutsche</i> in Czechoslovakia.	107	135
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Nov. 7	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i></p> <p>Military Attaché in Rome is to avoid an immediate interview with General Pariani and is to be instructed to inform him that Germany accepts the Italian proposals for General Staff talks in principle, but reserves her decision as to the time and place.</p>	403	522
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Nov. 8	<p><i>Minister Aschmann to Ambassador Dirksen</i></p> <p>No opportunity of attacking Duff Cooper, Churchill, and Eden is to be missed, as their real aim in the re-armament question is said to be to create anti-German feeling in Britain.</p>	264	327
Nov. 8	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>Mussolini, who had at first given his approval to a Franco-German declaration on the lines of the Anglo-German but had asked that signature should be postponed until after Chamberlain's and Halifax's visit to Paris, now fears that such a declaration may have a wider scope, particularly if it contains an obligation for Franco-German joint consultation.</p>	348	447

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1938 Nov. 8	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Weizsäcker informs Attolico that Germany is not bound by any precise formula regarding the proposed Franco-German declaration and points out that the importance of such agreements lies in the intention of carrying them out, which so far has not been the case with the Anglo-German Declaration.	349	448
Nov. 8	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in France</i> Welczeck is to emphasize that the initiative for the Franco-German discussions did not come from the German side and that the draft declaration only repeated already formulated French views. The declaration cannot be signed before the British statesmen's visit to Paris.	350	449
Nov. 8	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i> German-Italian cultural agreement to be signed.	405	523
Nov. 8	<i>Memorandum by the Ambassador in Italy</i> Mackensen in a telephone conversation with Bismarck (on November 7) inquires about the Foreign Ministry's decision regarding the attitude toward the German-Italian General Staff talks and again points out the consequences of giving a dilatory answer. He later learns that the Military Attaché has been instructed to give a favorable answer.	406	523
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Nov. 9	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division V</i> Oberführer Behrends of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle to lead underground work in Carpatho-Ukraine.	109	138
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Nov. 11	<p><i>Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Cultural Policy Department</i></p> <p>The agencies concerned in the matter object to the proposed treaty for the protection of the remaining German element in Czechoslovakia on the grounds that it might lead to demands by the Czech minority in Germany; they recommend instead a minorities declaration in conjunction with a German-Czechoslovak Government committee.</p>	111	140
Nov. 11	<p><i>Note by the Director of the Political Department</i></p> <p>In a conversation with the Ukrainian Minister and Deputy Karmasin, Göring states that the ultimate aim in the Slovak and Ukrainian question is an independent Slovakia and an autonomous Ukraine. Karmasin defends Slovakia's claim to Theben.</p>	112	142

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Nov. 19	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with Bonnet, who expressed regret that the Reich Foreign Minister's visit to Paris could not be expected in the immediate future, stressed his own and Daladier's efforts for peace, and again invited the Reich Foreign Minister to come to Paris to sign the declaration.	355	455
Nov. 20	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Mussolini has been informed by the Hungarian Government of its intention to occupy the Carpatho-Ukraine at once, as it understood the German reply to mean that the German Government did not in principle disapprove of such action. Attolico is requested to inform Mussolini of the German Government's surprise at this interpretation and to state that such action would be in contradiction to the Vienna Award.	128	156
Nov. 20	<i>The Head of the Italian Government to the Italian Ambassador in Germany</i> Mussolini admits that Germany's attitude was wrongly depicted by Hungary and, if the Führer so desires, he would agree to a German-Italian <i>démarche</i> in Budapest to prevent the action contemplated.	129	157
Nov. 20	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> The Foreign Minister's Chef de Cabinet admits the possibility of an early solution by force of the Carpatho-Ukraine question. Italian air force units dispatched for the defense of Budapest.	130	157
Nov. 20	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Conversation with Coulondre, the new French Ambassador, who expressed a desire for improved Franco-German relations. Ribbentrop said improvement depended on the European states confining themselves to their own interests. He promised to give further consideration to the question of the Franco-German declaration.	356	456
Nov. 20	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> In an informal conversation the Italian Chargé d'Affaires asks why the signing of the Franco-German declaration has been delayed. He ascribes the present attitude of the Italian press toward France to the expulsion of a number of Italians from France.	357	458

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Nov. 21	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Legation in Hungary</i> Erdmannsdorff is asked to hand to the Hungarian Foreign Minister a note expressing the German Government's views regarding Hungary's intention to occupy the Carpatho-Ukraine. A similar note is to be handed over by the Italian Minister.	132	159
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Nov. 23	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Conversation with the Deputy Foreign Minister, who said that, now that all frontier questions had been settled, there remained only the guarantee question. Hencke answered evasively and again complained of unjust treatment of Germans by Czechoslovak officials.</p>	136	166
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1938 Nov. 29	<i>Counselor of Legation Hencke to Counselor of Legation Altenburg</i> Hencke asks for approval of his intention to present the Military and Air Attachés to Chvalkovsky, to discuss with him the relations of the two Air Forces, and to transmit a request from Göring.	142	172
Nov. 29	<i>The Director of the Protocol Department to the Embassy in France</i> In view of the strikes in France and the French Government's difficult situation, it is considered advisable to postpone Ribbentrop's visit until complete calm prevails.	365	465
Nov. 29	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Conversation with the Papal Nuncio: appointments to vacant bishoprics; the Nuncio's part in the refusal of a Jesuit Father to sign a promulgation of the ban on speaking imposed on him; the case of Bishop Sproll; complaint by the Nuncio regarding a circular from the National Socialist Teachers' Association.	469	594
Nov. 30	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Dirksen recommends that the German coal industry should be urged to comply with Britain's suggestions for achieving complete understanding in the negotiations.	274	344
Nov. 30	<i>The Embassy in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Encloses a memorandum on a conversation between Selzam and Strang on the subjects discussed during the visit of Chamberlain and Halifax to Paris; Anglo-French relations; relations of France and Britain with Germany; guarantee of the Czech frontiers.	275	345
Nov. 30	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Bonnet is anxious that Ribbentrop's visit should take place as soon as possible, as postponement would encourage opponents of Franco-German <i>rapprochement</i> .	366	465
Nov. 30	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Growing opposition in France to the Franco-Russian pact as a result of the Soviet Union's attitude during the September crisis, the reorientation of French foreign policy, and the proposed Franco-German <i>rapprochement</i> ; this attitude might be affected by a Russo-Polish <i>rapprochement</i> .	367	467
Nov. 30	<i>General Keitel to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop</i> Encloses a memorandum, "Notes for Wehrmacht Discussions with Italy," dealing with the respective tasks of Germany and Italy in war.	411	529

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Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1938 Nov. 30	<p><i>The Chargé d' Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>For security reasons secret political files should be removed to Berlin. Letter pouches addressed "Care of Captain" are to be handed direct to representative of Consulate General in New York.</p>	505	648
Dec. 1	<p><i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Ciano's speech on foreign policy; anti-French demonstrations in the Chamber.</p>	412	532
Dec. 1	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>On the occasion of the negotiations with Russia regarding the extension of the German-Soviet economic agreement, Germany proposes to sound the Russians about a new trade credit amounting to 200 million RM in return for certain Russian raw materials.</p>	481	613
Dec. 2	<p><i>The Chargé d' Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Reasons for the delay in electing a new President; formation of the Party of National Unity; reasons for the withdrawal of Chvalkovsky's candidature; appreciation of the character of Hácha, the newly elected President.</p>	143	173
Dec. 3	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>At a talk with the delegates before the ninth session of the International Commission on November 21, it was decided not to wind up the Commission at the present meeting. Final agreement on the frontier delimitation was reached and a resolution on this drawn up and signed.</p>	135	163
Dec. 3	<p><i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>British proposal for an additional protocol to the Anglo-German naval treaty of 1937.</p>	276	347
Dec. 5	<p><i>The Foreign Ministry to the Air Ministry</i></p> <p>The communication from Göring to the Czechoslovak Government to be made by the Air Attaché, not by the Chargé d'Affaires.</p>	144	177
Dec. 5	<p><i>Circular of the Director of the Political Department</i></p> <p>Ribbentrop's visit to Paris is being made for the purpose of signing the Franco-German declaration, which represents the logical outcome of Germany's policy toward France.</p>	368	469

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1938			
Dec. 6	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Legation in Czechoslovakia</i> Ten million Czech crowns dispatched to Prague Legation for Deputy Kundt's welfare fund.	145	177
Dec. 6	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> British reaction to the Reich Foreign Minister's visit to Paris.	277	347
Dec. 6	<i>Franco-German Declaration of December 6, 1938</i> The text of the declaration by which the French and German Governments signify their intention to promote good neighborly relations, recognize the frontier between their two countries, and pledge themselves to mutual consultation.	369	470
Dec. 6	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Conversation between Ribbentrop and Bonnet: possibilities for Franco-German economic cooperation; Franco-Italian relations with particular reference to Italian claims to Corsica, Nice, and Tunis; the four-power guarantee of Czechoslovakia; Spain; the Franco-Russian pact.	370	471
Dec. 7	<i>Economic Agreement Between the Government of Carpatho-Ukraine and the Gesellschaft für Praktische Lagerstättenforschung</i> Mineral prospecting rights in the Carpatho-Ukraine made over to Germany.	146	178
Dec. 7	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the German Delegation Visiting Paris</i> Conversation between Wiehl and French economic representatives on possibilities of improving Franco-German economic relations.	371	477
Dec. 7	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> With reference to Chamberlain's forthcoming visit, Ciano implies that Italy has no definite program for the talks.	413	533
Dec. 9	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Further conversation with Bonnet (on December 7) at which the Jewish problem and the Spanish question were discussed.	372	481
Dec. 9	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Japanese Foreign Minister has informed British and U.S. Ambassadors that new order in East Asia is to be based on Japanese-Manchurian-Chinese economic bloc, that equality of rights in China can only be applied to third countries engaged in economic activities.	539	694

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1938			
Dec. 10	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Analysis of the situation of the remaining German element in Czechoslovakia.</p>	147	179
Dec. 10	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division I</i></p> <p>Objections to Britain's proposal for collective exchange of information on the grounds that Russia would have to participate. Rome to be consulted.</p>	278	349
Dec. 10	<p><i>Note Verbale to the American Embassy</i></p> <p>Announcing the exclusion of Jews from all forms of trade and commerce in Germany. German-American agreements are, however, to be taken into consideration in the case of those Jews possessing American citizenship.</p>	506	649
Dec. 13	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i></p> <p>Hencke is to be informed that the date of Chvalkovsky's visit to Berlin will be fixed later by Ribbentrop.</p>	148	181
Dec. 13	<p><i>Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Clodius reviews previous Italian attempts to abolish the foreign-exchange clearing balance and states that its abolition is again on the agenda for the present German-Italian negotiations; German opposition to this; possibility that Italy may attempt to reduce the foreign-exchange clearing balance by charging to the foreign-exchange clearing balance the cost of aerial torpedoes supplied to Germany.</p>	414	534
Dec. 14	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Czechoslovak Government to make a radio announcement calling for the cessation of boycott measures against Germans.</p>	149	182
Dec. 14	<p><i>Note from the American Embassy</i></p> <p>Expresses disappointment that no assurance of nondiscrimination against American citizens on racial grounds has been received.</p>	507	649
Dec. 15	<p><i>Memorandum by the Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia</i></p> <p>In view of the Czechoslovak Government's realization of its country's dependence on Germany, the latter can exercise decisive influence on the future course of relations.</p>	150	182

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1938 Dec. 15	<p><i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Italy</i></p> <p>The Italian Government is to be informed of the Anglo-German naval conversations designed to build up German submarine tonnage and to increase the armament of two new cruisers, and also of Germany's attitude toward Britain's proposal for collective exchange of information.</p>	279	349
Dec. 15	<p><i>Under State Secretary Woermann to Counselor of Embassy Thomsen</i></p> <p>Inquiries at the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle have revealed that Fritz Kuhn was received only by that organization, where he was told that the Reich authorities could not sanction the policy of the German-American Bund as directed by him.</p>	508	650
Dec. 16	<p><i>Memorandum by Deputy Kundt</i></p> <p>The economic and social situation of the remaining German element in Bohemia and Moravia.</p>	151	183
Dec. 16	<p><i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Report on Schacht's visit to London and his conversations with British statesmen.</p>	280	351
Dec. 16	<p><i>Ambassador Dirksen to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i></p> <p>In a conversation with Lord Halifax, Dirksen recommends methods for improving Anglo-German relations.</p>	281	352
Dec. 16	<p><i>The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>At the economic negotiations Italy regards the question of the foreign-exchange clearing balance as the chief subject for discussion, and also wishes to discuss various traffic questions, which Germany regards rather as a matter for discussion at a lower level.</p>	415	537
Dec. 16	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>In view of the alleged discharge of German workers in the United States in favor of Jewish refugees, Göring, with the Führer's approval, wishes the Foreign Ministry to initiate a repatriation scheme for these workers.</p>	509	651
Dec. 16	<p><i>Memorandum by Ambassador Dieckhoff</i></p> <p>Dieckhoff (at present in Germany), while welcoming the idea of repatriating German workers from the United States, recommends that, in view of possible difficulties with the U.S. Government in the case of German-Americans, the scheme should be confined to <i>Reichsdeutsche</i>.</p>	510	652

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1938 Dec. 17	<p><i>Directive by the Chief of Staff of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht</i></p> <p>Directive for the final liquidation of the Rump State of Czechoslovakia.</p>	152	185
Dec. 17	<p><i>The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Magistrati instructed to protest to Germany against the foreign-exchange clearing balance and to request its abolition. Italian insistence on increased deliveries of certain goods; instructions are requested whether the quotas may be exceeded.</p>	416	538
Dec. 17	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Wiehl reports on his talks with members of the American Embassy on the possibility of German-U.S. trade conversations. Although the U.S. Government is in favor of a trade agreement with Germany, conversations may have to await a settlement of the question of the treatment of U.S. Jews in Germany.</p>	511	654
Dec. 17	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>In spite of pressure being exerted on the President by Jewish circles for reprisals against Germany, it seems possible that a normalization of relations may be achieved.</p>	512	656
Dec. 19	<p><i>The Ministry of Economics to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>The Economic Ministry's attitude toward British proposals for agreement in the international coal negotiations.</p>	282	354
Dec. 19	<p><i>The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Embassy in Italy</i></p> <p>The German delegation in Italy is to insist on the foreign-exchange clearing balance. No increase can be made in quotas for steel and fertilizers, but coal quota may be increased. Instructions for other aspects of the negotiations.</p>	417	539
Dec. 19	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Cultural Policy Department</i></p> <p>The Foreign Ministry's proposals for the repatriation of German workers from the United States.</p>	513	657
Dec. 19	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>The possible consequences for German trade, finance, and economy in the event of U.S. economic reprisals against Germany.</p>	514	659

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1938 Dec. 20	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Representatives of the Four Year Plan and of the Ministry of Economics agree that Italy's foreign-exchange clearing balance cannot be released. Negotiations in Rome to be broken off until January 10, to allow Clodius to conduct negotiations on the Turkish loan.</p>	418	541
Dec. 21	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>Conversation between Weizsäcker and Coulondre, the new French Ambassador, who referred to the question of the guarantee of Czechoslovakia. Weizsäcker replied that the only guarantee of significance to Czechoslovakia was a German one.</p>	373	482
Dec. 21	<p><i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy</i></p> <p>Clodius to continue to refuse the release of the foreign-exchange clearing balance. Foreign Ministry agreement to interruption of negotiations, subject to prolongation of existing agreements.</p>	419	542
Dec. 21	<p><i>The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Clodius reports on the state of the negotiations and the questions still outstanding; he recommends that the question of the foreign-exchange clearing balance be settled with Italy through diplomatic channels before the resumption of the negotiations.</p>	420	542
Dec. 21	<p><i>The Chargé d' Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>In reply to Thomsen's protest against insults to the Führer alleged to have been made by Ickes, Sumner Welles accuses the German press of similar insults to the President of the United States.</p>	515	662
Dec. 21	<p><i>Ambassador Dieckhoff to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i></p> <p>Dieckhoff advocates an accommodating reply to the U.S. note in order to avoid a direct breach of relations.</p>	516	663
Dec. 21	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Wiehl states Germany's desire for a favored position in China vis-à-vis third powers, to which she feels entitled as a result of her support of Japan.</p>	540	694
Dec. 23	<p><i>The Chargé d' Affaires in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>The Italian Foreign Ministry considers the British proposal for exchange of information as unimportant and recommends that Germany accept it. Italy will take no action without consulting Germany.</p>	283	355

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1938			
Dec. 23	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i></p> <p>Conference (on December 22) between representatives of the Foreign Ministry and the heads of the U.S.S.R. trade delegation; the German proposal for granting a credit of 200 million RM against Soviet deliveries of raw materials to the value of 150 million RM a year; discussion of other economic matters hampering mutual relations.</p>	482	615
Dec. 24	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Communist Party in Czechoslovakia to be dissolved; Jewish teachers to be suspended.</p>	153	186
Dec. 24	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>Minister Kiep, appointed by the Foreign Minister to organize the repatriation of Germans from the United States, is to go to the United States on a "private" visit.</p>	517	665
Dec. 28	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>Magistrati, who asks about the guarantee of the integrity of Czechoslovakia, is told that Czechoslovakia is dependent on Germany alone, and a guarantee by any other power is therefore worthless.</p>	154	187
Dec. 28	<p><i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>French attitude toward the Italian note denouncing the 1935 Mussolini-Laval agreement; no territorial concessions to be made to Italy; fear that Chamberlain in his forthcoming visit to Rome may be persuaded by Italy to act as mediator.</p>	374	483
Dec. 29	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in China to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Chinese attitude toward the reception by the Führer of the new Chinese Ambassador in Berlin.</p>	541	696
Dec. 30	<p><i>Note to the American Embassy</i></p> <p>Germany admits the right of the U.S. Government to lay down political principles regarding discrimination in its own country, but points out that such principles cannot apply to U.S. subjects living in Germany; promises to consider individual cases of infringement of treaty rights.</p>	518	665
Dec. 30	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>Minister Kiep is to be instructed not to meet official personalities in the United States, but to explore the possibility, among private American friends, of collaborating with Roosevelt's opponents.</p>	519	667

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939 Jan. 1	<p><i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Bonnet stated that general satisfaction is felt in France over the signing of the Franco-German Declaration; with regard to Franco-Italian relations he stressed that no territorial concessions would be made to Italy, neither did France desire British mediation.</p>	375	485
Jan. 2	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> In reply to a reminder by the Italian Chargé d'Affaires of Ciano's offer of support in Anglo-German differences of opinion, Weizsäcker says that the Reich Foreign Minister has no wish to that effect.</p>	284	356
Jan. 2	<p><i>Foreign Minister Ciano to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop</i> The Duce is now prepared to convert the three-power Anti-Comintern Pact into a pact for mutual military aid and suggests that it should be signed in January; while tension between France and Italy has contributed to popularizing the idea of an alliance with Germany, the real reasons for Mussolini's agreement are the military alliance between France and England, growing warlike tendencies in France, and military preparations in the United States.</p>	421	543
Jan. 3	<p><i>The Minister in Eire to the Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with De Valera, who expresses his attitude toward the Munich Agreement and states his admiration for Germany's achievements.</p>	285	356
Jan. 3	<p><i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> In considering the future course of British foreign policy Dirksen examines the question of European cooperation and, after reviewing Anglo-French, Anglo-Italian, and Anglo-German relations, concludes that the only alternative facing Britain is closer political ties with the United States.</p>	286	357
Jan. 3	<p><i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Ciano expresses the Italian Government's willingness to act in agreement with Germany in the Suez Canal question.</p>	376	487
Jan. 3	<p><i>Memorandum by the Ambassador in Italy</i> Mussolini agrees that the Tripartite Pact can be signed immediately. Ciano suggests January 28 or 30 as the date for signature.</p>	422	545
Jan. 4	<p><i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Britain's attitude toward Germany's aims in eastern Europe as reflected in the press and public opinion and in the views of informed circles.</p>	287	364

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Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Jan. 4	<p><i>The High Command of the Navy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Encloses the record of the December 30 discussions with the British naval delegation; German claim to parity in submarine tonnage; conversion of German cruisers; Germany's attitude toward proposed protocol for exchange of information; voluntary limit for capital ships.</p>	288	368
Jan. 4	<p><i>The Reich Federation of Industry to the Foreign Ministry</i> Encloses a report by the head of the Reich Federation of Industry on meetings with the Federation of British Industries, at which possibilities for trade with Britain were examined.</p>	289	373
Jan. 4	<p><i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy</i> Before the resumption of the economic negotiations, two questions are to be cleared up with Italy: (1) the decrease in the export of German manufactured goods to Italy; (2) the maintenance of the foreign-exchange clearing balance.</p>	423	546
Jan. 4	<p><i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with Ciano on the American Ambassador's audience with Mussolini, at which Phillips delivered a letter from Roosevelt appealing for Mussolini's support in solving the Jewish problem. Mussolini repudiated Roosevelt's suggestion for settlement of Jews in Ethiopia, and suggested that the United States, among other countries, could accommodate large numbers of Jews.</p>	424	547
Jan. 4	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Protocol Department</i> On instructions from the Foreign Minister, members of the Foreign Ministry are to refrain from social contacts with members of the American Embassy.</p>	520	667
Jan. 5	<p><i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Dirksen's protest to Halifax against alleged insults to the Führer in the British press.</p>	290	377
Jan. 5	<p><i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Mackensen explains to Ciano the German point of view on the import of manufactured goods and on the question of the foreign-exchange clearing balance.</p>	425	549
Jan. 9	<p><i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reaction in Britain to Roosevelt's message to Congress; motives behind Chamberlain's statement.</p>	291	379

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1939 Jan. 9	<p><i>Foreign Minister Ribbentrop to Foreign Minister Ciano</i></p> <p>Expresses the Führer's and Ribbentrop's satisfaction at Mussolini's decision to sign the pact. A draft of the pact and of an additional secret protocol has been handed to the Italian and Japanese Ambassadors, and Ribbentrop invites Ciano to come to Berlin on January 28.</p>	426	550
Jan. 9	<p><i>The Chargé d' Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>In view of the action of Rettig, director of the New York office of the Student Exchange Agency, in asking German exchange students in the United States to report on the attitude of academic circles toward Germany, and the State Department's reaction to this, Thomsen recommends Rettig's recall.</p>	521	668
Jan. 10	<p><i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i></p> <p>Conversation with Attolico on Germany's attitude toward the foreign-exchange clearing balance and the South Tyrol question; Germany willing to admit Tyrolese who do not wish to remain in Tyrol.</p>	427	550
Jan. 11	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>The Italian Ambassador hints that, if Germany renounced the foreign-exchange clearing balance, Italy might accept payment of 6 million marks in foreign exchange for torpedoes.</p>	428	553
Jan. 11	<p><i>Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Clodius reports on Funk's discussions on economic questions in Rome, where he emphasized the need to increase German exports to Italy. In the question of the foreign-exchange clearing balance Funk had suggested that German-Italian economic relations should become so close that the clearing balance would be unnecessary. Clodius is opposed to its abolition before a general plan is drawn up.</p>	429	553
Jan. 11	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>The Soviet Ambassador states (on January 10) that his Government accepts in principle the German proposal for resumption of credit negotiations and asks that they should take place in Moscow. Wiehl reserves an answer on sending a delegation to Moscow, saying that such procedure might be difficult.</p>	483	618

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Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Jan. 11	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i></p> <p>In handing over a note, the American Chargé d'Affaires maintained the principle that there should be no discrimination against U.S. Jews in Germany, although the number of actual cases was small.</p>	522	670
Jan. 12	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>On the suggestion of Deputy Kundt (on January 11) the Führer is to be asked to recommend that funds required for relief of <i>Volksdeutsche</i> in Czechoslovakia be obtained from the <i>Winterhilfswerk</i>.</p>	155	187
Jan. 12	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Assurance by the Czechoslovak Government of its desire to adhere to the policy of close political cooperation with Germany; rumors of impending incorporation of Czechoslovakia into the Reich causing unrest among the people.</p>	156	188
Jan. 12	<p><i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Encloses a memorandum on a conversation with N. B. Ronald of the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office on the political, economic, and military situation in the Far East. British desire for Anglo-German cooperation there.</p>	292	380
Jan. 12	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the State Secretary's Secretariat</i></p> <p>Mackensen has been informed by Ciano of the Anglo-Italian talks and will keep the Foreign Ministry informed of their substance.</p>	430	555
Jan. 12	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Wiehl suggests (on January 11) that, in view of the importance attached by Russia to conducting the negotiations in Moscow, Schnurre and another representative should be sent there to act in collaboration with the head of the economic section of the Embassy.</p>	484	620
Jan. 12	<p><i>Ambassador Dieckhoff to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i></p> <p>Dieckhoff objects to the dispatch to the United States of an official of ministerial rank (Kiepe) in view of the effect on American public opinion.</p>	523	671
Jan. 12	<p><i>The Embassy in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Roosevelt's message on rearmament, which is less far-reaching than was expected, is regarded as a victory for the circles advising moderation.</p>	524	672

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1939 Jan. 13	<p><i>The Deputy Director of the Cultural Policy Department to the Legation in Czechoslovakia</i></p> <p>Departure of <i>Volksdeutsche</i> from Bohemia and Moravia undesirable; in Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine, no objection to employment of <i>volksdeutsche</i> labor.</p>	157	189
Jan. 13	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>At Ribbentrop's request Welczeck has been instructed to discuss unreservedly with Bonnet German equality of rights in Morocco.</p>	377	488
Jan. 13	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i></p> <p>Conversation between Ribbentrop and Funk: although the foreign-exchange clearing balance is not to be relinquished, it is hoped that the question will solve itself when assimilation of the two economies is complete. Funk to draft a scheme for future economic cooperation between Berlin, Rome, and Tokyo.</p>	431	556
Jan. 13	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>The Foreign Minister has directed that Kiep's mission to the United States is to be canceled, and that instead the task is to be assigned to Consul General Borchers.</p>	525	673
Jan. 13	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>Weizsäcker (on January 12) urges the Japanese Ambassador, who has said that the agreed date of January 28 proposed for the formal signing was too soon to take steps to conclude the matter by that date.</p>	542	697
Jan. 14	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>While there is disappointment in France regarding the lack of results from the British visit to Rome, there is general satisfaction that Chamberlain did not allow himself to be drawn into discussion of Franco-Italian affairs; increasing bitterness against Italy; the feeling that Germany supports Italy's claims has led to the fear of a second Munich at France's expense.</p>	378	488
Jan. 15	<p><i>The Foreign Ministry to the Ministry of Transport</i></p> <p>The Ministry of Transport is asked to rectify at once certain defects in the transport system which are interfering with Germany's coal deliveries to Italy.</p>	432	557
Jan. 16	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Kordt, who is to hand a note to the British Government, suggests the text of a communiqué on Germany's intention to carry out the expansion of her U-boat tonnage and to alter the armament of two cruisers.</p>	293	383

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1939			
Jan. 16	<p><i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Encloses a copy of the Italian answer to the British Government regarding the limitation on tonnage of capital ships.</p>	294	384
Jan. 18	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Note and press communiqué handed to Cadogan, who said that Germany's reasons for the change in armament of the two cruisers might create an awkward situation for the British Government.</p>	295	385
Jan. 18	<p><i>The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Italian proposal for a currency adjustment for Italians traveling to Germany and demand for compensation for Italian insurance companies in Czechoslovakia.</p>	433	558
Jan. 18	<p><i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> By his visit to Yugoslavia Ciano hopes to bring that country into closer relations with the Axis and thus to disintegrate the Little Entente.</p>	434	559
Jan. 18	<p><i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Assessment of the results of the visit of Chamberlain and Halifax to Rome.</p>	435	560
Jan. 19	<p><i>The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Italy is prepared to supply the torpedoes against clearing payment, if Germany abandons the foreign-exchange clearing balance.</p>	436	562
Jan. 20	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> The French Ambassador expresses his Government's anxiety about developments in Spain and hints that Italy might use her troops in Spain to exert pressure on France in regard to Italy's claims; France will make no territorial concessions.</p>	379	490
Jan. 20	<p><i>The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Embassy in Italy</i> Italian proposal to be rejected.</p>	437	562
Jan. 20	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Wiehl informs the Soviet Ambassador that, while Germany cannot agree to send a delegation to Moscow, she is prepared to send Schnurre there to discuss the basis for the credit agreement.</p>	485	621

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1939 Jan. 21	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i></p> <p>Conversation between the Führer and the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister: Chvalkovsky affirms his aim of close cooperation with Germany; the Führer stresses Czechoslovakia's dependence on Germany; the Jewish question in Czechoslovakia.</p>	158	190
Jan. 23	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i></p> <p>Conversation between the Reich and Czechoslovak Foreign Ministers: Ribbentrop objects to certain tendencies in the Czech press, the continued existence of the Beneš spirit, and Jewish influence; Chvalkovsky explains his difficulties in dealing with these matters.</p>	159	195
Jan. 23	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>Attolico is informed of the gist of the conversations with Chvalkovsky.</p>	160	203
Jan. 23	<p><i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>British version of the communiqué handed to the German Embassy.</p>	296	386
Jan. 24	<p><i>The High Command of the Navy to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>The demand by the High Command of the Navy that the British Government should announce the estimated strength of its fleet 5 years in advance is to be dropped.</p>	297	387
Jan. 24	<p><i>The High Command of the Navy to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Encloses draft of a note to the British Government stating that Germany cannot participate in a general exchange of information and giving the reasons for this decision.</p>	298	388
Jan. 24	<p><i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>A visit to London by Funk, Reich Minister of Economics, would be welcomed.</p>	299	389
Jan. 24	<p><i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Welczeck has demanded cessation of discrimination against Germany in Morocco; Bonnet affirms French policy of nonintervention in Spain; stresses his desire for continued good relations with Germany and says he has done everything possible to improve Franco-Italian relations.</p>	380	491
Jan. 24	<p><i>The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Further Italian proposal to abolish the foreign-exchange clearing balance as from 1940; Clodius comments on this.</p>	438	563

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1939 Jan. 24	<i>The Propaganda Ministry to the Foreign Ministry</i> In view of the uncertainty of German publishers regarding the South Tyrol, the Propaganda Ministry submits a questionnaire dealing with cultural and racial matters, the rendering of German place names, and maps featuring South Tyrol.	439	564
Jan. 25	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> In conversation with Chamberlain, who expresses anxiety over the tension in Europe, Dirksen refers to the Führer's constructive statements in his New Year's message and points out the need for restraint in the British press.	300	390
Jan. 25	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Ciano's visit to Belgrade; Stoyadinović's strong position; his desire for closer relations with the Axis; no new agreements reached between Italy and Yugoslavia; Yugoslav wish to improve relations with Hungary; Stoyadinović's attitude toward the League of Nations and the Anti-Comintern Pact.	440	566
Jan. 25	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Ciano had encountered the view in Belgrade that Hungary felt that Germany wanted agreement between Hungary and Yugoslavia but was indifferent to Hungarian-Rumanian relations; he asks Mackensen to obtain Ribbentrop's views on this matter.	441	568
Jan. 26	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Summary of the Anglo-German coal negotiations which have been resumed and are nearing conclusion.	301	391
Jan. 27	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reaction in Prague to Chvalkovsky's visit to Berlin. Disappointment in Government circles at the indecisive nature of the talks. Certain measures already put into effect and others promised.	161	203
Jan. 27	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Representatives of the Ministry of Economics and of the Reich Federation of Industry have returned from London with the impression that, because of anxiety about the political situation, the Federation of British Industries is less enthusiastic about the start of official industrial negotiations; delegations of both sides to meet in February.	302	393

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1939 Jan. 27	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Coulondre says that he has succeeded in restraining the French press and the Strasbourg broadcasting station and suggests that Germany might exercise a conciliatory influence on Italy.	381	492
Jan. 28	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Agreement reached in the Anglo-German coal negotiations; negotiations to be resumed with all interested countries with a view to reaching a general agreement.	303	394
Jan. 28	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy</i> Funk thinks the foreign-exchange clearing balance cannot be maintained after 1939; the delegation is to aim at a settlement of the torpedo transactions to the extent of 50 percent in foreign exchange. In return the Italians are to be asked to give declarations regarding the import of German goods and tourist traffic.	442	568
Jan. 28	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy</i> Mackensen is asked to inform Ciano that the relationship between Hungary and Rumania has been treated as being uncertain and that Germany is interested in drawing Rumania closer to the Axis.	443	569
Jan. 28	<i>The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Schnurre now unable to go to Moscow for conversations.	486	622
Jan. 28	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Ott quotes a Japanese report that Ribbentrop, Ciano, and Oshima are to meet to discuss anti-Comintern policy; Army circles in Japan anticipate a military alliance between Germany, Italy, and Japan directed against Russia.	543	698
Jan. 30	<i>Ambassador Dirksen to Ministerialdirektor Wiehl</i> Significance of the Anglo-German coal agreement for future industrial negotiations.	304	395
	<i>Editors' Note</i> Hitler's Reichstag speech of January 30, 1939, and the reaction in Czechoslovakia.		206
Jan. 31	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> The British Government, which has suggested that Funk be invited as guest of honor at a dinner to celebrate the conclusion of the coal agreement, would appreciate a similar invitation by Germany to Oliver Stanley.	305	396

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Jan. 31	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Consulate General at Milan</i> Encloses a memorandum on the resettlement of Reich Germans from the South Tyrol. Resettlement to be carried out by the AO.	444	570
Feb. 1	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Germany's aim in the forthcoming talks between representative British and German industrial groups is to insure for Germany the same foreign-currency earnings by an increase of prices in the event of quantitative limitation of German exports.	306	397
Feb. 1	<i>The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Further negotiations of the economic delegation; Italian proposal for payments on the expiry of the foreign-exchange clearing balance; Italy refuses to increase imports of manufactured goods from Germany and demands that the deficit be covered by deliveries of steel and machinery; Italian proposal for the Styrian Electricity Company.	445	572
Feb. 2	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> The International Commission is to be allowed to lapse.	162	206
Feb. 2	<i>The Consul at Hanoï, French Indochina, to the Foreign Ministry</i> The brother-in-law of Wang Ching-wei states that the latter feels the time has come for negotiations with Japan and gives the Chinese conditions.	544	699
Feb. 3	<i>The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Details of the agreement reached with Italy.	446	574
Feb. 3	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Roosevelt's statements in his press conference interpreted as being designed to silence the opposition, which censures him for maneuvering America into a position similar to that of 1917.	526	674
Feb. 4	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> In view of the importance attached by the British Government to an Anglo-German economic agreement, Dirksen recommends an early visit by Funk.	307	398
Feb. 4	<i>Ambassador Mackensen to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop</i> Conversation with Ciano on an interview with Baudouin, who stated that France was prepared to discuss with Italy certain questions of Franco-Italian relations on condition that Italian territorial claims were suppressed. These questions include Djibouti, Djibouti - Addis Ababa Railway, Suez Canal, Tunis. The conversations are to be kept secret.	447	575

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Feb. 6	<p><i>The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Embassy in Great Britain</i></p> <p>Because of engagements, Funk is unable to visit London at present, but the Reich Federation of Industry would gladly invite Oliver Stanley to a dinner in Berlin in connection with the coal agreement.</p>	308	399
Feb. 6	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i></p> <p>Conversation between Ribbentrop and Coulondre, who states that, while France is prepared to make concessions to Italy about Djibouti and the Suez Canal, she will never make territorial concessions. In Ribbentrop's view Franco-German economic relations could be improved by giving French Government contracts to Germany.</p>	382	493
Feb. 6	<p><i>Ambassador Schulenburg to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i></p> <p>Schulenburg expresses his disappointment over the cancellation of Schnurre's visit, which he alleges was due to French press reports inspired by Polish circles who regard with suspicion any German-Soviet rapprochement.</p>	487	623
Feb. 6	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>The effects on German economy of a possible breaking-off of relations with the Soviet Union; cessation of trade, breakdown of credit negotiations, difficulties in the repayment of the 1935 credit.</p>	488	624
Feb. 6	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>On being informed that Schnurre will not now go to Moscow and that the German Embassy there will negotiate with the Soviet Government on the credit agreement, Merekalov asks whether the Embassy can negotiate on all questions of the agreement. He is told that this is the case, but that any treaty must be signed in Berlin.</p>	489	625
Feb. 6	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>On instructions from the Foreign Minister, Wiehl pressed for approval by Japan of the <i>pro memoria</i> on German-Japanese economic cooperation in China; the Japanese Ambassador replied that the Army and the Foreign Ministry were in favor of this.</p>	545	700

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1939			
Feb. 7	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>The Hungarian Minister, who inquires about speeding up the delimiting of the Hungarian-Czech frontier, is told that there is now no question of a frontier guarantee for Czechoslovakia and that frontier delimitation will take place on the basis of the Vienna Award.</p>	163	206
Feb. 7	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Ashton-Gwatkin wishes to visit Berlin between February 17 and 28 for economic discussions.</p>	309	400
Feb. 7	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Coal agreement only an oral one covering German and British quotas; negotiations with other European coal exporting countries to be started.</p>	310	400
Feb. 7	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i></p> <p>In the conversation with Coulongre, Ribbentrop pointed out that Germany would consider French influence in eastern Europe as intolerable for Franco-German relations.</p>	383	494
Feb. 7	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i></p> <p>Conversation (on February 6) between Ribbentrop and Count de Brinon. Ribbentrop stresses his efforts for understanding with London and Paris but is of the opinion that nothing could be achieved by a general conference as long as France and Britain could not admit a demarcation of Germany's spheres of interest and her colonial claims. Franco-Italian relations still difficult.</p>	384	495
Feb. 7	<p><i>An Official of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop to the Press Department of the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Referring to an article in the <i>Europäische Revue</i> on Franco-Italian tension, Abetz suggests that the editors be instructed to adopt a more tactful tone.</p>	385	496
Feb. 8	<p><i>Note Verbale from the British Embassy</i></p> <p>The British Government is anxious to learn the German Government's views on giving effect to the guarantee of Czechoslovakia.</p>	164	207
Feb. 8	<p><i>The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Embassy in Italy</i></p> <p>Comments by the Ministry of Economics on suggested agreement with Italy.</p>	448	577

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Feb. 9	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Hungarian Government pressing for a decision in the Carpatho-Ukraine question.	165	208
Feb. 9	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Attolico has been briefly informed of the Ribbentrop-Coulondre conversation.	386	496
Feb. 10	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with Ciano regarding a statement made by Weizsäcker on German intentions regarding Albanian petroleum. Ciano points out that Albania is a purely Italian concern.	449	578
Feb. 10	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> The Soviet Foreign Trade Commissar, to whom Schulenburg handed a draft of the credit agreement, states that Russia can place orders for only 50 million RM and deliver only that amount of raw materials a year.	490	626
Feb. 11	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy</i> Weizsäcker explains to Attolico the reasons for his statement regarding Albanian petroleum, saying that the suggestion for German participation had come from Albanian sources.	450	579
Feb. 11	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> After examining the draft of the credit agreement Mikoyan states that the Soviet Government is willing to increase the value of Soviet deliveries to 70 and 75 million RM in the next two years.	491	626
Feb. 11	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Ott</i> Weizsäcker, acknowledging telegrams from Ott, says that no detailed reply is to be sent, as Ott is sufficiently well informed on policy from his visit to Berlin.	546	701
Feb. 12	<i>Note by the Head of Political Division IVb</i> Ribbentrop has stated (on February 11) that Germany is not interested in a speedy conclusion of the work of the German-Czech frontier delimitation committee.	166	208
Feb. 12	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy</i> Hungary has been warned against taking arbitrary action in the Carpatho-Ukraine.	167	209

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1939 Feb. 12	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i></p> <p>Conversation between the Führer and Professor Tuka, who states the Slovaks' desire for independence and says that Slovakia looks to Germany for her liberation. The Führer expresses his regret that at the time of the Czech crisis he was under a misapprehension as to Slovakia's real aims.</p>	168	209
Feb. 13	<p><i>German-Italian Commercial Agreement Signed in Rome, February 13, 1939</i></p> <p>Third Secret Protocol, with lists of goods which Germany wishes to purchase from Italy. Statistics of railway traffic between Germany and Italy.</p>	451	580
Feb. 14	<p><i>Note to the British Government</i></p> <p>The British proposal on limitation of tonnage of capital ships has been studied by the German Government, which expresses the hope that Britain will succeed in her efforts to prevent all powers bound to her by treaty from exceeding the tonnage at present recognized as expedient.</p>	311	401
Feb. 15	<p><i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Schulenburg</i></p> <p>Weizsäcker, while regretting Schnurre's recall, expresses the hope that the goal will nevertheless be reached.</p>	492	627
Feb. 16	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i></p> <p>Conversation between the British Ambassador and the Reich Foreign Minister: Henderson's satisfaction at the proposed visit of Oliver Stanley to Germany; suggested visit by representatives of the Royal Air Force dependent on an improved tone in the British press.</p>	312	402
Feb. 17	<p><i>An Official of the Legation in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Conversation with Chvalkovsky, who points out that the reduction of the Czech Army makes a German guarantee of the Czechoslovak frontiers essential for the maintenance of her neutrality. Such a guarantee would also enable her to denounce her treaties with France and Russia.</p>	169	213
Feb. 17	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>The British Ambassador states that Oliver Stanley will be in Berlin on March 17; to his suggestion that the Chief of the Air Staff and the Air Minister should visit Berlin, Weizsäcker replies that the Foreign Ministry must be notified.</p>	313	403

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Feb. 18	<p><i>The Commissioner for the Four Year Plan to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Göring requests that the transfer of part of the Czech gold reserve be expedited.</p>	170	215
Feb. 18	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Encloses a memorandum by the Reich Federation of Industry on the industrial conversations. The Federation of British Industries shows less interest in negotiations between German and British industry; main delegations to meet.</p>	314	404
Feb. 18	<p><i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Bonnet defends his attitude in his speech in which he referred to the extending of French friendships in central and eastern Europe.</p>	387	497
Feb. 18	<p><i>The Ambassador to the Holy See to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Conversation between Bergen and the Italian Ambassador to the Holy See: importance of the attitude of the German Cardinals in the Conclave; Vatican grateful for any sign of readiness for peace on Germany's part; hint by the Italian Ambassador that Italy would welcome a more restrained attitude in the German press toward the late Pope and other personages.</p>	470	596
Feb. 18	<p><i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Japanese Government said to have decided on strengthening the pact in spite of opposition of certain circles.</p>	547	702
Feb. 20	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Purpose of Ashton-Gwatkin's visit; decline in German exports to Britain; possibilities for extending Anglo-German trade.</p>	315	406
Feb. 20	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Conversation with Ashton-Gwatkin; economic relations between Britain and Germany.</p>	316	408
Feb. 20	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i></p> <p>Conversation between the Foreign Minister and Ashton-Gwatkin: desirability of increasing Anglo-German trade; close political cooperation a prerequisite for this; the Anti-Comintern Pact.</p>	317	410

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1939 Feb. 20	<p><i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>In view of the alternatives facing British commercial policy of following in the wake of the United States or of maintaining independence by cooperation with Germany and Europe, the visits of Stanley and Ashton-Gwatkin to Germany are of special significance.</p>	318	413
Feb. 21	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Surprise felt in Germany at the announcement in the British press that Hudson's visit to Berlin would be undertaken in conjunction with a visit to Moscow for economic conversations.</p>	319	414
Feb. 21	<p><i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Report that France has approached the Italian Under Secretary in the Ministry for Africa with proposals for conversations on Djibouti, Suez, and Tunis.</p>	452	582
Feb. 22	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>The Czechoslovak Chargé d'Affaires hands over a memorandum on the question of the guarantee of the Czech frontiers and states that similar notes are being delivered in Rome, Paris, and London. Weizsäcker expresses his surprise that Germany was not first consulted.</p>	171	215
Feb. 22	<p><i>Counselor of Legation Campe to Ministerialdirektor Wiehl</i></p> <p>Encloses a memorandum on Campe's talk with Count de la Baume at which possibilities for Franco-German economic cooperation were discussed.</p>	388	498
Feb. 24	<p><i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Czechoslovakia</i></p> <p>The Czech Foreign Minister is to be informed that men of German origin are to be released from the Czech Army in the forthcoming demobilization.</p>	172	216
Feb. 24	<p><i>Deputy Kundt to Counselor of Legation Altenburg</i></p> <p>Kundt states that he has obtained an assurance that Germans will not be enlisted in the Czech Army.</p>	173	217
Feb. 24	<p><i>The Office of the Commissioner of the NSDAP for Foreign Affairs to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Reports indicate that definite decisions are expected in Slovakia in March. Disunity in the Slovak Government.</p>	174	217
Feb. 24	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i></p> <p>Conversation between Ashton-Gwatkin and Funk: Funk's plan to introduce a commercial mark; necessity for clearing up the debt question.</p>	320	416

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1939 Feb. 24	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with Lord Halifax on the feeling in Great Britain and tension in Franco-Italian relations.	321	418
Feb. 24	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Propaganda Ministry</i> Answer to the Propaganda Ministry's letter of January 24 regarding South Tyrol; Germany regards the subject of South Tyrol as closed. The name is not to be used, but the area may be represented as part of the German-language area.	453	583
Feb. 25	<i>Note by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Conversation between Ashton-Gwatkin and Göring, who stressed the necessity of improving Anglo-German economic relations as a means of preserving peace.	322	419
Feb. 25	<i>Minute by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Conversation with Ashton-Gwatkin on the results of his visit to Berlin.	323	419
Feb. 25	<i>Ambassador Henderson to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Inquiry by Sir Nevile as to whether the Duke of Coburg had been inspired when quoting part of a speech by Hitler; Chamberlain in his speech at Blackburn had expressly referred to the same passage.	324	421
Feb. 27	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> The visit of Hudson to Moscow is in keeping with Halifax's statements on Anglo-Russian relations; Anglo-Russian trade regarded by Britain as unsatisfactory.	325	421
Feb. 27	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Mussolini has suggested that, in view of the intention to strengthen the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo association, German-Italian General Staff conversations should now begin.	454	584
Feb. 27	<i>The Consul General in New York to the Foreign Ministry</i> In spite of its deliberately "American" character, the demonstration by the German-American Bund has not furthered the German cause in the United States, and the Bund is generally regarded as a weapon to destroy America from within. Borchers believes that this view can be combated only by Germany's dissociating herself from the Bund and says that Germany's interests would be better served by attempting to win back suitable elements of the German-Americans for Germany.	527	675

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Feb. 28	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with the Czech Minister on the guarantee question and the situation in Czechoslovakia.	176	220
Feb. 28	<i>Counselor of Legation Campe to Ministerialdirektor Wiehl</i> Encloses a memorandum on possible Franco-German cooperation in the reconstruction of Spain.	389	500
Feb. 28	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Ribbentrop promises an early decision on Mussolini's request for General Staff conversations.	455	584
Mar. 1	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb</i> Conversation with Minister Masafik on the future course of German-Czechoslovak relations.	177	221
Mar. 1	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Henderson</i> Weizsäcker confirms that the Duke of Coburg's attention had been especially drawn to the sentence in Hitler's speech.	326	423
Mar. 1	<i>Counselor of Legation Campe to the Director of Commercial Agreements in the French Ministry of Commerce and Industry</i> Proposals for the Franco-German economic talks.	390	502
Mar. 1	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Preparations in Paris for discussion of certain colonial projects; Foreign Ministry objections to Franco-German cooperation in mandated territories.	391	503
Mar. 1	<i>Ambassador Schulenburg to Ministerialdirektor Wiehl</i> Schulenburg reports that Mikoyan is now prepared to deliver 200 million R.M. of raw materials but that the counterdemands are too high. He encloses a memorandum on a conversation with the Japanese Ambassador, who asks that the German-Russian economic negotiations should be postponed pending the settlement of the Japanese fisheries dispute.	493	628
Mar. 2	<i>Dr. Koppen of the Reich Federation of Industry to Counselor of Legation Campe</i> Koppen will not be able to visit Paris for industrial talks until April and suggests that his visit should be unofficial. He states that Germany will not be able to contribute much to Franco-German industrial discussions.	392	505

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Mar. 2	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Protocol Department</i></p> <p>Protocol Department recommends that the German Ambassador should convey the Führer's congratulations to the new Pope; in view of Cardinal Pacelli's attitude toward Germany, these congratulations are not to be conveyed particularly warmly.</p>	471	597
Mar. 2	<p><i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Ott</i></p> <p>Weizsäcker conveys Ribbentrop's approval for Ott's line of action and informs him that the Triangle relationship is to be materially tightened. All relevant conversations are to be secret and conducted in Berlin.</p>	548	702
Mar. 3	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>Weizsäcker explains to Mastny Germany's attitude toward the question of a guarantee of the Czech frontiers.</p>	178	224
Mar. 3	<p><i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>French Government approves opening of industrial discussions on March 22; certain proposals put forward by France for joint development of colonial projects.</p>	393	505
Mar. 4	<p><i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i></p> <p>Ribbentrop refuses to accede to the Hungarian Minister's proposal that Germany and Italy should acknowledge Hungary's prior claim to the Carpatho-Ukraine.</p>	179	225
Mar. 5	<p><i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen</i></p> <p>Proposed visit of Göring to Italy; Italy appears to regard the question of General Staff talks as urgent, while the Japanese are less enthusiastic about the Triangle.</p>	456	585
Mar. 5	<p><i>The Ambassador to the Holy See to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Bergen's audience with the Pope, in which the latter expressed his great desire for peace between Church and State.</p>	472	598
Mar. 7	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Report on the negotiations between the Prague Government and the Slovak Ministers.</p>	180	226
Mar. 7	<p><i>Minute by the Head of Political Division IIIa</i></p> <p>Germany cannot agree with the French view that Spain provides the best ground for Franco-German cooperation.</p>	394	507

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Mar. 8	<p><i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Conversation with Chvalkovsky, who reports Hungarian and Polish statements regarding the Carpatho-Ukraine.</p>	181	227
Mar. 8	<p><i>The Legation in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>State of the Czech Army; possibility of proclamation of independence by Slovakia; Hungary insists on solution of Carpatho-Ukraine question.</p>	182	228
Mar. 8	<p><i>Unsigned Minute</i></p> <p>Guiding principles for the Anglo-German economic talks; difficulty of Germany's economic position caused by measures adopted by other countries; necessity for Germany to export her goods at favorable prices; need for agreement on prices and distribution of markets.</p>	327	423
Mar. 8	<p><i>Minute by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Campe recommends that Alphanand should be well received in Berlin and thinks that Koppen should arrive in Paris early in April.</p>	395	508
Mar. 8	<p><i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i></p> <p>The Italian Ambassador has pointed out that German coal deliveries to Italy have fallen short of the amount agreed.</p>	457	585
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Mar. 8	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IIIa</i></p> <p>The Nuncio asks for postponement of the order of confiscation of the lands of Klosterneuburg Monastery; the Reich Commissioner in Vienna refuses to rescind the order.</p>	474	599
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Mar. 9	<p><i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb</i></p> <p>Conversation with a member of the Czechoslovak Legation; Czech willingness to accede to German demands; rumors of impending German occupation of Czechoslovakia.</p>	185	232
Mar. 9	<p><i>Minute by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Although Germany has no objections to the continuation of discussions on Franco-German colonial projects, no responsibility for future financial obligations is to be undertaken by Germany.</p>	396	508
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Mar. 10	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>Agreement reached with Alphanon on the inclusion of the Sudetenland in Franco-German economic agreements. France will hand over further proposals and hopes for concrete results.</p>	397	509
Mar. 10	<p><i>Ambassador Mackensen to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i></p> <p>Ciano has discussed with Mackensen the procedure for Spain's accession to the Anti-Comintern Pact; a report by a confidential agent in Rome does not appear to bear out Attolico's statements about the Duce's eagerness for immediate General Staff conversations.</p>	458	586
Mar. 10	<p><i>The State Secretary to the Ambassador in Italy</i></p> <p>Ribbentrop has now decided that General Staff talks should take place; they should be divided into two parts, the first reciprocal stocktaking, the second operational questions; no complete insight into Germany's operational intentions to be given.</p>	459	588

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Mar. 11	<p><i>The Chief of Staff of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Ministry</i></p> <p>Military conditions for an ultimatum to Czechoslovakia.</p>	188	234
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Mar. 11	<p><i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i></p> <p>Mussolini agrees to the commencement of General Staff talks and suggests that they take place in Innsbruck.</p>	461	589
Mar. 11	<p><i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i></p> <p>The negotiations on the Russian credit are to be broken off because of Germany's inability, in the present circumstances, to make deliveries amounting to 300 million RM in the next 2 years.</p>	495	630
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CHAPTER I  
GERMANY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA  
SEPTEMBER 30, 1938—MARCH 16, 1939

No. 1

2491/517957

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Czechoslovak Minister  
of Foreign Affairs*<sup>1</sup>

PRAGUE, September 30, 1938.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: On the instructions of my Government I have the honor to transmit in the enclosure the text of an agreement, together with the additional protocol, which was signed at Munich on September 29 between the German Chancellor, the British Prime Minister, the Head of the Italian Government, and the French Premier.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time I take the opportunity to inform Your Excellency that the Government of the German Reich invites the Czechoslovak Government to send an authorized representative and a military expert to a meeting of the International Commission provided for in article 3 of the enclosed agreement, to be held at 5 p.m. on Friday, September 30, 1938, in the Foreign Ministry, Berlin, with Baron von Weizsäcker, State Secretary of the Foreign Ministry, in the chair.

I take this opportunity to assure Your Excellency of my highest regard.

HENCKE

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<sup>1</sup> Kamil Krofta, Foreign Minister in the Hodza Cabinet and the first Cabinet of General Syrový, February 1936–October 1938.

<sup>2</sup> The German Chargé d'Affaires in Prague, Hencke, reported by telegram that he had handed over the text of the Munich Agreement and the accompanying note to Dr. Krofta at 6:20 a.m. on Sept. 30. At 12:50 p.m. he was informed by the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry that the Czechs would be represented at the session of the International Commission that afternoon by Mastný, the Czechoslovak Minister in Berlin, and by General Husárek of the General Staff. The Czech delegates arrived in Berlin by special aircraft in time to participate in the second part of the session (28/17856 and 28/17852–53). For text of Munich Agreement, see vol. II, document No. 675.

## No. 2

1648/391319-23

*Minutes of the First Meeting of the International Commission Held in Berlin on September 30, 1938*

The State Secretary opened the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

The French Ambassador<sup>1</sup> proposed the State Secretary as interim chairman pending the arrival of the Czechoslovak delegation.

The State Secretary accepted the chairmanship and expressed the hope that the negotiations would take place in a friendly spirit.

In reply to a question from the Italian Ambassador<sup>2</sup> the State Secretary proposed that French should be the language used in the negotiations.<sup>3</sup> The Italian Ambassador asked the Commission at the beginning of its work to remember those who the previous day had preserved the peace of Europe by their cooperation.

The State Secretary said that the most urgent task was to organize the evacuation of the first zone.<sup>4</sup> He proposed the immediate formation of a military subcommittee.

The representatives of the other states agreed that the military subcommittee should begin its work, at least in broad outline, even before the arrival of the Czechoslovak delegation.

On the proposal of the French Ambassador the military attachés of Great Britain, France, and Italy are to represent these states on the military subcommittee. They may have the help of their assistants and of the air attachés.

The French Ambassador proposed that the subcommittee should deal with the main questions immediately, i.e. the evacuation and the beginning of the occupation, the intervening area between the German and Czechoslovak troops, the question of movable and immovable property, and the road blocks and mine fields. He asked whether it was necessary for military representatives of the signatory states to supervise the progress of the operations.

General von Stülpnagel replied that an exchange of Czechoslovak and German liaison officers between the staffs concerned would suffice.

The British Ambassador<sup>5</sup> asked at what time of day the German troops would cross the frontier. In conversation at Munich the Führer had mentioned 2 p.m.

General von Stülpnagel stated that, according to his information, the frontier would be crossed at 12 noon.

The State Secretary moved that this question should be left to the military subcommittee. This was agreed to.

The State Secretary outlined the tasks of the military subcommittee as follows:

It shall, as soon as possible, submit to the plenary commission proposals for the tactical execution of the evacuation of zone I and start preliminary discussions on the evacuation of zone II. The procedure decided upon for these zones shall then be applied in general to the other zones.

The French Ambassador asked whether it would not be advisable for the Commission to express the wish that in the signatory states all steps should be taken

<sup>1</sup> André François-Poncet.

<sup>2</sup> Bernardo Attolico.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "Not correct."

<sup>4</sup> The "first zone" was the territory adjudged to contain up to 90 percent Sudeten Germans. At Munich it had been agreed that its evacuation by the Czechs should begin on Oct. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Sir Neville Henderson.

to insure that press and radio maintain an atmosphere favorable for the negotiations.

The State Secretary proposed that the subcommittee should start its work at once and that the political committee should in the meantime discuss the motion of the French Ambassador.

The meeting was adjourned pending the arrival of the Czechoslovak delegation.

After the arrival of the Czechoslovak delegation the meeting was resumed.

The State Secretary welcomed the Czechoslovak delegates.

The Italian Ambassador repeated his proposal that the State Secretary should continue to act as chairman.

The State Secretary expressed his thanks for the confidence placed in him and took the chair.

The Commission agreed on the following procedure: should the need arise in the course of its work to transfer its place of meeting to another country (Prague) then the representative of the host country should take the chair.

On the proposal of the State Secretary, the Commission agreed that identical minutes, one in German, the other in French, should be drawn up. These minutes should not contain a verbatim account but merely a résumé of the proceedings.

The Commission discussed and drew up the press communiqué<sup>6</sup> attached as an enclosure for transmission to the press.

The Italian Ambassador emphasized that in the communiqué and in the appeal to the press they had in mind the end rather than the means. Each delegate should select the means which seemed to him most suitable for conveying to his Government the intention of the Commission.

It was decided that the meetings should be private and confidential.

After the return of the military subcommittee the French Military Attaché, at the request of the State Secretary, read the proposals drawn up by the subcommittee.<sup>7</sup> Reservations were made with regard to the supplementary paragraphs.

The Italian Ambassador moved that in the supplementary paragraphs the first three lines should be in a separate paragraph from the last four lines and that the word "incident" should be replaced by the word "difficultés."

The Commission resolved to fix the time for the entry of German troops in the proposals of the military subcommittee at 2 p.m. instead of 4 p.m. On the other hand the neutral zone between the two armies should be "au moins" three kilometers.

The French Ambassador remarked that, according to certain unconfirmed reports, members of the *Freikorps* had caused incidents on the German-Czechoslovak frontier.

The State Secretary gave an assurance that all necessary steps would be taken to prevent such incidents, provided that the reports were confirmed.

The French Ambassador asked whether, in the opinion of the subcommittee, it was necessary to send representatives of the International Commission to the scene of the entry (*sur les lieux mêmes*). The Italian Ambassador proposed that, in view of the importance of the first two days, his assistant military attaché should supervise the normal course of evacuation from October 1. He asked that the German authorities should support the activities of this delegate.

The State Secretary promised to do this but emphasized that the observer's task would be chiefly on the Czech side.

The Italian Ambassador said that that had been his meaning.

The meeting was adjourned until 11 a.m. on October 1.

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (1648/391324).

<sup>7</sup> Not printed (2380/498814-16).

As they broke up, the Commission decided to appoint as soon as possible a second subcommittee to define the areas in which a plebiscite was to be held.

Before leaving the committee room, the State Secretary read a telegram which stated that it was reported from a reliable source that the town of Hohenfurt, south of Budweis, had been fired on by Czechoslovak artillery. It was, however, not yet known whether actual shooting had taken place or previously prepared mines exploded.

### No. 3

140/75622

#### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 523 of September 30

PRAGUE, September 30, 1938—9:00 p.m.

Received October 1—12:20 a.m.

The Italian Minister here<sup>1</sup> gave me the following information regarding today's *démarches* by the Ministers of Italy, Britain,<sup>2</sup> and France.<sup>3</sup> He personally had received orders from his Government early this morning to see either the President of the Republic in person or some other high Czechoslovak official and to advise him urgently to accept the Munich agreements and to avoid incidents of any kind during the evacuation of the Sudeten-German area. As the President was at the Council of Ministers, he was received by Samakt, Chief of the Presidential Chancellery, who promised to convey his recommendation to Beneš at once. On this occasion the Italian Minister also conveyed the wish of the Ambassadors in Berlin of Italy, Britain, and France that Minister Mastny<sup>4</sup> should be appointed Czechoslovak delegate. In view of his mental state a discussion with Samakt had been impossible. Samakt expressed himself roughly as follows: "Today we are down, but other days will come." At their own request the Ministers of Italy, Britain, and France were received in a body about noon today by the Foreign Minister, who, without allowing them to speak, said: "The President and the Government submit to the conditions of the Munich Agreement which has come into being without Czechoslovakia and against her. The Czechoslovak Government reserves the expression of its attitude in writing." At the same time Krofta asked the Ministers to use their influence with the Reich Government for the cessation of anti-Czech propaganda which was making difficult the execution of the Munich Agreement.

<sup>1</sup> Francesco Frasoni, August 1938–March 1939.

<sup>2</sup> Basil Newton, March 1937–March 1939.

<sup>3</sup> Victor Léopold de Lacroix, March 1936–March 1939.

<sup>4</sup> Vojtech Mastny, Czechoslovak Minister in Germany.

The French Minister's attempt to address words of condolence to Krofta was cut short by the Foreign Minister's remark, "We have been forced into this situation; now everything is at an end; today it is our turn, tomorrow it will be the turn of others." The British Minister succeeded with difficulty in saying that Chamberlain had done his utmost; he received the same answer as the French Minister. The Foreign Minister was a completely broken man and intimated only one wish, that the three Ministers should quickly leave his room.

HENCKE

### No. 4

140/75623

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 525 of September 30      PRAGUE, September 30, 1938—11:50 p.m.  
Received October 1—3:15 a.m.

On the occasion of the *démarche* on the questions of imprisonment and ill-treatment the Foreign Minister's deputy<sup>1</sup> requested in the conversation which followed that I too should exert my influence with the Foreign Ministry for the cessation of the German press and radio propaganda campaign against Czechoslovakia. Propaganda would render more difficult the execution of the Munich agreements, which in any case represented a very difficult problem for the Czechoslovak Government. The Deputy Foreign Minister emphasized at the same time that the Czechoslovak Government desired nothing more than the beginning of a new era in German-Czechoslovak relations. Now that all points of friction, including, for all practical purposes, the Russian pact, had been removed by the Munich agreements, the Government here hoped that the former enmity would give place to the coexistence of the great [German] and the small Czech people, inspired by mutual respect.<sup>2</sup> I replied that we too desired a smooth neighborly existence and urgently recommended the Deputy Foreign Minister to give proof of his desire for such an era by the immediate announcement of the release of Reich nationals from imprisonment.

HENCKE

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<sup>1</sup> J. Krno, Director of the Political Department in the Foreign Ministry in Prague, with the rank and title of Minister.

<sup>2</sup> ". . . dass bisherige Feindschaft achtungsvollem Nebeneinanderleben von Gross and Klein tschechischen Volkes Platz machen werde."

## No. 5

28/17840

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

PRAGUE, October 1, 1938—11:30 a.m.

No. 527 of October 1

Foreign Minister Krofta has just telephoned to me at 9:35 a.m. to make the following communication:

Polish Government about midnight presented a note demanding immediate cession of region of Teschen and Freistadt.<sup>1</sup> Poland demands cession by October 2, midday.

Referring to point 2 of additional protocol of September 29,<sup>2</sup> Foreign Minister asks that pressure be exerted upon Poland so that peaceful solution within time limit fixed by four Great Powers may not be made impossible by demand couched in form of ultimatum. Czechoslovak Government has already declared to Poland its readiness in principle to cede regions chiefly inhabited by Poles. Immediate cession without any preparation is not possible. The Foreign Minister added that he did not believe Poland's action accorded with spirit of Munich Agreement and put forward the view that the Reich was morally bound to constrain Poland as well as to recognize the decisions adopted at Munich.

I confined myself to promising to transmit his wishes to Foreign Ministry.

HENCKE

<sup>1</sup> The frontier coal-mining district east of Mährisch-Ostrau. See vol. II, document No. 506.

<sup>2</sup> See "Annex to the Munich Agreement," vol. II, p. 1015.

## No. 6

140/75626

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Ministry*

BERLIN, October 1, 1938.

At 10:30 the French Ambassador telephoned and asked that, although he would shortly see the State Secretary in person, the following communication be made to him immediately after his return:

A serious difficulty had suddenly arisen from the fact that Poland had addressed an ultimatum to Czechoslovakia due to expire at 12 o'clock, whereas in the Munich Agreement it had been settled that the Polish minority demands were to receive satisfaction through the usual diplomatic channels within a period of 3 months.<sup>1</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> See "Additional Declaration," vol. II, p. 1016.

Poles had evidently not read the agreement aright and it was, therefore, necessary to draw their attention to it. The French Government had taken steps in every capital and desired that the German Government should also associate itself with these steps and make it clear to the Poles that Czechoslovakia must be allowed greater freedom of action for settling the question in dispute.

FEDERER

## No. 7

334/196741

### *Note Verbale from the British Embassy*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, 1st October, 1938.

#### POLISH ULTIMATUM

According to information which has reached the Foreign Office, the Polish Government has delivered an ultimatum to the Czechoslovak Government demanding immediate satisfaction of their territorial claims. If a satisfactory reply is not received by noon to-day, Poland proposes to invade Czechoslovakia to-morrow.

Mr. Chamberlain regards this procedure as being wholly contrary to the spirit of the Agreement reached at Munich which provided that the settlement of the territorial problems in Czechoslovakia should be achieved by negotiation and not by force. Ample provision is made in the Agreement for the settlement of Polish claims.

The British Government is making immediate representations in this sense at Warsaw. Mr. Chamberlain would be grateful if the German Government would use their influence to induce the Polish Government to defer action and to seek satisfaction in the spirit of the Munich Agreement.

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<sup>1</sup> This note is in English in the original and was handed to the Foreign Ministry by the British Ambassador, as a result of instructions telephoned by the Foreign Office at 10:30 a.m. A similar appeal was made by the French and Italian Ambassadors. See *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Third Series, vol. III, No. 92.

## No. 8

140/75643

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 1, 1938.

Yesterday in Munich I informed Hungarian Count Csáky<sup>1</sup> about the outcome of the Munich meeting of the four Heads of Government.

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<sup>1</sup> Count Csáky, Chef de Cabinet to the Hungarian Foreign Minister, had been sent on a special mission by the Hungarian Government to enlist the support of the German Government in pressing Hungarian claims. See vol. II, document No. 671.

Count Csáky then asked me what further steps on the part of the Hungarian Government were recommended to safeguard its claims on Czechoslovakia. My answer was: I personally thought it expedient that, on the new basis of the Munich Agreement, Budapest should demand from the Czechoslovak Government the speedy peaceful fulfillment of the Hungarian claims. If Prague then proved obdurate, Budapest could probably apply to the Great Powers.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 9

1863/423029-31

### *Circular of the Director of the Political Department*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

BERLIN, October 1, 1938.  
zu Pol. IV 6621.  
Pol. IV 6811.<sup>2</sup>

For information.

According to information from Hungarian Minister here,<sup>3</sup> the Yugoslav Prime Minister<sup>4</sup> has informed Budapest that he would be willing to mediate in Prague about the cession to Hungary of areas of the former Czechoslovak State inhabited by Hungarians, if Hungary would issue a statement regarding security of Yugoslavia and would inform him what areas of Slovakia she claims. On the other hand, Yugoslavia would not agree to the cession to Hungary of strictly Slovak and Ruthenian territory, as this might be dangerous for Yugoslavia.

At the same time the Rumanian Government has also stated in Rome that it must reconsider its attitude in the event of Hungary's also putting forward claims to territory inhabited by a non-Hungarian population. For the rest, the Rumanian Minister<sup>5</sup> in Rome has only emphasized that impulsive gestures on the part of Hungary cannot but render Rumania's international situation more difficult in view of her obligations arising out of the Little Entente.

The Hungarian Minister here has informed us that, apart from the reintegration of the region inhabited by Hungarians, Hungary in fact aims only at a realization of the right of self-determination of the

<sup>1</sup> Addressed to Warsaw, Budapest, Prague, Belgrade, Bucharest, Paris, London, and Rome.

<sup>2</sup> These two file numbers refer to documents Nos. 609 and 660 printed in vol. II.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. II, document No. 660.

<sup>4</sup> Milan Stoyadinovič, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, June 1935-February 1939.

<sup>5</sup> Alexandru Duilio Zamfirescu, April 1938-September 1939.

Slovaks and Ruthenians, which has no kind of aggressive implication for Yugoslavia.

*Postscript for all missions except Prague*

Hungarian Minister has today announced Hungarian *démarche* in Prague in near future with a view to requesting the Prague Government to agree to immediate negotiations in the spirit of the Munich decisions.<sup>6</sup> In accordance with his wishes very far-reaching German diplomatic support has in principle been promised to him. It was added that we could naturally only support demands of which we had an exact knowledge and must reserve the right to decide in individual cases.

*Additional postscript only for Budapest*

Please follow a similar line in your capital.

For information: Prague Legation has been requested to put itself in contact with the Hungarian Minister there and to report by telegram upon the precise wording of Hungarian demands.

WOERMANN

<sup>6</sup> In a minute of the same date (334/196706) Woermann informed Ribbentrop that Sztójay had at 12:30 p.m. handed him a memorandum announcing his Government's intention of immediately opening negotiations with the Czech Government regarding the Munich decisions and requesting strong support by the German Government.

No. 10

1648/391325-31

*Minutes of the Second Meeting of the International Commission Held in Berlin on October 1, 1938*

The meeting was opened at 11:30 with the State Secretary in the chair.

The chairman called upon the military subcommittee to read its proposals on the ending of military operations in zone I and on the military operations to be carried out in zone II on October 2. He remarked that the committee must meet again in the afternoon to prepare and agree to the military operations for October 3.

On behalf of the French Military Attaché, the French Air Attaché read the arrangements made by the military subcommittee for military operations in zone I on October 2.<sup>1</sup>

These arrangements were agreed to by the committee.

The French Air Attaché thereupon read a reservation formulated by General Husárek (Czechoslovakia).<sup>2</sup>

The French Ambassador stated that this involved a problem which would crop up every time that it was a question of the Czechoslovak Army's evacuating fortifications. There was material in these fortifications which could be removed only in a certain time.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2380/498818-19).

<sup>2</sup> General Husárek had suggested that the evacuation of Czech troops from the fortified area near Kubohütten should be delayed beyond Oct. 2 (2380/498817).

The Italian Ambassador also emphasized that a general ruling based on the Munich Agreement must be made for this important question. By this agreement the Czechoslovak Army could remove all material as far as this was possible at all. The Ambassador opposed a solution which provided for destruction of remaining stocks of munitions. He proposed that a procedure should be found for acquainting the German unit headquarters in each individual case with details of the material which the Czechoslovak Army had to leave behind.

The British Ambassador expressed agreement with this.

The French Ambassador pointed to the fact that the word "installations" [*Einrichtungen*] in the German text of the Munich Agreement had a very general meaning. The Führer had had in mind the destruction of electricity plants and other vital installations; the fortifications represented a special case of a military nature.

The Italian Ambassador was of the opinion that it might lead to difficulties and unpleasantness if Czechoslovak military units remained behind to guard and remove this material. He therefore moved that the military attachés of the signatory powers should investigate whether in the present case it would not be possible to draw up lists of stocks to be handed to the appropriate authorities, i.e. to the International Commission.

The French Ambassador again referred to the importance of the problem. In view of the very short time for evacuation allowed to the Czechoslovak Army, it would undoubtedly leave behind heavy artillery or other matériel in certain places which, apart from its military value, also represented a considerable financial value; in some cases it might be a matter of milliards of crowns, which the Czechoslovak State should not in justice lose.

The Czechoslovak Minister remarked that the Commission should also give sympathetic consideration to the psychological side of this problem and should consider the actual position in which the Czechoslovak Army found itself as a result of the evacuation of its [fortified] positions.

The chairman stated emphatically that it was in no way the intention either of the International Commission or of the German delegation to make any decision which might be interpreted as an insult to an army which was doing its duty. Nevertheless, the Commission must confine itself to carrying out the arrangements laid down in the Munich Agreement within the time limits set by the Heads of Governments. The State Secretary proposed that this question should be left for the military subcommittee to study. As far as he knew there had been no question at Munich of taking away the items on the inventory left behind by the Czechoslovak Army. He emphasized, however, that he had no wish to complicate matters, and he hoped that the military subcommittee would find a general settlement for this problem.

The French Ambassador reverted again to the definition of the word "installations." At Munich the Führer had thought that the areas to be evacuated should not be left as "scorched earth"; he had, for example, above all had the unspoiled condition of the harvest in mind. Movable war matériel did not come within the conception "installations."

The Commission then agreed to leave the examination of this question to the military subcommittee.

At the request of the chairman the French Air Attaché then read the details of the proposals formulated by the military subcommittee for military operations on October 2.

These proposals were accepted by the full committee.

The military subcommittee then met in special session to study the particular problem arising out of the evacuation of the fortifications.<sup>3</sup>

On a motion by the French Ambassador the Commission then passed to the examination of the problems which will arise for the everyday life of the population in the former Czechoslovak areas as a result of the entry of German troops. Problems of finance and currency would also have to be dealt with here, and it was advisable to form a subcommittee at once for this purpose. For his part he was prepared to send his finance attaché to this subcommittee.

The Italian Ambassador observed that, regarded in their entirety, these problems had two sides—a particular and a general. From the point of view of the general problem it was desirable to draw up as quickly as possible a kind of program to define the real nature of these problems.

The French Ambassador referred to the precedent of the Saar plebiscite. Like the Italian Ambassador, he would have as his representatives on the subcommittee on this question those officials who had already dealt with such questions during the Saar plebiscite.

It was agreed that a preparatory finance subcommittee is to meet this afternoon. In the absence of the Czechoslovak finance expert the Counselor of the Czechoslovak Legation<sup>4</sup> will be a member of this subcommittee for the time being.

In these circumstances it was decided that the International Commission should be supported by three subcommittees:

1. Military subcommittee A.
2. Subcommittee for financial and economic questions B.
3. Subcommittee for plebiscite and frontiers C.

With regard to the measures to be taken for the carrying out of the plebiscite the French and Italian delegates moved that subcommittee C should meet as soon as possible. This was in fact a very urgent matter. The experts whose duty it was to decide on the frontier demarcation must reach agreement on October 7.

The British Ambassador added that the question of international troops provided for in the Munich Agreement was linked up with the regulations for the plebiscite and that the various governments must be given the necessary time to prepare and put into effect the dispatch of these troops.

The British Ambassador wished to hear something about the composition of the international formations. The British Government had taken the necessary steps for the dispatch of two brigades of the regular army.

The chairman pointed out that during the Munich discussions the French Premier had stated that French ex-servicemen and not regular troops would be sent. Count Ciano had also announced that Italy would not send regular formations. With regard to Britain it had been suggested to use the British Legion in accordance with the proposal made to the Reich Government by the President of the Legion.

The French Ambassador remarked that what might be called "civilian soldiers" (*militaire civil*) would insure control over the carrying out of the plebiscite.

The British Ambassador stated that as far as he knew no decision had been reached on this point at Munich.

<sup>3</sup> The special agreement [*Sonderabkommen*] reached on this problem is not printed. The two versions of this agreement in the files, one in German (2380/498813) and one in French (5198/E307633), differ in some particulars.

<sup>4</sup> Miroslav Schubert.

The Commission agreed that the international formations shall be provided by the three states not directly interested, i.e. not by Germany and not by Czechoslovakia.

In reply to a question by the British Ambassador the chairman stated that he had instructions to insist on the dispatch of ex-servicemen instead of units of the regular army. Psychologically, ex-servicemen appeared more suitable to supervise the plebiscite.

It was decided that the Czechoslovak delegate should obtain his Government's view on this question.

The Czechoslovak Minister said that his military expert proposed that, in certain areas of the zone to be evacuated, today's entry of German troops should be postponed a few hours in order to avoid incidents.

The British Ambassador read a telegram from his Government stating that as of tomorrow seven British observers would be in Czechoslovakia at the disposal of the Commission. A further 20 British observers could leave for Prague tomorrow.

The Italian Ambassador stated his agreement with this, with the reservation that France and Italy might also send observers to the spot.

The Commission decided that 27 British observers should be at the disposal of the British Ambassador in his capacity as representative of Great Britain on the International Commission.

The chairman adjourned the meeting until 5 p.m. on the afternoon of the same day. It was decided that subcommittee B should also meet that afternoon and that the members of subcommittee C were to be notified that that body could hold its first meeting on the morning of Monday, October 3.

## No. 11

1648/391340-46

### *Minutes of the Third Meeting of the International Commission Held in Berlin on October 1, 1938*

The chairman opened the session at 5:20 p.m. At his request, the French Assistant Military Attaché read the arrangements worked out by the military subcommittee covering the following points:

(a) Military operations in zone II for October 3. Operations of Czechoslovak and German troops for October 3, 4, and 5. Operations of troops for October 6 and 7.<sup>1</sup> Military operations in zones I, II, III, and IV.

(b) The removal of Czechoslovak war matériel in zone I.<sup>2</sup> The military subcommittee proposed that the same regulations apply also to zones II, III, and IV.

In reply to a question by the Italian Ambassador this plan was explained as meaning that, after the end of the operations, Czechoslovak units were at liberty to occupy localities situated on the frontiers of the neutral zone—either within or without these frontiers. This arrangement had been made jointly by the representatives of the Czechoslovak and German Armies. The proposal of the military subcommittee contained the words "localités importantes." The word "importantes" was deleted in the text adopted by the plenary commission. The proposals put forward by the military subcommittee regarding operations in

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2380/498821-24).

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (2380/498813).

zones I to IV were adopted by the plenary commission. The question of the removal of Czechoslovak war matériel in zones II, III, and IV led to a discussion.

General Husárek emphasized the importance of the problem for October 7.

The French Ambassador moved that the method applied to zone I should apply also to the others.

The representative of the Reich stated his agreement that this method should also be applied to zone II. With regard to zones III and IV he reserved his answer in order to confer with the German military experts.

The French Ambassador said that he could not see why the same principle should not apply also to zones III and IV, if the Reich recognized its validity for zones I and II.

The chairman objected that time factors were different for the two latter zones.

The French Ambassador insisted that it was not a question of time factors but of principle.

The chairman replied that the German experts considered the time limits set for the evacuation of zones III and IV sufficient to allow the removal of all the material. He therefore repeated his understanding that the question was settled for zones I and II, but he asked the Commission to be patient until he had conferred with his military experts regarding zones III and IV. He hoped to be in a position to give an answer on these points at the next meeting of the plenary commission.

The Commission adopted the solution proposed by subcommittee A for the removal of material in zones I and II and resolved to await the chairman's answer for zones III and IV.

At the suggestion of the Italian Ambassador the members of subcommittee B (economics and finance) then left the plenary commission to begin their deliberations.

The chairman announced that subcommittee C (plebiscite and frontiers) would meet at 9 a.m. on Monday, October 3.

The Italian Ambassador broached the question, provided for in the Munich Agreement, of international formations to maintain peace and order in the plebiscite areas if the need arose. He asked what strength could be counted on for each country and if a minimum could be decided in advance now. He further asked about the nature of these formations, whether it would be a question of regular troops or of ex-servicemen.

The Czechoslovak Minister stated that, after consultation with his Government, he had no objection to the use of units of ex-servicemen.

The Italian Ambassador said that it would be difficult to organize units of ex-servicemen, especially if larger formations were involved. He had in fact heard that the British Government intended, if need be, to send a detachment up to the strength of two brigades.

The chairman was of the opinion that it was unnecessary to send such large formations before October 10. If need be, the local police was sufficient to maintain order. As far as the effective strength was concerned this was a question of assessment, and he did not yet have the evidence to allow him to express an opinion on this subject.

The Czechoslovak Minister was also of the opinion that the Czechoslovak police would be sufficient until that date. The strength of the international formations would depend on the size of the plebiscite areas.

The Italian Ambassador repeated that in practice the establishment of units of ex-servicemen might prove impossible. He did not know if there were enough ex-servicemen in Italy who could leave their civilian occupations for an indefinite time.

The British Ambassador said that the result of the work of subcommittee C must be awaited. The latter would compare the ethnographic maps of the Czechoslovak and German delegations and decide on the extent of the plebiscite area. The plenary commission could then fix the strength of the international corps. He asked whether, in the event of there being an insufficient number of ex-servicemen, the Reich Government and the Czechoslovak Government would agree to the sending of regular troops by Britain. On the other hand the atmosphere at present was considerably less tense and it seemed that incidents and disturbances were less to be feared.

The Czechoslovak Minister stated that for this matter the first 7 days were of decisive importance.

In the course of discussion the Commission decided that on the motion of the French Ambassador each of the three states, Britain, France, and Italy, should send 1,000 men—that is 3,000 men in all.

The chairman made it clear that this was an approximate estimate. The exact numbers would be decided according to the extent of the plebiscite zones. At the time of the Saar plebiscite the international corps had numbered 5,000 men.

The Czechoslovak Minister said that in the present circumstances there must be no talk of occupation of the country by the international formations. They represented, as it were, a "political expedient."

Turning to the financial aspect of the problem the Czechoslovak Minister said that in his opinion it was for the Great Powers and not for Czechoslovakia to bear the costs of the international formations.

In reply to a question by the Italian Ambassador the chairman said that in his opinion the international formations need not be on the spot before October 10 or 11.

The Czechoslovak Minister, however, thought that an earlier date was advisable.

The British Ambassador asked whether the men of the international body would be armed or not.

The Commission was of the opinion that they should be provided with arms corresponding to those of the auxiliary police.

The British Ambassador again asked whether his Government was at liberty to send a battalion of regular troops.

The chairman replied that in the future the principle of employing ex-servicemen should be adopted.

The British Ambassador pointed out that the British ex-servicemen neither carried arms nor wore uniforms.

The three Ambassadors of Britain, France, and Italy resolved to report to their Governments and to inform them of the wish of the Czechoslovak and German representatives to give preference to ex-servicemen rather than regular troops.

At the close of the meeting the Commission decided that the military experts of subcommittee A might enter into contact with the members of subcommittee C.

The press communiqué<sup>3</sup> was adopted and released for distribution to the press. The next meeting of the committee was fixed for 3 p.m. on Monday.

The Czechoslovak Minister stated that his Government had no objection to the sending of 27 British observers, discussed at the previous session.

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<sup>3</sup> Not printed (1648/391347).

[EDITORS' NOTE. In the following document and throughout this chapter, place names are spelled as they appear in the German original.]

Many such names have separate renderings in German, Magyar, and Czech, e. g. Pressburg, Pozsony, and Bratislava.]

## No. 12

1648/391349-50

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, October 2, 1938.

Today the Führer received the German members of the International Commission appointed under the Munich Agreement together with the subcommittees. He began by pointing out that he attached particular importance to fixing the residuary German zone to be occupied between October 7 and 10. He stated that this line would in principle coincide with the so-called Godesberg line<sup>1</sup> and that he attached particular importance to a speedy occupation by German troops of the territory accruing to him in accordance with this. He was also particularly concerned about the occupation of the town of Reichenberg. With regard to the language enclaves of Iglau, Brünn, Olmütz, and Konitz, the Führer declared that a plebiscite in these zones could be dispensed with, provided that the Czechs for their part would agree not to insist on a plebiscite in the region between the Zwickau language enclave and Silesia. Should the occasion arise, an agreement might be reached that the Czech-language enclaves should not be occupied by Reich German troops and that a plebiscite should be held there. They must, however, adhere to the principle that this territory lying between Zwickau and Silesia should in any event fall to Germany, even if the remaining German-language enclaves are renounced.

In reply to a question by the Führer, the total number of Germans who would then still remain in Czechoslovakia was given as 300,000, that is 140,000 in Slovakia and Ruthenia, 30,000 of these being in Pressburg; 18,000 in the language enclave of Iglau; about 40,000 in Prague; 50,000 in Brünn; and the rest in the remaining language enclaves.

The Führer further declared that, in the places where plebiscites were to be held, regions with the highest possible German percentage should vote jointly with the mixed regions. With this in view the Hultschin territory<sup>2</sup> might also be included in the plebiscite. With regard to the Godesberg line the Führer further observed that some small revisions in favor of the Czechs might be admitted. The census of 1930 and other plebiscites were to be taken as the governing prin-

<sup>1</sup> See vol. II, appendix VI.

<sup>2</sup> The Hultschin (Hlučín) enclave—to the north of the industrial Mährisch-Ostrau area—had a population of 50,000, of whom about 80 percent spoke a Moravian-Czech dialect. See vol. II, document No. 536.

ciple for the territory to be occupied. The German commission was to allow itself to be dissuaded from demanding a plebiscite in the language enclaves. At the same time they were to endeavor to secure a plebiscite in Mährisch-Ostrau as the Slonzaks<sup>3</sup> living there would probably vote for Germany. Persons domiciled there on October 28, 1918, or born there prior to that date, were to be entitled to vote. In like manner the district of Mährisch-Ostrau must also be included in the plebiscite. They should also endeavor to include in the plebiscite area the German bridgehead of Pressburg-Engerau—not the town of Pressburg; in certain circumstances this might, however, be used as a bargaining point.

The Führer finally declared that they should insist that the plebiscite areas should be occupied not by troops, but by ex-servicemen's organizations or militia. After all, this would also harmonize with the proposal made by Sir Frederick Maurice in the name of the Prime Minister.<sup>4</sup>

KORDT

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<sup>3</sup> The Slonzaks were of mixed Polish-Slovak race, inhabiting the Silesian border territory.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. II, document No. 631.

## No. 13

140/75640

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 535 of October 1

PRAGUE, October 2, 1938—12: 10 a.m.

Received October 2—3: 20 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 323 of October 1.<sup>1</sup>

Tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock the Hungarian Minister<sup>2</sup> is to hand to the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister a note which in [German] translation reads as follows:

“As the Munich decisions have created a new situation, my Government invites the Czechoslovak Government to enter at once into direct negotiations for the purpose of giving effect to the right of self-determination of nationalities on full terms of equality with the right of the Sudeten Germans.

“The speediest execution of these negotiations and, as far as is possible, their conclusion on the basis of mutual agreement is in the interest not only of the good relations of both countries but of the

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<sup>1</sup> This telegram (28/18935) informed the Legation of the Hungarian Government's intention of opening direct negotiations with Czechoslovakia on the lines of the Munich Agreement and instructed the Chargé d'Affaires to get in touch with the Hungarian Minister and to telegraph the text of the Hungarian demands.

<sup>2</sup> János Wettstein, June 1933–March 1939.

whole of Europe. The Royal Hungarian Government therefore requests Your Excellency to inform it with all speed when and where the Czechoslovak Government desires to open the negotiations in question."

HENCKE

No. 14

1863/423041

*The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in  
Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

No. 332

BERLIN, October 2, 1938—4:30 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 535.<sup>1</sup>

Please inform the Government there that we strongly support the immediate initiation of direct negotiations. [As you know, the Czechoslovak Government has hitherto treated Hungarian requests in a dilatory manner. We should consider it calamitous if it continues to do so, and in particular if it claimed that it could not conduct such negotiations without the participation of other powers (Yugoslavia, Rumania).] <sup>2</sup>

Should negotiations take place in Prague, you are requested to maintain closest contact with your Hungarian colleague and to report continually by telegram.

WOERMANN

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 13.

<sup>2</sup> The portion of the text in brackets has been deleted in pencil by Woermann.

No. 15

140/75647-48

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, October 2, 1938.

The German Chargé d'Affaires in Prague telephoned at 12:30 p.m. today and told me the following:

The British Minister, accompanied by the British Military Attaché <sup>1</sup> and Henderson,<sup>2</sup> the British observer, had just called on him. Henderson had reported that he had noticed yesterday that in the villages left by the Czechs in zone I disturbances had broken out among the local population. Armed Communists in particular had been noticed. An untenable state of affairs might develop and lead to bloodshed. It was too late to take steps regarding the first zone, but something must be done at once about the other zones.

<sup>1</sup> Maj. G. A. C. MacNab.

<sup>2</sup> Ian Henderson, who had been temporarily attached to the Legation in Prague as an observer.

It had already been agreed with the German Government that 21 British officers should be sent as observers to the area to be evacuated. The British now proposed that a mixed German-British-Czech commission should be sent in order to secure by its presence the maintenance of law and order among the local population. It was therefore proposed to send nine German officers to Prague, who, together with nine Czech officers and a corresponding number of British, should be sent into the various zones. The most urgent thing now was to send a commission at once into the second zone, and for this purpose the British proposed that the German Military and Air Attachés<sup>3</sup> should be empowered that very afternoon to take part in a commission of this kind. Mr. Henderson further stated that the British Embassy and the Czechoslovak Legation in Berlin would make a *démarche* to that effect at the Foreign Ministry.

After receiving telephonic instructions from State Secretary von Weizsäcker I informed the Legation in Prague by telephone that at any rate today we could not consider the proposal. The tendency of the British to introduce a kind of international control in the areas to be evacuated had already been continuously manifest here. We had no reports which showed this to be necessary and were opposed to this tendency. The fact was that the German troops were following hard upon the Czech troops at a distance of 1.5 to 2 kilometers so that as a general rule no vacuum should be created. So far there had been no British or Czech *démarche* here. A final decision would be communicated later. The Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht has been informed.

WOERMANN

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<sup>3</sup> Lt. Col. Rudolf Toussaint, who was also accredited to Rumania, was Military Attaché. The Air Attaché was Major Möricke.

## No. 16

140/75682-83

### *Circular of the State Secretary*

Telegram

BERLIN, October 3, 1938.  
zu Pol. IV 6891.

The result achieved at the historic conference of the four leading statesmen of Europe at Munich, which did full justice to the demands put forward in the German memorandum, betokens an outstanding success for the policy of the Führer in general, as well as in the Sudeten-German question in particular. For the first time in history it has been possible to arrive by peaceful means at a frontier revision in the spirit of the peoples' right to self-determination.

The fears expressed in the press of various countries of southeastern Europe that the outcome of Munich represents an act of dictation and

simply means the first step toward further German territorial demands in southeastern Europe are completely groundless.

The Munich agreements amount to nothing more than the carrying into effect of the measures for the cession of Sudeten-German territory already conceded in principle by Czechoslovakia.

If, as in this case, the four leading Great Powers of Europe find themselves in complete agreement upon a European question, that can surely not just be overlooked in the future also by the other European powers. But neither by the German Government nor by the other powers concerned, as far as is known, are any plans or designs entertained of pursuing a joint policy of intervention. With regard to Germany, it must be repeatedly emphasized that she does not pursue any political or indeed territorial aims in those areas; she is on the contrary concerned solely with economic matters and desires to continue with such activities. The German attitude toward Germanism abroad [*deutsches Volkstum*] is known. It will, however, never give occasion for fears of the kind imagined. I would therefore ask you that you should, where the need arises, direct your efforts to giving reassurances in the sense indicated.

The matter will be dealt with in *Diplomatisch-Politische Korrespondenz*.<sup>1</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> The official bulletin of the German Foreign Ministry.

## No. 17

334/196656-58

### *Unsigned Memorandum*

Hof, October 3, 1938.

1. The frontier line established at today's meeting of the Commission has been confirmed by the Führer. The territory up to this frontier line will, after its occupation, finally become German territory. The question is whether the area between the frontier line established today and the Godesberg line is to be subjected to a plebiscite. The Führer has decided that we shall not advocate a plebiscite if its outcome is completely hopeless. When asked, Gauleiter Krebs<sup>1</sup> said that a plebiscite in the areas which we have renounced today is completely hopeless.

2. At today's meeting no agreement was reached on the future of Prachatitz,<sup>2</sup> which at the last election showed a German majority of 51.8 percent. In reply to a question, Gauleiter Krebs stated that in

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<sup>1</sup> Hans Krebs, one of the earliest Sudeten-German Nazis; honorary Gauleiter; later Regierungspräsident of Aussig, Sudetenland.

<sup>2</sup> Thirty-five kilometers west of Budweis.

a plebiscite a German majority would be certain. The Führer has decided that we shall at first insist on claiming Prachatitz but later, on account of the sentimental value of this town to the Czechs as the home of Huss, we might exchange it for Znaim. In 1910, Znaim had 12,000 Germans to 4,000 Czechs; in 1921, 12,000 Germans to 8,000 Czechs; and in the last election, 30,000 Germans to 33,000 Czechs.

3. The Führer has decided that Lundenburg must be given up.

4. No concession is to be made over Zwittau. The Führer has already made a statement to that effect at Munich. I informed the State Secretary of this by telephone.

5. The Führer has ordered that two plebiscite areas as advantageous as possible must be formed around the Hultschin territory and Mährisch-Ostrau. In reply to an inquiry by telephone Gauleiter Krebs said that he would send proposals to that effect by courier this evening.

6. On instructions from the Foreign Minister, State Secretary Weizsäcker was given the following directive for the tactics of future negotiations to be undertaken in the Commission: in the future there must be no deviation from the Godesberg line, except in the case of two or three villages which are indubitably Czech. If greater deviation appears necessary, instructions must first be obtained from the Foreign Minister.

7. As regards the question of Oderberg the following policy is to be pursued: the Poles are to be told that the inclusion of Oderberg in the Polish zone would present us with a new situation. However, as we must in any case discuss the final frontier line with the Poles, the question of Oderberg could be broached at the same time.

8. On instructions from the Foreign Minister, the State Secretary was asked to obtain immediately from Major von Waldau a report on his behavior today and for the present to exclude Herr von Waldau from participation in meetings until the matter is cleared up.

## No. 18

2446/514848

### *Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Cultural Policy Department*

SECRET

BERLIN, October 3, 1938.  
e.o. Kult. A 1099 geh.

I have the honor to submit for your information the following details concerning the minorities questions just communicated to me quite privately by the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle:

In the course of a conversation the Führer and Chancellor expressed the view that from now onward and for all time the minorities living

in Germany must be excluded from active military service in order that the members of other national groups might never be placed in the position of having to fight against their own people. In like manner, the members of the minorities are to be excluded from any civil-service career under the Central Administration, while on the other hand there is no objection to their employment as municipal officials, et cetera.

With reference to Germanism in Europe outside our frontiers, influence exerted from the Reich is in the future to be strictly limited to the fostering and preservation of cultural interests, and all irredentist activity is to be discontinued. Excepting where labor forces are needed in the Reich in consequence of the Four Year Plan, people of German extraction [*Volkstumsangehörige*] are also to be encouraged to stay outside the frontiers of Germany.

Submitted to Ministerialdirektor Stieve.

T[WARDOWSKI]

## No. 19

1648/391494

### *Note Verbale from the Czechoslovak Legation*<sup>1</sup>

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, October 3, 1938.

No. 10661/38

The Czechoslovak Legation is instructed to bring the following to the attention of the Foreign Ministry:

According to the text of the Munich Agreement of September 29, 1938, the evacuation of the Sudeten-German area is to take place "without destruction of any existing installations."

In the opinion of the Czechoslovak Government the term "existing installations" can apply only to property publicly owned by the State but not to private property.

Furthermore, the Czechoslovak Government is of the opinion that it is entitled to remove not only all movable property but that it may evacuate also immovable property, insofar as components belonging to the immovable property are involved which can be dismantled without damage to the existing installations (buildings and the like).

The same also applies to publicly owned property, which may in no case be destroyed or damaged.

It is naturally assumed that movable effects do not come under the term "existing installations" and that they may therefore be removed without further question.

The Czechoslovak Government, which has already issued instructions to carry out the evacuation loyally, is convinced that the Reich Government will fully agree with the interpretation of the paragraphs mentioned.

<sup>1</sup> This document appears in the files as appendix III to the minutes of the meeting of the International Commission of Oct. 6, 1938, document No. 41.

## No. 20

1648/391351-56

*Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the International Commission Held in Berlin on October 3, 1938*

The meeting was opened by the chairman at 6:15 p.m.

At his request the French Assistant Military Attaché read the minutes of the meeting of subcommittee A on October 2. They contained subcommittee A's proposals for the maintenance of order in the neutral zone between the German and Czechoslovak Armies. (See appendix I.<sup>1</sup>)

The French Military Attaché stated that subcommittee A met on October 2 at the request of the British Embassy in order to receive information from the British Military Attaché and from the military representatives of Czechoslovakia on certain incidents that had taken place on October 1 "outside the zones" which, according to special agreements for the movements of October 1, were to be occupied by the German Army.

The State Secretary did not think that the text of the minutes was quite clear on this point. Subcommittee A undoubtedly meant the security zone.

The French Ambassador inquired about the nature of the incidents.

The British Ambassador submitted that, according to reports from his military attachés, fighting had taken place in Krumau and Reichenberg.

The Italian Ambassador said that, in spite of the precautionary measures taken by the Commission, they must be prepared for incidents. They were inevitable. He agreed that, in accordance with paragraph 1 of the minutes of subcommittee A, Czechoslovak police and gendarmery should remain in this neutral zone to maintain order.

The Czechoslovak delegate informed those present at the meeting that the incidents in Krumau had been caused by a fight between Germans belonging to various political trends *after* the evacuation of the place by Czechoslovak troops. If such a thing occurred again, the observers provided for in paragraph 2 of the minutes of subcommittee A could ascertain the causes.

The Italian Ambassador asked whether the Commission agreed with paragraph 1 (maintenance of order by the Czech gendarmery).

The State Secretary replied that this was not such a reliable measure as it seemed. According to his information the Czech police and gendarmery detachments were withdrawing before the Czech troops. It seemed that in the neutral zone the population itself, and indeed officials of the Sudeten-German Party, were maintaining order.

The Czechoslovak delegate said that he would inform his Government. He remarked that in principle the neutral zone was still under the rule of the Czechoslovak State. It was therefore the duty of the Czechoslovak gendarmery to remain at their posts to maintain order until the arrival of German troops.

The State Secretary said that in most cases the task of the Czechoslovak gendarmes would be neither easy nor pleasant.

The Italian Ambassador agreed with the view of the Czechoslovak delegate; from the legal angle too, the neutral zone was Czechoslovak.

The Czechoslovak delegate said he would point this out to his Government, which would take the necessary measures.

The principle of the solution proposed in paragraph 1 of the minutes of subcommittee A was adopted by the Commission.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5196/E307530).

The State Secretary confirmed that for his part there were no objections to paragraph 2 (observers).

The French Ambassador remarked that in almost all cases the observers would probably arrive too late.

The Commission agreed that the duties of these observers should be facilitated by the German and Czechoslovak authorities.

The principle of paragraph 2 of the minutes of subcommittee A was also adopted by the Commission.

The French Assistant Military Attaché then read the minutes of the meeting of subcommittee A of October 3 on the evacuation of Czechoslovak military matériel from zones III and IV. (See appendix II.<sup>2</sup>)

The minutes were adopted by the Commission.

At the request of the Czechoslovak delegate the alteration shown as appendix III<sup>3</sup> was made on page 5 of the minutes of the third meeting of the international Commission.

As Baron von Weizsäcker was called away, the French Ambassador temporarily took over the duties of chairman.

The French Ambassador reverted to the question of the "international formations" which were to occupy the areas where plebiscites were to be held. He could give the view of the French Government. It was of the opinion that troops were better than civilians for maintaining order. The French Government proposed that military units accompanied by ex-servicemen should be sent.

The British Ambassador thought he was right in assuming that, in referring to the British Legion, the Reich Chancellor believed that this was an organized body. This was not so. The members of the Legion had no training which enabled them to carry out duties like the police. He wondered if the Reich Chancellor would have any objection if the British Government sent regular troops. Members of the Legion would accompany the troops as a psychological symbol.

The Italian Ambassador shared the views of his French and British colleagues but said that so far he had no precise instructions from his Government. At the Saar plebiscite Italy had sent a contingent of grenadiers accompanied as it were "symbolically" by ex-servicemen. He added that according to his information on the activity of subcommittee C it was possible that the number and size of the plebiscite zones might be considerably reduced.

The Commission decided to await the return of the State Secretary.

When the chairman returned, the French Ambassador reported briefly on the discussion which had taken place in the meantime.

The Czechoslovak delegate said that his Government had no objection either to the first solution (ex-servicemen) or to the second (regular troops accompanied by ex-servicemen).

The State Secretary regretted that he could not give a very favorable answer.

The British Ambassador asked if the German Government had any objection to the use of regular troops.

The State Secretary answered in the affirmative.

The British Ambassador emphasized that during the Munich discussions it had been decided to adopt for the plebiscite zones the principles which had applied at the time of the Saar plebiscite. There had been no British Legion there.

The State Secretary emphasized that in the Munich Agreement "international formations," not troops, had been mentioned.

The French Ambassador described "formations" as a general term.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5196/E307531).

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (5196/E307532).

The State Secretary said that, as long as the deliberations in subcommittee C had not progressed further, there was no definite basis for discussion.

The Commission decided to postpone the debate on the international formations.

The Italian Ambassador asked about the stage reached in the work of subcommittee C (plebiscite and frontiers). He said that it was not their duty to make hard and fast decisions. They should confine themselves to submitting proposals which would be discussed in the plenary session.

The Commission allowed the principle to stand, however, that the subcommittee must be unanimous before submitting its proposals.

The German secretary of subcommittee C read the various points worked out by subcommittee C regarding the line defining the predominantly German area remaining outside zone I. With the exception of one point the subcommittee had agreed on the line.

The French Ambassador insisted that, in its work, subcommittee C should be guided exclusively by the ethnographic frontiers. This was stipulated in the Munich Agreement. The exception of article 5, according to which the International Commission is empowered to propose "in certain exceptional cases, minor modifications in the strictly ethnographical determination," proved the rule.<sup>4</sup>

The Commission agreed on this principle.

The Italian Ambassador asked about the work of subcommittee B (economics and finance). This subcommittee had not yet been able to meet because of the absence of its chairman. The Italian Ambassador wanted to know whether this subcommittee knew what the political commission expected of it, namely, a résumé of the various problems to be solved in the economic and financial sphere. It should submit as soon as possible some kind of general program showing the main questions to be examined.

The chairman closed the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

<sup>4</sup>This phrase actually occurs in article 6 of the Munich Agreement. See vol. II, p. 1015.

## No. 21

1648/391357-58

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 3, 1938.

For the Foreign Minister.

The International Commission today resumed discussion of the question of occupying the plebiscite areas by British, French, and Italian formations. The French and British Ambassadors have again stated that their Governments want to send contingents of regular troops. Ambassador Attolico did not oppose this but stated that Fascist formations were to be sent. All three were in favor of sending as a token a sprinkling of ex-servicemen. Attolico, in particular, thought that they could render assistance during the plebiscite. The Czech signified his agreement to the sending of ex-servicemen or actual troops, according to the decision of the Commission.

I shall not repeat here all the arguments which I advanced against these unwelcome suggestions. I repeated *sub rosa* to Attolico that we did not want to see regular soldiers there.

The objections of the British and French Ambassadors to the exclusive use of ex-servicemen are mainly of a practical nature (difficulty of recruiting, insufficient discipline, inability to intervene actively, expense, et cetera).

After I had been informed of the foregoing proposals—I was called to the telephone during that time—I did not agree with them but remarked that as long as the plebiscite areas, which would presumably be small, were not determined, our whole conversation was of an academic nature. I cannot yet see on what basis agreement on this matter can be reached. I beg to request that the course of the negotiations described above be communicated to the Führer.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 22

140/75661-62

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 545 of October 3

PRAGUE, October 3, 1938—12 midnight.

Received October 4—2:30 a.m.

With reference to my report of October 3,<sup>1</sup> A.III. 2.h., and your telegram No. 332 of October 2.<sup>2</sup>

At 9 p.m. today the Hungarian Minister handed to the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry a note demanding that "in order to create a peaceful atmosphere" the following measures shall be taken without delay before the beginning of the Hungarian-Czechoslovak negotiations:

1. Hungarian political prisoners to be set free at once.
2. Soldiers of Hungarian nationality to be demobilized at once and allowed to return home.
3. A detachment to be formed under joint command for protection of life, for mediation, and for maintenance of local order.
4. As a gesture symbolic of cession of territory, two or three Czechoslovak frontier towns to be handed over to Hungary and to be occupied by Hungarian troops. In the western area such towns might be Komárom or Parkanyana or Ipolysag;<sup>3</sup> in the eastern area, the station at Satoraljaujhely or Csap or Beregszász.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1863/423051-52).

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Near the Hungarian border, about 50 kilometers northwest of Budapest.

<sup>4</sup> On the border of Carpatho-Ukraine.

5. The Hungarian Government proposes that negotiations should begin in Komárom at 4 p.m. on Thursday, October 6.<sup>5</sup> The Hungarian delegation will be led by Foreign Minister Kánya.

Krofta told the Hungarian Minister that the demands, especially with regard to the time limit, seemed to him excessive. Wettstein requested an answer in the course of tomorrow.

I request instructions by telegram or telephone regarding support for the Hungarian demands vis-à-vis the Government here.<sup>6</sup>

HENCKE

<sup>5</sup> In a later note delivered by the Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires on the morning of Oct. 7, this time was postponed till 7 p.m. on Oct. 9, in view of the new Czechoslovak Foreign Minister's appointment (140/75719).

<sup>6</sup> A marginal note on another document (1863/423051-52) records that on Oct. 4 the Legation received instructions by telephone to support the Hungarian demands.

## No. 23

2165/470558-59

*State Secretary Bohle<sup>1</sup> to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, October 3, 1938.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: I ask you to regard the following lines as completely private. If, contrary to my usual custom, I am writing to you and not speaking to you, it is only because as the chairman of the International Commission you have at present more important things to do and have extremely little time available.

In the last tense weeks, unfortunately, I have again had to note that in my capacity as State Secretary and Head of the AO I have never been informed about the course of events and have had to rely on acquiring the necessary reports through my personal representative, Counselor of Legation Fischer. During this time countless memoranda have certainly been drawn up by you and Under State Secretary Woermann, but not a single one of them has reached me. I emphasize in this connection that I realize that I am not directly concerned with questions of foreign policy. Nevertheless, it is my opinion that my work as Head of the AO, and this means also as Gauleiter of the AO of the NSDAP, is very strongly, if not decisively, influenced by the course of foreign policy; therefore, I have a right to be kept constantly informed, quite apart from my position as State Secretary in the Foreign Ministry.

In addition, it is my duty to watch over the German element abroad, so that it not only does not hamper foreign policy but supports it.

<sup>1</sup> Ernst Wilhelm Bohle, Gauleiter and Head of the Auslandsorganisation (AO), May 1933-May 1945, also State Secretary in the Foreign Ministry, November 1937-November 1941.

However, I am not in a position to do this if I do not know how things are going.

I therefore ask you personally to grant the wish I have often expressed already and to include me in the distribution list for all memoranda et cetera, especially for outgoing telegrams. As these documents regularly go to the Director and Deputy Director of the Political Department, there should be no difficulty in making them available also to the State Secretary and Head of the AO.

I certainly believe that you will sympathize with my request, especially as the present state of affairs is intolerable, because in my frequent meetings with foreign diplomats I have nothing to go on for guidance of speech. These diplomats naturally assume that a State Secretary in the Foreign Ministry is informed down to the last detail.

In conclusion, may I ask especially to be regularly informed about the negotiations and decisions of the International Commission, as in this connection questions regarding the 85,000 *Reichsdeutsche* in Czechoslovakia and also the question of the franchise of Sudeten Germans abroad are of particular interest to me.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours,  
E. W. BOHLE

## No. 24

1648/391361-66

### *Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the International Commission Held in Berlin on October 4, 1938*

The chairman opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

The Czechoslovak Minister at once broached the question of the work of subcommittee C. This subcommittee is at present employed in deciding the area beyond zones I-IV which, according to the Munich Agreement, is to be occupied by German troops by October 10 (zone V). The Czechoslovak Minister said that, according to reports of the Czechoslovak members of this subcommittee, considerable differences of opinion had arisen on this question. The problem was in fact a very delicate one. The Czechoslovak delegation, however, had a very definite view on this: the demarcation line to be fixed by the German subcommittee should include only those areas which were at least 75 percent German.

The Italian Ambassador said he thought the question of percentage could not be dealt with apart from the whole problem. He asked on what basis the subcommittee was working.

The French Ambassador went on to say that for the solution of the problem they must abide by the Munich Agreement. The participants in the talks there had left it to the International Commission to define the *vorwiegend* ("preponderantly" in the English text) German areas.

He thought that the train of thought of the responsible statesmen at Munich could be reconstructed as follows:

(a) All areas with 100-95 percent population [*sic*] were to be occupied by German troops at once. These areas were included in zones I-IV.

(b) The International Commission defined a fifth zone to be occupied by German troops by October 10. This zone must have a definitely German character. A simple majority is not sufficient for this. The expression "prépondérance" led one to suppose that a compromise between 50 and 100 percent, i.e. 75 percent, should be chosen as a percentage. The areas involved are not wholly German, but the German element is so preponderant that there cannot be the least doubt.

(c) For the other areas, which have only a slight majority and over which doubts might arise, the Munich Agreement provides for a plebiscite.

Thus it could be said that the agreement of September 29 provides the Commission with a clearly defined basis for its work. The preponderantly German areas could be established from the ethnographical maps. Which ethnographical documents should apply? That was the question.

The Ambassadors of Great Britain and Italy were of the opinion that the Commission must decide without delay the terms of reference for the work of subcommittee C.

The chairman admitted that subcommittee C had begun its work without previously established principles. This empirical method had worked well yesterday. This morning it had worked less well. As far as the nature of the problem was concerned, the German delegation did not share the view of the Czechoslovak delegation. In his opinion, the important thing was to find a final frontier between the two states as quickly as possible. For this frontier demarcation two basic principles should be taken into account:

1. The demarcation line to be fixed by the Commission.
  2. The line settled by plebiscite, that is, by the will of the people themselves.
- Two methods could be applied:

1. To extend line No. 1 as far as possible. That would have the advantage of reducing the plebiscite areas. The disadvantages of a plebiscite were indeed generally known. This first method was preferred by the Reich Government.

2. Not to extend line No. 1, and thus leave larger areas for a plebiscite.

The German delegation for their part proposed that demarcation line No. 1 should be fixed so as to give the greatest possible consideration to the "prépondérance allemande." According to the exact text of the Munich Agreement the methods employed at the time of the Saar plebiscite could serve as a basis for this. Considerations must therefore be based on the population statistics of the period when this population came under Czechoslovak rule. That meant that, just as in the Saar, the ruling date was October 1918.

No official census of population had taken place in October 1918. Therefore they must fall back on the immediately previous one, that is, the census of 1910.

With reference to the percentage, the Czechoslovak delegation proposed 75 percent; the German delegation demanded 51 percent. In view of the obvious divergence between these two claims the chairman moved that discussion should be continued in the small committee of the five heads of the delegations.

This suggestion was agreed to by the Ambassadors of Great Britain, France, and Italy and by the Czechoslovak Minister.

Before the meeting of this small committee the chairman of subcommittee C read the list of localities forming the demarcation line of the area adjoining zone I.

This line was accepted by the Commission, while reserving the question of the town of Prachatitz.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Thirty-five kilometers west of Budweis.

The State Secretary remarked that in the German view the town of Prachatitz possessed a German majority. This point could, however, also be discussed in the small committee.

He proposed that the line read above and adopted by the subcommittee should be set down in a special protocol which was then to be signed by the delegates.

The reading of the points which form the demarcation line for the territory bordering on zone II was postponed, as this line was not yet adequately fixed.

The chairman proposed that subcommittee A should be instructed to prepare for the occupation of the territory bordering on zone I.

The French Ambassador inquired about the results of the work of subcommittee B.

The Commission invited the chairman of subcommittee B to make a report. The latter gave a brief outline of the present state of negotiations in his subcommittee. So far a certain number of questions had been examined in direct talks between the Czechoslovak and German delegates.

The Commission approved the method of direct negotiations between the two interested parties. In cases where this method was not possible, the Commission would intervene and deal with any possible differences.

The session was thereupon adjourned to give the small committee of the five heads of delegations an opportunity of meeting.

The session was resumed at 8 p. m.

The chairman stated that the deliberations of the small committee had not yet led to agreement on the terms of reference and principles for the work of subcommittee C. The members of this subcommittee, however, should not delay their work but continue it and thus reduce as much as possible the number and extent of the doubtful areas.

The Italian Ambassador emphasized that subcommittee C should be guided by the principle of limiting the plebiscite areas as far as possible in numbers and extent.

The Commission adjourned at 8:15 p. m.

## No. 25

1648/391359-60

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 4, 1938.

The work of the International Commission for fixing the line of demarcation to which the German troops have to advance, as well as for fixing the line within which a plebiscite is, if necessary, to be held, today reached a difficult point. I demanded that the population figure of 1918 and the 51-percent line of this population figure should be accepted for the demarcation line for the German troops. On the Czech side, the 1918 population and the 51-percent figure were both declared unacceptable. In the more intimate gathering of the Ambassadors with the Czech Minister and myself, Mastny declared that he would have to break off negotiations and take his departure if no readiness to meet him were shown. His instructions were abso-

lutely binding. The German demand could not fail to lead to disorder in the country, et cetera.

After several hours of discussion, the French Ambassador made the following proposal for a compromise. The line of demarcation for the entry of our troops was to be based upon the population level of 1918, and for this purpose the statistics of 1910 and 1921 were to be compared with one another. With this as a basis, a line containing a population with a two-thirds majority of persons of German race was to be deemed "predominantly German." The population level of 1918, obtained in this way, would also be decisive for the plebiscite and would fix the 51-percent majority.

Tonight the Czech delegate sent a subordinate to Prague to submit the proposal to the Czech Government, as his instructions did not in any circumstances permit him to consider the compromise proposal. I myself argued with due vigor against the proposal and made every reservation.

After a rough computation of the figures, the actual effect of the proposal has been indicated on a map, which Gauleiter Krebs<sup>1</sup> on instructions from Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop is to lay before the Führer tomorrow morning with oral explanations.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 17, footnote 1.

## No. 26

334/198718

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 4, 1938.

The Italian Ambassador today informed me by telephone that Italian policy regarding Slovakia did not contemplate handing over that region to Hungary. The claims of Rumania, and in particular of Yugoslavia, pronounced against it. Italy did not wish to displease Yugoslavia in this matter.

I answered Attolico that in regard to Slovakia we had not yet any absolutely fixed line of policy. This much, however, was certain: we did not wish to hand over Slovakia to Hungary, the more so as Hungary, so far as I knew, had herself put forward only a demand for self-determination or autonomy for the Slovaks. The outcome of the closer examination of the question by us now in progress would be communicated to him, Attolico.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 27

2185/472217

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 4, 1938.

In a telephone conversation with me today, Field Marshal Göring also raised the question of the necessity for the acquisition by Germany of the bridgehead opposite Pressburg.<sup>1</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 12.

## No. 28

140/75679

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

## Telegram

No. 555 of October 4

PRAGUE, October 4, 1938—11:05 p.m.

Received October 5—3:30 a.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 545<sup>1</sup> of October 4 and telephonic instruction of October 4.<sup>2</sup>

I called on the Deputy Foreign Minister today to inform him that the Reich Government supports the wishes expressed in the Hungarian note of October 3 of this year.

The Deputy Foreign Minister replied that the Czechoslovak Government for its part wished to reach direct agreement with Hungary as soon as possible. For technical and personal reasons, however, it was not possible to negotiate simultaneously with Germany, Poland, and Hungary. The Czechoslovak Government would therefore propose to Budapest that the start of the negotiations be postponed a few days. A Czechoslovak note to that effect would probably be handed to the Hungarian Minister tomorrow.

M. Wettstein expects that Czechoslovakia will suggest October 15 for the opening of negotiations. This late date, however, would hardly be acceptable to the Hungarian Government.

HENCKE

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 22.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 22, footnote 6.

## No. 29

140/75681

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 556 of October 4

PRAGUE, October 4, 1938—11:05 p.m.

Received October 5—3:30 a.m.

According to reports here, independence movement in Slovakia is gaining ground steadily. Far-reaching autonomy is now demanded by political circles in Slovakia formerly loyal to Prague. A tendency is evident toward declaration of complete independence. According to press reports Cernak, the newly appointed Slovak Minister, today handed his resignation to the President and told journalists that conditions in Slovakia were steadily deteriorating. Slovakia was being overrun by Czechs.

Prague Government is endeavoring to reach agreement with Slovakia as soon as possible and at any price. Deputy Foreign Minister today spoke to me optimistically about probable outcome of negotiations at present in progress between Government and Slovak parties.

Hungarian Minister here stated that Budapest would regard voluntary union of Slovakia, including Carpatho-Ukraine, with Hungary as the most practical solution of the Slovak question. In his personal view Slovakia could be given territorial autonomy [*Territorial-Autonomie*]. Carpatho-Ukraine on the other hand, in view of the large Hungarian element of the population, could only be granted national autonomy [*National-Autonomie*]. This would also be in accordance with Poland's wishes, as Warsaw feared a strengthening of Ukrainian nationalism as a result of territorial autonomy.

Polish Legation in Prague is more inclined to the idea of an independent Slovak State which would leave open the possibility of a protectorate under Poland or Hungary.

HENCKE

## No. 30

1648/891376

*Protocol Signed by the German Foreign Minister and the Ambassadors of Great Britain, France, and Italy*

BERLIN, October 5, 1938.

The Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs, Herr von Ribbentrop, the British Ambassador, Sir Neville Henderson, the French Ambassador, M. François-Poncet, and the Italian Ambassador, Signor Attolico, agreed today in the course of a conference that the territory in gen-

eral marked blue on the annexed map,<sup>1</sup> and marked red on the line south of Taus to north of Steinbach, as well as on the line southeast of Bodenstadt to west of Oderberg, is that territory which, in accordance with the second sentence of paragraph 4 of the Munich Agreement, is to be occupied by German troops by October 10, 1938. They have set it on record that, according to the population status of 1918, this territory was inhabited by more than 50 percent of Sudeten Germans.

B. ATTOLICO                      NEVILLE HENDERSON  
ANDRÉ FR.-PONCET      J. V. RIBBENTROP

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<sup>1</sup> A photostatic copy of this map was found in a Pol. IV file (5196/E307562-63).

### No. 31

1648/391373-74

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 5, 1938.

RELATING TO THE CONFERENCE BETWEEN THE AMBASSADORS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, FRANCE, ITALY, AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AS WELL AS THE GERMAN REPRESENTATIVES ON THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON OCTOBER 5, 1938, AT 5:30 P.M.

A map was submitted to the representatives of Czechoslovakia showing the line up to which, according to the principles of the Munich Agreement, the German troops are to advance. While the representatives of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Germany were in agreement (according to the protocol<sup>1</sup> signed on the 5th at midday) that this line should be accepted, the Czechoslovak representatives raised various objections. These objections related in particular to those Czech-language islands or language peninsulas situated in territory to be occupied by the Germans. On the German side it was put forward that the German proposal would be to exchange the inhabitants of these peninsulas against those of the German-language islands in Czech and Slovak territory. This exchange of population should be carried out as soon as possible. In reply to the objections on the part of the Czechs that the new frontier delimitation would make the connection between Bohemia and the eastern regions of Czechoslovakia very narrow and economically intolerable, the German representative declared that it was just at that very point that there could be no tampering with the frontier line on the part of the Germans. Trifling deviations from the strict ethnographical determination of the zones to be transferred without a plebiscite were of course contemplated in the Munich Agreement in certain exceptional cases.

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 30.

For the place under discussion, however, no amendment could be considered.

The Italian representative then made the following proposal: In order to meet the anxieties of the Czech delegates regarding the cutting of certain railway lines which would be absorbed into German-occupied territory, these railway lines should be crossed as late as possible—but naturally within the time limit fixed for October 10. The Czech and German authorities should also get in touch with each other at once, today if possible, to regulate this through traffic, also for the period after the German occupation.

The German delegate urged the Czech delegate to deliver the answer to the proposal of the four Powers immediately, if possible in the course of the evening but at latest by midday on October 6. The difficulties entailed by a delay in this answer were obvious—the marching in of the troops on October 6 was imminent. The Czech representatives were then, at a suitable moment, confronted with the protocol of the session of midday on the 5th, which the four Powers had already agreed on and were committed to.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 32

1648/391377

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, October 5, 1938—5:40 p.m.

For the State Secretary.

The Foreign Minister requests that you make use of today's four-power protocol<sup>1</sup> and the map, in case the Czech representative refuses to accept the ruling and wishes to refer back to Prague.

ERICH KORDT

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 30.

### No. 33

1648/391379-80

*Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the International Commission Held in Berlin on October 5, 1938*

The chairman opened the meeting at 7 p.m. He reported that the small committee had agreed on a demarcation line indicated on the map before the Commission. The area included by this demarcation line would be occupied by German troops by October 10.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A minute (1648/391381) by Weizsäcker states that the Czech Minister telephoned to him on the morning of Oct. 6, saying that his Government accepted this decision and would take the necessary steps to carry it out; the Czech Government had ordered the demobilization of two classes.

The Italian Ambassador put forward two suggestions :

1. The two areas of the zone to be occupied, which are intersected by a Czechoslovak railway line, should be occupied as late as possible within the three days available.

2. German and Czechoslovak railway authorities should enter into direct negotiations in order to maintain rail traffic and thus secure food supplies for the population in these sectors.

The chairman of subcommittee B defined the decision by saying that direct negotiations should be opened between the German and Czechoslovak railway authorities only for those areas which were situated in or adjacent to the areas to be occupied.

The French Ambassador wished to know what was meant by the words "by October 10" in the Munich Agreement, whether they meant by October 10 inclusive or exclusive.

The chairman confirmed that the meaning of the text was that the occupation must be carried out by October 10 inclusive.

The French Ambassador read his proposal for a press communiqué. The proposal was adopted and the Commission adjourned until 12 noon on Thursday, October 6.

## No. 34

1648/391495

### *Note Verbale to the Czechoslovak Legation*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, October 5, 1938.

Pol. IV 6917.

The Foreign Ministry begs to inform the Czechoslovak Legation, with reference to the *note verbale* of October 3, 1938—No. 10661/38<sup>2</sup>—that the view of the Czechoslovak Government regarding the interpretation of the words "without destruction of any existing installations" in paragraph 2 of the Munich Agreement of September 29, 1938, must be emphatically contradicted.

According to the sense of the Munich Agreement the words "existing installations" refer to all installations serving general purposes, irrespective of whether these installations are state, municipal, or private property (for example, electricity works, gas works, local railways, et cetera). There can therefore be no question whatever of the destruction, evacuation, or dismantling of such installations.

The German Government further regards it as understood that movable property which forms part of such existing installations (e.g. furniture and such equipment) may not be removed either.

Any other essential details connected with the questions dealt with above would have to be discussed in the negotiations of the Commission

<sup>1</sup> This document appears in the files as appendix III to the minutes of the meeting of the International Commission of Oct. 6, 1938, document No. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 19.

at present in progress. Here, however, it must be pointed out that the definition contained in paragraph 2 of the Munich Agreement is only a special, expressly defined application of the understood general principle that the area to be evacuated is to be maintained in an orderly condition in all respects. This is the responsibility of the Czechoslovak Government.

## No. 35

140/75688

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 564 of October 5

PRAGUE, October 5, 1938—9:00 p.m.

Received October 6—1:00 a.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 555 of October 4.<sup>1</sup>

1. Hungarian Minister today handed a note to the new Foreign Minister<sup>2</sup> in which surprise is expressed that the answer to the Hungarian note<sup>3</sup> of October 3, promised for October 4, had not yet been received. In today's note the Hungarian Government demands an answer from Czechoslovakia and further makes an energetic protest against treatment and persecution of Hungarians in Czechoslovakia whereby good Czechoslovak-Hungarian relations would be endangered and prejudiced for the future. By the very nature of things Hungary and Czechoslovakia are at present in a state of excitement and, being aware of the Munich decisions, await their application with extreme anxiety. These conditions make it imperative that the necessary awards should be implemented immediately.

2. The head of the European section of the Foreign Ministry<sup>4</sup> told a member of the Legation that point 1 of the immediate measures demanded by Hungary (cf. telegram No. 545 of October 3<sup>5</sup>) had already been fulfilled by the Czechoslovak Government and that this had been confirmed by note. Point 2 could not be carried out at once as the interpretation of Hungarian nationality could not be established forthwith. The Hungarian Legation itself was not clear about the type of measures demanded in point 3. There can be no discussion on point 4 (symbolic cession of territory) while Hungarian detachments which penetrated at Rimavska Sobota<sup>6</sup> are still on Czechoslovak soil. The reconstruction of the Government had rendered impossible a complete

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. František Chvalkovsky, since the formation of General Syrový's second Cabinet on Oct. 4.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 22.

<sup>4</sup> Vlastimil Cermak.

<sup>6</sup> Gross-Steffelsdorf, 70 kilometers northwest of Miskolcz.

answer to the Hungarian note within the time requested. The Czechoslovak Government envisaged October 15 as the date for the opening of negotiations and hoped that Germany would exert a moderating influence on the Hungarian Government.

HENCKE

No. 36

383/210829

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 6, 1938.

Yesterday afternoon the new Czechoslovak Ministers, General Husárek and M. Vavrečka,<sup>1</sup> called on me. The Ministers stressed the fact that Beneš' resignation was a matter of a few hours.<sup>2</sup> The new Czechoslovak Cabinet fully realized that with her new restricted frontiers Czechoslovakia could pursue only the policy of close dependence on Germany and cooperation with her. At the same time the Ministers asked for considerate treatment of the Czechoslovak people, whose state of mind at the moment was naturally very agitated. If such consideration were not exercised, the result might easily be riots and wild confusion.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Ministers of Public Works and Propaganda respectively in the second Cabinet formed by General Syrový, October–December 1938.

<sup>2</sup> At 6:35 p.m. on Oct. 5 the German Legation in Prague telegraphed that President Beneš had resigned at 5:45 p.m. This telegram No. 563 (140/75687) was received in the Foreign Ministry at 8:05 p.m.

No. 37

1916/430855-56

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 268 of October 5 ROME (QUIRINAL), October 6, 1938—2:00 a.m.

Received October 6—3:00 a.m.

Pol. IV 7058.

Chvalkovsky, Czechoslovak Minister here, now appointed Foreign Minister, called on me this evening to say good-bye personally after his farewell audience with the Duce and Ciano. He said he was aware that he was taking up office at his country's most fateful hour but was firmly resolved to do everything to arrive as quickly as possible at a complete settlement, since the speedy construction of a new state

system, so urgently desired, was inevitable. As the idea that personal exchanges of views are the best means for a quick and satisfactory solution had again been confirmed by the results of Munich, he asked me to inquire in Berlin if he could be received personally by the Foreign Minister and, if he were accessible, also by the Führer and Chancellor, if possible immediately after his own entry into office in Prague, which was only now to take place. He attached special importance to hearing our ( . . . group missing, presumably "view") from the most authoritative ( . . . group missing, presumably "source") at the very beginning of his activity, the final aim of which was not only the establishment of a normal footing with the Reich but also the restoration of friendly and neighborly relations. He therefore wanted to obtain from us guidance, so to speak, for his conduct. I promised to forward this request but said that I could say nothing about its prospects of success.

Chvalkovsky then recalled our conversation at the time of my taking up office in May, in which I had spoken of the inherent weakness of the Czech State structure and had pointed out to him the necessity for a rapid and radical settlement of a problem that was every day becoming more clearly defined; I had at the same time repeated what I had told Mastny in Berlin a year and a half ago, as he knew from the latter's reports. At the time he had not been able to admit openly the justification of my statements but did not hesitate to say that he had been fully conscious of their justification and had at the time also sent a report on the conversation to Prague. The Foreign Minister then mentioned the subject of the guarantee and emphasized how extremely valuable a guarantee by Germany was for the rehabilitation of his country. I answered that this guarantee, as he doubtless knew, depended on a prior, complete settlement of outstanding questions taking place. He described this as in any case imminent also in relation to Hungary and presumed that Hungary's demands applied to the Magyar minority area bordering on Hungary. When I interrupted to say that claims to self-determination would probably also be raised by the Slovaks, he replied that this was first and foremost a domestic affair, as there was no doubt that most of the minority of the 9½ million [*sic*] Slovaks belonged to the so-called Centralists, that is, to those who, in certain circumstances, though perhaps with an increased degree of autonomy, wished to remain united to Prague. I replied that I could not share his view, because I knew that after 20 years of experience a considerable part of the Slovak minority opposed union with Prague, and besides this the question was so completely one of foreign policy that I could not imagine that we could contemplate a

guarantee of the new state structure, unless the Slovak question were completely settled. The Foreign Minister admitted this without hesitation.

In conclusion, Chvalkovsky asked that an answer to his request for an interview with the Foreign Minister and the Führer and Chancellor be sent as soon as possible to Prague, where he is arriving tomorrow evening.<sup>1</sup>

MACKENSEN

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<sup>1</sup> Chvalkovsky repeated his request urgently to the Secretary of Legation in Prague, to whom he spoke at 3:45 p.m. on Oct. 7, shortly after his arrival (Prague telegram No. 576, 28/17779-80).

No. 38

1647/391070

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, October 6, 1938.

The Hungarian Minister, who sat next to me at a luncheon today, repeated to me and to all within hearing that the Führer had promised Pressburg to Hungary. He then told me specifically that this promise had been made once last year, during the visit of Darányi and Kánya<sup>1</sup> and in the presence of the Foreign Minister,<sup>2</sup> Minister of State Meissner,<sup>3</sup> and other personages, and the second time to him personally. The Minister seemed to be uncertain whether we would now raise demands for Pressburg and was anxious to find this out.

He went on to say that for Slovakia the Polish solution must be completely abandoned and that the only natural solution was the Hungarian one. On this point, however, he did not refer to previous promises. He is to visit me tomorrow and will probably discuss these questions further.

On the subject of Pressburg, I merely said informally to the Minister that one must take account of the population statistics and on the subject of Slovakia that there were quite a number of possible solutions. Unless another decision on Pressburg is reached in the meantime I shall also adhere to this line in the forthcoming talks.

WOERMANN

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<sup>1</sup> During the state visit of the Hungarian Prime Minister (Darányi) and Foreign Minister (Kánya) to Berlin, Nov. 21-26, 1937, they were accorded an audience by Hitler on Nov. 25. See vol. v of this series. No mention of Pressburg occurs in the German records of this interview.

<sup>2</sup> Neurath.

<sup>3</sup> Otto Meissner, head of the Presidential Chancellery, 1934-45; Minister of State, with rank of Reich Minister, without Portfolio, 1937-45.

## No. 39

383/210819

*The Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

BERLIN, October 6, 1938.

Pol. I M 3855 g.

No. 0168/38 geh. Ausl. Ic. 2 Ang.

Reference: No. 0168/38 geh. Ausl. Ic. of Oct. 5, 38

Subject: Establishment of a common frontier between Poland and Hungary.

The creation of a compact bloc of succession states on Germany's eastern frontier, with lines of communication to southeast Europe, will not be to our interest. Accordingly, a statement to that effect was addressed to the Foreign Ministry by the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht on October 5, 1938, saying "that *for military reasons* a common Hungarian-Polish frontier was undesirable."

It is assumed that in the future the "Czech and Slovak" Rump State will of necessity depend to a considerable extent on Germany. The conditions for this are now present, especially as in Czechoslovakia strong feeling prevails against Britain and France, by whom she feels betrayed. Moreover, a strong tendency is certainly developing toward dissolving the relationship of the Czechs to the U.S.S.R. at the earliest possible moment.

Consequently, it is in our *military interest* that Slovakia should not be separated from the Czechoslovak union but should remain with Czechoslovakia under strong German influence.

By order of the Chief of Staff of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht.

(Signature)

## No. 40

140/75702

*The Consulate at Pressburg to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 55 of October 6

PRESSBURG, October 6, 1938—6:15 p.m.

Slovak Government formed today. Tiso Prime Minister. Ceremonial entry into Pressburg at 5:31 p.m. today. Slovak Government manifesto dated October 6<sup>1</sup> opposes Jewish Marxism and advocates peaceful solution of the problems at issue on the lines of the Munich agreements. Demands immediate demobilization and international protection for Slovak minority abroad.

GERMAN CONSULATE

<sup>1</sup> This manifesto was issued at Sillein (Žilina) after a plenary session of the executive committee of the Slovak People's Party (Hlinka).

## No. 41

1648/391382-86

*Minutes of the Seventh Meeting of the International Commission  
Held in Berlin on October 6, 1938*

The chairman opened the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

The Czechoslovak Minister read the following statement in the name of his Government:

"The Czechoslovak Government has noted the decision of the four Great Powers<sup>1</sup> with profound sorrow. It accepts the frontiers of the area to be occupied by German troops from October 7 to 10 and undertakes to carry out the measures necessitated by this decision.

"At the same time I inform the International Commission that my Government will immediately proceed to demobilize two classes and that the other classes will follow as this becomes possible, since demobilization—and I must emphasize this—has been rendered considerably more difficult by the German occupation."

The State Secretary expressed the satisfaction and thanks of the German delegation that the Czechoslovak delegation had given an answer so promptly.

At the request of the chairman, the French Military Attaché summed up the results of the deliberations of subcommittee A, which had met the night before.

Subcommittee A submitted three documents to the International Commission for examination:

1. An agreement on the evacuation and occupation operations in the areas situated beyond zones I-IV.<sup>2</sup>

2. An agreement on the removal of material from the Czechoslovak fortifications in zone IV and in the remaining zones.

3. A resolution demanding that the observers who might be sent by the British, French, and Italian Governments should be provided with letters of safe conduct.

The French Assistant Military Attaché read the agreement on the evacuation and occupation operations in the areas situated beyond zones I-IV.

The Italian Ambassador asked why in its third part this agreement did not provide for a neutral zone on the ground as well as in the air.

The French Military Attaché replied that the German and Czechoslovak delegates had already reached agreement on this point in subcommittee A.

The International Commission adopted the proposals of subcommittee A regarding the first agreement.

The chairman asked whether the Commission had any objection to the publication of the map with the zone to be occupied between October 7 and 10.

The Czechoslovak Minister said that he would prefer that this publication be postponed out of consideration for the domestic situation in Czechoslovakia.

The chairman asked how long, in the opinion of the Czechoslovak delegation, publication should be held up.

The Czechoslovak Minister replied that a period of two or three days would suffice.

The chairman expressed the opinion that it would be better, in the interests of the population of the zones concerned, to publish the map without delay.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 30.

<sup>2</sup> This agreement is not printed. Two copies are in the files, one in German (5198/E307651-59) and one in French (5198/E307660-66).

The Italian Ambassador moved that publication should be made in several stages.

The Czechoslovak Minister pointed out that, if official publication took place today, his Government would learn the details of the new demarcation line from the press.

The chairman proposed that publication should not take place until the following day, October 7. In the meantime the Czechoslovak delegation could report to Prague.

It was finally decided that this question should be decided by direct agreement between the German and Czechoslovak delegations.

The French Ambassador remarked that DNB had that morning published a reproduction of the map with exact data on the demarcation line.

The State Secretary said if that were so, the discussion they had just had was in danger of having been a purely academic one.

The French Assistant Military Attaché read paragraphs 2 and 3 as formulated by subcommittee A. The proposals therein contained were adopted by the International Commission.

The chairman asked whether any of the delegates had any further remarks to make regarding the future program of the Commission.

The French Ambassador asked what the position was regarding the possibility of a plebiscite. Was such a step to be adopted or not? If so, in which areas? In connection with this problem the Governments of Great Britain, France, and Italy were already making preparations to set up the formations provided for in the Munich Agreement. The press had announced that morning that the British Legion was busy providing uniforms for its members destined for the plebiscite zone.

The British Ambassador proposed that the question of a plebiscite should form the subject of direct talks between the German and Czechoslovak delegations.

The Czechoslovak Minister stated that apart from this there were also several other points which could be dealt with directly between the two delegations.

The chairman emphasized that apart from the reasons mentioned there were still other and more cogent reasons in favor of reaching a decision on the plebiscite question as soon as possible; the Munich Agreement had mentioned the end of November as the latest date for this.

The chairman further stated that he was, however, not in a position today to announce his Government's point of view on this question. He proposed that the theoretical aspect of this question should be examined in direct talks between the German and Czechoslovak delegations.

The Italian Ambassador asked what stage had been reached in the work of subcommittee B. If agreements had been reached in this subcommittee between the German and Czechoslovak delegations, could not the methods proposed be published, e.g. in the form of a communiqué?

The Czechoslovak Minister urgently drew the attention of the German delegation, and particularly of the representative of the German Wehrmacht, to the pressing nature of the following three questions:

1. the question of food supplies
2. the question how the German authorities could ease the work of the Czechoslovak railway officials
3. The question of a *modus vivendi* for the customs.

The chairman said that, as far as point 2 was concerned, he had never heard that Czechoslovak railway officials had been hampered so far in their work. He would make inquiries. Point 3 could be the subject of direct talks at once.

The chairman further proposed that the plenary commission should adjourn and not meet again until Monday, October 10. In urgent cases he would call a special meeting. The chief delegates could in that event send representatives. The Commission resolved not to issue a press communiqué today. The meeting closed at 1 p.m.

## No. 42

383/210797-99

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

BERLIN, October 6, 1938.

The Hungarian Minister<sup>1</sup> called on me this afternoon and on behalf of M. Kánya made the following statement:

According to information now reaching the public it appeared that the Reich Government wished to establish itself in the Engerau district south of the Danube. Engerau was an old part of the Burgenland and was the natural bridgehead of the ancient coronation city of Pressburg. There would be extreme disappointment in Hungary if the above-mentioned information should prove true. The cession of the Burgenland to Austria and now to Germany was already a sore point in our relations, and the Engerau district meant nothing to Germany but a great deal to Hungary. In other areas, such as Poland, South Tyrol, and Alsace, Germany had not insisted on incorporation of her fellow Germans [*deutsche Volksgenossen*] and it was only toward Hungary that she seemed to pursue a different policy. The Minister added as his personal suggestion that, on the contrary, it would be a very happy gesture if, after taking possession of the Engerau area, the Führer were to cede it to Hungary.

I answered the Minister somewhat as follows:

I first wished to know for certain whether the last remark was his own personally or whether it came from Budapest. The Minister expressly stated that it was his own suggestion. I then said that the *démarche* surprised me greatly. If the Minister brought up the subject of the Burgenland I would like to tell him, without wishing to go again into the events leading up to the transfer of the Burgenland territory to Austria, that a further examination of the Burgenland question from the ethnical point of view would cost Hungary still more territory. The allusions to any other surrender of German ethnical principles [*deutsches Volkstum*] seemed to me to be entirely out of place. Here also the Minister seemed to me to have lost sight of the ethnical question. It was correct, as the Minister had also pointed out, that strong German tendencies were stirring in Engerau and Pressburg. I could only tell him that there was good reason for these German sympathies. Any promises by the Führer to the Hungarian statesmen regarding Pressburg, to which the Minister had also referred,<sup>2</sup> only envisaged the event of a joint

<sup>1</sup>Döme Sztójay.

<sup>2</sup>See document No. 38.

seizure of Czechoslovakia by force of arms. Now, however, it was a case of redrawing frontiers by peaceful means. I therefore reserved our views on Pressburg. Concerning the views of the Hungarian Government on Engerau, I could only give the Minister my personal and friendly advice to reconsider whether he wished to make the *démarche* to me or not. Our reaction to it, if I were to inform official quarters of his *démarche*, would in my opinion be directly contrary to our common need for most friendly relations, especially at the present juncture.

The Minister then took a document from his pocket from which he read to me the contents of his instructions in somewhat more precise terms. These instructions read as follows: The Minister should ask for an explanation regarding the circumstances of the occupation of Engerau. He should give a reminder of the promises given on various occasions to Hungarian statesmen regarding the cession of Pressburg. M. Kánya would find it difficult to be responsible for the effect which the German occupation of Engerau would have on Hungary. The Minister should also draw the attention of the German Government to the great agitation carried on at present by the Germans in Pressburg.

After I had once more pointed out to the Minister that his step was inopportune, he withdrew and after a time informed me by telephone that the whole conversation was to be regarded as if it had not taken place.

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On October 7 the Minister again called on me and informed me that, after getting in touch with Budapest, he wished to declare expressly that his *démarche* of yesterday was to be regarded as if it had not taken place.

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No further use need therefore be made of the conversation.  
Herewith to the Under State Secretary.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 43

140/75700

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

No. 116 of October 6

BUDAPEST, October 6, 1938—11:20 p.m.

Received October 7—2:15 a.m.

The Hungarian Government has received reports that the Czechs are postponing the beginning of the negotiations demanded by Hungary for midday on October 8 and are trying to delay them in order in the meantime to influence the Slovaks and Ruthenians and to deploy

on the Hungarian frontier the troops released from the German and Polish fronts.

Immediate military intervention is therefore being seriously considered in order to implement Hungarian demands; troops are to be in an advanced state of readiness as from tomorrow.

After their first evasive answer, the Czechs now give the evening of October 9 as the earliest start for negotiations, as the new Foreign Minister has not yet arrived in Prague.

ERDMANNSDORFF

No. 44

1648/391392-93

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 7, 1938.

The Italian Ambassador today described to me the feeling among the members of the International Commission for the transfer of the Sudetenland, in order to prepare me for the development of the debate in the Commission.

According to Attolico, Henderson was reprimanded by London for having unconditionally signed the protocol<sup>1</sup> with map last Wednesday, as in the British Government's view the demarcation line for our troops was "grossly unfair."<sup>2</sup> Altogether, in questions in dispute between the Czechs and ourselves, opposition in the Commission comes from the British rather than from the French.

With regard to the plebiscite question the British and French, according to Attolico's account, oppose the inclusion of further plebiscite areas in territory which is at present still Czech and, in particular, in cases where there is a question of plebiscites on the neck of land between Bohemia and the eastern part of the country, e.g. near Brünn. The remark recently made to me by Poncet that plebiscites were still necessary for the sake of appearance is interpreted by Attolico as meaning that the French only wanted the holding of plebiscites in the territory now occupied or to be occupied by us, an idea which I described to Attolico as impracticable.

According to Attolico there was also disappointment among the Ambassadors with regard to the German-Czech economic talks, owing to lack of cooperation on the part of Germany. However, I think I convinced Attolico that, as a result of their well-known note of the beginning of this week,<sup>3</sup> the Czechs were to blame for the deadlock which had arisen.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 30.

<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 19.

In conclusion, Attolico said that it would be expedient if, in accordance with paragraph 6 of the Munich Agreement, a large number of proposals were made regarding small deviations from the strictly ethnographical rule. There was no need for drastic proposals. In order to preserve the appearance of justice and reason such proposals would however be appropriate.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 45

388/210762-68

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, October 7, 1938.

I submit a memorandum for the Führer on the Slovak and Carpatho-Ukraine question.

To the Foreign Minister.

WOERMANN

[Enclosure]

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FÜHRER

In view of the negotiations due to begin in the next few days between Hungary and Czechoslovakia, it is necessary to define our policy on the Slovak and Carpatho-Ukrainian question.

I

*Slovak Question*

Four possibilities in theory:

1. Independent Slovakia
2. Slovak autonomy within the Czechoslovak State
3. Autonomous Slovakia oriented toward Hungary, which might develop from alliance into incorporation
4. Autonomous Slovakia oriented toward Poland.

Ref. 1) The question of the economic viability of a completely independent Slovakia is doubtful but could be answered in the affirmative if Germany provided support. Very rich in timber; part of the Czechoslovak armaments industry lies in Slovak territory (Waag and Gran Valley). Geologically not yet fully explored, old inactive mining area, of which a part is again being worked. Possibilities for the future in this region. At all events favorable conditions for intensifying economic union with Germany. Common frontier will be set up.

An independent Slovakia would be weak constitutionally and would therefore best further the German need for penetration and settlement in the east. Point of least resistance in the east.

Ref. 2) Since the resolutions passed at Sillein on October 6<sup>1</sup> by all the Slovak parties and the subsequent agreement with the Czech Government, an autonomous Slovak Government has now been formed in conjunction with Czechia [*Tschechei*]. According to reports so far received the State presidency, foreign policy, and finance are to be common to both, while Slovakia is to have an independent military organization. The relationship would be similar to that between the old Austria and Hungary. We could tolerate that solution for the present. It even presents certain advantages compared with an independent Slovakia. This presupposes that the future Czecho-Slovakia will have a strong leaning toward Germany in political and economic matters, and evidence of a readiness for this is now apparent. A complete separation between Czechia and Slovakia would always be possible later. The complete structure of Czecho-Slovakia would in that case be stronger than two independent structures. If we exercise decisive influence on Prague, Hungary's and Poland's chances of making Slovakia a permanent bone of contention would be lessened.

From the point of view of foreign policy the solution of a Slovakia united with Czechia is the easiest of achievement. After the Slovak leaders have declared in favor of this solution it could be recognized by us under the slogan of "self-determination."

*The decision lies therefore between solutions 1 and 2, while solution 1, i.e. an independent Slovakia, would still remain open for the future if the Czecho-Slovak solution is decided on for the present.*

Ref. 3) Hungary is striving for some form of union of an autonomous Slovakia with Hungary. Germany has no interest in this solution. Slovaks themselves strongly reject any form of union with Hungary.

Ref. 4) Our interest in an autonomous Slovakia oriented toward Poland is even less than in one oriented toward Hungary. By her acquisition of the Teschen district<sup>2</sup> Poland has already considerably increased her power in this area. The addition of Slovakia to the Polish economic sphere might put considerable difficulties in the way of German economic aspirations toward the southeast.

## II

### *Carpatho-Ukraine Question*

An independent Carpatho-Ukrainian State without support from outside is at present hardly viable. The advantage of this solution, however, would be that a nucleus for a greater Ukraine in the future would be created here. The many million Ukrainians in Poland, the Soviet Union, and Rumania would be given a motherland and thus become national minorities.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 40, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 5.

In any case autonomy for the Carpatho-Ukraine under the slogan of self-determination should be demanded, and on this there are hardly any differences of opinion. Orientation of the autonomous Ukraine to Hungary is to be definitely rejected. This solution is desired by Hungary as well as by Poland. A common Polish-Hungarian frontier would thereby be created, which would facilitate the formation of an anti-German bloc. From a military point of view the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht is also opposed to this common Polish-Hungarian frontier.

While rejecting the Hungarian solution and assuming that an independent Carpatho-Ukraine is not viable, the remaining solution would be an autonomous Carpatho-Ukraine oriented to Slovakia or Czechoslovakia. This is the most natural solution for the present. It leaves other possibilities open for a later date, and it can also be achieved under the slogan "self-determination." Regarding the demarcation of the Carpatho-Ukraine from Slovakia there are questions of detail which have still to be examined.

### III

#### *German-Language Enclaves*

With the exception of Pressburg, there are no German-language enclaves in the area, immediate cession of which is claimed by Hungary. Most important groups: Proben and Kremnitz language enclave with about 50,000 Germans, Upper and Lower Zips about 40,000, less important new settlements in the Ukrainian area north of Munkatsch about 15,000 Germans. There should be no transfer of population from these language enclaves, as they are of value as a nucleus for further development in the east. Transfer from the Kremnitz area is possible for some of those who already are coming to Germany for seasonal work.

### IV

#### *Summary*

1. For Slovakia: Alternatives—-independent Slovakia or Czecho-Slovak solution. Both presuppose orientation toward Germany. For the outside world, a slogan of "right of self-determination," which leaves open the possibility of a plebiscite in Slovakia.
2. For Carpatho-Ukraine: Alternatives—support for an independent but scarcely viable Carpatho-Ukraine and orientation toward Slovakia or Czecho-Slovakia. For the outside world the slogan also to be "right of self-determination" with the possibility of a plebiscite when the time comes.
3. From this results a rejection of the Hungarian or Polish solution for Slovakia as well as for Carpatho-Ukraine. In rejecting the

demands of both those powers we would have a good slogan in the phrase "self-determination." For the outside world no anti-Hungarian or anti-Polish slogans are to be issued.

4. Steps can be taken to influence leading persons in Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine in favor of our solution. Preparations for this are already on foot.

## No. 46

1647/391064-65

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, October 8, 1938—11:30 a.m.

Counselor of Legation Hewel has just given me the following information by telephone:

1. The Führer agrees in principle to receive Chvalkovsky, the new Czech Foreign Minister.<sup>1</sup> Before an invitation is issued, however, he wishes to discuss the matter with the Reich Foreign Minister.

2. With regard to Pressburg, the Führer has stated that this city does not belong to Germany and is therefore not ours to give away. Outwardly, self-determination for Pressburg is to be aimed at, and thus it will probably fall to Slovakia.

3. With regard to Slovakia, the Führer thinks it opportune to support the Sillein resolutions<sup>2</sup> (autonomy and orientation toward Prague).

4. As far as Carpatho-Ukraine is concerned, the Führer thinks it best that Germany should interfere as little as possible in this question. What would appeal to us most would be an autonomous Ruthenian area with orientation toward Prague, which of course would only be a temporary solution until the final separation. The Führer does not think that Hungary will be in a position to solve the problem. Left to itself, this question will certainly develop along the right lines.

5. On the question of German-language enclaves within Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine, the Führer is in agreement with the view put forward in the memorandum under part III.<sup>3</sup>

6. The Führer attaches no importance to a plebiscite in "Theben";<sup>4</sup> he takes the view that this area must fall to Slovakia.

ERICH KORDT

<sup>1</sup> The State Secretary informed the Prague Legation, telegram No. 369 of Oct. 8 (1613/387128), that Ribbentrop would receive Chvalkovsky in Berlin between Oct. 12 and 14 and that an audience with Hitler might then be arranged. See document No. 37.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 40.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 45.

<sup>4</sup> A small town at the junction of the Danube and the March, 10 kilometers west of Pressburg. In a brief prepared for Hitler on Oct. 7 (1647/391056-60) Weizsäcker explained that, although Theben had a majority of *Volksdeutsche* according to the 1910 census, the town was cut off from German territory by both the March and the Danube, and no bridges existed. In the same brief he reported that the 1930 census of Pressburg showed 85,000 Slovaks, 25,000 Czechs, 33,000 Germans, and 19,000 Magyars. The Hungarian kings had been crowned at Pressburg from 1563 to 1840, although the population had then always shown a German majority. See also document No. 112.

## No. 47

388/210702

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 118 of October 8

BUDAPEST, October 8, 1938—12: 17 p.m.

Received October 8—2: 15 p.m.

British Minister handed memorandum to Foreign Minister which stated that British Government felt morally bound to guarantee Czechoslovakia and solemnly warned the Hungarian Government to keep calm and not to make such harsh demands. Knox<sup>1</sup> gave no answer when Kánya asked whether the British were using similar language to the Germans and Poles or whether they were only threatening the smaller nations.

ERDMANNSDORFF

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Geoffrey Knox, British Minister in Hungary, October 1935–May 1939.

## No. 48

1863/423132

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Ministry*

BERLIN, October 9, 1938.

zu Pol. IV 7193.

TELEPHONE MESSAGE FROM UNDER STATE SECRETARY WOERMANN<sup>1</sup>

The Hungarian Minister telephoned me today at 7 p.m. and informed me as follows:

“It appears that at the forthcoming negotiations the Czechoslovak Government will not recognize the principle that areas with a Magyar majority are to pass to Hungary. If the Czechoslovak Government takes this view, Hungary would immediately mobilize. She would be all the more obliged to do this, because Czechoslovak troops in the vicinity of the Hungarian frontier have not been demobilized and are apparently concentrated in order to exercise pressure on the negotiations.”

WOERMANN

Note.

As instructed, I transmitted the above information to

1. The office of the Adjutant of the Reich Foreign Minister at Sonneburg<sup>2</sup>
2. The State Secretary
3. The duty officer at OKW.

S[?]

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<sup>1</sup> Woermann, the Director of the Political Department, had the personal title of Under State Secretary and was often referred to by it.

<sup>2</sup> Ribbentrop's country house in Brandenburg.

## No. 49

140/75742-48

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

## Telegram

No. 587 of October 10

PRAGUE, October 10, 1938—6:50 p.m.

Received October 10—10:45 p.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 583 of October 9.<sup>1</sup>

Chvalkovsky, the Foreign Minister, asked me to come to see him today to inform me of his fundamental attitude toward German-Czechoslovak relations, as he had already told Secretary of Legation Hofmann.<sup>2</sup> The Minister began by saying that the Reich should judge him only by his actions; for the present he could only state his intentions. He intended to do everything in his power systematically to establish neighborly relations with the Reich. The Czechoslovak Government had nothing in common with France but must rather pursue a policy of close cooperation with her great German neighbor. He had always held the same view and had therefore been relegated to an "exil distingué." As early as his student years Beneš had fallen completely under French influence and had never had "even an inkling" about Germany. Chvalkovsky, on the other hand, had always been firmly of the opinion that the Czechs could learn many salutary lessons from Germany. As long ago as 1927 he had reported that the Führer, for whose achievements the Minister had the greatest admiration, would come to power. The then President Masaryk<sup>3</sup> had deprecated such imbecile reports and had thought him a "fool."

What Germany had demanded and received at Munich had been just. The Czechs should have drawn for themselves earlier the necessary conclusions from the facts. The chief blame for recent developments lay with the strong Jewish influence in Prague, especially in the press, and this he [Chvalkovsky] would do his utmost to remove. The Minister was looking forward to going to Berlin and hoped by means of frank discussions to save for his country what was still to be saved.

He wanted no Czech representative present at the talks, because he felt strong enough to put the case for Czechoslovakia; naturally he would not demand anything of Germany but would only try, as a patriotic Czech, to help his country.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (140/75736). It conveys Chvalkovsky's thanks for the invitation to Berlin and contains an inquiry about the exact date of the visit.

<sup>2</sup> On Oct. 7. See document No. 37, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas G. Masaryk, elected first President of the Czechoslovak Republic, November 1918; reelected 1920, 1928, and 1934; resigned December 1935; died September 14, 1937.

Only the Prime Minister, Masařik, Chef de Cabinet [*Präsidentalchef*] of the Foreign Ministry, and Cermak, head of the European section, have been informed of the intended visit to Berlin. The press here has been instructed not to make any speculations on the journey. The Minister asked to be informed of Germany's intentions regarding an announcement in the press at the appropriate moment in order to be able to take the corresponding steps in Prague. In conclusion, the Minister expressed the desire to travel by train in order to relax during the rail journey. He wanted to use a car only where the railway line was out of action. He asked the Reich Government to specify the route.

HENCKE

No. 50

5725/E415113-14

*Circular of the State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

BERLIN, October 10, 1938—12:30 p.m.  
e. o. Pol. IV 7177.

After the settlement of those Sudeten-German questions for which the decision still depends on a plebiscite, our attitude toward remaining questions concerning Czechoslovakia is as follows:

1. Starting point is the desire for friendly relations with Prague.
2. We support Hungarian demands for the adjacent Magyar territory and leave settlement of details to direct negotiations between Hungary and Czechoslovakia.
3. In the Slovak question we sympathize with the Sillein resolutions,<sup>2</sup> which demand definite autonomy within the Czechoslovak State.
4. We maintain reserve in the Carpatho-Ukraine question. A common Hungarian-Polish frontier is not supported by us, though outwardly we do not issue anti-Hungarian or anti-Polish slogans.
5. We advocate self-determination for Pressburg, which, for your confidential information, probably means that it will go to Slovakia.
6. At present we are showing no particular activity in these questions. The general watchword is "self-determination."

W[EILZÄCKER]

<sup>1</sup> Addressed to missions in Paris, London, Rome, Warsaw, Washington, Tokyo, Belgrade, Bucharest, Brussels, Bern, and Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 40, footnote 1.

## No. 51

1648/391461

*The Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

BERLIN, October 10, 1938.

No. 2576/38 geh. L I a

Subject: Situation in Iglau.

Reference: D-R.Min. d. J. I S. Oct. 9, 38.

Attention State Secretary Dr. Weizsäcker.

The Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht requests that the Czech Government and the International Commission be required to give immediate assurance of adequate protection for the Germans in Brünn and Iglau and to inform these towns of the result.

The Führer has agreed that the British Legion, in the event of its being moved to Czechoslovakia, will be employed in protecting the Germans, particularly in Brünn and Iglau.

If the situation in Brünn and Iglau assumes a *threatening* character for the Germans living there, it is to be reckoned with that the Führer will order the immediate entry of German troops into those areas.<sup>1</sup>

The Chief of Staff of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht.

KEITEL

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<sup>1</sup> Marginal note by Weizsäcker:

“BERLIN, October 10, 1938.

“I wish to note with regard to this that we have already taken appropriate steps in Prague this morning. I intend to discuss the treatment of the matter soon with General Keitel direct. Submitted herewith to the Foreign Minister.”

## No. 52

1647/391090

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 10, 1938.

The French Ambassador told me by telephone today that he had once again thought over the question of the plebiscite and was now inclined to the idea that it would be better to dispense with the plebiscite entirely.

As a reason for this new attitude he stated among other things that, according to data furnished by Gauleiter Krebs,<sup>1</sup> the minority living on Czech and on German soil respectively remains fairly steady at about 400,000. M. Poncet considers it important to receive fur-

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 17, footnote 1.

ther confirmation of these figures from Herr Krebs at the earliest opportunity.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>2</sup>The following instruction to Altenburg is appended as a minute: "Please notify Herr Krebs that he must again submit exact figures."

## No. 53

1648/391407-10

### *Unsigned Memorandum*

Telephone Message

GODESBERG, October 12, 1938—4:45 p.m.

For the State Secretary.

In his conversation with the Foreign Minister at Godesberg on October 11, the Führer made the following decisions:

#### I

No further plebiscite areas in Czechoslovakia are to be demanded by Germany.

#### II

The basic tendency of our future attitude toward the International Commission should be to pursue the aim of winding up the International Commission as quickly as possible and replacing it at the earliest possible moment by direct bilateral negotiations with Czechoslovakia.

#### III

The final determination of the frontiers by the International Commission shall be carried out as soon as possible. The determination of the actual frontiers on the spot shall then later be the exclusive responsibility of a German-Czech commission.

#### IV

The International Commission shall decide that all questions connected with option shall be transferred to direct negotiation between Germany and Czechoslovakia.

(The appropriate government agency will examine the question whether it is possible to expel from Vienna the 27,000 Jews of Czech nationality.)

#### V

We must pursue the aim of obtaining from the Czechs permission to construct a Reich *Autobahn* following the line of the Breslau-Zwit-

tau-Brünn-Vienna railway and, at the same time, to have this railway line internationalized. The Czechs should be offered equal privileges in respect of the internationalization of the railway line which intersects the Zwittau peninsula, if they, at the same time, give permission for the construction of an *Autobahn*. Ambassador Ritter<sup>1</sup> is to sound the Economic Commission on this accordingly.

## VI

The German point of view on transfer of the property of State and public-utility services in the areas to be ceded, and on the return of property removed, is to be upheld unconditionally.

## VII

At the outset it is to be most strongly stated that there was never any question of Germany taking over a share of the Czech national debt, as this debt was incurred by Czechoslovakia for the purpose of the struggle against Germany.

## VIII

Regarding the Mährisch-Ostrau and Witkowitz area, the State Secretary is to ask the Polish Ambassador<sup>2</sup> to come to see him and to tell him the following: In contrast to Germany's lack of interest in Oderberg, she is interested in Mährisch-Ostrau and Witkowitz. Future developments will decide whether Mährisch-Ostrau and Witkowitz are to remain in Czechoslovakia. If the future of these areas comes up for discussion, we demand a plebiscite under international control.

## IX

As for the question of Pressburg, complete reserve is at first to be exercised in principle, and all questions connected with this problem are to be subjected to the most careful examination. Should the Hungarians approach us with demands for Pressburg, the following statement is to be made to them:

(a) In principle Germany sympathizes with Hungarian demands on Czechoslovakia.

(b) The Führer has repeatedly said that Germany can only draw the sword for German interests.

(c) The Führer invited the Hungarian Prime Minister and Foreign Minister to visit him at Obersalzberg and there advised them both to press their cause somewhat more energetically.<sup>3</sup> In the critical days

<sup>1</sup> Karl Ritter, who had been recalled from his post as Ambassador in Brazil in August 1938 (see vol. v), had been reemployed in the Foreign Ministry for special duties connected with economic policy.

<sup>2</sup> Jozef Lipski, November 1934–September 1939.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. II, document No. 555.

which followed, the Hungarians did nothing and this explains their present difficult diplomatic situation.

(d) With regard to the present Czech-Hungarian negotiations, our view is that incontestably Hungarian areas should pass to Hungary; even Germany has established no strategic frontiers but only ethnic frontiers.

(e) If any points of difference remain, a plebiscite under international control must take place.

## X

For the personal information of the State Secretary.

Should Hungary mobilize, it is not our intention to hamper the Hungarians or even advise them to use moderation.

## No. 54

F17/349-344

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, October 12, 1938.

### CONVERSATIONS TO BE HELD WITH CHVALKOVSKY, THE CZECHOSLOVAK FOREIGN MINISTER

According to reports so far received, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister is coming to Berlin with the firm intention of effecting a radical change in Czechoslovak policy. It would therefore probably be advisable to let him express his views in the early part of the conversations and at the same time not to state too clearly that a friendly relationship between the two countries means in practice a certain dependence of Czechoslovakia on Germany.

The individual questions are dealt with from this angle in the following:

#### A. GENERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN GERMANY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA

##### I

##### FOREIGN POLICY

We must start from the assumption that Czechoslovak policy is undergoing such a radical change that former Czechoslovak alliances are already regarded by Czechoslovakia as useless and will in no circumstances be renewed after the expiry of the terms specified in the treaties. Naturally this applies primarily to the treaties between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union.

<sup>1</sup> A covering note to another copy of this memorandum (383/210604) shows that Woermann was its author.

Furthermore, these treaties would not be compatible with the guarantee envisaged in supplement I to the Munich Agreement. The most favorable solution for us of course would be if Czechoslovakia rejected any such guarantee of her own accord. It would, however, probably be difficult to persuade the Western powers of this, as this guarantee is an essential point of the Munich settlement for public opinion in their countries. The best thing would probably be to touch on this subject lightly, without developing it at this time, merely stating clearly that there was no question of a guarantee by the Soviet Union.

It would have to be emphasized that a guarantee by Germany as provided for in paragraph 2 of supplement I could not be considered until the Hungarian and Polish demands had been met.

Such a guarantee by Germany, if it were given, would have to be developed into the main guarantee of Czechoslovakia in contrast to the guarantees by other powers. It would entail definite obligations being undertaken by Czechoslovakia (no participation in actions against Germany, not even on the lines of article 16 of the League of Nations Covenant).

## II

### QUESTIONS OF DOMESTIC POLICY

We must avoid giving the impression of German interference in the internal affairs of Czechoslovakia. Friendly and close relations with Germany would, however, presuppose that the Communist Party in Czechoslovakia continued to be banned [*verboten bleibt*]. A natural demand would be that Czechoslovakia should put an end to the activities of *émigrés* in Prague and elsewhere.

A greater degree of conformity of the structure of domestic policy to that of Germany should not be demanded at present.

Czechoslovakia should not be allowed to put any obstacle in the way of the activity on her territory of *Reichsdeutsche* within the framework of the NSDAP or the A.O.

## III

### MILITARY QUESTIONS

Military questions are indeed the most delicate problem. According to provisional oral statements by General Keitel, the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht takes roughly the following view:

The building of a new system of fortifications facing Germany could not be tolerated by us. On the other hand neither did we intend to construct a German system of fortifications along the new frontier. We must arrive at the point where, in any conflict between Germany

and the Western powers, Czechoslovakia would no longer be of importance as an opponent of Germany. If she were allowed full freedom in military affairs, she would even now, in the event of war, pin down some 25 German divisions at the beginning.<sup>2</sup> The ideal would be voluntary military neutralization, something like the system in Luxembourg, whereby Czechoslovakia could retain about three divisions.

However convincing these wishes are from a purely military point of view, certain objections must be put forward from a political point of view. If it is the intention to establish really close relations with Czechoslovakia, we must not impose a Versailles on the country. Czechoslovakia also needs an army against her other neighbors.

It would probably be advisable to conduct this first conversation in such a way that we first inquire what Czechoslovakia's intentions in this field are and confine ourselves to a general statement that Czechoslovakia's military organization must in no way be directed against Germany.

A separation of the Czech from the Slovak contingent would be to our advantage.

#### IV

##### ECONOMIC QUESTIONS

See enclosed memorandum (appendix I)

#### V

##### TRANSPORT QUESTIONS

There would be no need to go into details, but the desire for a preferential treatment of transport between Silesia and the Ostmark in questions affecting transport by rail, air, inland waterway, and road should be put forward in general terms.

The question of a Reich *Autobahn* on Czechoslovak territory could be introduced into the discussion.

#### VI

##### CULTURAL QUESTIONS

See enclosed memorandum (appendix II)<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> A memorandum by Heyden-Rynsch for Ribbentrop, dated Oct. 13 (F6/0196-97), gave the OKW estimate of the Czech armed forces as follows: peace strength: 180,000-200,000 men with 650 first-line aircraft; war strength: 750,000 men and 1,360 aircraft.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (F17/343-340).

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (F5/0054-0053).

## VII

## PRESS QUESTIONS

See enclosed memorandum (appendix III)<sup>5</sup>

Here the immediate demand should be made for cessation of the anti-German attitude of the Czechoslovak press. In return an assurance could be given of a corresponding attitude on the part of the German press.

## B. TRANSITION QUESTIONS

Along with these questions dealing with the permanent shaping of German-Czechoslovak relations, the following practical questions affecting the transition period might also be usefully discussed:

1. Question of the plebiscite areas or frontier adjustments, if a decision to that effect had been made by the Führer.

2. An agreement that in principle as many questions as possible should be taken out of the hands of the International Commission and become the subject of bilateral negotiation.

3. Speeding up of the conclusion of the execution of point 8 of the Munich Agreement which was already in progress (release of Sudeten Germans from military and police units, release of Sudeten-German prisoners serving sentences for political offenses, on assurance that these promises would also be fulfilled in the case of Sudeten Germans remaining in the territory of the Czechoslovak State. A promise that Sudeten Germans who had fled to the Reich might return unhindered).

4. Appointment of the German-Czechoslovak commission for questions of option.

5. The question of possible transfers of population has not yet been fully investigated by Germany and therefore should not in any case be gone into.

6. Protection for the *volksdeutsch* minority remaining in the Czechoslovak State; promise of reciprocity.

## C. SLOVAK AND RUTHENIAN QUESTION; HUNGARIAN AND POLISH WISHES

Along with these two categories of questions it will be quite natural to discuss also the question of Slovakia, Carpatho-Ukraine, and the Hungarian and Polish wishes, on the lines laid down by the Führer.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (F5/0052).

## No. 55

FG/0189-95

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, October 13, 1938.

## CONVERSATION BETWEEN HERR VON RIBBENTROP, THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER, AND CHVALKOVSKY, THE CZECH FOREIGN MINISTER, ON OCTOBER 13, 1938, IN BERLIN

Chvalkovsky described at some length the inner developments in Czechoslovakia during the last 20 years. There had always been a small group surrounding Beneš and Masaryk which had guided the country into anti-German paths, whereas the great mass of the Czech people is not at heart anti-German. This was shown by the fact that very many Czechs spoke German well but only very few spoke good French, and that even today there was in fact no French textbook in Czechoslovakia. Masaryk, a typical professor who regarded everything from the theoretical angle, had, as a result of his extraordinarily great authority with the Czech people, exerted a decisive influence on the political development of the country with certain academic slogans such as "the trend is to the Left" and "we must be democratic." Beneš and the small circle around him had worked with other methods but in the same direction. This had led to the catastrophe which had ended with the rude awakening of the Czech people. In Czechoslovakia the recent tragic sequence of events had convinced people of the error of their former policy, and they had already in their own minds turned completely away from their previous attitude. In the future they wanted to pursue a policy of the closest cooperation with Germany.

The Reich Foreign Minister, for his part, described past developments from the German angle. The Beneš policy, especially in recent times, had been completely incomprehensible to Germany. At the time of the mobilization on May 21,<sup>1</sup> it had been perfectly clear to him (the Reich Foreign Minister), who knew the Führer very well, what course events must now take. The game played in this connection by France and Britain, the serious consequences of which he had pointed out most emphatically at the time to the Ambassadors of both countries, had not made the slightest impression on Germany. If, at the end of September, certain possibilities of a solution had not appeared at the last moment, Czechoslovakia would have been annihilated within a few days, and Germany would not have allowed herself to be diverted from her plans on account of any complications with Britain or France. For Germany had made all military preparations

<sup>1</sup> See vol. II, documents Nos. 177 and 209.

for a conflict with these two powers if they had been foolish enough to attack Germany. However, these things belonged to the past. At present it was a matter of discussing future relations between the two countries. He (the Reich Foreign Minister) would be glad to hear from the Czech Foreign Minister how he envisaged the future shaping of German-Czech relations.

Chv[alkovsky] replied that Czechoslovakia asked Germany to give her a chance of establishing good neighborly relations between the two countries. Czechoslovakia would make an honest attempt to comply with Germany's wishes in every respect. Naturally the final frontier determination and the German guarantee already promised at Munich, in the event of the Polish and Hungarian question's being settled, were of great interest to Czechoslovakia.

At this point the Reich Foreign Minister referred to the condition laid down in the Munich Agreement that, apart from slight adjustments, the frontier of the territory now occupied by German troops must be regarded as the final frontier between the two countries.

Chv[alkovsky] expressed his thanks for this clear answer and, in reply to a further question by the Reich Foreign Minister, said that Czechoslovakia would now make a complete *volte-face* in her foreign policy. He personally had always been an opponent of Beneš' policy; he had always preached cooperation with Germany and, especially when he himself was Minister in Berlin, had always followed the further development of National Socialism with sympathetic interest. For that reason he had also advocated a policy of cooperation with Germany in the new Cabinet and had found complete understanding for this among his ministerial colleagues. This new foreign policy meant of course the end of the Moscow-Prague-Paris Axis. The present Czech Government regarded this combination as being finished in any case. If Germany wished, this could be done formally. In foreign policy Czechoslovakia wanted to rely on Germany, if Germany would allow this.

In answer to a further question by the Reich Foreign Minister, Chv[alkovsky] said, with reference to the development of military policy in Czechoslovakia, that naturally no new line of fortifications was planned against Germany, and that, quite apart from demobilization, the Czech Army as such would be very greatly reduced ("quite a small army"). This was also necessary for purely financial reasons. In this connection, the question arose as to what was to be done with the numerous officers who were now becoming superfluous. At present the officers' corps was so resigned that they expected nothing else but a radical reduction of the army; furthermore, generals had intentionally been included in the Government, so that they could explain to their comrades the necessity for a reduction in the army.

When further questioned by the Reich Foreign Minister, Chvalkovsky said that great changes would also take place in domestic policy. A dissolution of all political parties was envisaged. This was the reason why the Communist Party had not yet been banned in Czechia, whereas the ban had already been pronounced in Slovakia.

Moreover there existed a separate Slovak Government under Dr. Tiso, as well as a government for Carpatho-Ukraine. Both were represented by ministers in the Prague Government.

A further chapter which would have to be settled was the Jewish question. Jews occupied all key positions in the press and in the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry. This had struck him particularly in his own Ministry, and in this respect too he would seek a speedy remedy. The Jews, especially through the Czechoslovak press, had influenced public opinion in their own favor and were still trying to do so. This had recently induced him to confiscate a newspaper edited by a Jew which had attempted to publish the Führer's Saarbrücken speech under the title "Hitler Already Expecting Another World War." The question of the German *émigrés*, too, naturally presented particular difficulties, as in her present form Czechoslovakia was much too small to shelter such numbers of *émigrés*.

Speaking of the economic relations between the two countries, Chv[alkovsky] said that in the economic field, too, Czechoslovakia wanted to adapt herself completely to the German system. As he himself was not an economic expert, he could not discuss details at the moment. He could only say that Czechoslovak economic circles took a very positive attitude toward cooperation with Germany.

In connection with the economic question, the question of easing traffic on the Breslau-Vienna line by an *Autobahn* was discussed, and the granting of similar privileges by Germany in respect of the internationalization of the railway line intersecting the Zwittau peninsula was envisaged. Without going into details, Chv[alkovsky] agreed in principle with this suggestion.

Chv[alkovsky] further accepted a proposal made by the Reich Foreign Minister for the settlement of the option question by direct German-Czech negotiations, without recourse to the International Commission.

Questions of press policy were also briefly touched upon without a detailed discussion taking place.

The expectation was expressed on the German side that no further difficulties would be placed in the way of Reich Germans in Czech territory participating in activities of the NSDAP. Chv[alkovsky] stated that naturally this would be so and added that the restrictions imposed during the period of tension would be removed.

A further point in the conversation was the release of the Sudeten Germans from military and police units and the release of Sudeten-German prisoners sentenced to imprisonment for political offenses. In this matter too Chv[alkovsky] promised that German wishes would be met.

When the Reich Foreign Minister inquired about the state of the Czechoslovak-Hungarian negotiations, Chv[alkovsky] said that he was not acquainted with the details of these negotiations, as they were taking place in Komorn directly between the Slovaks and the Hungarians. He only knew that the Hungarians were making extremely far-reaching demands, including the cession of the Slovak capital (Pressburg) as well as the capital of Carpatho-Ukraine (Kaschau). In face of this the Slovaks had refused in principle to cede these two towns along with six others.

In conclusion, the question of the protection of minorities on a mutual basis was discussed and Chv[alkovsky] promised a settlement in accordance with Germany's desires.

Both sides were agreed that the time had not yet come to discuss the question of possible transfer of population and that this must be reserved for direct discussion between the two countries at a later date.

Submitted to the Reich Foreign Minister according to instructions.

DR. SCHMIDT

## No. 56

1648/391414-21

### *Minutes of the Eighth Meeting of the International Commission Held in Berlin on October 13, 1938*

The meeting opened at 6 p.m.

The chairman informed the Commission as a matter of routine that he had received a large number of letters and telegrams, the contents of which did not for the most part come within the competence of the Commission. They were partly concerned with Sudeten-German aspirations regarding the final frontier determination.

The chairman then turned to the question of the plebiscite. He said that Germany had examined this question very closely on the basis of the Munich Agreement. The Reich Government was of the opinion that an ethnographic frontier had already been found and established in the demarcation line and that under these circumstances it was possible to avoid the holding of plebiscites in the areas beyond this demarcation line. The chairman added that he would not state in detail the reasons for the German view. He asked for the Commission's views on the question of the plebiscite.

The Czechoslovak delegate answered that his Government would accept the German proposal with satisfaction. Indeed he was well aware of the disadvantages of a plebiscite operation. At a time when, according to the wishes of the Czechoslovak Government, efforts were being made to establish a true friend-

ship between the two countries, it was necessary to avoid anything which from the psychological point of view might disturb the course of German-Czechoslovak relations.

The question of the plebiscite could thus be regarded as solved, likewise the question of frontier delimitation which was now settled, with the exception of individual points of detail.

The Czechoslovak delegation, however, emphasized that in the interests of living side by side in a friendly manner it was important to settle questions of economy and traffic as soon as possible.

The exchange of population by option provided for in article 7 of the Munich Agreement was also still to be carried out. This problem could be examined in direct talks between the German and Czechoslovak delegations. Regarding the question of option, the Munich Agreement provided for the setting up of a German-Czechoslovak commission to solve this.

The chairman proposed that the Commission record in writing the decision to dispense with a plebiscite. He read the text prepared for this purpose by the German delegation. After a few alterations the following text was accepted:

"The International Commission puts on record that the final delimitation of the Sudeten-German area falling to Germany can be carried out on the basis of the line established by the Commission on October 5, with such alterations as the Commission may propose in accordance with the text of article 6 of the Munich Agreement.

"In these circumstances the International Commission has unanimously resolved that plebiscites may be dispensed with."

The Commission resolved to include this text in the press communiqué to be published later.

After lengthy deliberation the text of the press communiqué was drawn up and accepted by the Commission.

In reply to a question by the French Ambassador, the chairman stated that, according to the Munich Agreement, the settlement of the option question was a matter for a German-Czechoslovak committee and that this question had only been brought before the International Commission because, in accordance with the Munich resolutions, that body had to take cognizance of the appointment of the committee, which would certainly bring its work to a satisfactory conclusion.

The Commission thereupon asked the chairman of subcommittee B for a report on the present state of work of this subcommittee.

Ambassador Ritter stated that in the last few days subcommittee B had been mainly concerned with reaching agreement in principle on the condition in which territory was to be handed over in accordance with the Munich Agreement. Agreement had been reached on the general principle that the territory was to be handed over in an "orderly condition," and on all the other points. There was only one point still at issue, the effective date from which the Czechoslovak Government had to guarantee the "orderly condition," and, if need be, to restore the "orderly condition." The Czechoslovak delegation was of the opinion that the effective date was October 1; the German delegation, on the other hand, thought that it should be at least September 21, that is, the day on which the Czechoslovak Government had accepted as binding the Anglo-French proposal regarding the cession of the territory. The obligation of the Czechoslovak Government to cede the territory ran from that date, therefore so did the obligation to hand it over in an "orderly condition." This question was of great practical importance, as precisely in the period between September 21 and October 1 a great deal of material had been removed from the area, in particular railway rolling stock.

The representatives of Britain, France, and Italy on the subcommittee had expressed no opinion on this question. The British representative had moved that it be brought before the International Commission.

Ambassador Ritter then reported on the rest of the work since his last report. The railway experts had already gone a long way toward settling technical questions, so that it was expected that railway traffic could be resumed at the end of that week or the beginning of the following week. That of course also depended in very large measure on when and to what extent railway rolling stock was returned. The German Reich naturally could not provide rolling stock from its own resources to start Czechoslovak rail traffic.

Questions dealing with posts, telegraphs, and telephones, the problems of clearing, especially as they affected money orders and postal savings transactions, had already been dealt with in detail. Negotiations were in progress between the Reichsbank and the Czechoslovak National Bank regarding the branch offices of the latter. The conclusion of the negotiations depended on the return of the Czechoslovak experts who had full powers to deal with this.

The return of files, plans, documents, and archives, part of which had been removed as a precaution from the German area and part of which was in the central offices in Prague, had already begun.

The subcommittee was also already dealing with the manner in which exchange of goods between the Sudeten areas and Czechoslovakia could be resumed. In accordance with the recent recommendation of the International Commission, and as it was closely bound up with future politico-economic relations between the two states, this whole question will be dealt with at first between the German and Czechoslovak delegations. The subcommittee will be informed of the progress of these negotiations.

In reply to a question by the British Ambassador, the chairman proposed that the Commission should now deal with the question of the effective date from which the Czechoslovak Government had to guarantee the "orderly condition." This question was, as had been stated, of great practical importance. The British delegate on subcommittee B had moved that this question should be brought before the International Commission. In his (the chairman's) view, the obligation of the Czechoslovak Government already existed as from September 21.

The French Ambassador recalled that subcommittee B had reached agreement on the definition of the "orderly condition" in which the territory to be evacuated was to be handed over and on the definition of the word "installations." The subcommittee had decided that this term included all public-utility installations including their accessories and irrespective of whether they were publicly or privately owned.

In the future therefore it was only a matter of translating the principles established into practice. In the case of the installations as defined by subcommittee B there was no need to fix a date. The date September 21 meant nothing. It referred to an outdated agreement, as the negotiations between the Governments concerned during the time in question had been in a state of flux, and the details of one obligation assumed had been canceled or superseded by the assumption of another obligation. He therefore considered the fixing of an effective date superfluous.

The Italian Ambassador agreed with this view. All that could be done in the International Commission was to establish principles. Everything that was decided on there would have to be carried out according to "faith and good will." One must rely on that in the case in point.

The British Ambassador, however, held that the fixing of an effective date in some form was necessary.

The chairman proposed that the question of an effective date be dropped. He agreed with the view of the French Ambassador that the principle of the transfer of territory in an "orderly condition" must suffice for its execution. The International Commission could not concern itself with such details.

In reply to this the British Ambassador stressed the practical importance attached to the fixing of a date.

The Czechoslovak delegate also pointed out the importance of an effective date.

The chairman ruled that, as the members of the International Commission had stated their views, the question of an effective date should be referred back to subcommittee B. On the basis of the French Ambassador's proposal the subcommittee should deal further with this question. This matter should not be brought before the International Commission again unless subcommittee B failed to reach agreement. If the question were again brought before the International Commission while the latter was not in session, the members of the International Commission could appoint representatives.

In conclusion the Commission adjourned for an indefinite time.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A further session was held on Nov. 21. See document No. 135.

## No. 57

140/75826

### *The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 129 of October 13

BUDAPEST, October 13, 1938—10:56 p.m.

Received October 14—3:20 a.m.

With reference to telephone message today to Under State Secretary Woermann.<sup>1</sup>

Prime Minister<sup>2</sup> informed me that his predecessor, Darányi, had been instructed to clear away certain misunderstandings which appeared to have arisen between Germany and Hungary and to clarify the views of both parties.

The attitude of the German press toward the creation of a common frontier between Poland and Hungary in Carpatho-Ukraine had caused astonishment here. The idea suggested in the French press of Hungarian participation in any formation of a Polish-Rumanian bloc against Germany was absurd, as the Carpathians form a natural barrier only against the east. With the reincorporation of Carpatho-Ukraine, Hungary would prolong the Rumanian front against Bolshevism and form a strong bulwark against it on the Carpathian passes.

<sup>1</sup> Erdmannsdorff had telephoned to Woermann (140/75797) at 6:40 that morning to say that the Hungarian Prime Minister had just sent for him to ask him to arrange that his predecessor, Darányi, might be received at once by Hitler. The reason given for this urgent request was that the Hungarian Government contemplated definite decisions but would do nothing without consulting the Führer.

<sup>2</sup> Béla Imrédy.

The events of recent months caused the Hungarian Government to feel itself bound more firmly than ever to the Berlin-Rome Axis and it was prepared to affirm this on paper. The question of the Pressburg bridgehead is not to be raised by Darányi.

ERDMANNSDORFF

No. 58

140/75801

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

BUDAPEST, October 13, 1938—10:56 p.m.

No. 132 of October 13

Received October 14—1:40 a.m.

Prime Minister informed me that if the Czechoslovaks, whose counterproposal of this morning was completely unsatisfactory, did not change their attitude, the Hungarian Government would order mobilization within 24 hours, presumably without making its intermediate demand announced in yesterday's telegraphic report.<sup>1</sup> This would result in the doubling of the present strength of the army. This measure did not mean war but was necessary because Czech demobilization had not yet taken place. Hungary was ready to march if we gave our consent. Unrest in the Hungarian area of Czechoslovakia was constantly increasing.

The Foreign Minister's Chef de Cabinet<sup>2</sup> has just stated that negotiations in Komárom had been broken off. The Hungarian Government will appeal to the four Great Powers and inform them of the course of the negotiations.

ERDMANNSDORFF

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (140/75789-90). The telegram reported that the Hungarians intended first to demand that the Czechs demobilize on their frontier by a certain date; in the absence of a favorable reply, they would themselves mobilize.

<sup>2</sup> Count Csáky.

No. 59

140/75824

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

BUDAPEST, October 14, 1938—5:25 a.m.

No. 133 of October 14

Received October 14—9:15 a.m.

Count Csáky informed me at 3 a.m. that the Council of Ministers had just passed a resolution to call up five more classes by individual

orders but to refrain from making a public announcement of this partial mobilization until the attitude of the German and Italian Governments was known.

Ex-Prime Minister Darányi is flying to Munich at 9 a.m. today and Count Csáky to Rome in order to ascertain this.

ERDMANNSDORFF

## No. 60

140/75836-37

### *Communication from the Italian Embassy*

[October 14, 1938.<sup>1</sup>]

Today I accompanied Count Csáky, Kánya's Chef de Cabinet, to the Palazzo Venezia, where he reported briefly on the recent course of events in the Czech-Hungarian negotiations.

He told us that negotiations between Prague and Budapest had been broken off, and that in view of the enormous divergence existing between the two points of view there was no hope of their being usefully resumed. Hungary has therefore appealed, or is about to appeal, to the four Great Powers to call a further conference in continuation of the Munich conference. At the same time Hungary intends to order partial mobilization, as Czechoslovakia has not demobilized vis-à-vis Budapest but, on the contrary, has sent troops to the frontier. At all events it is emphasized that no aggressive character can be attributed to the Hungarian mobilization, as Hungary has no intention of attacking Czechoslovakia but only wishes to take all precautionary measures which seem necessary in view of the present situation. Hungary will report to the four Great Powers, the neighboring states, and Poland on this partial mobilization and the reasons underlying it.

The Duce has approved Hungary's action and her program and is about to make a public statement to the effect that he considers the Hungarian precautionary measures justified. The Duce is also of the opinion that the conference should be called for the beginning of next week and suggests that it should take place in Italy, either in Venice or in Brioni. He does not think that the heads of governments should take part in this conference and considers the presence of the four Foreign Ministers sufficient.

Your Excellency is requested to go at once to the Foreign Ministry to convey the above information and to emphasize that it would be

<sup>1</sup>This communication (translated from a copy in German) must have been written on the 14th, the day on which Count Csáky flew to Rome (see document No. 59). Another minute (140/75835) of Oct. 14 records that Ciano had telephoned to the Italian Embassy in Berlin expressing his concern at the way Czech-Hungarian relations had been allowed to deteriorate.

opportune to set machinery in motion for calling the conference as soon as possible in order to obviate the ever increasing danger of complications.

I have brought the foregoing to the notice of London and Paris.<sup>2</sup>

CIANO

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<sup>2</sup> Marginal note by Weizsäcker: "Steps have already been initiated in Bucharest and Belgrade in order to induce calm insofar as the Hungarian military preparations render this necessary."

No. 61

F17/363-357

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

MUNICH, October 14, 1938.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FÜHRER AND CHANCELLOR AND CHVALKOVSKY, THE CZECH FOREIGN MINISTER, IN THE PRESENCE OF VON RIBBENTROP, REICH FOREIGN MINISTER

Chvalkovsky thanked the Führer for his willingness to receive him and then described the complete change of attitude which had taken place in Czechoslovakia following the tragic developments of the last few weeks and months. Czechoslovakia was now conscious of the mistakes which had been made in the past and could also very well understand that Germany had rightly complained of Prague's former methods. The new Czechoslovak Government, in whose name Ch[valkovsky] was speaking, intended to make a complete *volte-face* in Czechoslovak policy. It asked for Germany's good will for this new policy. Without the certainty that Germany would undertake no action against the national independence of the Rump Czech State, the Czechs could make no move, and he therefore asked the Führer to tell him whether Germany could give a guarantee for the new frontiers of Czechoslovakia.

Ch[valkovsky] then again emphasized at length the firm determination of the Czech Government to comply with Germany's wishes and made special mention of the fact that the new Czechoslovakia would have only a very small army and that she would arrange her domestic policy on the lines of curbing of the parties and the limitation of Jewish influence. He also mentioned the necessity of economic cooperation with Germany and repeated that benevolent support from Germany was desirable for Czechoslovakia in carrying out this new policy of cooperation with Germany, a policy moreover which he had long advocated. The Reich should grant the Czechoslovaks a period of probation, for, after her experiences with Prague,

Germany naturally could not be expected to place great value on mere assurances and promises on the part of the Czechs.

The Führer answered that in the present circumstances there were only two alternatives facing Czechoslovakia. One was that she might try to arrive at a friendly settlement with the Reich. In doing so, she must realize that she was in the German sphere, and it was in her own interest to adapt herself to the conditions of this sphere. If Czechoslovakia ceased to appear as an enemy toward Germany, Germany would completely disinterest herself, and the Czech people would be able to organize their country peacefully as they desired. Perhaps after decades it would even come about that the two peoples would achieve a friendly relationship with each other, and in time neither side would be able to understand how there had once been a time when the two peoples had faced each other as enemies.

The other alternative was for Czechoslovakia to renew her efforts to act as an enemy of Germany. This would undeniably result in calamity for the country in a very short time, at the latest in the event of a general conflict. It was insufferable for a great power to tolerate at her side a small country which, as it were, represented a constant threat to her flank. If Czechoslovakia were to make even the slightest move in this direction, Germany would immediately take energetic action.

In the recent crisis Czechoslovakia had been fortunate in that she had faced a Germany which was built on the principle of nationality and which had no desire for foreign elements within her frontiers. The new frontiers had therefore been determined by Germany in accordance with the demands of nationality. Germany could have laid down strategic frontiers without more ado, for if it had come to war no one would have intervened on Czechoslovakia's behalf; neither France nor Great Britain would have given the country military support. And even if they had done so they would not have achieved the slightest result in view of the state of German defenses and considering the fact that the German Army was the strongest and the best equipped in the whole world. If a conflict had arisen, complete catastrophe would have overtaken Czechoslovakia in a very short time.

Looking at the course of events in retrospect, one could only note with surprise the lack of reason with which Czechoslovak policy had been conducted. Consciously or unconsciously the Czechs had headed directly for disaster. From the purely military point of view Czechoslovakia's position had been untenable in any case because of geographical conditions. He (the Führer) had in the meantime inspected the fortifications on Czech territory. They were inferior beyond all

expectation. If German firms had constructed fortifications with such bad workmanship and such inferior material they would immediately have been court-martialed. The German Army had, as an experiment, bombarded several fortified places, and often the installations had collapsed at the first or second shot. An armed conflict would have entailed enormous and needless sacrifice of life for the Czechoslovak Army.

If Czechoslovakia found her proper place and realized that British and French guarantees were as worthless as the treaty of alliance with France or the pact with Russia had been during the crisis and that the only really effective guarantee was that by Germany, then in the course of time satisfactory relations might develop between the two countries. But if this was to come about, Czechoslovakia must abandon every attempt to return to her former mistaken ways, either in the military or in any other sphere. This of course necessitated a definite press and propaganda policy, capable of preventing public opinion in the country from again slipping out of the hands of the Government and returning to its old ways. Finally, it was desirable that Czechoslovakia should solve her remaining minority problems, especially those questions at present still pending with Hungary.

In this connection, the Führer inquired of Chvalkovsky about the state of the Hungarian-Czechoslovak question. He again pointed out that it would be better for both parties if they solved the question by direct understanding instead of submitting it again to the four Great Powers. He thought a solution might be possible if it were first established what Czechoslovakia was prepared to give up and also if it were clearly defined what the Hungarians were demanding. The concessions which Czechoslovakia was prepared to make could then be regarded as a final offer and need no longer be discussed. With regard to the Hungarian demands, the areas in which there was a definite Hungarian majority must first be singled out, and for the remaining areas where the proportion was in doubt plebiscites must be arranged; in these the British Legion might perhaps be used for police functions. At all events, in any possible cession of territory Czechoslovakia must leave out of account all strategic considerations, for, as already stated, because of geographic and political conditions, the position of Czechoslovakia was such that strategic considerations were of no value for her security. In these circumstances too a large army was an absolutely superfluous luxury for the country. For a country like Czechoslovakia the greatest security lay in friendly relations with her neighbors, and, above all, with the greatest neighbor State, the German Reich.

With regard to economic cooperation the Führer said, in answer to a question from Chv[alkovsky], that the final settlement of these questions must be left to the experts but that he (the Führer) envisaged as a basis an exchange of goods between the two countries, whereby Czechoslovakia as an agricultural country would deliver agricultural products to Germany, and Germany as an industrial country would sell to Czechoslovakia those industrial products which were not manufactured in the country itself.

When asked by the Führer about the Slovak-Hungarian negotiations, Chv[alkovsky] stated that, since the creation of the Slovak Government, Prague no longer had any direct influence on these negotiations. It could only try to influence the Slovak negotiators toward direct agreement. At present the position was that the Hungarians had made extremely far-reaching demands which had been rejected by the Slovaks, not for strategic but purely and simply for ethnic reasons. For example, Hungary had demanded the cession of Pressburg, the capital of Slovakia. In Pressburg the numerical proportion of the nationalities was extremely confused. There were Slovaks, Germans, Hungarians, and Jews, the latter generally forming a considerable proportion of the larger towns of this area. In many cases (including Pressburg) no ethnic group had a clear majority of over 50 percent, and in any plebiscite it could never be foretold exactly how the Jews would decide, as they always cast their votes for the side they thought would be successful. Therefore he (Chv[alkovsky]) could not answer the Führer's question about the probable result of a plebiscite in parts of the disputed area.

The Führer once again emphasized the necessity of direct agreement between Hungary and Czechoslovakia and pointed out particularly that, so far as foreign policy was concerned, Prague in any case had the last word in the Slovak question, too.

If the question were to be submitted again to the four Great Powers, there was the danger that a solution might be laid down by them which would satisfy neither party. For, among the four statesmen who would have to make the decision, there was not one who had an exact knowledge of local conditions, and an interrogation of the parties by the Great Powers was not to be thought of, as then there would be endless arguments and counterarguments on the Geneva pattern.

In conclusion, the Führer again briefly summed up the conditions to be fulfilled by Czechoslovakia if she wished to live on a satisfactory footing with Germany.

Submitted to the Reich Foreign Minister according to instructions.

DR. SCHMIDT

## No. 62

379/210142-53

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

MUNICH, October 14, 1938.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FÜHRER AND CHANCELLOR AND DARÁNYI, EX-PRIME MINISTER OF HUNGARY, IN THE PRESENCE OF REICH FOREIGN MINISTER VON RIBBENTROP, GENERAL KEITEL, AND MINISTER VON ERDMANNSDORFF IN THE FÜHRERBAU, MUNICH, FROM 3 TO 4:15 P.M. ON OCTOBER 14

After handing the Führer a letter<sup>1</sup> from the Regent, Darányi stated that the negotiations in Komorn had been broken off, as the Czechs were prepared to give up only a fraction of the territory inhabited by Hungarians and intended to determine their frontiers not on an ethnic but on a strategic basis and for reasons of communications. He submitted maps and documents and complained that the Slovaks wanted to keep almost all Hungarian towns and railroads.

Thereupon the Führer asked what the Hungarians intended to do now. Darányi answered that they had broken off the negotiations but that on the Pressburg radio the Czechs were calling upon the Czechoslovak people to resist and telling them that the army was still there and with enough weapons. Thereupon Hungary had called up five classes, and general mobilization was expected for tomorrow.

The Führer asked if the Hungarians wanted to fight. Darányi said that Hungary could not tolerate the attitude of the Slovaks.

The Führer then stated that he had given the Hungarians many warnings, both on board ship and also during the visit of Imrédy and Kánya to the Obersalzberg.<sup>2</sup> He had told them plainly enough that he would solve the Czechoslovak problem one way or another in October. Poland had recognized the right moment, taken action, and achieved her goal. This problem could only be solved by means of negotiation if one were determined to act. Only in this way had he (the Führer) obtained all he wanted. M. Kánya, however, had expressed nothing but doubt, although the Führer had told him that France and Britain would not fight. The position now was that, if it came to a conflict, Hungary would be completely alone and the outcome would be very doubtful. If it came to a conference of the Great Powers the outcome would also be doubtful, as no one was

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to the conversations with the Hungarian Regent on board Hitler's yacht during the naval maneuvers at Kiel on Aug. 23 (see vol. II, document No. 383) and with Imrédy and Kánya on Sept. 20 (see *ibid.*, document No. 554).

willing to fight, even if the Great Powers were in agreement. Germany no longer had any inducement to fight, apart from the fact that she was now in the process of demobilization, and no one would join in international punitive measures. Furthermore, the situation was such that the Hungarians had previously informed him that the Slovaks and Ruthenians wanted union with Hungary at all costs. But today this did not seem to be the case at all. So from that point of view the result of a general plebiscite was extremely doubtful. The decisive factor in any case would not be who was right but who had the power. He, the Führer, had told M. Kánya all this in detail and he had proofs of the Hungarian Government's actions during the crisis which had not particularly impressed him, such as the statements made by the Hungarian Ambassador<sup>3</sup> [*sic*] in London and the Bled Agreement<sup>4</sup> during Horthy's visit. Whereas we and Poland had prepared ourselves to stake everything we had and had also suffered loss of life, Hungary had constantly stated that she insisted on her rights but did not wish to achieve these by aggressive means. The moment had passed. He, the Führer, was glad that for Germany the matter was settled.

The Führer then mentioned a few items of his conversation with Chvalkovsky and pointed out that Czechoslovakia was no longer a strategic factor. The affair had cost us Germans a great deal, at least 6-7 milliards, and the Führer asked the Hungarians what they had staked to gain their objective. Obviously at an international conference we would represent Hungary's interests, but we would be alone in this. The fact was that the Czechs had a feeling of hatred for the French and that the French and British, now that they knew that Germany would not mobilize again, would do everything to save face with the Czechs. They would therefore support Czechoslovakia to the uttermost, and, if the Führer and Mussolini supported Hungary to the uttermost, the conference would be fruitless and the situation for the Hungarians would be worse than ever, for the Czechs and Slovaks would refuse to listen. He, the Führer, saw no way at present.

Darányi asked for support, whereupon the Führer said that at a conference he would naturally support the Hungarians. Darányi said that if Hungary took action she did not know what Yugoslavia and Rumania would do. The Führer then stated that previously the situation had been perfectly clear. Today it was considerably more difficult. At that time Germany, Poland, and Italy had stood together and Hungary had stood apart. Pointing to the map, the Führer asked whether Darányi did not consider a possible solution to

<sup>3</sup> György Barcza was Minister in London (see vol. II, document No. 395).

<sup>4</sup> The agreement drawn up at Bled on Aug. 23, 1938, between Hungary and the Little Entente States (see vol. II, document No. 383, footnote 44; also vol. V).

be the occupation by Hungary of a part and the recovery of the rest by plebiscite.

Darányi said that he must ask his Government, but he thought that what was Hungarian should certainly be occupied.

Referring to the intention expressed by the Hungarians to hold a plebiscite in the whole of Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine, the Reich Foreign Minister said he would not advise the Hungarians to do this, as the outcome was very doubtful. Darányi answered that the atmosphere in the areas would be more favorable for Hungary as soon as there were no more Czech soldiers there. If the Slovaks and Carpatho-Ukrainians became independent, Hungary could then aim at a customs union or something of the kind.

The Führer thought that this was inadvisable. A plebiscite could not be forced on the Slovaks against their will. They naturally wanted to be independent but definitely did not want union with Hungary. For several days Slovak leaders of every shade of opinion had been pestering the Germans with assurances that they did not want union with Hungary. Besides, Germany was not an arbiter.

The Reich Foreign Minister stressed once again that a conference was undesirable and expressed the opinion that the Hungarians should come to terms with the Slovaks direct.

The Führer suggested calling in Chvalkovsky, but Darányi stated that his Government had not empowered him to hold such talks. The Führer thought that neither the Slovak nor the Hungarian frontier delimitation was just and that fairer frontiers must be achieved through bilateral negotiations.

Darányi then mentioned various press reports dealing with Hungarian-Polish politics, in which reference was made to the formation of a bloc and the like. The Führer remarked that these were matters of complete indifference to him. The question was who was prepared to fight for his aims. Germany would never engage in a cause in which theoretical solutions were to be forced through on a school-book pattern. He was firmly rooted in reality. The final issue here was only what the population wanted and, as far as Germany knew, the population did not want union with Hungary. The Reich Foreign Minister again proposed to the Hungarian Minister that they should occupy the purely Hungarian areas and hold a plebiscite for the rest.

The Führer told of his struggle during the talks between the four statesmen in Munich and how difficult it was to bring such a conference to a favorable end and inferred from this that an international conference to solve the Hungarian frontier problem would have no hope of success. He also mentioned that the Slovaks would never give up Pressburg. When Darányi interjected that if Germans and Hungarians voted together in Pressburg they would have a

majority, the Führer answered that the Germans would certainly not do that as they never wanted to live as a minority under Hungary. He referred in passing to Hungary's bad treatment of minorities. Turning to the map, the Führer said that an international conference would never accept the Hungarian line. If we had had a war, Hungary would have had the whole of Slovakia. Now she must adapt herself to what was possible. It was repeatedly pointed out that a conference would not lead to any result. The Führer instructed the Reich Foreign Minister to talk with the Czechs in order to establish what maximum possibilities could be expected from the Czechs, and for this purpose asked the Hungarians to state their minimum demands to the Reich Foreign Minister for his personal information.

Darányi remarked to the Führer that he had the feeling that everything was not as it should be between Hungary and Germany and expressed the fear that Germany was in some way displeased. The Führer replied that we had not the slightest reason to be annoyed, as he had not asked M. Kánya to help us but had merely warned him that if he did nothing he would miss the bus [*zu leurz käume*]. Darányi should give up all doubts, and, if it were desirable, make an official statement that Hungary was adhering more closely to the Rome-Berlin Axis. The Führer left this completely to the Hungarians, as they were a sovereign state, but asked Darányi why they still belonged to the League of Nations. Darányi said that resignation from the League of Nations might be suggested and probably also achieved by him. Third, Darányi asked if it was desirable for Hungary to join the Anti-Comintern Pact. The Führer would approve of this but proposed that all three suggestions should be put into effect only when the Hungarian-Slovak question was settled as, if the quarrel came before a conference, Hungary was placing herself unnecessarily in opposition to Britain and France.

The Führer further pointed out to Darányi that, if Germany, Hungary, and Poland formed a great bloc, nothing would be final and frontier alterations could still be made. The Führer instructed the Reich Foreign Minister to explore the question of the frontier guarantee in his conversation with Chvalkovsky, i.e. to point out to the Czechs that if they did not give the Hungarians a just frontier, Germany would never guarantee any of their frontiers.

Darányi referred to a conversation with Minister Darré<sup>5</sup> on economic relations between Hungary and Germany and requested that economic negotiations envisaging a term of 10 or more years should be held. The Führer agreed that it was quite clear that long term economic agreements must be made. Darányi was also desirous of receiving arms for the Hungarian Army from Germany and Italy,

<sup>5</sup> Walter Darré, Reich Peasant Leader and Minister for Food and Agriculture, 1933-42.

if possible of the same types, by barter arrangements or by means of credit. The Führer agreed to this, too, and referred to later economic negotiations. Darányi again asked whether the Führer supported or opposed Hungary's mobilization, to which the Führer replied that he expected no result from this unless the Hungarians were really resolved to fight. The conversation closed with the Führer's request to Darányi to convey his greetings to the Regent.

Submitted to the Foreign Minister according to instructions.

HEWEL

No. 63

379/210137-41

*Memorandum by the Minister to Hungary*

MUNICH, October 14, 1938.

Ex-Prime Minister Darányi conveyed to the Reich Foreign Minister the attitude of the Hungarian Government on the frontier delimitation of the territory to be ceded by Slovakia to Hungary, as communicated to him by telephone by Prime Minister Imrédy at 6 p.m. This contains a few concessions as compared with the blue line on the map handed to us. The question of the future ownership of Pressburg is to be left in abeyance for the present; a plebiscite is proposed for the big Slovak enclave south of Nyitra and also for disputed points on the frontier. Besides Kaschau, which has 50,000 Hungarian inhabitants, the Hungarians would like to obtain the Slovak-inhabited area west of it, especially as it has only 3,000 inhabitants.

About 7:30 p.m., the Reich Foreign Minister received the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister in my presence. He told him that Darányi, the Hungarian ex-Prime Minister, had complained in the name of his Government that the note handed over yesterday in Komárom by the Czechoslovak Government stating the areas which Czechoslovakia is prepared to cede to Hungary is completely unsatisfactory. The Reich Government is of the same view. The Reich Foreign Minister uttered a warning against the introduction of such methods which were reminiscent of the past epoch of Czechoslovakia. A reconstruction of the Czechoslovak State could only be successful if the frontiers coincided with the ethnic frontiers and were not determined by strategic or economic considerations, or for reasons of communications.

The Reich Foreign Minister further stated that he naturally did not want to appear as pleading Hungary's cause. He showed M. Chvalkovsky on the map, which the latter took with him, what he considered to be a fair frontier delimitation. The question of the future ownership of Pressburg would not be discussed for the present; that of Kaschau was left open, while Ungvár and Munkatsch would remain in Carpatho-Ukraine territory. For the rest, this line showed

only a few deviations from the ethnic frontier proposed by the Hungarians and demanded for immediate cession.

The Reich Foreign Minister added that these were minimum demands, and, unless they were fulfilled, there could be no question of a guarantee by the Reich Government of the new Czechoslovak frontier. As the Hungarians had already carried out partial mobilization, speed was necessary. He could only propose to the Czechoslovak Government a speedy resumption of the negotiations with the Hungarian Government on a better basis.

The Czechoslovak Foreign Minister answered that he was not acquainted with these matters, as the Slovak Ministers had conducted the negotiations. According to information which had reached him, if the original Hungarian demands had been fulfilled, 440,000 Slovaks would have been added to the 300,000 Slovaks already living in the present Hungary, as well as 70,000 Ruthenians, so that the Slovak and Ruthenian minority living in Hungary would amount to 810,000. The Slovak Government contemplated keeping 300,000 Hungarians as compensation for the Slovaks living in Hungary, the number of whom would probably amount to the same. M. Chvalkovsky was reminded that the Hungarian demands were made on the basis of a map dated 1910. According to a German map before us, drawn up on the 1936 statistics, the territory which the Slovaks offered to cede was much too small.

M. Chvalkovsky admitted that Prague bore the responsibility for the negotiations. He would inform his Government tomorrow of the German point of view and was grateful for our advice. He personally was in favor of satisfying the Hungarian demands to the fullest extent possible, especially as Czechoslovakia attached great importance to the guaranteeing of her frontiers by Germany. It would, however, be extremely difficult to induce the Slovaks to be accommodating, as Prague's influence on them was after all limited.

V. ERDMANNSDORFF

## No. 64

1864/423239

### *Communication from the Italian Embassy*

[October 14, 1938.<sup>1</sup>]

Pol. IV 7387.

As Hungary has not asked and will not ask for a meeting of the four Powers, please inform the German Government that our step in support of this request<sup>2</sup> is to be regarded as having been abandoned.

<sup>1</sup> A marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "Handed to me only on the morning of Oct. 15 by the Italian Ambassador."

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 60.

The negotiations between Hungary and Czechoslovakia will be resumed through other channels, and therefore for the present at least there is no necessity for a conference.

The above has been communicated to London and Paris and for information to Belgrade.

CIANO

N. B. I have informed Ribbentrop direct of the above.

I further added that, if the direct negotiations failed, the best solution would appear to be an arbitral award by the Axis Powers. Count Csáky, to whom I mentioned this possibility, expressed himself in favor of it.

## No. 65

140/75896-99

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 17, 1938.

The Hungarian Minister today handed me the enclosed memorandum and asked that our Legation in Prague be informed accordingly.

In reply I told the Minister that, as far as I knew, the Reich Foreign Minister, after consultation with ex-Prime Minister Darányi, had on the 14th appealed to the conscience of the Czech Foreign Minister. M. Chvalkovsky had been urged in strong terms by Herr von Ribbentrop to take steps for the speedy resumption of the negotiations with the Hungarian Government on a better basis. The request now made to us to tell the Czechs that direct negotiations could no longer be considered and that the Czechs should without delay submit a new proposal to Budapest, which would then either be accepted in Budapest or passed to the Axis Powers, Germany and Italy, for the purpose of mediation or arbitration, obviously represented a change of tactics by the Hungarian Government. There seemed to me to be no fresh element for the instruction which we were asked to send to Prague, as only 48 hours ago the future procedure had been agreed between the Foreign Ministers of Germany and Czechoslovakia. I added that I naturally did not wish to anticipate the Reich Foreign Minister. I would therefore inform him at once of the Hungarian request and ask for his decision.

In conclusion, M. Sztójay alleged as the reason for this new request from his Government the fact that the military situation had deteriorated considerably. In answer to the deployment of Czech military units on the frontier Hungary had had to mobilize six additional classes, which approximated full mobilization; furthermore,

acts of violence and repressive measures in the Magyar area of Czechoslovakia continued to increase.

WEIZSÄCKER

[Enclosure]

BERLIN, October 17, 1938.

MEMORANDUM

The Hungarian Government has the honor to inform you that it has no desire to enter into *direct* negotiations with the Czechoslovak Government regarding the frontier or the extension of the area to be ceded to Hungary, because this would only postpone the final decision by many days, or possibly weeks.

The Hungarian Government envisages the further development of the question in this way: that the Czechoslovak Government should present it at once with a new urgent proposal, which the Hungarian Government would either accept or declare to be unsatisfactory.

The Hungarian Government requests the Government of the German Reich to intervene most urgently in Prague to this effect.

If the new Czechoslovak proposal was unacceptable to us, the Hungarian Government would at once appeal to the German and Italian Governments and would ask them to mediate, or, if these Governments considered it appropriate, the Hungarian Government would be prepared to leave the final decision as to the frontiers of the Hungarian inhabited areas to the arbitration of the above-mentioned two Governments.

The Hungarian Government begs to point out that it is very desirable that a settlement of this question should be reached within a few days and begs to stress further that a solution of this problem is extremely urgent and essential because, according to the latest reports, the oppression of the Hungarian minority is assuming ever greater proportions and because martial law was yesterday decreed for the whole southern-frontier region of Slovakia.

A solution of the Hungarian question is also extremely urgent because, after the separation of the areas with a Hungarian majority, the practical realization of the right of self-determination for the other nationalities in Slovakia still remains open, and until this is accomplished the final reorganization of Czechoslovakia cannot be regarded as complete.

## No. 66

140/75910

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

## Telegram

MOST URGENT

PRAGUE, October 17, 1938—7:30 p.m.

No. 624 of October 17

Received October 17—9:00 p.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 620 of October 16.<sup>1</sup>

The Foreign Minister asked me to come to see him today to make the following communication:

Tiso, the Slovak Prime Minister, Durčansky, Minister of the Interior, and Bačinsky,<sup>2</sup> Carpatho-Ukraine Minister (who has leanings toward Greater Russia), asked to be received by the Reich Foreign Minister before submitting new proposals to Hungary. If the Reich Foreign Minister thought that an audience with the Führer and Chancellor was also possible, the Slovak and Carpatho-Ukraine Ministers would be particularly grateful.

M. Chvalkovsky most warmly supports the above request, because by direct influence being exerted by the Reich Government on the Slovaks and Carpatho-Ukrainians he hopes for a speeding up in the resumption and execution of the negotiations with Hungary. As the matter is urgent, the Foreign Minister requests an answer as quickly as possible. The desire of the Slovaks and Carpatho-Ukrainians to be received in Berlin is being kept strictly secret by the Government here. The Foreign Minister is particularly anxious that any refusal of permission for the visit by the Reich Government should not be made public.

Please send telegraphic instructions.

HENCKE

<sup>1</sup> Not printed. In this telegram (28/18331) Hencke reported that Chvalkovsky had mentioned the possibility of members of the Slovak Government visiting Berlin and requesting an interview with Ribbentrop, which had Chvalkovsky's approval.

<sup>2</sup> In addition Tiso and Durčansky were among the five Ministers representing Slovakia in General Syrový's second Cabinet of Oct. 4, 1938, in which Bačinsky was one of the three Ministers representing the Carpatho-Ukraine.

## No. 67

379/210057

*Unsigned Memorandum*

CONVERSATION BETWEEN FIELD MARSHAL GÖRING AND  
MINISTER MASTNY

[Undated<sup>1</sup>]

Mastny said:

The political course in Czechoslovakia had veered round completely.  
Foreign policy: Orientation toward Germany.

<sup>1</sup> The conversation may have taken place on Oct. 16 or 17.

Domestic policy: Sharp trend to the right. Communism being wiped out. Jewish problem being tackled in earnest. Fate of Czechoslovakia in Germany's hands.

Ministers of Economics and Agriculture<sup>2</sup> and president of bank will come to Germany at once if desired.

Small scale revolts still possible, otherwise calm.

Views of the Field Marshal:

The Führer can make any demand on Czechoslovakia.

The new Czech Foreign Minister is viewed favorably.

After a customs union, currency union is possible; then influence over economy and budget, which is very important for our rearmament. Czechs do not want plebiscite, only ask for a few small villages.

Very great disillusionment over France, Britain, and especially Russia.

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<sup>2</sup> J. Kalfus and L. Feierabend.

## No. 68

379/210058

### *Unsigned Memorandum*

[Undated<sup>1</sup>]

CONVERSATION BETWEEN FIELD MARSHAL GÖRING AND DR. DURČANSKY, SLOVAK MINISTER

Also present:

Mach, Propaganda Chief of the Slovak Government

Karmasin, leader of the Germans in Slovakia

Reichsstatthalter Seyss-Inquart

Durčansky (Deputy Prime Minister) began by reading a statement. Contents: "Sympathy for the Führer; gratitude that, thanks to the Führer, the right of self-determination had been made possible for Slovaks." Slovaks *never want union with Hungary*. Slovaks want *full independence*, with very close political, economic, and military ties with Germany. Pressburg as capital. Execution of plan possible only if army and police are Slovak. At the meeting of the first Slovak Diet proclamation of independent Slovakia. In *plebiscite*, majority would be for separation from Prague. Jews vote for Hungary. Plebiscite to extend to the March River, where many Slovaks live.

Jewish problem will be solved as in Germany; Communist Party banned.

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<sup>1</sup> The conversation may have taken place on Oct. 16 or 17. It is referred to in a letter written by Woermann on Oct. 17 (document No. 69).

Germans in Slovakia do not want union with Hungary but to stay in Slovakia.

German influence on Slovak Government strong; a German Minister is promised.

Present negotiations with Hungary are being conducted by Slovaks.

Czechs are more compliant toward Hungary than the Slovaks.

The Field Marshal is of the opinion that efforts of the Slovaks for independence should be suitably supported. A Czech State minus Slovakia is even more completely at our mercy. Air base in Slovakia for air force for operation against the east very important.

### No. 69

1864/423317-18

*Under State Secretary Woermann to Consul Druffel*

BERLIN, October 17, 1938.

Pol. IV Abst. 640.

DEAR HERR VON DRUFFEL:<sup>1</sup> In your telegram you expressed the justifiable request for information on the conversations with Slovak personages in Germany. However, I assume that you may perhaps have more detailed information than we have ourselves as Deputy Karmasin was one of the party visiting Germany and was received by Field Marshal Göring<sup>2</sup> along with M. Durčansky, Mach, the Slovak Propaganda Chief (?), and Reichsstatthalter Seyss-Inquart. From what I have heard, M. Durčansky advocated full independence for Slovakia with a tie to Germany in political, economic, and military affairs with Pressburg as the capital but declared that the plan could only be carried out if the army and the police were Slovak. Durčansky also said that, in the event of a plebiscite, there would be a majority in favor of separation from Prague. It appears that these statements were sympathetically received.

Durčansky also spoke of the Czechoslovak-Hungarian negotiations. It seems to me, however, that developments have since overtaken the conversation on this.

At present Germany's official objective continues to be Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine, with strong autonomy and orientation toward Prague, while it remains to be seen whether Slovak desires will one day develop from autonomy to independence as a state.

In this connection I would like to tell you that I have the impression that most reports from Pressburg, especially from the DNB representative, have a somewhat too strong anti-Hungarian tone. We

<sup>1</sup> Consul at Pressburg.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 68.

understand that this is caused to a certain extent by local conditions, but we do not want to have the reputation of betraying those friends we have. As you will have noted from the official communiqué, the Czechoslovak Government has been urged by the Führer to show a more accommodating attitude toward Hungary. This being so, we must not give the impression that we are trying to attack Hungary from other quarters.

I was very glad that you were here. Such a talk is always very helpful.

Best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,  
WOERMANN

No. 70

140/75921-22

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb*

BERLIN, October 18, 1938.

The Foreign Minister telephoned late last night to inquire about the preparation of the material requested by him on the Hungarian question. I answered that the map<sup>1</sup> which the Hungarian Minister handed to Under State Secretary Woermann on Sunday morning was already on its way to him by special messenger. At the Foreign Minister's request, I made inquiries of Herr von Erdmannsdorff in Budapest and ascertained that this map is the same as that submitted last Saturday in Munich to the Foreign Minister by M. Darányi. In accordance with the Foreign Minister's wish, Herr von Erdmannsdorff further stated his willingness to redraw from memory the line which the Foreign Minister traced on Darányi's map as a compromise proposal and to send the map in question by air. The aircraft with the map will leave Budapest at 12:30 and arrive in Berlin at 4 p.m. Its collection and further dispatch to Berchtesgaden have been arranged for by the Foreign Minister's secretariat.

Berchtesgaden has been informed to this effect by telephone.

The Foreign Minister then wanted the Prague Government to be asked to state whether it recognized as a basis for negotiation the compromise line traced by him on the Hungarian map which he had given to M. Chvalkovsky; until this was done he could make no answer to the request of the Czechoslovak Government that he receive Ministers Tiso, Durčansky, and Bačinsky.<sup>2</sup> Herr Hencke thereupon confirmed

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 68.

overnight that the Czechoslovak Government is prepared to accept as a basis for negotiation the line drawn by the Foreign Minister. M. Chvalkovsky at the same time again requested that the three Ministers should be received by the Foreign Minister.

ALTENBURG

No. 71

140/75926-27

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb*

BERLIN, October 18, 1938.

On the basis of the statement by Chvalkovsky, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, transmitted by Counselor of Legation Hencke, to the effect that the Czechoslovak Government accepted the line proposed by the Reich Foreign Minister as a basis for the Hungarian-Czechoslovak negotiations regarding the cession of territory, the Reich Foreign Minister has directed me to transmit the following instruction to Herr Hencke: He is to inform M. Chvalkovsky that the Foreign Minister interprets this statement as meaning that his line is to be accepted as the basis of these talks, i.e. that in these talks this line and no other is to be taken as the starting point and that only questions of detail are to be discussed concerning places on one side or the other of this line. Before inviting the Slovak Ministers to visit the Reich for conversations, he asked for confirmation that this interpretation of the statement made was correct.

After carrying out his instructions, Herr Hencke reported by telephone that M. Chvalkovsky had asked him to come this afternoon at 3:30 for a talk. In this conversation the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister said that the Foreign Minister's interpretation was correct, i.e. that the line proposed by the Reich Foreign Minister was to be the starting point for the talks. Regarding the points still outstanding, M. Chvalkovsky stated:

1. Pressburg was outside this line.
2. On the question of Nitra,<sup>1</sup> the Reich Foreign Minister had said that this could be discussed.
3. On the question of Ka[s]chau<sup>2</sup> the Reich Foreign Minister had observed that this question was difficult. This was recognized by the Czechoslovak Government.

<sup>1</sup> (German: Neutra; Magyar: Nyitra) 85 kilometers ENE of Pressburg, 60 kilometers north of the Hungarian frontier.

<sup>2</sup> (Czech: Košice; Magyar: Kassa) in eastern Slovakia, 20 kilometers north of the Hungarian frontier.

4. The Czechoslovak Government was anxious that Munkatsch<sup>3</sup> and Uscherod<sup>4</sup> should be further discussed.

According to M. Chvalkovsky's statement, these four points are to be the subject of discussion by the Slovak Ministers. I conveyed this information to Herr Hewel for transmission to the Reich Foreign Minister. Shortly afterward Herr Hewel sent me instructions from the Reich Foreign Minister to have M. Chvalkovsky informed by Herr Hencke that the Reich Foreign Minister was expecting the three Slovak Ministers in the Führerbau at Munich tomorrow. More precise details of their arrival are requested.

Herr Hewel said, merely for the information of the Foreign Ministry and not for transmission to the Czechoslovak Government, that it was intended to present the three Slovak Ministers to the Führer as well, if the Reich Foreign Minister formed a favorable impression during his conversation with them.

ALTENBURG

<sup>3</sup> (Czech: Mukačevo; Magyar: Munkács) in Carpatho-Ukraine, 30 kilometers north of the Hungarian frontier.

<sup>4</sup> (Czech: Užhorod; Magyar: Ungvár) on the border between Slovakia and the Carpatho-Ukraine, 25 kilometers north of the Hungarian frontier.

## No. 72

2129/464551-66

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

MUNICH, October 19, 1938.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER AND TISO, THE SLOVAK PRIME MINISTER, DURČANSKY, THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, AND BADCYNSKI,<sup>1</sup> THE UKRAINIAN MINISTER, WHO ARRIVED LATER, IN THE FÜHRERBAU AT MUNICH ON OCTOBER 19, 1938, FROM 4:45 TO 6:45 P.M.

Tiso began by conveying the Slovak people's thanks to the Führer for his speech at Nuremberg<sup>2</sup> which had brought the Czechoslovak problem to the notice of the world. He had said that the Slovaks were a peaceful nation and that they wanted to live independently. The Slovaks had followed the principle of nationality since 1918, when Hlinka<sup>3</sup> had gone to Versailles, although this had been unsuccessful.

<sup>1</sup> Bačinsky is meant.

<sup>2</sup> Hitler's speeches of Sept. 6-12 at Nuremberg contained no special reference to the Slovaks. Tiso was probably thinking of Hitler's speech of Sept. 26 at the Sportpalast, Berlin, in which he said "the Slovaks did not want to have anything to do with the Czechs . . . the Slovak people wish to have peace and not adventures."

<sup>3</sup> Mgr. Andrej Hlinka, leader of the Slovak People's Party, who died in August 1938.

Slovakia was ethnologically, as well as in her language and literature, an independent territory. On June 5 the draft law had been introduced providing for autonomy for Slovakia under Prague, in which she had only foreign affairs, the army, and finance in common with Czechia. On October 8 [6] all Slovaks had united at Sillein <sup>4</sup> and had taken power into their own hands.

Passing to Komorn, he said that the plan submitted by the Hungarians was founded on the principle of nationality but based on the 1910 census. The Slovaks had determined and could prove that the 1910 statistics were incorrect and that they had even been falsified. Moreover, in 1910 the Hungarians had been at the height of their power, and this had caused countless Slovaks to vote for the Hungarians. A few years later the picture had completely changed. In any case, they asked that, if the decision were to be made on an ethnic basis, Magyar interests should not be unilaterally favored. At present the Hungarians had 300,000 Slovaks within their frontiers; by their demand they would include a further 300,000. This was no solution, but the key lay in a healthy balance. They asked the Third Reich to help them in carrying through their proposals, especially for reasons of communications and economics. They had full confidence in the Third Reich, as they respected the ethnic principle in the same way, and they were striving to attain close cooperation with us. They asked us to suggest to the Hungarians that the negotiations should be resumed and suggested Vienna as the place.

The Reich Foreign Minister answered that the statements had interested him very much. He then pointed out the Führer's great sympathy for the struggle of nationalities toward independence. Finally, by his action he had given the Slovaks the opportunity to realize their attempts for autonomy. Prague had recognized too late the lines on which its foreign policy must develop.

Today, as he had also told Chvalkovsky, there were only two ways open to Prague, first, alliance with Germany, and second, reversion to the Beneš policy, which would inevitably lead to the annihilation of Czechia. Germany had great understanding for the Slovak problems and felt the warmest sympathy for the Slovak people. Our attitude toward the Slovak problems was very simple; we would welcome the greatest possible measure of independence, which in the end was the prerequisite for peace in this part of Europe. If Slovakia placed great value on national necessities, she must also respect the Hungarians' national aspirations. If she did not do so, centers of unrest would remain. It was a question what attitude one adopted toward ethnic questions [*Volkstumsfragen*] in general. We Germans

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 40 and footnote.

also had language enclaves in Czech territory and regarded the fate of our fellow countrymen there with the greatest interest. We would never leave these Germans in the lurch. The Reich Foreign Minister asked his visitors to insure that this was constantly kept in mind in Prague. He referred to telegrams which reported friction and difficulties with the German population in Czechoslovakia and uttered a serious warning as far as Czechoslovak interests were concerned.

Tiso agreed with this view and said that Trebnitz, the place mentioned, was in Czech territory, so that the Slovaks were not responsible for conditions there. On being reminded that he was a member of the Czechoslovak Cabinet, Durčanský declined all responsibility and indicated by a gesture that he wanted to have nothing to do with the Czechs.

The Reich Foreign Minister went on to say that Germany was perfectly willing to cooperate politically and economically with Slovakia. He had recently told the Hungarians too that it was very important to reach a clear settlement as soon as possible, as otherwise the possibilities of a conflict were only increased. The Führer had said that there were really no ideal frontiers, and in an operation such as this generosity must be shown. Not only Slovak aspirations but also those of the Hungarians must be satisfied, for in the end Hungary was the country which had suffered most under the Treaty of Trianon. He further pointed out that Germany could not stand aside if it came to an armed quarrel between Hungary and Czechia. Only when the frontiers had been determined clearly and firmly, even if generously from an ethnographic point of view, would peace be guaranteed.

The Minister described the line which he had established with Darányi, and later with Chvalkovsky, and said that the Führer had instructed him to mediate between Hungary and Czechoslovakia on this basis. Hungary, it was true, had not made a final decision on this line, but there was every possibility that Hungary would resume the negotiations on this basis. The area which would then be settled must be ceded so that Hungary could occupy it. This point was repeatedly stressed during the discussion.

Turning to the map, Tiso remarked that the arguments advanced by the Hungarians were scarcely objective but rather sentimental. In this connection he said that the Magyars associated themselves with the Communists and Jews and that therefore any plebiscite must result in a decision against the Slovaks. He made the following statement on details:

1. Pressburg was a vital issue for Slovakia. The timber industry depended on it as its only access to the Danube—the Minister said that the Hungarians must certainly relinquish their claim to Pressburg.

2. The most difficult question was of course Kaschau. Kaschau was practically a metropolis for Slovakia. The most important railway communications passed through Kaschau, and the loss of Kaschau would mean for Slovakia a complete separation from eastern Slovakia and the Ukraine.

(At this point Minister von Erdmannsdorff and Geheimrat Altenburg were called into the discussion.)

The Reich Foreign Minister asked what the result of a plebiscite in the Kaschau area would be. Tiso replied that, as the Jews and Communists would vote against Slovakia, the result of a plebiscite was very doubtful. Moreover, a great deal depended on which year was taken as a basis. The country surrounding Kaschau was purely Slovak. If the plebiscite were held over a larger area and present-day conditions taken as a basis, Slovakia would gain four times its present territory. If the year 1910 were taken, the Kaschau area would be lost to Slovakia. A plebiscite on the 1910 basis was, however, impossible, as after 28 years it could not be established who had lived there. The Slovak Government, however, was opposed in principle to any plebiscite and gave reasons for this.<sup>5</sup>

The Reich Foreign Minister admitted that Kaschau was the most difficult point, for the Hungarians had proved very obstinate over this question. He had indeed dissuaded the Hungarians from claiming Pressburg in the interest of the Slovaks, but he did not know if he would succeed in doing so in the case of Kaschau. He instructed Minister Erdmannsdorff to make representations on these lines to the Hungarians. In his opinion Kaschau was indeed a central point for Slovakia, and the Hungarians must leave it to the Slovaks. He asked the Slovaks to treat this information as confidential, as, if it reached the press, the result would be a success for the other side.

Summing up, the Reich Foreign Minister told the Slovaks that he had instructed Minister Erdmannsdorff to inform the Hungarians that they should renounce their claims to Pressburg, Nitra, Kaschau, Munkatsch, and Ungvár, as these towns were vital for Slovakia. A condition for this was the occupation of the area accepted by the Hungarians within 8 days. He further expressed the hope that the negotiations would be resumed in one or two days. There was no question of holding the negotiations in Vienna, nor in Prague, Pressburg, Komorn, or Pistyan. The best way would be through diplomatic channels, and Chvalkovsky should first ask the Hungarian Minister to visit him. The Slovaks expressed their agreement in principle with these ideas.

<sup>5</sup> This sentence is added in handwriting in the margin.

The Reich Foreign Minister then asked the Slovaks what their economic prospects were. Tiso replied that Slovakia could be economically self-supporting even in isolation. At present she had a common budget with Prague but hoped by the autumn to be financially independent, at least in the local budget. She possessed a great deal of timber and coal, but on the whole Slovakia was not yet developed, and there were still great possibilities. For this purpose they had made great technical preparations, particularly in Kaschau. Besides this the Magyars had promised them certain free harbors on the Danube. In answer to a question by the Foreign Minister, Tiso added that Carpatho-Ukraine had told the Slovaks that she wanted to follow the same course.

The Ukrainian Minister, Badcynski, was then called in and began by pointing out that the Carpatho-Ukraine question was different from the Slovak one, and for that reason he had especially asked to state his case.

In the same way as he had done with the Slovaks, the Foreign Minister explained to him Germany's attitude toward these problems and also described the line which he had discussed with D[určansky] and then communicated to Ch[valkovsky]. He again repeated the importance of a speedy solution and the necessity that the solution to be sought should be a lasting one. He hoped that Carpatho-Ukraine would accede to the proposals which had already been accepted by the Slovaks.

B[adcynski] then tried to introduce some minor details which the Minister, however, would not then discuss. He handed the Minister a memorandum dealing with the ethnic composition of the Carpatho-Ukraine area, saying that the district surrounding the towns of Comà, Retina, Scrina, Trstink, Ardov, Cepa, and Tekovo was purely Ruthenian.

The Foreign Minister said again that there was no ideal solution, but that, if these areas were so purely Ruthenian as the Minister stated, Hungary must give up her claim here, too. What was pure Ruthenian must remain Ruthenian. He would also inform the Hungarians to that effect.

B[adcynski] then asked the Foreign Minister to suggest to the Hungarians that they should grant the Ruthenians certain transit facilities on various railway lines, as, for example, from Cep to Sevluš and Batovo to Munkatsch, since, if this were not done, the Ukraine would be torn apart economically. The Foreign Minister said he understood this and would call the Hungarians' attention to it. B[adcynski] continued that in no circumstances did the Ukraine want to acquire Hungarian territory, but she insisted that she should keep

all that was purely Ruthenian and that she should not be economically strangled.

Summing up what he had said, the Foreign Minister once again expressed his desire that the territory to be handed over should be evacuated within 8 days and that the negotiations should be resumed as soon as possible.

The Foreign Minister continued the conversation with Tiso, who asked him privately whether in his opinion the Hungarians would be more willing to make concessions if they were told by Germany that the Slovaks would enter into negotiations independently, that is independently of Prague.

The Foreign Minister advised against such a step and said that everything should be done as quickly as possible and things should be allowed to develop as they were doing now. If the Hungarians accepted, they, the Slovaks, would keep all their towns, including Kaschau, and the road would be completely clear. If these problems were dealt with internationally the result would only be an unfavorable one for Slovakia. She should make a clean cut now and rebuild the country.

The Foreign Minister brought up the question of the German area around Theben.<sup>9</sup> After a short discussion it was agreed to leave this question to the frontier commission. The Slovaks then took their leave.

B[adcynski], the Ukrainian Minister, again asked the Foreign Minister to support Ukrainian aspirations vis-à-vis the Hungarians. The main point was the cession of Munkatsch and the granting of transit facilities for the railway line, which was of vital importance for the Ukraine. The Foreign Minister then instructed Minister von Erdmannsdorff to submit these points to the Hungarians, as after all they affected Hungary's interests also, and Minister von Erdmannsdorff noted down details of the railway lines discussed.

B[adcynski] expressed his thanks, and the Foreign Minister expressed the hope that the negotiations would be resumed again in one or two days. He asked the Ruthenian how he thought that relations between the Ukraine and Prague would develop in the future. B[adcynski] did not answer this question directly but said that he himself had experienced the Magyar regime and that it meant a ruthless suppression of national individuality. He said that all Magyars and Czechs who belonged to the Greek Catholic Church were of Ruthenian origin. National feeling among the youth was so strong that it was out of the question to go on living with the Hungarians. The Czechs had not kept the promise made at St. Germain to grant independence to the Ruthenians. His aim was an autonomous Car-

<sup>9</sup> See document No. 46, footnote 4.

patho-Ukraine under Prague. He wanted exactly the same as the Slovaks, and negotiations with Slovakia had been conducted on that basis. The exact frontiers between Carpatho-Ukraine and Slovakia had not yet been determined.

Thereupon B[adcynski] took his leave of the Foreign Minister after thanking him for his reception. The Foreign Minister replied that the German people felt the warmest sympathy for the Ruthenian people.

HEWEL

### No. 73

2129/464575-77

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

MUNICH, October 19, 1938.

At about 7 p.m. the Reich Foreign Minister again received at his hotel Tiso, the Slovak Prime Minister, and Minister Durčanský. He told these gentlemen that he had invited them quite unofficially and privately in order to ask them what they thought of the development of their relations with Prague.

Whereas Tiso elaborated at length his aim of an autonomous Slovakia collaborating with an autonomous Carpatho-Ukraine under Prague, D[určanský] seemed to be striving rather for the complete independence of Slovakia, perhaps in union with Carpatho-Ukraine. Tiso thought that he would have to steer developments slowly and methodically. At Sillein<sup>1</sup> he had not wished to make any sudden move. If Prague did not adhere to the agreements which had been made regarding complete autonomy, with the exception of a common foreign policy and common army and common State finances, complete separation would soon follow. As a matter of fact, the administrative side of finance had already been taken over, so that joint control remained only in the State finances. In the army, too, agreement had been reached in theory to form purely Slovak regiments, but this had not yet been put into practice.

In reply to a question by the Foreign Minister, Tiso said that Slovakia could maintain her independence culturally and economically as long as she was helped militarily by guarantees from the Great Powers. It was of course impossible for her to form a modern army for the defense of her frontiers. There were three possible orientations in the event of Slovakia's becoming independent. The first was orientation toward Czechia, which in the end was probably nearest to the Slovaks' hearts, as Prague had been politically weakened and

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 40, footnote 1.

as Slovakia, because of her large raw material resources, was also economically the equal of the Czech State. The second possibility was orientation toward Hungary, for which the Hungarians were making great efforts, and the third was orientation toward Poland. He could not foresee which of these tendencies was strongest in the Slovak people at present. If the Hungarians persisted in their stiff demands, he did not think that there would be much sympathy left among the Slovak people for throwing in their lot with the Magyars.

In conclusion, the Minister told his visitors that he was naturally interested in the development of their country, and he asked them to apply directly to him if ever they had any particular political or economic problems.

HEWEL

No. 74

2129/464547-48

*Memorandum by the Ambassador in Italy*

ROME, October 20, 1938.

Geheimrat Altenburg telephoned to me as follows at 3:45 p.m. from Munich:

Yesterday evening the Reich Foreign Minister telephoned Count Ciano and informed him briefly of the contents and result of the talks with the Slovak and Carpatho-Ukraine representatives. While reserving the Duce's approval, Count Ciano, on the whole, expressed his agreement with the result. A report on the Duce's attitude has not yet reached the Reich Foreign Minister, so that the latter assumes that Italy will raise no objections. The Reich Foreign Minister had arranged that appropriate memoranda on the talks mentioned, together with a map, should be sent to me. He added the request that I should go to Count Ciano and explain matters to him once again in detail with the aid of the map and memoranda. He also asked that Count Ciano should be urged to exert Italian influence on Hungary, to induce Budapest to accept the frontier indicated on the map as "a reasonable solution."

When I asked when I could expect the arrival of the papers, Geheimrat Altenburg replied that they would probably reach me tomorrow morning, but when I expressed doubt he admitted that he had no information about the time of their dispatch nor about the method chosen for sending them (rail or air). However, he was on the point of returning to Berlin and would telephone me from there this evening.

I told Herr Altenburg that I could not unconditionally share the view that the fact that an answer had so far not been received from Count Ciano should be interpreted as complete agreement, for I knew

that Mussolini had left Rome last night, so that there might possibly be some delay in agreement being reached between him and Ciano. Moreover, an opportunity would certainly occur in my conversation with Count Ciano to take up the question of the Duce's attitude. I would report by telegram immediately after the conversation.

MACKENSEN

No. 75

140/75945

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

BUDAPEST, October 20, 1938—3:50 p.m.

No. 141 of October 20

Received October 20—6:00 p.m.

With reference to oral instructions from the Foreign Minister.

I have told the Foreign Minister that the Czechoslovak Government, and also the Slovak and Ukrainian Ministers present yesterday at Munich, have accepted the frontier line proposed by the Reich Foreign Minister and have agreed to the occupation by October 26 of the area to be ceded to Hungary, with the reservation that details are to be settled in direct negotiations between Czechoslovakia and Hungary in accordance with the request to this effect made by the Czech Foreign Minister to the Hungarian Minister in Prague. Pressburg, Nyitra, Kaschau, Ungvár, and Munkács thus do not pass to Hungary. I have also transmitted the special requests of the Slovak and Ukrainian Ministers regarding a more favorable frontier settlement for them and the facilitation of transit traffic, as well as the Reich Foreign Minister's urgent advice given in agreement with the Italian Foreign Minister, to accept the new frontier line.

Kánya answered that he thought there could be no question of the Hungarian Government's accepting the proposal. Count Teleki, the Minister of Education, who was called in as an expert on nationality questions, also said that the Hungarian Government must insist on a plebiscite in the frontier areas with a mixed population, and, if its claim to Pressburg were abandoned, it must insist on having Kaschau, and at least Ungvár *or* Munkács. As instructed, I left no doubt that, if his proposal is not accepted, the Reich Foreign Minister sees no possibility for further mediation. The Foreign Minister stated that Ciano had merely informed the Hungarian Minister in Rome<sup>1</sup> of the tenor of his telephone conversation with the Reich Foreign Minister without stating his views about our proposal.

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>1</sup> Baron Frigyes Villani.

## No. 76

379/210029

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 143 of October 20

BUDAPEST, October 20, 1938—11:48 p.m.

Received October 21—4:00 a.m.

Minister Frank<sup>1</sup> asks me to state that the Regent, the Prime Minister, and the Foreign Minister showed the greatest dismay over the proposal communicated this morning. The Regent said that he could not justify to his people renunciation of Kaschau, Ungvár, and Munkács, or reconcile it with his honor. The Foreign Minister emphasized that the Hungarian Government was prepared for any economic concession toward Czechoslovakia but only if these towns returned to Hungary. He was considering an appeal to the Axis Powers.

Minister Frank asks for an interview with Foreign Minister Ribbentrop on Monday.

ERDMANNSDORFF

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<sup>1</sup> Hans Frank, Reich Minister without Portfolio, 1934-45; Governor-General of the occupied Polish territories, October 1939-45.

## No. 77

140/75969-71

*Memorandum by the State Secretary<sup>1</sup>*

BERLIN, October 21, 1938.

The Hungarian Minister today handed me the two enclosed memoranda. As a reason he added that the situation was now so critical and the experience gained in direct negotiations with the Slovaks so bad, that there was now no other conceivable way out than an appeal to the Axis Powers for arbitration.

I made it clear to the Minister that the present Slovak line was none other than that already approved by Darányi and Imrédy a few days ago. It was true that Kaschau was not included, but in this respect too the Reich Foreign Minister was in full sympathy with Hungary's claim. However, he had not so far succeeded in obtaining the Slovaks' agreement to the surrender of Kaschau. I was not in a position to judge whether the Axis Powers, Germany and Italy, would now be willing to accept the role of arbiters. Our view so far

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<sup>1</sup> There is a marginal instruction that this memorandum was to be telephoned to the Foreign Minister at Munich.

had been that Prague and Budapest should make one more effort to negotiate between themselves.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

[Enclosure 1]

BERLIN, October 21, 1938.

MEMORANDUM

The Hungarian Legation begs to express to the German Government the sincere and respectful thanks of the Royal Hungarian Government for the influence exerted by the former on the Prague Government and on Mgr. Tiso in the interests of a speedy and favorable settlement of the frontier question.

The new Czechoslovak proposal, brought to Budapest by Herr von Erdmannsdorff on October 19, still contains so many points which in the Hungarian view are unfavorable that to accept it would stir up Hungarian public opinion in the extreme and would so further poison the situation that conditions full of danger would certainly ensue.

This applies primarily to Kassa [Kaschau] but also to a possible renunciation of Ungvár and Munkács.

With regard to Pressburg and its surroundings, the Nyitra area, and districts near Kassa—apart from the town itself—the Hungarian Government, as is known, is prepared to make concessions.

In the opinion of the Hungarian Government, further negotiations, which may have been begun or conducted through diplomatic channels on the basis of the above-mentioned new Czech proposal, would have little prospect of success.

[Enclosure 2]

BERLIN, October 21, 1938.

I take the liberty of suggesting the idea and of asking whether Germany would be willing to undertake the role of arbiter in conjunction with Italy.

In doing so, I beg you to take into account that the present position cannot be maintained much longer without serious consequences.

The situation is daily becoming more difficult, especially since martial law was imposed in areas inhabited by Hungarians, a measure which has made an extremely unfavorable impression on the Hungarians there, as well as on public opinion in Hungary, and has caused great agitation.

<sup>2</sup> On the same day Hencke was instructed to inform the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister that Germany expected the Czechoslovak Government to communicate its proposals to the Hungarian Government, as the Czechoslovak Government's views on the Slovak proposals must be clearly stated (140/75973).

## No. 78

140/75962

*The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Hungary*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 219 of October 21

BERLIN, October 21, 1938.

e.o. Pol. IV Abst. 752.

In all future conversations on pending negotiations between Hungarians and Slovaks please stress that the solution discussed between the Reich Foreign Minister and the Slovak Ministers is based on the Darányi line,<sup>1</sup> which, as you know, does not include the various towns situated to the north of the line. As regards Kaschau, the Reich Foreign Minister sympathizes with the Hungarian claim. He has, however, not succeeded in winning the Slovak Ministers over to this point of view. It therefore remains a question of a Slovak proposal which is based on the Darányi line as a result of the mediation of the Reich Foreign Minister.

WOERMANN

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<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 62 and 63.

## No. 79

140/75978

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 145 of October 21

BUDAPEST, October 21, 1938—5:15 p.m.

Received October 21—8:45 p.m.

The Foreign Minister told me that he had instructed the Hungarian Legation in Prague to urge the Czechoslovak Government to submit a formal proposal soon.

The Italian Foreign Minister this morning expressed complete understanding of Hungary's attitude. Mussolini had agreed that the frontier was to be determined by a German-Italian arbitral award and that for the delimitation of the frontier east of Kaschau (inclusive) Poland was to be brought in as a third power. Kánya had so far not made a suggestion of this kind to Poland.

The French Foreign Minister had earlier given the Hungarian Minister to understand that he wished if possible to be left out of the matter. Britain's attitude was similar.

ERDMANNSDORFF

## No. 80

140/75986-87

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb*

BERLIN, October 21, 1938.

Ambassador von Mackensen gave the following report by telephone at 8:40 p.m.

He had just returned from his visit<sup>1</sup> to the Italian Foreign Minister. Count Ciano had begun by saying that a further detailed statement by the Ambassador on the outcome of the Munich talks was unnecessary, as this had been superseded by events. After his telephone conversation with the Reich Foreign Minister on the evening of the 19th,<sup>2</sup> he had at once instructed the Italian Minister in Budapest<sup>3</sup> to inform the Hungarian Government that the Italian Government associated itself with the action of the German Government and regarded the solution reached at Munich as a reasonable one. Yesterday he had heard nothing regarding the matter, as he had left Rome for Naples to welcome the volunteers returning from Spain. Today the Hungarian Minister had called on him and informed him that the Czechoslovak proposal was unacceptable to Hungary. In particular he had said that no Hungarian Government could relinquish its claim to Kaschau. This, Count Ciano said, meant that, in his opinion, German-Italian mediation could be regarded as being at an end. The Hungarian Minister had then suggested arbitration, which he, Count Ciano, had already mentioned briefly in previous telephone conversations with the Reich Foreign Minister. The Hungarian Government proposed German-Italian arbitration for Nitra and Pressburg, and German-Italian-Polish arbitration for Kaschau, Ungvár, and Munkatsch. Count Ciano had made no comment on this proposal and replied that he must first get in touch with Berlin; he personally was in agreement, but the decision lay in the hands of the German Government. The Foreign Minister added that a summary of his conversation with the Ambassador would be dispatched today to Signor Attolico, who would in the meantime probably have reported it to the Foreign Ministry.

Ambassador von Mackensen added that, on entering Count Ciano's office, he had noticed the Polish Ambassador<sup>4</sup> leaving and had asked the Italian Foreign Minister what the Polish Ambassador had been discussing. Count Ciano answered that the Polish Ambassador had inquired, purely for information and as a result of direct communica-

<sup>1</sup> On Weizsäcker's instructions, Altenburg had telephoned that the Ambassador should see Ciano as soon as possible to inform him concerning Ribbentrop's conversations at Munich with the Slovak Ministers, to inform the Italian Government of German policy, and to request Italian support for it (140/75972).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 74.

<sup>3</sup> Luigi Orazio, Count Vinci-Gigliucci.

<sup>4</sup> General Boleslas Wieniawa Dlugoszowski.

tions between Budapest and Warsaw, how the Italian Government viewed the participation of Poland in the proposed arbitration for the three eastern towns. In his answer to this inquiry Count Ciano had not committed himself.

Ambassador von Mackensen will send during the night a telegraphic report on the subject matter of his conversation with the Italian Foreign Minister.<sup>5</sup>

A[LITENBURG]

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<sup>5</sup> Mackensen's telegram No. 282 of Oct. 21 (2129/464578-79) from Rome repeats the above information, adding that, in his opinion, Ciano appeared to be in favor of Polish participation.

## No. 81

Nuremberg Document 136-C  
Exhibit USA 104

### *Directive by the Führer for the Wehrmacht*

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, October 21, 1938.

OKW L Ia. No. 236/38

The future tasks of the Wehrmacht and the preparations for the conduct of war resulting from these tasks will be laid down by me in a later directive.<sup>1</sup>

Until this directive comes into force, the Wehrmacht must at all times be prepared for the following eventualities:

1. Securing the frontiers of the German Reich and protection against surprise air attacks.
2. Liquidation of the remainder of the Czech State.
3. The occupation of Memelland.

[Translation of Part 1 omitted]

## 2

### LIQUIDATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE CZECH STATE

It must be possible to smash at any time the remainder of the Czech State, should it pursue an anti-German policy.

The preparations to be made by the Wehrmacht for this eventuality will be considerably less in extent than those for Operation "Green";<sup>2</sup> on the other hand, as planned mobilization measures will have to be dispensed with, they must guarantee a continuous and considerably higher state of preparedness. The organization, order of battle, and degree of preparedness of the units earmarked for that

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 152 for a later supplement dated Dec. 17.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. II, document No. 175.

purpose are to be prearranged in peace time for a surprise assault so that Czechoslovakia herself will be deprived of all possibility of organized resistance. The aim is the speedy occupation of Bohemia and Moravia and the cutting off of Slovakia. The preparations must be so made that the defense of the western frontier [*Grenzsicherung West*] can be carried out simultaneously.

The following are the individual tasks of the Army and Air Force:

A. *Army*

The units stationed near the Czech frontier and certain motorized formations are to be detailed for surprise attack. Their number will be determined by the forces left to Czechoslovakia; quick and decisive success must be assured. The deployment and preparations for the attack must be worked out. Forces not required are to be kept in readiness in such a manner that they either can be used for securing the frontier or can follow up the attacking army.

B. *Air Force*

The rapid advance of our Army is to be assured by the early elimination of the Czech Air Force.

For this purpose the rapid move of the formations near the frontier from their peace stations is to be prepared. Whether even stronger forces will be required for this purpose can only be seen from the development of the military and political situation in Czechoslovakia.

In addition, the simultaneous deployment of the remainder of the offensive forces against the west must be prepared.

[Translation of Part 3 omitted]

Certified correct: ADOLF HITLER  
KEITEL

No. 82

140/76003-05

*Minister Erdmannsdorff to Under State Secretary Woermann*

CONFIDENTIAL

BUDAPEST, October 22, 1938.

DEAR WOERMANN: With reference to the telegraphic instruction No. 219<sup>1</sup> signed by you, I must inform you of the error underlying your statement that the solution discussed by the Reich Foreign Minister with the Slovak Ministers was based on the Darányi line, which as you know does not include the various towns situated north of the line.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 78.

<sup>2</sup> A minute by Woermann (140/75988) records that the Hungarian Minister had telephoned to him early that morning to point out the same error.

When I was last in Munich I noted that the Reich Foreign Minister was under the impression that Darányi, after his telephone conversation with Imrédy, had agreed to the line drawn by the Reich Foreign Minister, which does not include the towns of Ungvár and Munkács. I have already pointed out to him myself that this is a mistake. At his reception on October 14 at 6:30 p.m. in the Vier Jahreszeiten Hotel, Darányi, who at the time was accompanied by Uj pétery, the ministerial draftsman, merely told the Reich Foreign Minister, in the presence of Kordt and myself, that the Hungarian Government had agreed that, in contrast to the original Hungarian demand (blue line), the mixed-language area to the south of Nyitra, as well as the other areas indicated on the Hungarian map for a plebiscite (e.g. east of Kaschau) would not be ceded immediately but that their fate would be decided by plebiscite.

The memorandum<sup>3</sup> drawn up by me on this meeting and which was submitted to you runs as follows:

"Ex-Prime Minister Darányi conveyed to the Reich Foreign Minister the attitude of the Hungarian Government on the frontier delimitation of the territory to be ceded by Slovakia to Hungary, as communicated to him by telephone by Prime Minister Imrédy at 6 p.m. This contains a few concessions as compared with the blue line on the map handed to us. The question of the future ownership of Pressburg is to be left in abeyance for the present; a plebiscite is proposed for the big Slovak enclave south of Nyitra and also for disputed points on the frontier. Besides Kaschau, which has 50,000 Hungarian inhabitants, the Hungarians would like to obtain the Slovak-inhabited area west of it, especially as it has only 3,000 inhabitants."

Pages 2-3 of the memorandum run as follows:

"The Reich Foreign Minister further stated that he naturally did not want to appear as pleading Hungary's cause. He showed M. Chvalkovsky on the map, which the latter took with him, what he considered to be a fair frontier delimitation. The question of the future ownership of Pressburg would not be discussed for the present, that of Kaschau was left open, while Ungvár and Munkács would remain in Carpatho-Ukraine territory. For the rest, this line showed only a few deviations from the ethnic frontier proposed by the Hungarians and demanded for immediate cession."

At that time, therefore, the Hungarians merely agreed to leave the question of Pressburg in abeyance for the time being and to refrain from immediate occupation of the plebiscite areas mentioned above but did not give up Ungvár and Munkács. Yesterday, before a lunch for Reich Minister Frank, Darányi spoke on the same lines to Imrédy, who, after the receipt of a telephone message from Sztójay, asked him about his conversation with Herr von Weizsäcker. Darányi added

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 63.

that he could never have made a statement renouncing the towns mentioned, as he had not been in any way empowered to do so.

As a matter of fact, the Reich Minister did not draw in the frontier line regarded by him as reasonable on the map handed to the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister until after the Hungarians had left.

I mention the foregoing only for your private information and should conversation revert to these matters, I shall tell the Hungarians only that we were under the impression that Darányi had accepted the solution discussed with the Slovak Ministers with the exception of Kaschau.

I have the impression that, unless the Hungarians receive very strong support from Italy and Poland in this matter, they will finally renounce Ungvár or Munkács or, if necessary, both towns. Particularly for reasons of domestic policy, however, it is hardly possible to abandon Kaschau. There seems little justification for this, since Tiso said in my presence that a plebiscite in Kaschau based on the 1918 census in Bohemia and Moravia as proposed by us would probably be in favor of Hungary, even if wide areas of the predominantly Slovak but sparsely populated area situated to the west and east of the town were included.

I enclose a copy for Herr von Weizsäcker. I further request, of course, that this matter should be treated confidentially.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

VON ERDMANNSDORFF

### No. 83

140/75999-76000

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, October 22, 1938.

#### TELEPHONE MESSAGE FOR THE FOREIGN MINISTER

As far as can be judged from here, the following procedure is to be envisaged for the further treatment of the frontier settlement between Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

1. The Czechoslovak Government has, in accordance with the request addressed to it, already approached the Hungarian Minister in Prague<sup>1</sup> and asked him to obtain directions as to when and where

<sup>1</sup>The text of this proposal does not appear among the documents. It was handed by Chvalkovsky to the Hungarian Minister in Prague on Oct. 22, as reported by Hencke in telegram No. 651 from Prague (140/75993); reinforced by German pressure, it caused the Hungarian Government to resume the negotiations. See document No. 86.

his Government is prepared to resume negotiations on the basis of the Munich plan. The Hungarian Government should be induced, first of all, to accept this proposal. As the Czechoslovak and Hungarian Governments will certainly not reach agreement, the aim of this discussion—as Attolico has also suggested here personally—would be to establish exactly the points on which they agree and those on which there are differences of opinion.

2. On the basis thus established, direct arbitration by Germany and Italy, or by Germany, Italy, and Poland should for the present be avoided. The argument against arbitration is that, while there would indeed be no objection to German and Italian mediation on the basis of the Munich discussions, it might lead to difficulties contrary to the Munich decisions if these two powers with or without the inclusion of Poland were to undertake the role of arbiter. Moreover, the role of arbiter is an extremely thankless one, as Hungary might attribute the responsibility chiefly to Germany and thus keep alive the present state of tension. Therefore, Germany and Italy, with or without Poland, could again make joint *proposals* to the two powers on the common basis established by Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Further procedure in the event of the proposals' being rejected need not yet be considered. Another solution would be a second four-power conference. Even in this case it would be an advantage if the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Governments were first to establish their points of difference.

3. The inclusion of Poland means a definite departure from the Munich policy and would represent a great gesture to Poland, whose interests in this area would thus be expressly recognized by us. For this reason the question of initiating a serious discussion with Poland and of demanding compensation from her (Danzig, Memel) should be seriously examined. However, this would only be successful if, in the course of such negotiations, we were prepared to admit the establishment of a common Polish-Hungarian frontier on the Carpathian front, which would give rise to possibilities of conflict with Rumania and probably also with Yugoslavia. Time would be gained for a discussion of this kind if we could persuade the Hungarians first to act according to paragraph 1 of this proposal.

4. Hungary would perhaps accept this proposal if she were allowed to occupy at once the line to which the Slovaks have agreed, as Attolico suggested as a purely personal remark.

## No. 84

379/209987

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT  
No. 149 of October 22BUDAPEST, October 22, 1938—3: 27 p.m.  
Received October 22—5: 35 p.m.

On telephoned instructions from the Reich Foreign Minister I handed the Foreign Minister an *aide-mémoire*<sup>1</sup> stating that, as the Hungarian Government had described the German mediation proposal approved by Darányi as unacceptable, the Reich Government regards direct mediation between the two parties as being at an end.

Kánya answered that this was no surprise after my statements on my return from Munich. He requested a speedy answer to the proposal for German-Italian arbitration,<sup>2</sup> to which Italy had already agreed.

ERDMANNSDORFF

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<sup>1</sup> The text had been telephoned to him that day by Ribbentrop from Munich (2129/464582-85). The same day Erdmannsdorff sent to the Foreign Ministry a copy of this *aide-mémoire*, which stated fully the German views on the dispute (2063/448692-95).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 77, enclosure 2.

## No. 85

1938/434470-75

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

A III I allg.

PRAGUE, October 23, 1938.  
Pol. IV 7750.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: The reorientation of Czechoslovak policy on pro-German lines and the difficulties involved.

The realization that really close and good relations with the Reich are vital for Czechoslovakia, and thus must be decisive for the country's policy as a whole, existed long before the events of recent months in the minds of a number of Czech politicians, who were mostly to be found in the Agrarian Party.<sup>1</sup> Wider circles and leading Government authorities, as well as a not inconsiderable section of the people, certainly wished to be on good terms with Germany but were willing

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<sup>1</sup> In a subsequent personal letter to Altenburg on Oct. 28 (1941/435034-85), Hencke mentioned that Beran, leader of the Agrarian Party, was anxious to establish personal contact with leading German personalities such as Hess. As he was afraid of compromising himself with the majority of his countrymen, who were still anti-German, he proposed to send a deputy, Dr. Jozef Korec, to initiate negotiations.

to make only the smallest possible sacrifices for this so far as foreign and national policy was concerned. As a result of this country's bitter experiences at the hands of her allies in the crisis of recent months and the knowledge which has now penetrated to the whole population that the foreign and domestic policy pursued by Beneš had brought the state to the brink of disaster, the influence of those politicians and those groups who had always advocated a policy of *rapprochement* with Germany at first increased. Embittered by the conduct of their former friends, disappointed and deceived by their leaders, the mass of the population at first regarded events with a certain mental confusion which prevented them from adopting an independent attitude. The apathy noticeable everywhere at first almost gave the impression that neither outward nor inward resistance to a reorientation of the policy of this state toward *rapprochement* with Germany was to be expected.

Today, when 4 weeks have elapsed since the Czechoslovak State's fatal hour at Munich, it seems possible to give a general survey of the attitude of the various elements in this country toward a policy of dependence upon Germany.

The leading personalities in the Government, among whom, apart from General Syrový, I would include the Foreign Minister, Chvalkovský, and the Minister, General Husárek, are in my opinion convinced that only the closest cooperation with the Reich affords Czechoslovakia the possibility of maintaining her outward independence. These men wish—certainly not because of sentiment but for reasons of practical policy—to give the Reich proof of their loyalty. M. Chvalkovský, who from his conversations with the Führer and the Reich Foreign Minister best knows where a relapse into the Beneš policy would necessarily lead, will honestly endeavor to bring his still wavering Cabinet colleagues into line with his policy and will in particular try to avoid in the field of foreign politics anything which might give rise to doubts as to his honesty. This is especially true of Czechoslovakia's relations with France and the Soviet Union. That Prague has in the meantime realized the questionable value of friendship with the Bolshevik ally is shown by the ban recently imposed on the Communist Party, which, in view of circumstances here, signifies a measure directly aimed at Moscow. It is a fact that the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia was a valuable prop for Moscow, not only in the ideological but also in the concrete political sense, and was regarded as such and tolerated by authoritative elements of the former Government. The attitude of the press here can also be regarded as further proof of the Government's desire to achieve good relations with Germany. Official instructions and censorship regulations in general prevent the recrudescence of an aggressive attitude toward Germany.

Even those newspapers which were formerly known for their chauvinistic anti-German outlook now preach *rapprochement* with Germany. In spite of this, certain mental reservations must always be reckoned with in the Czechs—be they statesmen, politicians, or journalists. This can be traced to the characteristics peculiar to the western Slavs and applies in particular to relations with the Reich, which is indeed regarded here with fear but at the same time with a respect which inspires a feeling of humiliation but certainly not love.

Another question is: How far is the influence of the representatives of the new regime capable of securing the acceptance of their policy in the state and of firmly implanting it among the people themselves?

Those officials over whom the Government has the opportunity of exerting direct influence seem to have more or less adopted the new policy. The majority of departmental Ministers seem to be making a personal effort to remove points of friction which might endanger German-Czechoslovak relations. One section of the ministerial bureaucracy too is obviously willing to work toward this end. Another section, it is true, still clings to the old anti-German attitude and tries, not always unsuccessfully, to sabotage the Cabinet's intentions. Determined action by Ministers in such cases is often tardy and in the present circumstances hardly possible. A Government which—like the Czechoslovak—has increased as a result of the transformation of the state to 21 members who belong to the most widely differing political and ethnic camps and who attack each other and intrigue against each other can have only a very limited scope. Only a thorough reorganization which would establish the *Führerprinzip* could in time effect a change here; for this, however, there are at present no suitable personalities. In addition to this, in recent months and especially as a result of mobilization, a number of Beneš' supporters such as legionaries and officers loyal to the ex-President have found their way into important Government positions and, in view of the weakness of the central authority, cannot be got rid of overnight.

Cases of resistance which the Legation encounters in settling various questions can doubtless be traced to the obstructive activity of the negative section of the ministerial bureaucracy. In this connection I might cite as an example the reluctance of the Ministries of Justice and of the Interior to confirm by an official written statement a promise made orally to the Legation that Sudeten Germans would not be subjected to any persecution for desertion or failure to comply with mobilization orders. The passive resistance of ministerial officials might also account for the fact that so far no reply has been received to the Legation's request for an official notification in writing of the Czechoslovak Government's general directive, actually is-

sued, whereby expulsions of Sudeten Germans legally residing in the ceded area should no longer be carried out. Finally, I might also mention the difficulties raised by the Ministries of Education and Public Health in connection with the return of the German-university clinics occupied by the Czechs during the days of mobilization. Among the determining factors here, it is true, might be the general desire to exclude German cultural influence as far as possible in the new Czech national State. On the other hand, it must be admitted that in all cases where the Foreign Ministry has been able to act on its own responsibility the wishes of the Legation have been quickly and loyally fulfilled.

Even more difficult than relations with the central authorities are those with the Czech provincial authorities. For the present there are no signs of a change for the better here. The weak central government can obviously prevail only with difficulty in face of the feeling against everything German which was somewhat intensified after the cession of the Sudeten-German areas. Even if the reports of persecution of the remaining Germans by Czech provincial authorities are often exaggerated for obvious reasons, what is actually happening is enough to embitter the lives of our fellow countrymen who have remained in the country. Expulsions, dismissals, taxation, and other administrative intrigues are unequivocally designed to drive the Germans out of the country as soon as possible in order to be "by themselves" at last. The speediest possible conclusion of bilateral agreements on the legal position of the remaining Germans and at the same time a strong central government possessing the energy and the means to enforce the agreements throughout the country are necessary for the removal of the conditions existing today, which are intolerable for any length of time.

As for the Czech people themselves, there can at present be no question of a real diminution of anti-German feeling. Bitterness against the British and French has now been added to the antipathy for the Germans, in which a certain distinction is made between Reich Germans and Sudeten Germans in favor of the former. An anti-Semitic tendency is also gaining ground. In the last few days, for example, considerable anti-Jewish demonstrations have taken place in Prague which were not mentioned by the press. One has the impression that the Czech masses have recovered from the initial shock and are now passing through a state of reaction to what they have experienced. The demobilized soldiers, glad as they are that war has been avoided, are now indulging in Czech chauvinism and therefore anti-German agitation as a substitute for military heroism. Economic boycotting of Germans, terrorization of Germans (difficult to define in individual cases), discrimination against the German

language, et cetera, are now frequent occurrences. This attitude on the part of the Czechs is intensified by the realization growing daily that the new situation involves more or less heavy economic sacrifices for almost every individual. It may be expected that, after the final determination of the frontier and the election of the new President, a certain calm will gradually set in. A mental change from centuries-old opposition to a loyal attitude can be brought about among the Czechs only when the people too realize that they benefit from good German-Czech relations, especially in the economic field. This necessitates a very skillful propaganda directed at the man in the street. In any case such a mental change must take a rather long time. It is also obvious that even in the most favorable circumstances there must be frequent relapses into the old accustomed chauvinistic ways.

It remains to be seen whether and to what degree the general pro-German attitude of the Slovak people and the Carpatho-Ukrainians will induce a change of heart in the Czechs. The further development of the at present problematic question of the coexistence of these peoples side by side within the framework of the Czechoslovak Republic might play an important part in this.

HENCKE

## No. 86

140/76011

### *The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

BUDAPEST, October 23, 1938—10: 55 p.m.

No. 150 of October 23

Received October 24—3: 30 a.m.

In consideration of the polite tone of the Czech proposal,<sup>1</sup> which is described as a basis subject to general modifications later, and at the suggestion of the Reich Government, the Hungarian Government has decided to continue negotiations.

The Hungarian counterproposal, which will be handed over in Prague tomorrow and the text of which is being communicated to Berlin, Rome, and Warsaw, is as follows:

1. Undisputed areas are to be ceded within 3 days from October 27 and occupied militarily.

2. Disputed areas, including the towns of Neutra, Kaschau, Ungvár, and Munkatsch, are to be divided into 8 sectors in which plebiscites are to be suggested on the basis of the 1918 census, to be carried out under international control by November 30. For Pressburg no plebiscite but a special agreement is envisaged.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 83, footnote 1.

3. Realization in practice of the right of self-determination under international control for all nationalities in Czechoslovakia, especially the Ruthenians. Unless this is done, Hungarian Government cannot guarantee new Czechoslovak frontier. If Czechoslovak Government does not accept proposal for plebiscite, a decision will be reached for the whole disputed area by arbitration by Germany and Italy, with the inclusion of Poland for the eastern sector. Hungarian Government accepts arbitral award in advance and expects the same from Czechoslovak Government.

Following the Hungarian example, an answer is expected within 48 hours.

ERDMANNSDORFF

### No. 87

140/76012

*The Foreign Minister to the State Secretary*

Telephone Message

BERCHTESGADEN, October 24—11:30 a.m.

With reference to telegram No. 150<sup>1</sup> of October 23 from Budapest.

For the State Secretary personally.

If the Hungarian Government approaches you about German-Italian arbitration, please maintain complete reserve.<sup>2</sup>

*For your personal information* I would like to say that I am opposed to such an arbitration procedure but intend to get in touch with the Italian Government again before making a final decision.

Please instruct Erdmannsdorff to this effect.

RIBBENTROP

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "Has been done."

### No. 88

1647/391115

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

October 24, 1938.

For State Secretary von Weizsäcker.

Subject: Czechoslovak frontier adjustments.

1. Reference is made to the enclosed General Staff map<sup>1</sup> on which the wishes of the General Staff are indicated in blue pencil.

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced. The map indicates various minor salients beyond the frontier line agreed, between Taus and Budweis on the Böhmerwald frontier of Czechoslovakia.

The Führer's decision on this matter is that every effort must be made to adapt the frontier to the wishes of the General Staff but only in so far as this is possible by the normal means of negotiation; no pressure whatever is to be exerted. The Führer expressed the view that if the attainment of this frontier involved too great difficulties the present frontier was to be retained.

2. Dr. Todt<sup>2</sup> informed me that he had some time ago made a request to the State Secretary that both the following areas should be secured for Germany from the point of view of communications:

(a) the Böhmisches-Aicha tip, as an *Autobahn* is to pass through this.

(b) the Pollaun area, as at present 500 meters of the main trunk road still belong to Czechoslovakia.

This road must without fail be secured for Germany, as otherwise communication between the eastern and western parts of the Sudetenland can be effected only by a very great detour.

The Führer yesterday instructed me to telephone to the State Secretary and to tell him that these areas must, without fail, be secured for Germany by negotiation, if necessary with compensation.

HEWEL

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<sup>2</sup> Inspector General of German Highways.

## No. 89

140/76035

*The President of the Slovak Government to the German Foreign Minister*

BRATISLAVA,<sup>1</sup> October 25, 1938.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: In pleasant recollection of our audience with Your Excellency on October 12, 1938,<sup>2</sup> in Munich, I should like to convey in this way our most sincere thanks for the good will of the Third Reich toward our Slovak nation.

Immediately after our return we offered to resume direct negotiations with Hungary on the basis of the ethnic frontier indicated at Munich. The Hungarian Government did not consider that it was in a position to accept this offer.

We could accept the offer of a plebiscite on condition that the Jewish population was excluded from participating.

In these circumstances both Governments have agreed to ask Germany and Italy to act as arbiters.

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<sup>1</sup> Pressburg.

<sup>2</sup> The meeting took place on Oct. 19; see documents Nos. 72 and 73.

I thus place the future of my people and of my country in the hands of the Reich Chancellor and of Your Excellency. I do so with the fullest confidence in Your Excellency's skill as a statesman and in your great understanding, which I had the honor to know and to appreciate during my stay in Munich.

I am, Your Excellency,

Respectfully,  
DR. JOSEPH TISO

No. 90

140/76028

*The Foreign Minister to the Minister in Hungary*

BERLIN, October 25, 1938.

When an opportunity occurs please thank M. Darányi in my name for his letter of October 23, a copy of which is enclosed.<sup>1</sup> On this occasion please point out to M. Darányi that, as already appears from the directive sent to you last Saturday, I have given my support vis-à-vis the Czech Foreign Minister to the Hungarian point of view regarding the town of Kaschau. I ask you in particular to draw his attention to the fact that the towns of Munkács and Ungvár lie outside the line drawn on the map by both of us, so that no misunderstanding should arise over this.

RIBBENTROP

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed. In this letter (140/76029-31) Darányi thanked Ribbentrop for his hospitality at Munich and for the valuable support to Hungarian aspirations rendered by Hitler and Ribbentrop. The letter then referred to the *aide-mémoire* presented by Erdmannsdorff on Oct. 22 (see document No. 84) and pointed out that the Hungarians had not agreed to leave the question of Kaschau open to future negotiation; they claimed the town of Kaschau and the district west of it, but would leave open the question of the district east of it where the population was mixed. Darányi also claimed that, during the Munich conversation, Ribbentrop had referred to the towns of Ungvár and Munkács as being situated "directly on the frontier"; he therefore assumed that Ribbentrop supported Hungary's claims to these two towns.

No. 91

140/76036

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 26, 1938.

The British Chargé d'Affaires<sup>1</sup> today inquired of me about the state of the Hungarian-Czechoslovak negotiations. In mentioning the pos-

<sup>1</sup> Sir George Ogilvie-Forbes.

sible inclusion of Poland in the arbitration suggested by Hungary, he pointed out that the four Great Powers actually had the final say in the matter. In reply to Forbes, I merely said that it was a question of a Hungarian and not a German proposal.

The Chargé d'Affaires then went on to speak of the German-Czech negotiations over the Sudetenland. He asked particularly about the question of option. I answered Forbes that we would very soon be discussing the question of option with the Czechs, for this was an urgent matter for us, too. This question, however, did not come within the competence of the International Commission.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 92

140/76046-47

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 670 of October 26

PRAGUE, October 26, 1938—11:10 p.m.

Received October 27—4:30 a.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 666 of October 26.<sup>1</sup>

The following is a translation of the gist of the Czechoslovak note handed to the Hungarian Minister this afternoon:

The Czechoslovak Government has submitted the Hungarian Government's proposals of October 24<sup>2</sup> to careful and detailed study.

The Czechoslovak Government begs to stress again that the present negotiations can deal only with the question of the Hungarian minority. As points 1 and 2 of the supplementary Munich protocol<sup>3</sup> mention only Polish and Hungarian minorities, other ethnographic problems must remain outside the scope of the present negotiations.

As far as the Hungarian question is concerned, the Czechoslovak Government is inspired by the honest desire to reach a clear, rapid, and complete solution. On October 22, therefore, it made proposals<sup>4</sup> which applied to the whole compact Hungarian-minority area. These proposals were made as a general basis for fresh negotiations while reserving the right to make changes later. As the Hungarian Government does not regard these proposals as satisfactory, the Czechoslovak Government agrees to submit the question of the Hungarian minority to the arbitration of Germany and Italy as signatory powers of the Munich Agreement.

The possible inclusion of other arbiters must be left to the decision of these two powers. If both powers agree to the Hungarian suggestion to include Poland, the Czechoslovak Government would propose that Rumania, too, be included.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2381/498859).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 86.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. II, pp. 1015, 1016.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 83, footnote 1.

The arbitral award should fix the procedure and time limits for the evacuation by Czechoslovak troops and authorities of the area to be ceded. The Czechoslovak Government proposes an immediate meeting of a Hungarian-Czechoslovak commission of military experts to prepare the necessary measures and expedite their execution. End of note.

Contrary to the statement of Chef de Cabinet Masařik (telegram 666), the arbitral award, according to information received from the Deputy Foreign Minister, is to extend not only to the disputed area but to the whole area to be ceded to Hungary.

HENCKE

No. 93

140/76050

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

BUDAPEST, October 27, 1938—5:32 p.m.

No. 154 of October 27

Received October 27—7:20 p.m.

The Foreign Minister told me that the Hungarian answer<sup>1</sup> to be handed over today in Prague would contain the following points:

1. Regret that the Czech Government rejects Hungarian proposal for a plebiscite in disputed areas, which is in the spirit of the Munich Agreement.

2. As Czech note admits of another interpretation, it is confirmed that arbitration applies only to disputed area.

3. Composition of the court of arbitration to be left to the Great Powers.

4. In the Hungarian Government's view, the decision by arbitration, mentioned in the last paragraph of the Czech note concerning the procedure and time limit for evacuation of the areas to be ceded, should apply only to the disputed areas, whereas the evacuation of the undisputed areas should take place at once.

5. Proposal for meeting of military experts is accepted.

6. Hungarian Government welcomes and shares the desire of the Czechoslovak Government for a speedy and complete solution.

The Foreign Minister added that the Hungarian Government would now approach Germany, Italy, and Poland with the request that they should undertake the role of arbiters.<sup>2</sup> Participation of Rumania,

<sup>1</sup> To the Czech proposals summarized in document No. 92. The full text of the Hungarian note is not printed (379/209897-99).

<sup>2</sup> On Oct. 28 Weizsäcker recorded (140/76054) that the Hungarian Minister had handed him a request from his Government that the German Government should definitely arbitrate on the outstanding disagreements as to the Hungarian-Slovak frontier, including the fate of Pressburg. A similar request was being made to the Italian Government.

who according to her Foreign Minister was opposed to Polish-Hungarian frontier (. . . group garbled) Yugoslav Prime Minister for all practical purposes given up already. No question of saving the Little Entente, because as a military ally of Czechoslovakia, Rumania offered no guarantee of complete impartiality. Italy and Poland had earlier signified willingness in principle to accept the role of arbiter. If Germany declined, Hungarian Government would demand a meeting of the four Great Powers, as provided for at Munich—at the earliest possible moment, in the interest of a peaceful solution.

ERDMANNSDORFF

## No. 94

140/76052

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 676 of October 28

PRAGUE, October 28, 1938—11:00 p.m.

Received October 29—1:20 a.m.

With reference to the telephone message of the evening of October 27 to Secretary of Legation Stechow.

The Czechoslovak Foreign Minister today handed to the Hungarian Minister a note in answer to the Hungarian note of October 27,<sup>1</sup> the contents of which, according to an oral statement by M. Wettstein, were substantially as follows:

The Czechoslovak Government expressed its satisfaction that agreement had been reached on settlement by German-Italian arbitration and also that both parties bound themselves to accept the arbitral award in advance.

In the note it is further proposed that 24 hours after its delivery the Czechoslovak and Hungarian Governments should officially request Berlin and Rome to undertake the role of arbiters.

The Czechoslovak Government adheres to the view that the arbitral award should include the whole question of the Hungarian minority and not only the disputed areas, and also that the fixing of modalities for the evacuation and occupation of the areas to be ceded should be left to the decision of the arbiters. The note ends with the wish for a settlement of the whole matter as quickly as possible.

HENCKE

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 93, footnote 1.

## No. 95

2184/467207

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 29, 1938.

The Czechoslovak Minister handed me this afternoon an *aide-mémoire*, the contents of which are as follows:

"The Czechoslovak Government requests the Government of the German Reich to undertake the role of arbiter in the matter of the Hungarian minority in the Czechoslovak Republic.

"If the Royal Hungarian Government has already informed the Reich Government of its intention to include the Polish Government for the Carpatho-Ukraine question, the Czechoslovak Government asks that the Royal Rumanian Government should also be included as an arbiter."

Submitted to the Foreign Minister's Secretariat with the request to communicate it immediately by telephone to Rome for the Foreign Minister.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 96

376/209313

*The Legation in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telephone Message

BUDAPEST, October 30, 1938.

Received October 30—6:40 p.m.

## NOTE VERBALE

The German Chargé d'Affaires<sup>1</sup> today handed to the Royal Hungarian Foreign Minister the following written declaration:<sup>2</sup>

"The German Government, in agreement with the Royal Italian Government, is prepared to accede to the request of the Royal Hungarian Government regarding the settlement of the problem of the Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia, with the proviso that the Royal Hungarian Government give a binding declaration that the decisions of the arbitral award by Germany and Italy shall be accepted as the final settlement and shall be carried out without reservation or delay in accordance with the conditions to be laid down."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. K. Werkmeister, Counselor of Legation.

<sup>2</sup> A similar statement was addressed to the Czech Government in Prague, which accepted its terms on the same day on condition that the Hungarian Government make a similar declaration (376/209314).

<sup>3</sup> The complete text of the German *note verbale* (140/76071) contains the following additional paragraph:

"If the answer is in the affirmative, the German Foreign Minister and the Royal Italian Foreign Minister are prepared to meet in Vienna on November 2, to make the arbitral award in the name of their Governments."

The Royal Hungarian Foreign Minister declares in the name of the Royal Hungarian Government that the decisions of the arbitral award by Germany and Italy will be accepted as the final settlement and will be carried out without reservation or delay in accordance with the conditions to be laid down.

## No. 97

2038/445972-73

*Memorandum by the Director of the Protocol Department*

VIENNA, October 30, 1938.

Pol. IV Abst. 1273.

Ambassador von Mackensen telephoned me this evening about 10:30 and told me that he had just come from seeing Count Ciano, with whom he had discussed for an hour the question of the arbitral award and the frontier delimitation, as he had been instructed. In his opinion, the Hungarian Minister in Rome had given Count Ciano a map on which the areas demanded considerably exceeded the (ethnographic) line agreed on at Munich. The Ambassador, however, had not seen this map. By means of a photostatic copy of the so-called Munich-Darányi map, he explained to Count Ciano our point of view, with which Count Ciano expressed agreement. Count Ciano had a few suggestions which he would like to discuss with the Reich Foreign Minister:

1. The frontier delimitation near Nyitra was very unfortunate. He would suggest that here the "sharp corners be rounded off."

2. If the delimitation of the frontiers were carried out according to the existing proposal, the town and surroundings of Kaschau would be connected with Hungary only by a very narrow belt. Count Ciano therefore suggested that a kind of glacis be created round Kaschau.

3. Count Ciano considered it important that, particularly with regard to Pressburg, certain guarantees for the protection of minorities should be given. I told the Ambassador that the question of protection of minorities had already been raised by us. The Ambassador suggested that the Reich Foreign Minister should have a further talk with Count Ciano before the meeting. I told the Ambassador that this had already been arranged.

The Ambassador further informed me that he would be arriving in Vienna at 8 o'clock on Tuesday morning.

The Ambassador also told me that Count Ciano was leaving tomorrow for Bozen and would remain there until his departure for Vienna.

According to present arrangements, Minister Anfuso<sup>1</sup> would remain in Rome for the present; I shall establish contact with him tomorrow.

DÖRNBERG<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Filippo Anfuso, Chef de Cabinet to Count Ciano.

<sup>2</sup> Counselor of Legation Dörnberg had the title of Minister.

No. 98

140/76075-76

*Circular of the State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

BERLIN, October 31, 1938.

For information.

The Hungarian and Czechoslovak Governments have addressed a request to the German and Italian Governments to settle the problem of Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia by arbitration and thus to determine new frontiers between the two countries. The Hungarian and Czechoslovak Governments have signified in advance their agreement to accept the arbitral award as final and to put it into effect without reservation or delay. The German and Italian Governments thereupon decided to accede to the request. The Reich Foreign Minister and Count Ciano will meet for this purpose on November 2 in Vienna and will first of all again hear the case of the contestant parties there.

On the evening of the 30th, I communicated the above to the British, French,<sup>2</sup> and Polish Chargés d'Affaires.<sup>3</sup> In the case of the French Chargé d'Affaires it was necessary to stress that the International Commission for German-Czech Affairs had nothing to do with this matter and that, as is known, a few days ago the British Government recommended in Rome a German-Italian court of arbitration without the inclusion of the British or French Governments. I told the Polish Chargé d'Affaires that the original Hungarian suggestion to include Poland also for a certain part of the task of arbitration had been dropped after consultation between Rome and Budapest. As Poland is thus not participating, the Czech suggestion to include Rumania<sup>4</sup> as an arbiter in that event also lapsed.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Sent to Paris, London, Warsaw, Bucharest, Washington, Belgrade, Sofia, and Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> Count de Montbas, Counselor of Embassy.

<sup>3</sup> Prince Stefan Lubomirski, Counselor of Embassy.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 92.

## No. 99

140/76102-15

*Documents on the Vienna Award*

## I

MEMORANDUM ON THE CONFERENCE OF THE FOUR FOREIGN MINISTERS  
IN THE BELVEDERE PALACE ON NOVEMBER 2, 1938, FROM 12 NOON TO  
2 P.M.

Present:

*German Delegation*Foreign Minister von Ribben-  
tropUnder State Secretary Woer-  
mannCounselor of Legation Alten-  
burg

Minister Schmidt

Counselor of Legation Kordt

*Italian Delegation*

Foreign Minister Count Ciano

Ambassador Attolico

Minister Count Magistrati

*Hungarian Delegation*

Foreign Minister Kánya

Count Teleki, Minister of Edu-  
cation*Czechoslovak Delegation*

Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky

Minister Krno

The Reich Foreign Minister opened the meeting with the following remarks:

“YOUR EXCELLENCIES, GENTLEMEN: I have the honor to welcome you in Vienna in the name of the Reich Government. I welcome especially my friend Count Ciano, Foreign Minister of Fascist Italy, as well as the Foreign Ministers of the Kingdom of Hungary and of Czechoslovakia.

“The Kingdom of Hungary and Czechoslovakia have appealed to Germany and Italy to arbitrate on the frontier delimitation between their two countries.

“The Reich Government and the Royal Italian Government have responded to this appeal, and the Italian Foreign Minister and I have come here today to make this decision. I regard it as being of particular symbolic significance that Italy and Germany can devote themselves to this great and responsible task in this very house of Prince Eugene of Savoy. Two hundred years ago this prince of Italian blood, German statesman and general, once before brought freedom, peace, and justice to the peoples in southeastern Europe.

“Our task today is to determine the final frontier between Hungary and Czechoslovakia on an ethnographic basis and to find a solution of the questions connected with this. The arbitral award made by us is binding and final and is recognized in advance by Hungary and Czechoslovakia as the final settlement.

“The essential points of the views of both Governments are already known to us from previous negotiations. Nevertheless, I think it would serve a useful purpose if the representatives of both Govern-

ments briefly summarized their views on the question and stated their reasons, so that all arguments may be carefully considered again before the award is made.

"Before asking the representatives of the two Governments to speak, I first call on His Excellency the Italian Foreign Minister to address you."

Thereupon Count Ciano said as follows:

"YOUR EXCELLENCIES, GENTLEMEN: I have the honor to bid you welcome in the name of the Fascist Government.

"I wish to express to my friend Herr von Ribbentrop, Reich Foreign Minister, my sincere thanks for the cordial reception accorded to me here in Vienna, in the house of Prince Eugene, who, as the Reich Foreign Minister has said, brought freedom, peace, and justice to the peoples of southeastern Europe 200 years ago.

"And thus, in accepting the role of arbiters at the request of the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Governments, the Rome-Berlin Axis has set itself the aim of adding a further important contribution to the many efforts already made for peace and reconstruction in Europe.

"I feel sure that our efforts will be crowned with success, and that from the meeting in Vienna there will arise a new order and a new era in central Europe, based on that international justice which we have always striven for and desired."

The Reich Foreign Minister then called upon M. Kánya, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, to speak.

M. Kánya began by expressing the thanks of the Hungarian Government to the German and Fascist Governments for their readiness to arbitrate in the territorial questions still outstanding between Hungary and Czechoslovakia. He intended to be brief, as all the facts were already in the possession of the two Governments. Count Teleki, the Hungarian Minister of Education, would undertake to supplement his statements from the geographical and ethnographic angles. The Hungarian Government had endeavored to reach a friendly solution of the points at issue with Czechoslovakia by negotiation on the lines of the Munich Agreement of the four Great Powers. The Hungarian Government hoped that a settlement of this kind would also lead, above all, to an improvement of Hungarian-Czechoslovak relations. By preserving peace the Munich Agreement had rendered Europe a tremendous service. It had also contained the basis for a solution of the Hungarian-Czechoslovak question. It was true, the agreement had provided that the Hungarian-Czechoslovak question was to be settled within three months. To him this seemed a very long time, for it was a matter of importance to find a speedy solution. For this reason the Hungarian Government too had appealed to the German and Italian Governments to arbitrate, and he was glad that this proposal had also been accepted by the Prague Government. Hungary

had tried to reach direct agreement at first with the Czechoslovak Government at Komorn from October 9 to 13. When the negotiations there were broken off, the Czechoslovak Government had made a further proposal, but great differences had still remained. For these disputed points, Hungary had proposed a decision by a court of arbitration or by a plebiscite. Hungary looked forward with a clear conscience to the arbitral award of the two powers and was convinced that the two Great Powers would give a just verdict, satisfactory to both parties.

Count Teleki, Minister of Education, then stated that the Hungarian proposals were based on purely ethnographic principles. The relevant facts were known, and he had no need to go into details. The Munich Agreement had established two principles for the solution of the Hungarian-Czechoslovak question: first, the majority principle and second, the ruling that the year 1918 was to be the basis for counting the population, i.e. the last census prior to that date. It was a simple matter to draw a frontier on the basis of these principles. However, the delineation of the frontier on purely ethnographic principles presented great difficulties at two points, first with regard to a rather large area around the town of Neutra, inhabited by a Hungarian majority and situated outside the actual ethnic frontier, and also with regard to the areas to the east of Kaschau. The Hungarian Government had proposed a special solution for these areas. It was also difficult to apply the ethnographic principle to the town of Pressburg. The difficulty here was that no one ethnic group possessed the absolute majority. Therefore, the 50-percent principle was of no use here. It was true, however, that in 1911 there had been a relative Hungarian majority. It must also be taken into account that for centuries during the Turkish regime Pressburg had been the Hungarian capital; on the other hand, he admitted that the Slovaks must have access to the Danube. In conclusion, he would like to refer to several towns from Neutra to Munkács which were close to the language frontier and which in 1918 had been 80-90 percent Hungarian but were later denationalized. Hungary therefore raised a claim to these towns on the ground of both ancient and recent rights.

Thereupon the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister spoke as follows:

"In the name of the Czechoslovak Government and at the same time in my own name I thank Your Excellency for the kind words which you have just addressed to me.

"In the person of Your Excellency and of His Excellency Count Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, I greet the representatives of those two Great Powers who for 2 years have been showing the rest of the world the true and the shortest way to a new and better foreign policy.

"The fact that the two Foreign Ministers have accepted the role of arbiters in the question of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia is a fresh proof of the firm and solid resolution of the policy pursued by Berlin and Rome to contribute to the pacification of an important part of central Europe by as speedy and just a decision as possible.

"We have come to Vienna with complete confidence in the objectivity of the Great Powers toward us.

"On the occasion of the dinner given in Berlin on September 28, 1937,<sup>1</sup> in honor of His Excellency the Head of the Italian Government, His Excellency the Reich Chancellor said that the cooperation of Germany and Italy not only served the common interests of the two Great Powers but in actual fact served the aim of speedy and general understanding among the nations of Europe.

"His Excellency the Duce answered on that occasion that Germany and Italy were prepared to work together with all other peoples of good will.

"I take advantage of this very opportunity to state solemnly here that the Slovak, Ruthenian, and Czech peoples desired to demonstrate just this good will by addressing to Your Excellencies' Governments the request which will be the subject of your decision today.

"If we demand respect and full consideration for our own claims, it is with the intention of applying the same standards to the Hungarian people, too. With all our hearts we hope that your award today in this historic palace with its symbolic name will lay the firm foundations from which we will be able to face the future with complete confidence.

"May you by your award make it possible for us to return home from Vienna conscious that as a result of your award we may let bygones be bygones in our common relations with our neighbor Hungary, and may this meeting in the Belvedere become a historic act which will open up for the two neighboring peoples a new, bright, and wide outlook into a future which, with God's help, may be a better one.

"With your consent, Minister Krno will answer Count Teleki's statements and briefly put before you the Czechoslovak point of view."

Minister Krno then made the following statement:

"The Munich Agreement of September 29, 1938, which introduced a new era in central Europe and particularly in the history of my country, specified a period of 3 months for the settlement by direct negotiation of the question of the Hungarian and Polish minorities in Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak Government honestly endeavored to carry out faithfully this point of the Munich Agreement also. As early as October 9, that is, 10 days after the Munich meeting,

<sup>1</sup> It took place on Sept. 27, 1937. For extracts of the statements made by Hitler and Mussolini, see *Survey of International Affairs, 1937* (London 1938), vol. I, p. 334.

it took part in the negotiations in Komorn and tried to reach a settlement. It was and still is prepared to accept the nationality principle as the basis of the new frontier delimitation.

"At Komorn, however, the Hungarian delegation submitted a proposal which in Czechoslovakia's view could not form a basis for national justice. The result of this proposal would have been to replace the present Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia (approximately 700,000) by a new and almost as numerous Slav (Slovak and Ruthenian) minority in Hungary.

"The negotiations in Komorn were then declared by the Hungarian delegation to be at an end.

"On October 22 my Government handed over in Budapest a new proposal offering to resume direct negotiations at once on this general basis. The Hungarian Government did not see its way to accept this offer.

"Thereupon the Hungarian Government made a counterproposal to solve the question by means of a plebiscite or arbitration. Fully relying on the sense of justice of the German and Italian Governments, the Czechoslovak Government accepted this proposal. In the negotiations with Hungary, the Czechoslovak Government upheld the view that a solution must be found by which Hungary would receive a number of Slovaks and Ruthenians equal to the number of Hungarians who would remain in the Czechoslovak State. On the basis of Czechoslovak statistics for 1930, however, the Hungarian proposals would have left only 110,000 Magyars in Czechoslovakia, compared with over 200,000 Slovaks and Ruthenians who would have fallen to Hungary. It was moreover to be remembered that two or three times a hundred thousand Slovaks already were living in Hungary as a minority. The starting point for a solution of the question must be the compact ethnic area [*Volksboden*]. The Hungarian side had stated that the Munich principles must be applied uniformly, but in actual fact, conditions in Bohemia and Moravia could not be compared with those in Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine. In Bohemia and Moravia the ethnic frontier had been unchanged for a long time, and consequently Germany had been able to claim that, in the areas to be ceded, an ancient German cultural area was involved. Teleki, the Hungarian Minister of Education, had stated that Hungary's demands were based on ancient and recent rights. He felt that he must raise objections to this claim. If the year 1910 were taken as a basis, there perhaps existed Hungarian majorities in many places, but if one went back only 20 to 30 years and took the census of 1880, quite different results were obtained. In 1910 for example, Kaschau had had a small Hungarian majority, but in 1880 the town had been predominantly Slovak. Thus his view that Hungary could demand these towns on the grounds of ancient and recent

rights was not quite correct for, if one ignores the last 30 years, the Slovak side could demand with equal justice that the 1880 figures should be taken into consideration. Even in 1910 Kaschau had been a Hungarian-language enclave in a compact Slovak ethnic area."

Kánya, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, replied to this that in his opinion the Czechoslovak Government was adhering too strictly to the Munich Agreement, which had provided a period of 3 months for the solution of these questions. The Munich Agreement had only this one fault, namely, that the period of 3 months was too long, for, if the question were allowed to drag on for so long, a peaceful solution would no longer be possible. From his own experience he could say that tension in Hungary during the last few weeks had reached an unbearable pitch, and reports in his possession from Czechoslovakia gave the same picture. In all probability matters would have come to an armed conflict, and the Hungarian Government had therefore appealed to Germany and Italy to arbitrate.

Count Teleki, the Minister of Education, stated that the principles established by Minister Krno would create entirely new problems. Hungary had been aiming at a territorial solution. Poland had done the same. In addition, Hungarian claims were made on a historical basis. The proposal made at Komorn by the Czechoslovak Government to add to Hungary a number of Slovaks equal to the number of Hungarians remaining in Czechoslovakia, in order to establish a balance, could not be recognized. For one thing it must be taken into consideration that in a very short space of time this balance might again be disturbed by emigration or an important increase of population. In the long run, the application of this principle was not calculated to establish friendly relations, and therefore at Komorn this principle had been described by Hungary as one of mutual hostages. For the rest, Hungary recognized the principle of the compact ethnic area. However, at two points, i.e. at Neutra and Kaschau, the great change in nationalities [*Volkstum*] in the course of time must be recognized. It had been pointed out by the Czechoslovak side that between 1880 and 1911 these towns had been Magyarized. But if one went further back, it was seen that until 1880 there had been a Slovakization, and in earlier years, as shown, for example, by the statistics of 1720, this had been an old Hungarian ethnic and settlement area. The grandfathers of the inhabitants now described as Slovaks had still been, for the most part, Hungarians, as could be seen today to some extent from their names. It was true that Neutra and Kaschau were language enclaves if the 50-percent principle were taken as a basis. However, he wished to point out that Kaschau, for example, was separated from the compact Hungarian ethnic area by a few small communities in-

habited by Magyars to a maximum of 45 percent and an average of 37.8 percent.

Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky stated that he fully agreed with Foreign Minister Kánya's view regarding the necessity of a speedy solution. He asked, however, that the views of Tiso, the Slovak Prime Minister, and Vološin, the Ukrainian Prime Minister, on Count Teleki's statements should first be heard.

Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop said that they had met to find a solution for a Slovak-Hungarian question. The views of both Governments had been expressed by their Foreign Ministers. He could therefore see no point in hearing the views of a number of additional experts on the subject, for as such he must regard Tiso and Vološin, especially as the problem itself was sufficiently familiar to both arbiters. He therefore did not think that the circle of participants in today's conference should be enlarged.

He would take the liberty of saying the following on the subject of Foreign Minister Kánya's remarks that too long a period had been fixed by the Munich Agreement: it was as a result of the cooperation of the German and Italian Governments with the two other Powers at Munich that the question of the Hungarian minority had been brought near to solution at all. Moreover, the two Governments had stated their willingness to undertake the role of arbiter in this question so that it might be brought to a peaceful and speedy solution. He had noted with interest the statements of the Czechoslovak and Hungarian delegations. The preparatory talks for the arbitral award could thus be regarded as ended. The problem had been expounded with sufficient clarity. As for MM. Tiso and Vološin, they would have an opportunity for unofficial talks with the two arbiters in the course of the lunch to which both of them had also been invited.

After lunch, the Italian and German delegations would then enter into consultations on the award to be made, which could probably be completed late in the afternoon. He would then ask the Hungarian and Czechoslovak delegates to attend a final meeting in the Belvedere Palace.

Foreign Minister Count Ciano expressed agreement with this proposal. Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky then asked to be allowed to speak again. In view of the thoroughness which he had learned in German schools, he asked if he might point out the following: MM. Tiso and Vološin could not be described as experts. The Slovak Prime Minister had been the leader of the Slovak delegation which had up to now negotiated with the Hungarians. M. Vološin was Prime Minister of the Ukraine. He therefore asked that in any minutes of the meeting to be drawn up the two gentlemen should not

be referred to as experts. Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop and Foreign Minister Count Ciano expressed their agreement.

Thereupon the meeting adjourned.

E. KORDT

## II

140/76116-17

### MEMORANDUM ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ARBITRAL AWARD IN THE PRESENCE OF THE FOUR FOREIGN MINISTERS ON NOVEMBER 2, 1938, AT 7 P.M.

Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop opened the meeting by stating that the German and Italian Governments had now completed their task of arbitrating in the question of the cession of Czechoslovak territory to Hungary. The task of the arbiters had been extremely difficult. But on the basis of the ethnographic principle a decision had been reached, which, if correctly carried out, would bring a lasting and just solution of the questions outstanding between Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

Count Ciano corroborated this statement on behalf of the Italian Government. He said that the arbitration by the German and Italian Governments had again revealed the solidarity of the Axis. He, too, wished to stress the difficulty of the task undertaken by the two Governments and to call attention to the efforts of both to find a lasting and just solution of the problem, designed to introduce a new era and to lay the foundations for friendly and good neighborly relations between Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

Then followed the reading and afterward the signing of the arbitral award and accompanying protocol. Thereupon Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop declared the meeting closed.

E. KORDT

## III

140/76118-19

VIENNA, November 2, 1938.

Pol. IV 7958.

### ARBITRAL AWARD

In virtue of a request from the Royal Hungarian Government and the Czechoslovak Government to the German and Royal Italian Governments to settle by award the questions pending between them relating to territories to be ceded to Hungary, as well as in virtue of notes thereupon exchanged on October 30, 1938, between the Governments concerned, the German Foreign Minister, Herr Joachim von Ribbentrop, and the Foreign Minister of His Majesty the King of

Italy, Emperor of Ethiopia, Count Galeazzo Ciano, have met this day in Vienna and, after further discussion with the Royal Hungarian Foreign Minister, M. Kálmán Kánya, and the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, Dr. František Chvalkovsky, have promulgated the following award :

1. The areas to be ceded to Hungary by Czechoslovakia are marked on the annexed map.<sup>1</sup> Demarcation of the frontier on the spot is delegated to a Hungarian-Czechoslovak Commission.

2. The evacuation by Czechoslovakia of the areas to be ceded and their occupation by Hungary begins on November 5, 1938, and is to be completed by November 10, 1938. The detailed stages of the evacuation and occupation, as well as other procedure connected therewith, are to be settled at once by a Hungarian-Czechoslovak Commission.

3. The Czechoslovak Government will insure that the territories to be ceded are left in an orderly condition at the time of evacuation.

4. Special questions arising out of the cession of territory, in particular questions relating to nationality and option, are to be regulated by a Hungarian-Czechoslovak Commission.

5. Likewise, special measures for the protection of persons of the Magyar nationality remaining in Czechoslovak territory and of persons not of the Magyar race in the ceded territories are to be agreed upon by a Hungarian-Czechoslovak Commission. This commission will take special care that the Magyar ethnic group [*Volksgruppe*] in Pressburg be accorded the same status as other ethnic groups there.

6. Insofar as disadvantages and difficulties in the sphere of economics or [railway] traffic may be caused by the cession of territory to Hungary for the area remaining to Czechoslovakia, the Hungarian Government will, in agreement with the Czechoslovak Government, do its utmost to remove these disadvantages and difficulties.

7. In the event of difficulties or doubts arising from the implementation of this award, the Royal Hungarian and Czechoslovak Governments will settle the matter directly between themselves. Should they, however, fail to reach agreement on any question, this question will then be submitted to the German and Italian Governments for final decision.

JOACHIM VON RIBBENTROP  
GALEAZZO CIANO

#### IV

376/209305-06

The general course of the new frontier between the Kingdom of Hungary and the Republic of Czechoslovakia as determined in the

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2087/445831-39). See section iv, below.

award made by the German Foreign Minister and the Royal Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs on November 2, 1938, is as follows:

Starting from the old frontier south of Pressburg, the new frontier runs north of the Pressburg-Neuhäusl railway line, turns in a north-easterly direction to the northwest of Neuhäusl, and is continued north of Vráble direct to the Lewenz-Altsohl railway line. The towns of Neuhäusl and Lewenz revert to Hungary. To the east of Lewenz the frontier runs diagonally through the Eipel territory some 30 kilometers north of the old frontier. Its further course is directly to the north of the towns of Lutschenetz and Gross-Steffelsdorf, which also revert to Hungary. The frontier then turns to the northeast, taking in the town of Jolschwa, and in the neighborhood of Rosenau extends direct to the German-settlement area of the Unterzips. It then turns north, includes Kaschau in Hungarian territory, and follows a south-easterly course to a point some 30 kilometers north of the railway junction of Sátoraljaujhely on the former Hungarian frontier. It then proceeds due east to a point directly north of Ungvár, which is assigned to Hungary. The frontier then takes a sharp turn to the southeast. Its further course passes close to the north of Munkatsch. Continuing in a southeasterly direction, the new frontier links up with the old frontier northeast of the Rumanian-frontier railway station of Halmei.

Of the disputed towns, therefore, Pressburg itself, the capital of Slovakia, the old cathedral town of Neutra, and the town of Sevljusch in the Carpatho-Ukraine, with its surrounding villages, remain within the Czechoslovak Republic. The towns of Neuhäusl, Lewenz, Lutschenetz, Kaschau, Užhorod, and Munkatsch were adjudged to the Kingdom of Hungary.

The new ruling returns the whole area of compact Hungarian settlement to the Kingdom of Hungary. At points where circumstances did not allow an exact determination of the frontier on ethnic lines [*volksmässige Grenzziehung*], the interests of both sides were carefully weighed.

#### No. 100

376/209267

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

VIENNA, November 3, 1938.

State Secretary von Weizsäcker gives the following information by telephone in reply to an inquiry transmitted to him by Herr Hewel:

The Czechoslovak delegation in Berlin yesterday presented their wishes regarding the final frontier delimitation. Some of the Czecho-

slovak desiderata seemed reasonable while others would be impracticable. At the moment, a summary of our wishes and those of the Czechs which appear acceptable is being drawn up. The Czechoslovak delegation stated that, in view of the great importance of questions of detail, they had to keep constantly in touch with Prague and would probably not be in a position to complete the work of final demarcation in less than 4 weeks. In point of fact, such a period was not too long if solid work were to be done. Should a speed-up be absolutely imperative, perhaps 14 days to 3 weeks would suffice, but such haste would certainly be at the expense of the work itself.

If elections are to be held as early as November 20, it may perhaps be assumed that approximately 95 percent or more of the population which would ultimately fall to the German Reich could take part in these elections, with the possibility of a byelection for the remainder.

Herewith submitted to Under State Secretary Woermann.

ERICH KORDT

No. 101

1647/391111-12

*Unsigned Minute*

[Undated <sup>1</sup>]

THE QUESTION OF FRONTIER DELIMITATION IN THE SUDETENLAND

For the Foreign Minister.

1. On the basis of the numerous demands received, a summary was first drawn up of all claims for frontier rectifications. This, however, far exceeded what can be advocated or achieved.

2. In order to bring the demands within reasonable limits they were given a second reading. This, however, did not produce any satisfactory result either, because of the very numerous desiderata of an economic and military nature and in questions of traffic. Even now, after the second reading, German demands represent the further inclusion of over 200,000 Czechs as compared with 37,000 Germans.

3. In order to facilitate a decision on the matter Herr von Richt-hofen will today give the following directive to the German committee:

(a) No further increase of Reich territory by inclusion of non-Germans.

(b) Consequently, no fresh demand without corresponding cessions.

(c) In cases where incorporation of Czech communities is necessary for geographical reasons, exchange of population on a very small scale can be envisaged.

<sup>1</sup> This note must have been written prior to the drafting of the final report by the departmental boundary committee (enclosure to document No. 102). From its position in the file it may have been written on Oct. 21 or 22.

(d) No demands for frontier rectification unless very plausible ethnic and economic reasons or reasons of communications can be put forward (military reasons are out of the question in dealing with the Czechs).

(e) According to Czech statements, German soldiers have crossed the demarcation line at more than 100 places. Investigations are in progress. The lines now reached may remain as long as the Czechs do not make any counterdemands; otherwise the areas must be the subject of negotiation.

(f) A new basis in accordance with the above must be submitted within 2 days. At the same time the points at which we can withdraw behind the demarcation line for the purpose of an exchange of population should be marked separately on the map.

4. As elections for the Reichstag will, as far as is known, take place in the Sudetenland on November 20 and further, as the International Commission for frontier demarcation should be disposed of as soon as possible, the frontier should be finally settled with the Czechs within the next 10 days. The exact demarcation of the frontier, which will still take a very long time, must be postponed until later and taken out of the hands of the International Commission.

5. It would be best to submit the basis for negotiations at once to the Führer before the delegation begins its discussions with the Czechs.

## No. 102

2313/484714-16

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Political Department*

November 3, 1938.

Enclosed is the final report<sup>1</sup> of the departmental committee for the delimitation of the German-Czechoslovak frontier together with

Annex 1. German demands.

Annex 2. Most important Czech demands with German comments.

Annex 3. Statistics on above.

Annex 4. Map 1:300,000 with German and Czech demands marked. (The latter are copied from a smaller scale map, which was later withdrawn by the Czech Minister Heidrich).<sup>2</sup>

## I

The committee has put forward as the most important German demands of a strategic nature, dictated by considerations of traffic:

1. Railway link west of Taus between Egerland and Furth im Walde:

1910:	6,304 Czechs	774 Germans
1930:	5,615 Czechs	539 Germans

<sup>1</sup> An earlier draft (2313/484694-96) of this "final report" is dated Oct. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Annexes 1-3 not printed (1647/391175-88); annex 4 not found. Detailed references in the text to these annexes have been omitted.

2. Cession of territory for the construction of a double-track railway link between (Dresden-)Reichenberg-Hohenelbe-Trautenau-Glatz:

1910: 12,951 Czechs	327 Germans
1930: 11,379 Czechs	254 Germans

Minimum solution (for possession of the road without construction of railway) : 4,000 Czechs

3. Tip between Böhmisches Aicha and Liebenau for the construction of a Reich *Autobahn* to Reichenberg, south of the Jeschken-Gebirge:

4,000 Czechs

4. Jablonné tip to insure rail connection between Silesia and northern Moravia without new construction:

1910: 3,107 Czechs	— Germans
1930: 2,913 Czechs	63 Germans

5. The Brodek language enclave to facilitate the construction of a Breslau-Brünn-Vienna *Autobahn*:

5,268 Germans

At the same time, however, a corridor containing 1,886 Czechs would have to be demanded.

Please give instructions whether negotiations are to take place on the basis of these German demands.

## II

As these German demands (1-4) cannot be justified on ethnographic grounds but would rather involve taking over a purely Czech population, we should perhaps negotiate on certain Czech requests regarding traffic.

Any discussion on the Zwittau peninsula and the railway between Mährisch-Weisskirchen and Mährisch-Ostrau will be refused.

Instructions are, however, requested whether the following more important Czech requests can be the subject of negotiation:

1. Facilities on the Brünn-Lundenburg railway, in the last resort the return of Lundenburg (as compensation for the big Riesengebirge project)

2. Extension of the Pilsen tip

3. Railway line Alt-Paka-Königinhof-Jaromir

4. Cession of the tip at Wildenschwert

May the following, under certain circumstances, be envisaged as compensation?

Mährisch-Kromau:

1910: 1,598 Germans	1,603 Czechs
1930: 349 Germans	3,047 Czechs

Neuhaus tip. Without the Czech town the rural districts are not viable.

2,593 Germans	1,083 Czechs
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Return of Böhmisches Aicha (in exchange for the northern tip for the Reich *Autobahn*).

1910: 1,199 Germans	1,343 Czechs
1930: 778 Germans	2,361 Czechs

If the answer is in the affirmative, exchanges of population on a limited scale would have to be envisaged.

### III

There remain a number of German and Czech requests of second- and third-rate importance, partly ethnographic and partly connected with traffic. The committee asks for a free hand during the forthcoming negotiations.

R[ICHTHOFEN \*]

1647/391173-74

[Enclosure]

BERLIN, November 3, 1938.

The departmental committee for the delimitation of the final German-Czech frontier, in strict adherence to the instructions given to it by the Führer, has toned down, as far as this seemed possible, the German demands to be put forward in the negotiations with Czechoslovakia.

The proposed modifications of the Berlin line of October 5 (blue) involve:

(a) ethnographic corrections, partly in favor of Germany and partly in favor of Czechoslovakia,

(b) certain demands which are desirable for military, economic, and traffic policy reasons.

The proposals made under (a) and (b) are indicated by a red line on the attached map,<sup>5</sup> scale 1:300,000, and, starting from Theben near Pressburg, are numbered consecutively in red. Where there is no ethnographic basis for the German demands, the localities affected are shown by red crosshatching. In the over-all assessment of the German wishes, the demands last set forth are especially important, in particular the railroad project south of the Riesengebirge and at Taus, as well as the project for an *Autobahn* near Liebenau.

<sup>4</sup> Baron Herbert von Richthofen, Minister in Belgium, May 1936–October 1938, was at this period employed on special assignments in the Political Department with the rank of Minister zur Disposition (awaiting assignment).

<sup>5</sup> Not found.

Meanwhile, the most important Czech demands have been published which, for economic and traffic policy reasons, call for considerable corrections of the Berlin line, that is, at Lundenburg, Pilsen in the Zwittau promontory, and along the *Nordbahn* (connection toward Mährisch-Ostrau). The Czech claims are set out in yellow in the attached map and marked with Roman figures.

In order to push through the important German claims which have no ethnographic justification, it will be necessary to accord a certain measure of consideration to the Czech wishes—a measure, of course, falling far short of their aspirations. Even before the Czech demands were made known, the departmental committee for the delimitation of the German-Czechoslovak frontier had considered certain districts which might be regarded as bargaining points. They are indicated on the map by blue crosshatching and are numbered consecutively in blue. The bargaining points are to be assessed not only according to surface area and number of population but above all according to their importance for the Czechs as regards traffic policy and economics. In what manner and to what extent they should be thrown into the scales during the course of the negotiations must depend on the progress of the negotiations.

A survey of the German demands and a short statement of the reasons underlying them is added in annex No. 1.<sup>6</sup>

In annex No. 2<sup>7</sup> the most important demands of the Czechs are stated, as well as the German comments on them, together with the bargaining points we have in mind.

Instructions are requested as to the treatment of the German and Czech demands during the first phase of the negotiations with the Czechs. Further instructions will have to be obtained, if required, during the course of the negotiations.

Annex 3: <sup>8</sup> table with figures of population.

RICHTHOFEN

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (1647/391175-79).

<sup>7</sup> Not printed (1647/391180-85).

<sup>8</sup> Not printed (1647/391186-88).

## No. 103

2377/497324-25

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, November 3, 1938.

1. Dr. Todt, Inspector General of German Highways, who returned to Berlin yesterday, told his staff in confidence, leaving it to their discretion to inform the [Foreign] Ministry, that the Führer had in-

structed him the day before yesterday to prepare the construction of the *Transit Autobahn*.<sup>1</sup> At the same time he stated that he would demand from the Czechs the right to unhindered construction and use of the *Transit Autobahn* within the framework of the negotiations for the guarantee of [their] State. The information in its present form is meant only for the Foreign Ministry and not for other departments. At the departmental conference it was agreed that, under the circumstances, the request of the Inspector General already conveyed to me before the conference to provide for only a *pactum de contrahendo*, committing Germany and Czechoslovakia to far-reaching concessions in respect of the use of the *Autobahn*, is the only possible solution. The minutes of the conference will follow. Similar action must be taken in the case of the *Transit Autobahn* as in the case of the Oder-Danube canal.

2. I learned from the Reich Ministry of Transport that the question of German demands regarding inland water transport is at present being examined with a view to intensifying these demands as much as possible.

3. On the other hand, the Stettin Chamber of Industry and Commerce has suggested that the Reich Ministry of Transport should offer the Czechs the creation of a free zone in Stettin harbor. The effects of carrying out this suggestion are still being studied within the Ministry. I pointed out the necessity of withholding any concession intended to be made vis-à-vis the Czechs in this respect until such time as the position of the negotiations makes it seem advantageous.

MARTIUS

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 123, footnote 2, for the final arrangements for this highway.

## No. 104

23869/495106-07

### *Unsigned Memorandum*

BERLIN, November 4, 1938.  
Pol. IV 8025.

#### PROPOSALS BY OBERFÜHRER BEHREND'S<sup>1</sup>—CONFERENCE ON NOVEMBER 5<sup>2</sup>

1. In the first place no treaty negotiations with the Czechoslovaks about protection of minorities, as we do not want to make a corresponding offer to the Czechs or to have our hands tied. Further developments are to be awaited for the time being.

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<sup>1</sup> An official of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 111.

2. Immediate meeting of a German-Czechoslovak Government commission to conclude a standstill and transfer agreement.

3. The Czechoslovak Government should be notified by our Legation that Deputy Kundt is to be consulted in all questions affecting the German element [*Deutschtumsfragen*]. We would wait to see whether the Czechoslovak Government also appoints someone to us.

No civil rights as Volksdeutsche [*Volksbürgerrecht*],<sup>3</sup> no protected status [*Schirmherrschaft*] (Kier's proposal),<sup>4</sup> as this would be harmful to our foreign policy and would benefit the Czechs more than us.

4. Preparation of an agreement for possible minority negotiations later.

With reference to items II and III of the memorandum of November 2, 1938—Kult A 4482 Ang. I<sup>5</sup> on the German-Czechoslovak minorities agreement.

Submitted for information to Ministerialdirektor Stieve for the State Secretary.

<sup>3</sup>This concept had been suggested by Kundt in a memorandum of Oct. 31. It envisaged a privileged status for members of the remaining German minority in Czechoslovakia (1022/309262-67).

<sup>4</sup>Dr. Kier, a former Austrian Nazi, acted as legal adviser to the Sudeten-German Party.

<sup>5</sup>Not printed (376/209271-73).

## No. 105

2037/445840

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 161 of November 4

BUDAPEST, November 4, 1938—2:45 p.m.

Received November 4—5:15 p.m.

Pol. IV 8002.

In his speech yesterday to the Unity Party the Prime Minister referred with gratitude to Germany, Italy, and Poland but especially to the Führer, whose energy and dynamic force had transformed the troubled waters of European politics into a life-giving stream. As there was already a Mussolini Square in Budapest, he would ask the capital to name a beautiful square nearby after Adolf Hitler.

Government and press most warmly welcomed the Vienna result, whereas, under the impression of earlier propaganda, the mass of the people had hoped for more, especially Pressburg and a common Polish-Hungarian frontier.

ERDMANNSDORFF

## No. 106

140/76125

*Circular of the Director of the Political Department*

Telegram

BERLIN, November 5, 1938.

Pol. IV Abst. 1281.

For information and as a directive for guidance of speech.

By the German-Italian Vienna Award of November 2 the entire compact area peopled by Hungarians returns to Hungary. Careful consideration was given to the interests of both sides in cases where circumstances do not permit an exact ethnic delimitation of the frontier.

The award is the outcome of the spirit of mutual friendship between Germany and Italy and their consciousness of responsibility regarding the peace of Europe. The Rome-Berlin Axis has successfully acted as arbiter in an international dispute of great significance and extraordinary intricacy and thus once more has given proof that it is a factor for peace and order in European politics. A constant source of unrest in the southeastern European area resulting from the injustice of the peace treaties has been eliminated by the award, after careful hearing of both parties. It is to be hoped that on the implementation of the award the relations between Hungary and Czechoslovakia will develop in a spirit of peaceful and good-neighborly cooperation.

WOERMANN

## No. 107

140/76127-29

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 703 of November 5

PRAGUE, November 6, 1938—2:50 a.m.

Received November 6—5:30 a.m.

With reference to instructions received in Munich and Vienna.

1. Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky requested me today to transmit to the Reich Foreign Minister his respectful thanks for the hospitality extended to him in Vienna and for the acceptance of the role of arbiter.

2. In the conversation which followed, M. Chvalkovsky remarked that the award meant heavy sacrifices for Slovaks but especially for Carpatho-Ukrainians. Nevertheless, he was satisfied that now

frontier questions were essentially settled. The Czechoslovak Government knew that the Reich Foreign Minister had stood up for legitimate Czechoslovak interests, and they were grateful to him for it. The Government would carry out the award loyally.

The Slovaks, who in Vienna had still accused Chvalkovsky and Krno of treason, now appeared more reasonable. The Carpatho-Ukrainians, whose Minister President, Vološin, contrary to various rumors, was supported by the Prague Government, were very depressed, but they had the firm intention to cope with the present situation by special efforts. In this they hoped for the support of the Reich.

According to instructions, I told the Foreign Minister that Hungarian demands had materially exceeded what Hungary had received by the award. In existing circumstances everything that it was possible to save for Czechoslovakia had been saved. In this connection I referred particularly to Pressburg, Nitra, and the district of Sevlus.

3. M. Chvalkovsky added that he welcomed with gratitude the intention expressed by the Foreign Minister of receiving him in Berlin in the near future. He hoped on this occasion to be able to discuss the guarantee of new frontiers by the Axis Powers as visualized in the Munich Agreement. In consideration of the situation in the Carpatho-Ukraine and in Slovakia, the guarantee had now become particularly vital for Czechoslovakia from the viewpoint of external and internal politics. He [Chvalkovsky] would also appeal to the Italian Government in this matter.

In reply I gave as my personal opinion that the guarantee question would probably become acute only when new frontiers had become effective after having been individually determined by appropriate committees. A written report on the guarantee question follows.

4. In view of certain unchecked rumors, according to which some Czechoslovak General Staff officers were playing with the idea of new frontier fortifications, I warned the Foreign Minister urgently against such attempts. Chvalkovsky firmly denied the existence of such plans but would transmit the warning to the General Staff without delay.

5. Finally I pointed out to the Foreign Minister the necessity, in the interests of his own country, of treating ethnic Germans [*Volksdeutsche*] in the Rump State with consideration and requested him to take steps against the daily recurring excesses by subordinate officials of the Ministry of the Interior and Defense Ministry. Chvalkovsky promised appropriate steps. He asked that negotiations contemplated in this connection relating to cultural questions affecting the German element in the Rump State [*Restdeutschtum*] should be concluded as quickly as possible, so as to eliminate certain points of friction.

## No. 108

1647/391189-91

*An Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff to the Foreign Minister*

Telephone Message

URGENT

NUREMBERG, November 8, 1938—10:15 a.m.

On November 6 and 7 I submitted to the Führer maps and memoranda by the departmental committee for delimiting the German-Czechoslovak frontier and reported to him on the lines discussed with Minister von Richthofen. The Führer decided as follows:

1. In principle no territories which have been occupied by us are to be returned to Czechoslovakia. To my objection that some areas claimed by us were entirely Czech, the Führer remarked that a large number of Germans were still in Czechoslovakia, so that an exchange was not justified.

2. Alteration of the frontier in favor of Czechoslovakia for reasons of traffic policy and economics is not to be carried out, unless it be on a small scale only, where there is a question of territories which are purely Czech and whose population desires to return to Czechoslovakia. For this there would have to be at least a 90 percent Czechoslovak population. In this case, however, departures from the above principle could be made only to a very limited degree.

3. Neither must the areas of Lundenburg, Mährisch-Chromau near Neuhaus, etc., be given back.

4. On my pointing out the great difficulties caused to the Czechs by the necessity of letting important railway lines run through four or five German enclaves, the Führer thought in that case they could be accorded certain transit facilities.

5. The main thing for him was the extraterritoriality of the *Autobahn* from Breslau to Vienna.<sup>1</sup> The Czechs could be told that in return for this concession of extraterritoriality for the Reich *Autobahn*, the equivalent would be accorded them in regard to certain railway lines.

6. Regarding the projecting point number 40,<sup>2</sup> the Führer expressed the opinion that as much as possible should be taken here. He did not, however, appear to desire particular pressure in this matter.

7. Regarding the question of the estate of Prince Thurn and Taxis at Biskupitz, the Führer, replying to my reference to this, said that this was a purely Czech corridor—that the question should be made dependent on whether the inhabitants wished to opt for Germany or Czechoslovakia.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 103.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to the neighborhood of Deutsch-Brodek. The reference is to a list contained in annex 1 (not printed; 1647/391180-85) of document No. 102.

8. The Führer did not go further into details on the map. He gave orders that negotiations should be carried on with the intention of intimating to the Czechs that Germany had been very modest in her demands. This had been proved, moreover, by her relinquishing the claim to Brünn and its surroundings. In consideration of the German-language enclaves, the Czechs would have to relinquish their claim to the smaller Czech areas required by us.

9. Should the Czechs make difficulties, they are to be given to understand that they would do well to accept the proposals of the departmental committee, as otherwise the Führer would take up the matter personally and they might then fare far worse.

HEWEL

### No. 109

1613/387137

#### *Memorandum by the Head of Political Division V*

BERLIN, November 9, 1938.  
zu Pol. I g 2530.

According to a statement by Oberführer Behrends of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle, he was instructed by the Foreign Minister, at a conference which the Under State Secretary and Counselor of Legation Altenburg also attended, to take charge of the underground activities in Carpatho-Ukraine.

Submitted to the Deputy Director of the Political Department.

SCHLIEF

### No. 110

376/209193-97

#### *Minutes of the German-Czechoslovak Frontier Committee*

MEETING ON NOVEMBER 10, 1938—11 A.M.

Minister Baron von Richthofen opened the meeting and read the statement contained in the enclosure.

Minister Heidrich then answered:

"In reply I have to say that I shall submit the map you gave me to my Government without delay. I should like to make two observations on your statement. You have said that the demarcation line of occupation of *October 5* is to be regarded as final. Against this I must point out that from the beginning the line was intended as a *demarcation line*, not as final settlement of the frontier.

"With regard to the wishes of the Czechoslovak Government I must make the following observations:

"At their meeting on October 13<sup>1</sup> the International Commission adopted a resolution according to which the occupation line was to be taken as a *basis* for the work of final demarcation of the frontiers. I made the proposal that a reference to point 6 of the Munich Agreement be incorporated in the resolution. This mentions the possibility of certain deviations from the *purely ethnographic* frontier. If you, Your Excellency, study the desiderata of the Czechoslovak Government, you will have to recognize that these requests do not contain any deviation from the ethnographic frontier, but certain places are mentioned as compensation, for example, as regards the Zwittau language enclave, North Moravia, and Troppau, where considerable Czech areas have been included in the occupation zone."

M. Heidrich then asked whether the blue line is the occupation line and whether the occupation line which in printing has been put slightly forward had been corrected on this map.

Minister Baron von Richthofen replied that the correct course of the line was drawn in by hand on the map. The red line showed the German claims. He would express the wish to have the Czechoslovak Government's reply as soon as possible, to be precise, by Saturday.

Minister Baron von Richthofen continued by drawing attention to the large German-language enclaves remaining within the Czech state. He mentioned that thousands of letters from Brünn and surroundings were arriving continually, and the Reich Government had made a heavy sacrifice by leaving these language enclaves in Czechoslovakia.

M. Heidrich pointed out the large numbers of Czechoslovak nationals remaining in German territory.

Baron von Richthofen emphasized that these numbers had already altered enormously. Considerable evacuation of Czechs from places inside the German-occupation line had taken place. Population figures would alter quickly. The great influx of Czechs had only taken place after 1918.

M. Heidrich replied that quotation of the 1910 figures did not give a correct picture of national conditions either, because it was not membership of different nations that was established but only which language was used. He asked further whether the map, etc., given him was to be considered as the proposal of the Reich Government.

Herr von Richthofen referred him to the text which had been read and added that the Reich Government had to bring forward these *claims*.

M. Heidrich remarked that therefore the map handed in represented the claims of the Reich Government within the meaning of article 6 of the Munich Agreement. He inquired whether the map contained the reaction to the Czechoslovak requests.

Herr von Richthofen answered in the affirmative.

M. Heidrich declared his intention of leaving for Prague this very day in order if possible to be back again by Saturday. If, owing to the need for consulting the appropriate authorities, his return should not be possible by Saturday, he would have the reply as to the earliest possible date transmitted to the Foreign Ministry through the intermediary of the Czechoslovak Legation in Berlin. This would probably be on Sunday.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 56.

[Enclosure]

ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FRONTIER DEMARCATION COMMITTEE  
TO THE CZECHOSLOVAK DELEGATION

I have asked the members of the Czechoslovak delegation to come here today in order to inform them of the German Government's point of view on the question of the final frontier demarcation.

As is known, the basis for the final determination of the frontier was laid down according to the ethnographic point of view by the decisions of the International Commission of October 5 and 13. To this the Czechoslovak delegation as a member of the International Commission had also given its assent. It is therefore a question of decisions reached on the lines laid down at the time which awarded certain territory to Germany once and for all.

Yet comprehensive requests from its Government were brought forward by the Czechoslovak delegation, the attainment of which would lead to a complete alteration of the line of October 5 and 13. I must inform the Czechoslovak delegation that the presentation of these requests has caused the greatest surprise to the Reich Government. The Reich Government is determined to settle this matter in the shortest time possible and takes the following standpoint:

1. The Reich Government does not intend in any circumstances to give up any part of the occupied areas.

2. On the other hand, the Reich Government for its part still has certain claims to put forward. These are marked by a red line on the map which I hereby hand over to the Czechoslovak delegation.

These German claims are based on compelling considerations. They have been reduced to a minimum. It means a great sacrifice for the Reich Government not to extend them further in view of conditions in the large German-language areas of Brünn and surroundings, Olmütz, Iglau, Budweis, etc., which lie adjacent to the German frontier. It was solely in order to speed up appeasement between Germany and Czechoslovakia that the putting forward of further claims has been abandoned.

3. The final frontier demarcation must be carried out as soon as possible. Recent experiences render it necessary to take the still outstanding final decision at once. The Reich Government therefore requests the Czechoslovak delegation to let it have in a day or two its assent to the projected frontier demarcation.

No. 111

2080/450595-97

*Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Cultural Policy  
Department*

BERLIN, November 11, 1938.

e.o. Kult. A 1148 Ts. Verh. geh. Ang. 2.

A conference took place on November 7 in the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle on the question of effective protection for Germans remaining in Czechoslovakia; besides the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of the Interior, the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht, and the Reichs-

führer SS were represented. The subject of discussion was the Foreign Ministry plan<sup>1</sup> to guarantee the remaining German element by a far-reaching treaty on the protection of ethnical groups [*Volksgruppen-schutzvertrag*]. The discussion revealed that all agencies represented considered the plan for settlement by treaty as premature. Particularly strong objections were raised by the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle (Oberführer Behrends), the Ministry of the Interior (Ministerialdirektor Vollert), and the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht. It was decided to recommend that the Foreign Minister should implement the protection of the remaining German element as ordered by the Führer by means of a German-Czechoslovak minorities declaration in collaboration with a permanent German-Czechoslovak Government committee for the settlement of nationality questions [*Volkestumsfragen*] which might arise. A settlement later by treaty should be kept in reserve.

The following were the chief reasons brought forward against the plan for immediate settlement by treaty:

1. We do not wish to grant to the Czech minority [i. e. in Germany] the position which we expect for our German group in Czechoslovakia. For example, we could not tolerate the following: A Czech State Secretary for the Czech minority, an extensive Czech educational system and Czech colleges, open activity by the pan-Slav-minded Sokol with flags and uniforms, uncontrolled relations abroad for Czech national organizations, cultural autonomy, nationalist organization in Czech-language enclaves.

2. At present we ourselves cannot yet foresee what our ultimate demands will be. This will depend among other things on the size of the ethnical group in Czechoslovakia after the departure of those who opt (i. e. how many *Volksdeutsche* will opt and emigrate or will remain in Czechoslovakia as *Reichsdeutsche* after the option). Another decisive factor will be the development of German-Czechoslovak relations during the next few months.

The intended German-Czechoslovak declaration should only set up a basis for the treatment of the ethnical groups and in such general terms that we do not commit ourselves too deeply vis-à-vis the Czech ethnical group.

The Reich should be in a sufficiently strong position to facilitate the development of the status of the remaining Germans in the manner proposed.

Submitted herewith to Ministerialdirektor Stieve for the Under State Secretary with the request to obtain the decision of the Foreign Minister on the question of a minorities agreement or minorities dec-

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1647/391150-65).

laration in conjunction with a German-Czechoslovak Government committee.

The draft of a declaration is enclosed.<sup>2</sup>

VON TWARDOWSKI

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<sup>2</sup> Not printed (376/209159 and 1647/391197-200). The final joint declaration concerning the protection of the respective minorities was signed at Berlin on Nov. 20 (2080/450629-30).

## No. 112

1941/435088-89

*Note by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, November 11, 1938.

Pol. IV 8395.

For the Foreign Minister.

Field Marshal Göring received the Ukrainian [*sic*] Minister Durčanský today in the presence of Deputy Karmasin and Veesenmayer<sup>1</sup> of Keppler's staff.

The Field Marshal explained that at the moment the Slovak and the Ukrainian question could be dealt with only within the framework of the Czechoslovak State but that the goal was an independent Slovakia and an autonomous Ukraine oriented toward this independent Slovakia.

Then some questions concerning immediate practical help for the Ukraine were discussed. The Legation in Prague will be instructed to inform the Czechoslovak Government in an appropriate manner or to have it participate.

In the course of the conversation Deputy Karmasin again brought up the case of Theben.<sup>2</sup> He explained that the castle of Theben on the rock at the confluence of the March and Danube was Slovakia's sole historic monument and that "all Slovak history books would have to be burned" if the castle were lost. He took the view that German military requirements could be met by special agreements without the cession of territory.

The Field Marshal said that these arguments were new to him and probably to the Führer too. He himself could not decide anything about it; however, he would submit the matter once more to the Führer. Finally, he added that he certainly would not make concessions to a Czechoslovakia but to a Slovakia only. (It is not quite clear what this means.)

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<sup>1</sup> Edmund Veesenmayer, expert on Wilhelm Keppler's staff, was sent to Pressburg to study and report on the future status of Slovakia. Keppler was a State Secretary for special duties in the Foreign Ministry. František Karmasin was State Secretary in the Slovak Government. See document No. 119.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 46, footnote 4.

This note is based on information given me by Herr Veesenmayer and Deputy Karmasin, independently of each other.

WOERMANN

No. 113

376/209191-92

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, November 11, 1938.

The Czechoslovak Minister called on me today at the request of his Government. He stated that Chvalkovsky, the Foreign Minister, could not understand why, as a result of the statement made by Minister Baron von Richthofen to the Czechoslovak delegation, the Czechoslovak Government, in the question of the delimitation of the frontier, had been faced with a demand which was of the nature of an ultimatum and why negotiations were not to continue. He asked if I could give the reasons for this. The Minister added as a personal observation that the German demands, which he had not even been able to study properly as a result of M. Heidrich's hasty departure, had struck him like a bolt from the blue. The cessions of territory in the Taus area were particularly painful to the Czechoslovak Government. Here a purely Czech population was involved.

I told the Minister that I had nothing to add to the statement by Herr von Richthofen. The only reason for the form of the German demand was the necessity for an immediate final settlement of the questions of frontier delimitation which were becoming too protracted. I could tell him definitely that the German demands admitted of no bargaining and that the Czechoslovak Government would be well advised to accept the demands in the form in which they were presented. I then explained to him at some length how moderate the German demands were. If he recalled the plebiscite zone marked on the Godesberg map<sup>1</sup> in which our prospects had been very good, he must admit that we had put forward only very small and modest demands. When the Minister objected that the ethnographic principle was thus being largely violated, I told him that only a relatively small number of Czechs were involved and that, moreover, the framing of the right of option would put this to rights.

M. Mastny said that he was leaving me with a very heavy heart and would report to his Government on the conversation.

WOERMANN

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. II, appendix VI.

## No. 114

1647/391204

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PRAGUE, November 11, 1938—midnight.

No. 717 of November 11

Received November 12—4:10 a.m.

1. Today at 11:40 p.m. Masařik, Chef de Cabinet to the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, and Minister Heidrich came to see me and requested me to inform the Foreign Ministry this very night word for word as follows:

"The Czechoslovak Government in its session of November 11 has accepted in principle the German demands of November 10 relating to frontier delimitation.<sup>1</sup> It has at the same time taken cognizance that the Reich Government has renounced the intention of making further demands. The Czechoslovak Government expresses the hope that the Reich Government will not turn down certain modifications of its demands where consideration for Czechoslovak national feeling appears possible without disadvantage to German ethnic interests.

"True to the principle of its new policy to bring about loyal *rapprochement* and close collaboration with Germany, the Czechoslovak Government has met the German demands on the assumption that henceforth nothing more stands in the way of a German guarantee of the new and final frontiers of the Czechoslovak State."

As an example of hoped-for modifications of German demands Masařik and Heidrich mentioned the region of Taus, Böhmisches Aicha, and Starkenbach.<sup>2</sup>

2. Minister Heidrich requested that Minister von Richthofen be informed that he would fly back to Berlin at noon tomorrow.

3. On instructions from the Foreign Minister, the Chef de Cabinet informed me that M. Chvalkovsky would be grateful for information as to when and where the interview proposed at the Vienna conference by the Reich Foreign Minister could take place.

In connection with this, I would point out that the election for the Presidency, for which Chvalkovsky is considered the most likely candidate, will possibly take place as early as November 17.

4. I request telegraphic instructions regarding the Foreign Minister's inquiry.<sup>3</sup> At the same time I should appreciate telegraphic information on the new frontier delimitation, together with a directive.

HENCKE

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 110.

<sup>2</sup> Taus is 50 kilometers southwest of Pilsen, Böhmisches Aicha, 30 kilometers southeast of Zwittau, and Starkenbach is 40 kilometers farther east.

<sup>3</sup> On Nov. 14 Woermann replied by telegram No. 447 (28/19348), conveying the gist of the Foreign Minister's instructions (see document No. 116) which were given on the same day in writing to Heidrich by Richthofen.

## No. 115

28/18195-96

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 718 of November 12 PRAGUE, November 12, 1938—8:00 p.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 717 of November 11.<sup>1</sup>

The new delimitation of the German-Czechoslovak frontier has caused great consternation and disappointment in government and political circles here. The Foreign Minister, who feels personally hurt, did not dare submit the German proposal to Cabinet and Party leaders until yesterday evening, in order not to prejudice negotiations connected with questions of internal politics which took place in the afternoon. (Presidential election, dissolution of parties, new constitution). The decision to accept the text reported was taken by the Cabinet in the late evening after hours of difficult and impassioned debate.

Deputy Beran, who is to take over leadership of the new Unity Party in process of formation, was significantly not yet informed up to this forenoon of the Cabinet decision. He spoke to a confidant to the effect that the candidature of the Foreign Minister for the Presidency was jeopardized by the new situation, because "Chvalkovsky, although closely attuned to Germany, could achieve no more than Beneš." Beran—as already said, in ignorance of the Cabinet decision—was anxious that the Government should appeal to a four-power conference on account of the so-called "6th zone."

The press here has not yet made mention of the new frontier delimitation. Nevertheless grossly exaggerated reports are circulating among the population about the extent of the new German demands.

In my opinion, failing other personalities in question, Chvalkovsky's candidature for the Presidency, which is also being supported by Slovakia, is not so endangered as Beran represents. Chvalkovsky himself and his supporters hope that Germany will accord the Foreign Minister a certain prestige success in order to strengthen with people and parties his personal position, which is at present shaken.

HENCKE

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 114.

## No. 116

1647/391205-08

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb*

BERLIN, November 13, 1938.

The Foreign Minister telephoned this afternoon about telegram 717 from Prague.<sup>1</sup> He wished to make certain that in regard to the pas-

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 114.

sage in the Czechoslovak statement on the question of frontier delimitation, "It has at the same time taken cognizance that the Reich Government has renounced the intention of making further demands," no such declarations have been made by us. As was known, we still had a number of other important questions to settle with the Czechs, primarily concerning traffic matters. The Foreign Minister emphasized in particular the project for an extraterritorial Reich *Autobahn* between Breslau and Vienna. He likewise mentioned, without going into details, the railway projects under consideration with Czechoslovakia.

These questions would first have to be settled with all speed before frontier delimitation could be finally decided. On the other hand, this question too was to be dealt with as a matter of great urgency in view of the coming Reichstag elections. Lastly, the question of a frontier guarantee must not be linked with that of frontier delimitation. The frontier guarantee depended on further political developments in general.

After consultation with Minister Martius who, in turn, got in touch with the appropriate principal official [*Generalreferent*] at the Reich Ministry for Transport, I informed the Foreign Minister by telephone of the present state of the transport questions pending with Czechoslovakia.

The following projects are proposed :

1. Extraterritorial *Autobahn* Breslau-Vienna
2. Preferential rail traffic on the lines Breslau-Wildenschwert-Lundenburg, Breslau-Oderberg-Prerau-Lundenburg
3. Oder-Danube canal
4. Other inland shipping questions of various kinds
5. Questions of motor traffic and cycle traffic
6. Questions of minor importance concerning railways
7. Air traffic

The projects had all been made known to the Czechoslovak Government already. A definite acceptance regarding the *Autobahn* had not yet materialized. The preferential railway traffic under paragraph 2 was already in force. As soon as the necessary Czechoslovak experts arrived in Berlin, the settlement of the projects by treaty, if necessary in the form of a skeleton treaty, could, in the opinion of Minister Martius, be carried out in 3 or 4 days.<sup>2</sup> It is true, Dr. Todt's wishes regarding the *Autobahn* would only reach the Foreign Minis-

<sup>2</sup> On Nov. 14 Ambassador Ritter telephoned Ribbentrop at Munich, informing him that all these projects could not be settled in 3 or 4 days and suggesting that the German demands should for the present be confined to the *Autobahn* (2377/497314-15).

try tomorrow. The appropriate principal official of the Reich Transport Ministry had no information about the project of a double-track railway along the *Autobahn* Breslau-Vienna. The Foreign Minister gave the following instructions for the further treatment of the questions pending with reference to telegram 717 from Prague:

1. Minister von Richthofen is requested to give the following information at the talk with the Czechoslovak delegation, which takes place this afternoon at the Foreign Ministry:

(a) The question as to whether the Reich Government wishes to advance further claims must remain entirely open.

(b) The question of frontier guarantee must in no wise be linked with that of frontier delimitation; on the contrary, it depended on further political developments in general.

(c) The modifications in the district of Taus, at Böhmisches Aicha, and at Starckenbach, hoped for by the Czechoslovak Government, could not be conceded.

(d) The Czechoslovak Government is requested to express its attitude in principle in a positive manner by tomorrow on the project of the extraterritorial Reich *Autobahn* Breslau-Vienna.

(e) The Czechoslovak Government is requested to dispatch to Berlin by tomorrow those experts who are essential to the transport discussions still pending, so that these questions may be brought to a conclusion in 3 or 4 days.

(f) M. Chvalkovsky is to be informed that the Foreign Minister is at present at Berchtesgaden; from there he will attend the funeral of the late Counselor of Legation vom Rath<sup>3</sup> at Düsseldorf and then, after his return to Berlin, will notify M. Chvalkovsky through the Legation when he can see the latter in Berlin.

2. On the question of the possible construction of a double-track railway along the *Autobahn* Breslau-Vienna, he reserved any further necessary instructions until after another consultation with the Führer.

3. The signature to the frontier delimitation must not be affixed until the pending traffic problems are settled. Everything must be ready in 3 or 4 days.

Minister von Richthofen has been informed accordingly, likewise Minister Martius. In connection with the forthcoming visit of M. Chvalkovsky, and independently of Herr von Richthofen's statement to the Czechoslovak delegation, a corresponding communication has been telephoned to the German Legation in Prague (Kanzler Fischer).

ALTENBURG

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 269, footnote 2.

## No. 117

28/18194

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 719 of November 14 PRAGUE, November 14, 1938—1:40 p.m.

The Foreign Ministry today asked me to transmit the following to the German Foreign Ministry:

The Czechoslovak delegation in Berlin has been empowered to sign the protocol on the construction of the north-south *Autobahn* and the construction of the Danube-Oder canal.<sup>1</sup> The settlement of financial questions between the Reich and Czechoslovakia is to be left to a mixed commission.

The Czech expert here will leave for Berlin today to reinforce the Czechoslovak delegation.

HENCKE

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<sup>1</sup>A memorandum by the Director of the Political Department on Nov. 15 (376/209172) states that the Foreign Minister, after a conference held that day, decided that a short outline agreement on the subject of the Danube canal should be concluded simultaneously with the agreement about the *Autobahn*. These agreements were signed Nov. 19. See documents No. 123, footnote 2, and No. 124.

## No. 118

140/76174

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 174 of November 15 BUDAPEST, November 15, 1938—5:05 p.m.

Received November 15—8:30 p.m.

The Regent, who asked me to come to see him in order to present me with his portrait in connection with the Vienna Award, made a few friendly remarks and mentioned that he was worried over the problem of Carpatho-Ukraine. The Hungarian Government was being besieged with requests to put an end to the untenable conditions there. At Ungvár, 121 of the communities remaining in Czechoslovakia and the former Minister there, Fencik Hiam, had made representations on these lines. Because of the course of the rivers the needy population of the mountainous remainder of Carpatho-Ukraine was entirely dependent on Hungary as a market. Troops with a leaning toward Bolshevism (Katljura),<sup>1</sup> who had previously been driven out of the Ukraine and incorporated into the Czech Army, were terrorizing the population.

Since the Führer's statement in Munich to Darányi (who should have countered senseless rumors about an anti-German Polish-

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<sup>1</sup> Perhaps an error for Petljura.

Hungarian bloc) that we were not interested in the question of setting up a Polish-Hungarian frontier, there is the possibility that, in the event of an explosion in Carpatho-Ukraine, Hungarian troops would march in and remain there until the population was guaranteed the right of self-determination, perhaps through the sending of international troops for the duration of the plebiscite. The mountainous country of Carpatho-Ukraine, intersected by deep valleys running north and south, was moreover ill suited as a line of communication for the German activity to be expected in the future in the Ukraine, which must be brought about in conjunction with similar action by Italy and Japan in order to stem the Bolshevist danger.

ERDMANNSDORFF

No. 119

2002/442227-80

*Consul Druffel to Under State Secretary Woermann*

PRESSBURG-BRATISLAVA, November 15, 1938.

DEAR UNDER STATE SECRETARY: The experiences of the last week give me an opportunity of once again claiming your kind interest. The topic of poor cooperation and coordination between different departments is probably nothing new in the Ministry either. In my present sphere of activity the various elements have up till now been to some extent coordinated, thanks to my long-standing confidential collaboration with Karmasin, leader of the ethnical group here and at present State Secretary in the Slovak Government. Last week this cooperation suffered a severe blow as a result of Karmasin's not only arranging Durčansky's visit to Berlin without consulting me but also adopting an attitude of particular secrecy toward me.

I do not know the reasons for this; they are probably to be sought not here on the spot but in some unpleasant experiences with the machinery of the Foreign Ministry, so-called "diplomacy." Even now, I know very little about Durčansky's visit.<sup>1</sup> It seems to have been insufficiently prepared for and to have come about only under pressure. The discussion of the subject of Theben<sup>2</sup> seems to have led to a fresh depression.

With regard to this incident I should like to raise the question whether it would not be in the interests both of the Foreign Ministry and of the foreign policy of the Reich if the leaders of the *Volksgruppe*, and incidentally the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*, too, were to confine themselves to the affairs of the *Volksgruppe*, leaving political

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 112.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 46, footnote 4.

relations with Slovakia, in so far as they are not conducted via Prague, to the Foreign Ministry and its machinery.

If this is not done and if visits of Ministers continue to be arranged by other agencies and discussions of political questions (e.g. Theben) conducted through other channels, I can scarcely accept the responsibility for upholding the authority of the Reich Mission here. There is also the fact that for months Karmasin has been heavily overburdened with exacting and continual work and, if the recent tempo continues, he will hardly be able to stand up to it. For this reason, too, a reasonable division of work between his duties and those of the Reich Mission appears necessary, while the role of the *Volksgruppe* as mediator, mentioned also in Tiso's last conversation with a press representative, need not be altogether excluded.

Karmasin, who has always fully proved his worth as the leader of the *Volksgruppe*, does not in my opinion possess the necessary experience to deal with the foreign-affairs side of German-Slovak relations. On the other hand, I would advocate that he should be given every support as leader of the *Volksgruppe* in Slovakia, especially in the face of any attempts by Prague (Kundt) to assimilate conditions here to the situation there. If "an office for liquidation and reorganization" is to be established in Prague—I do not know whether this term is a necessary or happy one there—there is in the *Volksgruppe* here nothing to liquidate and nothing to reorganize, only something to build up and reconstruct.

Necessary and desirable as parallel work between the remnant of the *Volksgruppe* in Bohemia and Moravia with the *Volksgruppe* here may be, conditions here cannot be correctly judged through Prague spectacles.

This also applies to the purely political field, where the two correspondents of the VB here and in Prague almost always give somewhat different versions of Czech-Slovak relations.

At present I have the impression that Slovakia's revolutionary phase is being legalized almost too quickly in Prague, without our having been able, in my opinion, to exploit sufficiently the situation in which everything in Slovakia was in a state of flux and we could have achieved anything. Our claims to Theben doubtless contribute at present to driving the Slovaks into closer reliance on Prague. Moreover, the historical and sentimental factors which the Slovaks put forward with regard to Theben are completely groundless. The legend of Cyril and Methodius<sup>3</sup> and their connection with Theben

<sup>3</sup> A reference to Cyril and his brother Methodius, two missionaries sent from Thessalonica in the ninth century to convert the western Slavs of Moravia to Christianity; Cyril is said to have devised the Cyrillic alphabet of the Slavonic languages.

has only a very weak historical foundation in the unscientific writings of a priest.

I would rather give as a reason for giving up Theben the fact that the March-Danube frontier is undeniably a natural one.

In my opinion Theben is of importance for us only in view of the future Danube-Oder canal. At all events, it is to be expected that the psychological effect on the Slovaks here will be very serious.

In the hope, Mr. Under State Secretary, that my remarks will at least partially enlarge your perspective of the situation here,

I remain,

Heil Hitler!

Your obedient servant,

E. V. DRUFFEL <sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> On Nov. 30 Woermann replied to this letter (2002/442231-33) apologizing for the fact that Druffel had not been kept informed of Durčánský's visit to Berlin, which had been arranged at the last minute. Woermann also informed Druffel that the decision had already been made that the Germans would occupy Theben.

## No. 120

1647/391216

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, November 17, 1938.

Counselor of Legation Hewel gave the following information today:

"On instructions from the [Foreign] Minister, I informed General Bodenschatz <sup>1</sup> today that

1. of the Czech crowns reverting to us through the return of the Sudetenland, a sum of several million marks is to be held in reserve in case we should purchase the land required for the *Autobahn* from Czechoslovakia.<sup>2</sup>

2. I requested that the Field Marshal be informed that at the moment political negotiations with the Slovaks were not opportune. The Führer had decided that at present the question of the separation of the Slovaks should not be touched upon, either in a positive or in a negative sense. The decision about this depended in part on the negotiations taking place during the next few days between the Reich Foreign Minister and the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Chvalkovský."

Submitted for information to the State Secretary, the Under State Secretary, Ambassador Ritter, Director Wiehl, and Counselor of Legation Altenburg.

BRÜCKLMEIER

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<sup>1</sup> Maj. Gen. Karl Bodenschatz was Chef des Ministeramtes in the Reich Air Ministry and acted for Göring as a sort of Chef de Cabinet.

<sup>2</sup> A further memorandum dated Nov. 17 (2375/496863) reports the Führer's decision that these Czech crowns should be invested as quickly as possible in view of a danger of devaluation of the Czech currency.

## No. 121

376/209155

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb*

BERLIN, November 17, 1938.

The Führer had ordered an immediate answer to the following questions:

1. How many *Volksdeutsche* fall to Czechoslovakia under the frontier settlement?
2. How many *Volksdeutsche* are there in the new Czechoslovakia?
3. How many Czechs fall to Germany under the new frontier delimitation?
4. How many Czech nationals are there in Germany?

After inquiry at the Ministry of the Interior (Regierungsrat Essen) the following answers were given to these questions:

1. Under the forthcoming frontier settlement 263 *Volksdeutsche* revert to Czechoslovakia.

2. After deducting the number of *Volksdeutsche* falling to Poland and Hungary, 478,589 *Volksdeutsche* remain in the new Czechoslovakia.

3. Czech nationals falling to Germany:

Under the demarcation line of October 5	637, 035
Under the forthcoming frontier settlement	39, 443
Total	676, 478

4. Czech nationals in the Reich, including Austria: 32,274.

For Czechoslovakia the figures are based on the 1930 statistics; for Czech nationals in the Reich the statistics are for 1934. Information transmitted at 2:20 p.m.

A[LITENBURG]

## No. 122

140/76175

*The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Hungary*

Telegram

No. 246

BERLIN, November 18, 1938.  
e.o. Pol. IV 8456.

For the Minister.

With reference to your telegram No. 174.<sup>1</sup>

The Hungarian Minister today made a *démarche* here similar in content to the Regent's statement to you. He pointed out that the

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 118.

situation in Carpatho-Ukraine was beginning to be untenable and that it was difficult for the Hungarian Government to continue to exercise restraint. He added that, however the situation might develop, the Hungarian Government was anxious to confer with the German Government on the matter.

When next an opportunity presents itself, which, however, should be brought about soon, please tell the Hungarian Foreign Minister that the German Government objects to the action apparently envisaged by the Regent in Carpatho-Ukraine. According to reports in the possession of the German Government, Czechoslovakia would just not endure such action. If Hungarian action gave rise to difficulties, Germany could not support Hungary. Hungarian action therefore, on the lines apparently contemplated, appears to the German Government to be inopportune.

The Hungarian Minister has in the meantime been instructed in the same sense and has been reminded of the obligation to do nothing without us. Furthermore, the Italian Ambassador has been given a broader view of the situation.

WOERMANN

### No. 123

2377/497316

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

November 19, 1938.

Last night at 12:10 a.m. State Secretary Dr. Dietrich<sup>1</sup> rang me and told me that the draft of the treaty with Czechoslovakia for a Breslau-Vienna *Autobahn* given by the DNB teleprinter had been submitted to the Führer. The Führer has accepted all points of the treaty.<sup>2</sup>

The Reich Foreign Minister has been informed of the above.

HEWEL

<sup>1</sup> Otto Dietrich, State Secretary in the Ministry of Propaganda and Press Chief of the Reich Government, 1937-45.

<sup>2</sup> This treaty, like the Oder-Danube canal protocol (document No. 124), was signed by Ambassador Karl Ritter and General Husárek as plenipotentiaries on Nov. 19. It contained 13 clauses. The strip of land for the arterial roadway Breslau-Brünn-Vienna and its ancillary establishments was to be placed at the disposal of the German Government within 2 months, free of all cost; the latter would enjoy extraterritorial privileges in it, though the land itself would remain under Czechoslovak sovereignty. The land would be included in the German customs and passport area. Connecting roads with the Czechoslovak road system would be arranged by the German Inspector General of Highways after consulting the Czechoslovak Government. Security and traffic control throughout would be the responsibility of the German Government. The arterial highway would be available without cost to all German and Czechoslovak motor traffic (2375/496848-62).



## No. 126

140/76179

*The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in  
Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

No. 454

BERLIN, November 19, 1938.  
Pol. IV 8455.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 721 and 730.<sup>1</sup>

For the Chargé d'Affaires only.

Until further notice, reserve is to be exercised both in the Slovak and in the Carpatho-Ukraine questions. For this reason an instruction has been issued to the press to publish nothing about incidents in Carpatho-Ukraine. The question of setting up a Consulate General in Chust has also been postponed. Intervention in the question of renaming the Carpatho-Ukraine and in the question of equal treatment of the Carpatho-Ukraine and Slovakia is therefore also undesirable at present.

WOERMANN

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (140/76176-77 and 76178).

## No. 127

376/209102

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 178 of November 19 BUDAPEST, November 19, 1938—8:06 p.m.  
Received November 20—12:45 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 246.<sup>1</sup>

Instruction carried out.

The Foreign Minister answered that he recognized the frontier delimitation as laid down in the Vienna Award. In the meantime, however, a new situation had arisen as a result of a declaration expressing the will of the overwhelming majority of the Carpatho-Ukraine population in demanding union with Hungary. In consequence the Carpatho-Ukrainian question had become a national affair of the Hungarian people. As this movement had the backing of very influential persons here, he did not know whether the efforts of the Hungarian Government to prevent a solution by force would be successful. He had suggested to the Czechoslovak Minister,<sup>2</sup> who

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 122.

<sup>2</sup> Miloš Kober, April 1933—March 1939.

had complained about propaganda here, that more serious possible developments might be prevented by a plebiscite under international control.

ERDMANNSDORFF

No. 128

376/209073-75

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, November 20, 1938.

Ambassador Attolico telephoned me today at 1 p.m. to make the following communication:

The Hungarian Military Attaché in Rome<sup>1</sup> had called on Mussolini and stated that the situation in the Carpatho-Ukraine was becoming more and more untenable. The Hungarian Government would therefore occupy the Carpatho-Ukraine area within the next 24 hours. The Hungarian Government had previously consulted the German Government and in reply to an inquiry had received the answer that Germany considered action by Hungary as inopportune. If difficulties arose therefrom, Germany could give Hungary no support.<sup>2</sup> The Hungarian Government took this to mean that Germany did not in principle disapprove of action but was only apprehensive for Hungary.

I told Ambassador Attolico that such an interpretation of our reply to the Hungarian feeler was wrong. It had been our intention to inform the Hungarian Government that we could not give our approval to their action. Furthermore, such action would be a breach of the Vienna Award. Ambassador Attolico replied that in that case the Hungarian Government had obviously misunderstood us. Mussolini had instructed him to ask us if the Hungarian interpretation was correct, so that he might give a similar answer to Hungary. I denied the possibility of a misunderstanding on the part of the Hungarian Government and requested Ambassador Attolico to acquaint Mussolini with the German point of view.

In the afternoon, after consultation with the Führer, I made the following communication to Ambassador Attolico for transmission to Mussolini:

1. The German Government was extremely surprised at the interpretation of its reply. Furthermore, the Hungarian Government had even given a written assurance that it would take no steps without informing the German Government.

2. The Führer was of the opinion that a Hungarian occupation of the Carpatho-Ukraine would discredit the Axis Powers, whose award Hungary had unconditionally accepted 3 weeks ago.

<sup>1</sup> Lt. Col. Vitez Szabó.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 122.

3. Hungary was playing a frivolous game if she intervened by force now, and she would bear the full responsibility for all eventual consequences. The outcome of a Czechoslovak-Hungarian conflict, which would inevitably result, could not be foreseen; possibly Germany too would be forced to intervene.

V. RIBBENTROP

No. 129

376/209068

*The Head of the Italian Government to the Italian Ambassador in Germany*<sup>1</sup>

November 20, 1938—8:30 p.m.

1. I deeply regret that, by means of a communication conveyed at the last moment, and entirely unsupported by the contents of the statements made from the German side to Kánya, an attempt has been made to depict to me the situation and the attitude of the German Government in a manner completely at variance with the truth.

2. I agree with the Führer that, after the Vienna Award which took account of 95 percent of the Hungarian demands, this action on the part of Budapest seriously detracts from the prestige of the Axis and places Hungary in a position which is not without danger morally, and perhaps also militarily.

3. If the Führer thinks an immediate German-Italian *démarche* in Budapest is called for in order to arrest the action, in case it is still only contemplated or in a preparatory phase, and in order to clarify the situation, the Italian Government is in complete agreement.

MUSSOLINI

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<sup>1</sup>This instruction to Attolico, found in a German translation edited by Ribbentrop, was presumably handed to the latter by the Italian Ambassador as a reply to Hitler's statement conveyed to Attolico earlier in the day. See document No. 128.

No. 130

140/76189

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

BUDAPEST, November 20, 1938—11:45 p.m.

No. 181 of November 20

Received November 21—1:40 a.m.

When I pointed out to the Foreign Minister's Chef de Cabinet,<sup>1</sup> who like other Government officials at first showed marked reserve with regard to questions on the situation in Carpatho-Ukraine, that

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<sup>1</sup>Tibor Bartheldy.

air-force units here had been transferred and that, in spite of its being Sunday afternoon, full staffs were on duty at the War Ministry and the Foreign Ministry, he admitted the possibility of a solution by force in the course of this week. In the Foreign Minister's view the people had been overcome by a psychosis about the Carpatho-Ukraine. The Army was strongly urging intervention. The War Minister<sup>2</sup> and the Foreign Minister thought the chances of success were good in spite of the Czech Minister's threat of intervention by the Czech Army. The Slovaks had asked support from Hungary against Ukrainian claims to parts of eastern Slovakia.

Italy was sending air-force units for the protection of Budapest. Mussolini had offered 12 fighter squadrons, of which however only 8, i.e. 96 aircraft, had been accepted by Hungary because of lack of air-field accommodation. Italian airmen are coming in Hungarian uniforms. Fifty aircraft should already have arrived here today. But because fog had been reported by telegram from Steinamanger,<sup>3</sup> they had remained at Gorizia today. He was giving me the above information in strict confidence.

Please forward to the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht.

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>2</sup> Gen. Károly Bartha, Minister of Defense, 1938-42.

<sup>3</sup> Magyar: Szombathely.

## No. 131

376/209058

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, November 21, 1938.

This morning the Reich Foreign Minister handed to Ambassador Attolico the draft approved by the Führer of the note to the Hungarian Government in Budapest with the request that Attolico inform the Duce of this draft and ask him if he, for his part, was prepared to make representations in Budapest on the lines of the German draft note.

On the strength of this, Foreign Minister Ciano telephoned the Reich Foreign Minister this morning about midday and informed him that the Italian Government shared the German view in the Carpatho-Ukrainian question and that, for its part, it would deliver a note in Budapest which would include the four points of the German draft note. At the same time Foreign Minister Ciano had complained that the Hungarian Government had not informed him correctly. Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop agreed with Foreign Minister Ciano to in-

form the Polish Government also of the German and Italian *démarches* in Budapest.<sup>1</sup>

RIBBENTROP

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<sup>1</sup> A memorandum by the Under State Secretary on Nov. 21 (376/209026) gives the Foreign Minister's instructions that every detail of the "Hungarian incident" was to be reported to the Führer at Berchtesgaden and that the German Ambassador in Warsaw was to hand to the Polish Foreign Minister a copy of the German note to the Hungarian Government.

No. 132

140/76192-96

*The Foreign Minister to the Legation in Hungary*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, November 21, 1938.

(Telephoned to Budapest November 21—6:30 p.m.)

Request you to hand at once to Hungarian Foreign Minister following note to be signed by you:

(insert enclosure)

End of note.

Before making the *démarche* please confer with your Italian colleague, who has likewise received instructions to deliver a note embodying points 1-4.

In making the *démarche* please express clearly to M. Kánya our astonishment at Hungarian attitude.

For information:

Italian Foreign Minister has given us the following information on Italian-Hungarian conversations about Carpatho-Ukrainian question:

1. That in three conversations on the 11th, 18th, and 19th, Ciano had strongly urged Hungary to abandon any action against Czechoslovakia on account of Carpatho-Ukraine. He had said verbatim: ". . . Italy has no immediate interest in the matter. According to the Vienna Award you Hungarians could not naturally count on our support in an action of this kind, and I would add that, should Berlin take steps to remind you of the obligations arising from the decisions of the award, we should associate ourselves with Berlin."

2. Italy will make a *démarche* in Budapest similar to that of the German Government and in the same terms as the closing four points of the German note.

3. As regards military assistance, none has been requested, excepting the 100 fighter aircraft which were promised a few months ago for the defense of Budapest and which, in fact, have now been retained in Italy.

End of the communication from the Italian Government.

RIBBENTROP

[Enclosure]

November 20, 1938.

The German Government has received information through the Italian Government about the Hungarian communication in which the Royal Hungarian Government informs the Italian Government of its intention to commence military operations on Sunday, November 20, for the occupation of Carpatho-Ukraine.

This communication to the Royal Italian Government is in direct contradiction to the communications made by the Royal Hungarian Government to the Reich Government. Minister von Erdmannsdorff was informed by the Hungarian Foreign Minister on November 19<sup>1</sup> that they were endeavoring to prevent the employment of force against Carpatho-Ukraine. Besides this, the Hungarian Minister had called at the Foreign Ministry as late as Friday the 18th<sup>2</sup> and given assurances that Hungary would not resort to measures of any kind without agreement with the German Government.

The following facts are furthermore established:

In a *démarche* with the Royal Hungarian Government on November 19, the German Minister had expressed the German Government's misgivings as to the employment of force in Carpatho-Ukraine and had pointed out that, should such an invasion meet with resistance, which was possible according to available information, the German Government would not at present be able to give the Hungarian Government military support. He had moreover indicated that for these reasons the German Government considered such action inopportune.

According to information from the Italian Government the Royal Hungarian Government had interpreted this step mistakenly, it seems, and had represented it to the Italian Government as if the German Government had no objection to the use of force as such, as was now planned, but only wished to express certain misgivings regarding Hungary's position. In order to obviate any possible misunderstanding, the German Government now has the honor to communicate once more to the Hungarian Government the following:

1. In the award given recently at Vienna at the request of the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Governments, the frontier between Hungary and the Carpatho-Ukraine has been determined by the German and Italian Governments. By her signature in Vienna, Hungary has explicitly recognized this frontier before the whole world as the final frontier. If Hungary now advances with armed forces against the

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 127.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 122.

Carpatho-Ukrainian part of Czechoslovakia, the Hungarian Government may thereby be placed morally in a very difficult position.

2. Moreover, a consequence of such action would be to render valueless the Vienna Award to the discredit of the two arbitrating powers. The German Government therefore feels justified in expecting Hungary to abide by the award.

3. According to reports available here, it is within the bounds of possibility that an incursion into the Carpatho-Ukraine might meet with armed resistance by the Czechoslovak Army. Judging by the relative strength of both armies, which is known to the German Government, Hungary might in that case run into a difficult, not to say critical, military situation. As already stated, the German Government would not, however, be in a position at present to render assistance of any kind to Hungary.

4. For these reasons also the German Government once more draws attention to the serious misgivings which it feels obliged to entertain regarding such an entry by force into the Carpatho-Ukraine and makes it quite clear that Hungary would have to take the blame for any unfortunate consequences of such action.

V. ERDMANNSDORFF

## No. 133

140/76191

### *The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 184 of November 21 BUDAPEST, November 21, 1938—10:18 p.m.

Received November 22—1:30 a.m.

With reference to the telephoned instructions from the Foreign Minister.<sup>1</sup>

Instruction was carried out in conjunction with *démarche* by Italian Minister, who confined himself to delivering the note.

My discussion with the Foreign Minister became very heated; he maintained that the Italian note was inspired by us, as could be seen from the style. He could not give any satisfactory answer to my reference to the strange difference between the declaration given by the Hungarians to the Italian Government and to ourselves, respectively. He was in fact far too excited for an objective talk.

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 132.

## No. 134

140/76200—01

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, November 21, 1938.

After the Hungarian Minister had carried out the instruction mentioned in another memorandum<sup>1</sup> he made the following statement on behalf of his Government:

From reports from Rome the Hungarian Foreign Minister had gathered that the German Government wanted to prevent Hungarian action in Carpatho-Ukraine.

From answers previously received in Berlin and Budapest, Hungary had been led to believe that Germany would put no obstacles in her way if this action were undertaken by Hungary on her own initiative. The other Axis Power, Rome, viewed this action with the greatest sympathy. The "Ruthenian" [*russinisch*] question was regarded in Hungary, irrespective of party, as a national affair. As the proposal for a plebiscite had been rejected, the only thing that remained was to take direct action.

In this difficult situation the Hungarian Government asked whether, in spite of the circumstances mentioned, the negative attitude of the German Government represented its last word and whether the German Government did not consider it at all possible that it might adopt a disinterested view. From the answers given in Berlin and Budapest to the latest Hungarian *démarche*, it could certainly not be concluded that the attitude adopted by Germany in October toward Darányi had changed. The Minister explained this by saying that the Führer had told Darányi that the Carpatho-Ukraine did not interest him. In conclusion, the Minister added that a German answer might have decisive and far-reaching influence on Hungarian public opinion.

I replied that the Minister was completely out of touch with the situation. It was regrettable that there had been a twofold misunderstanding. First, our answer, which had been couched in very clear terms, had been misinterpreted and, second, we had very definite reports from Rome that there could be no question of "complete sympathy on the part of the Italian Government." On the contrary, Count Ciano had repeatedly given a negative answer to the Hungarian Minister. Furthermore, the Italian and German Ministers in Budapest had today made a *démarche* regarding this matter. I then read to the Minister points 1-4 of the directive to Minister von Erdmannsdorff and gave him a copy of the note to be handed over by the latter.

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<sup>1</sup> On the same day the Hungarian Minister had informed Woermann of his Government's desire to enter into closer relations with the Reich and to join the Anti-Comintern Pact (73/51673-79).

The Minister nevertheless still requested to be granted an interview with the Reich Foreign Minister, which eventually took place.<sup>2</sup>

WOERMANN

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<sup>2</sup> See vol. v of this series.

## No. 135

1648/391441-47

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, December 3, 1938.

To be submitted to State Secretary von Weizsäcker on his return.

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The minutes of the 9th session of the International Commission are enclosed.

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Before the meeting I asked the Czechoslovak Minister, the Italian Ambassador, and the British and French Chargés d'Affaires to come to see me, first, to determine the agenda of the meeting and, second, to find out whether on this occasion the International Commission could be finally buried. On the second point the following is to be kept in mind for future reference.

At first the Czechoslovak Minister tried to uphold a dissenting view—especially with reference to the third supplementary declaration to the Munich Agreement.<sup>2</sup> I told him that any attempt to maintain his dissenting view at the meeting would be interpreted by Germany as meaning that Czechoslovakia wanted to rely upon the help of the other powers represented on the Commission against Germany. Such an impression would certainly not be in Czechoslovakia's interest. Thereupon the Czechoslovak Minister said that he would not dissent at the meeting.

The Italian Ambassador was unable to come and sent Signor Magistrati. He too referred to the third supplementary declaration of the Munich Agreement and thought it would be premature to fix a time now for the winding up of the International Commission.

The British and French Chargés d'Affaires said that a decision of this kind at the forthcoming meeting would embarrass them. They

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 53, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> See "Supplementary Declaration," vol. II, p. 1016.

were not prepared for it and therefore had no instructions. They must therefore, in any case, reserve their opinion in order to obtain instructions from their Governments.

In view of this attitude of the other members of the International Commission I refrained from announcing the winding up of the International Commission at the meeting. Formal reservations by the British and French Chargés d'Affaires would have imposed greater restrictions on our freedom for the further discussion of this question than if the question had not been raised. The Italian Ambassador made the observation marked on page 4 of the enclosed minutes.<sup>3</sup> The question was not raised by other members.

RITTER

[Enclosure]

NINTH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION, NOVEMBER  
21, 1938, 6 P.M.

In the absence of State Secretary von Weizsäcker, Ambassador Ritter acted as chairman and opened the meeting.

The chairman began by recalling the resolution of the International Commission on October 13<sup>4</sup> that the work of rectifying and finally delimiting the frontier should be begun at once by the German and Czechoslovak Governments. These negotiations had now resulted in an agreement which was embodied in a memorandum signed by the leaders of both delegations on November 20, 1938. He read this memorandum (appendix I<sup>5</sup>).

The Czechoslovak Minister confirmed this statement. He recalled the words of State Secretary von Weizsäcker at the opening of the first session of the International Commission when he expressed the wish that the deliberations of this Commission should be conducted in a spirit of friendship and reconciliation. This wish expressed by the State Secretary had greatly helped the work of the Commission, and the Czechoslovak delegation would like to record that they too had been inspired by this spirit in the course of the negotiations. The Czechoslovak delegation naturally had had to defend their vital interests, while at the same time taking into account that a state which gives up part of its population on the basis of the nationality principle has to sacrifice not only large territorial but also economic interests. These sacrifices had been very heavy, and the Czechoslovak delegation could not conceal the feelings of deep grief which filled the hearts of the Czechoslovak people. In submitting to these stern necessities, however, the Czechoslovak delegation did not fail to appreciate that these sacrifices offered on the altar of peace dispelled the unrest of the past in order to bring peace in the future. The Czechoslovak delegation, therefore, looked more to the future than to the past. It was this spirit which had inspired the Czechoslovak delegation in their work with the German delegation, the result of which was now submitted to the International Commission. He had nothing to add to this result. He would, however, take the liberty of ex-

<sup>3</sup> See italicized sentences of enclosure, p. 165.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 56.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (1648/391448).

pressing the firm conviction of the Czechoslovak Government that the sacrifices made by Czechoslovakia might contribute to establishing good neighborly relations as well as bonds of friendship and profitable cooperation with Greater Germany. (The French text of this statement is added as appendix II.<sup>6</sup>)

The chairman expressed his thanks to the Czechoslovak Minister for having brought the negotiations on this important matter to a close in the same spirit of reconciliation and friendship in which State Secretary von Weizsäcker had opened them. The members of the International Commission appreciated the remarks of the Czechoslovak Minister on the sacrifices made by the Czechoslovak State. He pointed out that Germany, too, compared with her expectations, had made sacrifices. It was also painful for Germany and the German race [*Volkstum*] that so many *Volksdeutsche* remained outside the frontiers of the German Reich. He agreed with the Czechoslovak Minister that the two states would render themselves and Europe the best service by now devoting themselves entirely to the tasks of the future. The Government of the Reich was prepared to enter into good neighborly and friendly cooperation with Czechoslovakia. The agreements on various subjects concluded in the last few days already gave proof of this willingness.

The chairman referred to paragraph 6 of the Munich Agreement. In the absence of statements to the contrary, he assumed that the frontier between the German Reich and Czechoslovakia could now be regarded as final. He proposed that this resolution be formally recorded in the minutes of the meeting in the following terms:

"The International Commission has today taken cognizance of the minutes of November 20, relating to the delimitation of the German-Czechoslovak frontier by the German and Czechoslovak delegations as well as of the maps<sup>7</sup> appended to this record. It declares that the frontier marked on these maps is the final frontier within the meaning of paragraph 6 of the Munich Agreement."

The Italian Ambassador congratulated both Governments on having reached agreement. In the name of his Government, he signified agreement to the proposal after again outlining briefly the course of the negotiations during which the International Commission had agreed that the German and Czechoslovak Governments in direct negotiation should reach agreement on the delimitation of the frontier. This agreement had now been reached. *The most important task of the International Commission was thus accomplished. The Italian Ambassador referred to the third supplementary declaration to the Munich Agreement. The International Commission was available if the necessity arose.*

The French and British Chargés d'Affaires associated themselves in the name of their Governments with the remarks of the Italian Ambassador and at the same time expressed their satisfaction that direct agreement had been reached between the two Governments concerned.

The chairman thanked the delegates of the other states for their statements. He noted that the proposed text had been accepted. This text would be incorporated in the minutes of the meeting. Further, in accordance with a wish expressed by the Commission, the resolution was signed by the five members of the International Commission.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (1648/391449-50).

<sup>7</sup> Not found.

<sup>8</sup> This declaration (1648/391436) was signed on the same day by Ritter, Attolico, Ogilvie-Forbes, Montbas, and Mastny.

The chairman stated that the maps<sup>9</sup> appended to the German-Czechoslovak memorandum of November 20, 1938, had been signed by the German and Czechoslovak representatives for the frontier negotiations. In view of the fact that these maps had already been signed, the signatures of the members of the International Commission could be dispensed with on the maps.

The press communiqué attached as appendix III<sup>10</sup> was approved.

The meeting closed at 7:30 p.m.

<sup>9</sup> No maps have been found.

<sup>10</sup> Not printed (1648/391451).

## No. 136

1340/353483-84

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 741 of November 22

PRAGUE, November 23, 1938—12:20 a.m.

Received November 23—3:15 a.m.

Deputy Foreign Minister Krno asked me to call on him today and handed me a note in French which in translation reads as follows:

"As annexes 1 and 2 of the Munich Agreement of September 29 provide for the settlement of the question of Polish and Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia, the Czechoslovak Government takes the liberty of emphasizing to the signatory powers of this agreement:

"1. that the notes exchanged between the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky and the Polish Minister in Prague, Papée,<sup>1</sup> on November 1, 1938, contain the following passage:

"With the present exchange of notes the Governments of Poland and Czechoslovakia declare that they have finally settled the questions regarding rectification of the common frontiers."

"2. that in the protocol signed at Vienna on November 2 by von Ribbentrop, Count Ciano, Kánya, and Chvalkovsky, MM. Kánya and Chvalkovsky have confirmed anew in the name of their Governments the declaration by these Governments of October 30, 1938, to accept the award as a final solution and to implement the same without reservation or delay. Prague, November 22, 1938."

Minister Krno, in this connection, explained orally that a similar note would be handed today to the representatives here of Italy, Great Britain, and France, referring to the fact that by the signature of the German-Czechoslovak frontier agreement of November 21,<sup>2</sup> all frontier questions had been finally settled. Minister Krno added that henceforth the road was open for genuinely friendly relations with the Reich and for the constructive building-up of the Czechoslovak State. There remained only the solution of the guarantee question, which would now probably be studied by the interested powers. Krno accepted without contradiction my reply that the guarantee question

<sup>1</sup> Kasimierz Papée, January 1937-March 1939.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 135.

had no direct connection with frontier delimitation but was a separate matter. I took advantage of this opportunity to draw the attention of the Deputy Foreign Minister once more to the continued complaints of *Volksdeutsche* about arbitrary and unjust treatment by Czechoslovak officials and indicated that continued intervention by the Czechoslovak Government was urgently necessary.

Finally, Minister Krno remarked that Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky was ready at any time to start on his proposed visit to Berlin.

HENCKE

## No. 137

376/208996-97

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, November 23, 1938.

At the request of the Foreign Ministry, the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht has stated its opinion on the question of the reconstitution of the Czech armed forces in the enclosed report, which has not yet been submitted to the Führer by the Chief of Staff of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht.<sup>1</sup>

In speaking of this, General Keitel said to me that he did not think that these requests should be put to Minister Chvalkovsky in this form. In his opinion the practical method was to ask the Czech Foreign Minister how he visualized the development of military relations and then to continue to reject his proposals until something acceptable resulted.

An outline for military regulations but without details is given in the draft treaty worked out by Ministerialdirektor Dr. Gaus.<sup>2</sup>

Herewith submitted to the Foreign Minister.

WOERMANN

[Enclosure]

TOP SECRET MILITARY

BERLIN, November 21, 1938.

No. 1310/38 g. K. Ausl. III L

Subject: The Czech armed forces.

In the matter of the reconstitution of the Czech armed forces the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht requests that the following

<sup>1</sup> Keitel was Chief of Staff of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht (*Chef des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht*), as distinct from Hitler, who was Commander in Chief (*Oberster Befehlshaber der Wehrmacht*).

<sup>2</sup> A further document (401/213658-61), dated Dec. 9, contains a draft protocol which embodies the requirements of OKW in nine clauses, slightly differently formulated. This protocol was intended to supplement a "treaty of friendship," a draft of which was submitted by Gaus, Director of the Legal Department, on Nov. 25 (1941/435100-01).

demands be made. The Chief of OKW has approved them but has not yet been able to submit them to the Führer :

1. No fortifications or barriers on the Czech-German frontier and no preparations for such.

2. Czech armed forces of minimum size must look toward Germany and break off their connections with other countries (German Military Mission).

Proposals as to strength, organization, and armament must be submitted to the German Government for approval.

3. Standardization on German pattern of the types of arms and ammunition manufactured by the Czech armament industry and retooling of the Czech armament industry for use by Germany.

4. No intelligence service against Germany and no toleration on Czech territory of intelligence service by third powers against Germany.

5. The right of Germany to transport troops by rail and road, in war and peace, between Silesia and Austria through Czech territory subject to previous notification.

6. Special regulations for military service for German minority remaining in the Rump Czech State.

7. The roads leading from Dresden, Glatz, or Ratibor through Czech territory to the Ostmark must be completely available for military movements, also in time of war.

For the Chief of Staff of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht.  
BÜRKNER<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Kapitän zur See Bürkner was Director of Intelligence at OKW.

## No. 138

615/249781-88

### *Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb*

BERLIN, November 24, 1938.  
Pol. IV Abst. 1984.

The Czechoslovak Minister called on me yesterday to express his deep regret once again that it had not been possible for him to speak to the Foreign Minister personally last Saturday and to tell him what a serious loss the cession of the territory west of Taus<sup>1</sup> represented for the Czechs. The Chods who lived there were the oldest settlers of Czech stock. For centuries they had maintained their independence. There was a vast deal of literature on the Chods' wars of liberation, and hardly a month passed in Prague without the presentation there of a very popular opera dealing with the wars of liberation in the Taus area 300 years ago. This all went to show what a tremendous sacrifice Czechoslovakia was making in giving up this territory.

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<sup>1</sup> Fifty kilometers southwest of Pilsen.

M. Mastny said that he had also advised M. Chvalkovsky to send a personal letter to Herr von Ribbentrop as he himself had not succeeded in seeing the Foreign Minister, but he did not know whether M. Chvalkovsky had accepted this suggestion or whether he perhaps intended to raise the question again personally on the occasion of his visit to Berlin. In conclusion, M. Mastny again emphasized that the news of the surrender of the tip of territory at Taus had had a very unfavorable influence on the process of readjustment among the Czech people. After the Munich Award the view had generally gained ground among the masses that Czechoslovakia had been abandoned by her old friends—in particular by the French—that the policy of Beneš had been a catastrophe for the State, and that, therefore, orientation of the country toward Germany must be sought as the only natural solution. This felicitous development had been arrested by the demand for this territory which to every nationally minded Czech was intimately associated with his history and literature. It was understandable that—as far as possible—the Reich had wanted to realize the right of self-determination for the *Volksdeutsche* in Czechoslovakia. But for this very reason, it was incomprehensible that the Reich was now making demands on genuinely Czech territory, merely in order to simplify questions of traffic. However, any arrangement desired by us in this matter could be made.

M. Mastny expressed the hope that perhaps the Führer by a generous decision would after all spare the Czechs' national pride by relinquishing the Taus tip. Nothing would do more than such a gesture to promote friendly *rapprochement* between the two States and to prepare the way for reconciliation.

ALTENBURG

## No. 139

140/76220

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 188 of November 24      BUDAPEST, November 24, 1938—9:27 p.m.

Received November 25—1:00 a.m.

The Regent told me that Italy had not warned Hungary against marching into Carpatho-Ukraine but had only pointed out that Germany might possibly be opposed to this, and in that event Italy could not do other than associate herself with a possible German protest. The impression here was that Germany had primarily military objections, which were not shared here in view of reports on the poor fighting morale of the Czechoslovak Army. After benevolent support

in the Italian press, Mussolini had then sent good wishes for the forthcoming operation and had offered to send fighter aircraft to defend Budapest. German intervention, which had made a painful impression here, had still occurred in time because the Hungarian entry was delayed for a day or two as a result of necessary regrouping in view of Czech countermeasures. The Regent added that he thought the inviability of the remainder of Carpatho-Ukraine would become more and more evident as time went on.

ERDMANNSDORFF

No. 140

140/76228-29

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 761 of November 28      PRAGUE, November 28, 1938—10:00 p. m.  
Received November 29—12:50 a.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 756 of November 25.<sup>1</sup>

Secretary of Legation Hofmann returned today from his informative trip to Chust. He reports as follows:

"Complete calm in Carpatho-Ukraine with the exception of attacks by Polish terrorists on the northern frontier, which still continue. Mobilization still in force; demobilization to start within the next few days. According to information received from General Svatek, the Czech Divisional Commander in Perecin, Hungarian troops are already withdrawing. Apart from reinforced frontier guards on the northern frontier the Czech Intelligence Service has so far observed no larger active Polish formations. Several large bands of Polish terrorists, however, are said to be concentrated on the frontier. With reference to this and to the strength of Czech troops I refer you to telegram 759 of November 28.<sup>2</sup>

"No foundation for reported existence of Carpatho-Ukraine terrorists. Home defense organization, Sitsch, is only in elementary stage and not yet in possession of firearms. Limited issue said to be starting. Competent Czech authorities at present show little inclination to issue arms on a larger scale.

"Morale among the consciously Ukrainian population is good; they see in Germany a powerful ally who will help them in solving their internal problems. Even among that part of the population which is not consciously Ukrainian a decline in sympathy toward Hungary has been noted as a result of the proposed revision of her action in the occupied area. A plebiscite for union with Hungary would now have only a small chance of success.

<sup>1</sup>Not printed (401/213741). This telegram indicates that Hofmann, Press Attaché to the Legation, had been sent on a special mission to the Carpatho-Ukraine to report on the situation. During this mission he dined on Nov. 26 with Vološin and assured him of German sympathy, and on Nov. 27 he visited General Svatek, the local military commander (401/213697-701).

<sup>2</sup>Not printed (140/76225).

"No signs of food shortage; food supply for the population, according to data from Carpatho-Ukraine Government and the Czech military authorities, almost completely assured for the winter; stocks of grain for more than 6 months are on hand; 3 months' supply of maize stored in the country according to Government data; supplies for daily use by convoys of army trucks; Czechoslovak Army in possession of stocks exceeding their own needs, which in an emergency could be distributed to the civilian population.

"Chief economic problem lies in the cutting off by Hungary of transit traffic, which, above all, renders impossible transport into and through the territory of Czechoslovakia. Carpatho-Ukraine Government regards this as a violation of the Vienna Award.

"Lorries are only means of transport from Presov; roads are already under construction, including the Užhorod and Munkatsch bypasses. Freight traffic is maintained by military lorries; no rise of prices is ascertainable in the different districts, in contrast to the territory ceded to Hungary. ["]

To sum up: "Carpatho-Ukraine is viable, especially if foreign help is available for reconstruction. Prerequisite for this is stability of frontier and also restoration of internal security."

Written report follows.

HENCKE

## No. 141

1613/887183-84

### *Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb*

BERLIN, November 29, 1938.

Pol. IV 2944 g.

The Security Service [*Sicherheitsdienst*] maintains certain connections in Czechoslovakia which have proved useful in recent months. It has followed as a result of these connections that the Security Service has financed certain journeys of Slovak Ministers (for instance Durčanský),<sup>1</sup> as well as journeys of other official Slovak personages who were to study State and Party institutions in the Reich. These disbursements, which lie entirely outside the sphere of activity of the Security Service, have, through force of circumstances, attained such dimensions recently that they can no longer be defrayed by the Security Service alone. The Security Service has therefore approached the Foreign Ministry with the request to refund the disbursements accumulated to date, totaling 6,000 RM. At the same time, the Security Service has requested that in the future help be given to meet these current expenses. In return the Security Service places information received by it at the disposal of the Foreign Min-

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Ribbentrop's handwriting: "Where was he?"

istry. The first examples that have been furnished were in every way useful. On the other hand, it is not advisable to make payments without knowing to what purpose the money will be applied. Hence the Security Service has been told at the conferences that a regular subsidy was hardly possible, whereas it could be considered as circumstances arose whether in the future a subvention might be granted in particular cases. For this it was necessary that the Security Service should come to an understanding beforehand with the Foreign Ministry. The Security Service is prepared to accept this proposal. It is therefore requested that the disbursements amounting to 6,000 RM accumulated in the past be refunded to the Security Service.<sup>2</sup> Future claims are to be made dependent on the decision as to political necessity. The authorized amount would have to be transmitted to SS Haupt-Scharführer Lehn, Berlin-Grünwald, Delbrückstrasse 6a.

Submitted for approval to Personnel Department.

A[LTENBURG]

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "Yes. R[ibbentrop]"

## No. 142

1613/387162-63

*Counselor of Legation Hencke to Counselor of Legation Altenburg*

SECRET  
MOST URGENT  
A IV 2 f

PRAGUE, November 29, 1938.  
Pol. IV 2834 g.

DEAR ALTENBURG: Enclosed I am sending for your personal information a directive received by our Air Attaché<sup>1</sup> from his immediate superiors.

If the Foreign Ministry agrees, I visualize carrying out the instruction by presenting both the Military and the Air Attachés to Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky in the next few days. On this occasion I could discuss the relations of the two Air Forces and convey the wish of the Field Marshal.

However, I did not want to do this before you had given me your consent.

Perhaps, my dear Altenburg, you would be good enough to inform me by telephone whether you agree.<sup>2</sup>

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours sincerely,

HENCKE

<sup>1</sup> Major Möricke.

<sup>2</sup> According to a minute by Altenburg (1613/387164), he informed Hencke on Woermann's instructions that the Foreign Minister had no objection to the communication Göring wished to make to the Czechoslovak Government but that it should be made by the Air Attaché rather than the Chargé d'Affaires. See document No. 144.

[Enclosure]

*The Air Ministry to the Air Attaché in Czechoslovakia*

SECRET

BERLIN, November 10, 1938.

Min. A I No. 2057/38 geh.

Pol. IV 2834 g.

The Field Marshal desires to establish close relations between the two Air Forces and considers that an appropriate basis for this would be created if General Fajfr were to assume command of the Czech Air Force.

He requests that this idea should be brought to the notice of the right quarters in Prague, perhaps through the medium of the head of the mission.

(Signature)

No. 143

1916/430830-34

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

A III 2 b 2

PRAGUE, December 2, 1938.

Pol. IV 9023.

Subject: The election of Dr. Hácha as President of the Republic.

According to the Constitution of the Czechoslovak Republic, the Czechoslovak National Assembly should have been summoned to elect a new head of state within 14 days after the resignation of Dr. Beneš, the former President, which took place on October 5. Reasons of foreign and domestic policy in the meantime prevented the Prague Government from holding the elections until 55 days later, on November 30. The formal legal reason given for the postponement was that the frontiers of the Republic were not yet defined and that it was therefore not yet clear which members of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies represented areas to be ceded and would, therefore, not be entitled to vote. More decisive than the reasons connected with foreign policy, however, were the reasons of domestic policy. The Czechoslovak Government realized that, after the collapse of its old state system, a completely new constitutional basis must be evolved for the Rump Republic. Apart from the intervening legal proclamation of autonomy by Slovakia and the Carpatho-Ukraine, there was among other things the desire to define the functions of the President of the Republic in different terms from those of the old constitution. As a result of the unsound parliamentary system of this state, agreement could only be reached slowly among the internal political groups on the fundamental questions of the reform of the

constitution and the shaping of domestic policy. There were two conflicting tendencies in the struggle in domestic policy. The bourgeois parties, headed by the Agrarians, were of the opinion that they should at first confine themselves to the most important additions to the constitution, e.g. the autonomy laws, and should proceed to the fundamental reform of the constitution only after the election of the President. This reform would be rendered easier by an enabling act to be passed even before the election, giving the President and the Government far-reaching plenary powers to pass laws altering the constitution. In order to increase their power, not only for the Presidential election but also for the reform of the state, the bourgeois parties under the leadership of Beran proceeded to form the Party of National Unity, which finally included all parties with the exception of the Marxists. In this way Beran was able to avoid elections, the outcome of which did not appear altogether certain for the bourgeois parties. At the same time the bloc of National Unity—in itself really an artificial creation—had the power in Parliament to secure the election of the President proposed by them. On the other hand the Left, particularly the Social Democrats, wanted first of all to clarify the situation by issuing writs for a general election. The Parliament formed as a result of this election would then decide on the new constitution; only then did the Left think the moment would have come to elect the head of state. The Social Democrats based their case on the thesis that coming difficulties of an economic and social nature would improve their election prospects and thus strengthen their influence on the new constitution. A postponement of the election of the President would not have been unwelcome to a section of the former Government, including General Syrový, because the hitherto prevailing elements did not want to see the accession to power of the younger generation, which stood behind the Party of National Unity, more for reasons of domestic than of foreign policy. In the end, as is usually the case in this country, a compromise has been reached which in the main is more in keeping with the wishes of the so-called Right than of the Left. The enabling act did not materialize, particularly because the Slovaks refused to grant far-reaching plenary powers to a new Government and a new President whom they did not yet know. On the other hand, as I have already said, the formation of the Party of National Unity and the election of the President were achieved *before* a general election. A decisive factor for this success was the increasingly strong conviction throughout the whole country that the dilatory handling of the domestic crisis would further weaken the position of the state in foreign policy.

As regards the individual to be elected as President, internal agreement had been reached, after several intermediary stages, on Chvalkovsky, the Foreign Minister. His election seemed certain. Meanwhile, he himself withdrew his candidature—allegedly because he felt that as Foreign Minister he could render his country greater services. In actual fact other reasons may have dictated his decision. M. Chvalkovsky well realized that he did not enjoy the prestige among the broad mass of the people which is essential for the high office of head of the state. Today the man in the street is still of the opinion that in the frontier settlement the Foreign Minister did not represent the interests of the Republic energetically enough, at all events not successfully. In a widespread whispering propaganda campaign he was described as the helpless tool of the Germans. In addition, personal defamation of the Foreign Minister was brought into play; he was represented as being of Jewish origin and the same was said of his wife. To the best of my information, both M. Chvalkovsky and his wife—a native of Holland—are of pure Aryan descent. Finally, the Foreign Minister may also have realized that upheavals in domestic and probably in foreign policy lie ahead for his country, upheavals which in view of existing political conditions he probably considers inevitable. For this reason, too, he may have shrunk from assuming the supreme responsibility for his country's and his people's fate.

After Dr. Chvalkovsky's withdrawal of his candidature, unanimity was successfully reached in a comparatively short time on the person of Dr. Emil Hácha, the former President of the Supreme Administrative Court, and on November 30 he was elected President of the Republic.

So far, the general public had known little of Dr. Hácha. Nevertheless, in the short time during which his name has been known, he has achieved considerable popularity. The 66-year-old President is one of those men of whom no one can say anything bad—and in this country that is saying a great deal. He has behind him a blameless career as a judge. His great sense of justice and his mature judgment in all legal and human matters are generally praised. He has never interested himself in politics and, according to his own statement, understands little of it. For this very reason, however, it has been possible for him so far to represent only the legal point of view. He has consistently done so in all ethnical questions [*Volkstumsfragen*] and thus often earned the displeasure of the former regime and also of his predecessor Beneš. In the present circumstances it is in Hácha's favor that he is completely without private means and until now has lived only on his modest income. To all who have spoken with him, the new President gives altogether the impression of almost too great modesty and self-effacement. I men-

tion as a typical example that until now his grown-up daughter has been working as a typist in a bank at a monthly salary of 600 crowns, and the new President was only prevailed upon with difficulty to make her give up this situation so that she might help him in his social duties. He would have preferred to continue to live in his own home and to use the rooms of the castle only for official purposes. The new President has always lived a very retiring life, especially since his wife's death about a year ago, which was a particularly severe blow for him. His private interests are scholarly pursuits, legal philosophy, and art. He is especially fond of music and art. Dr. Hácha is a deeply religious man and regards his call to be Head of the State as a dispensation of fate from which he cannot escape. It is characteristic of him that on the day after his election he wanted the celebration of a low Mass, which was transformed, completely against his will, by the Cardinal Prince Archbishop<sup>1</sup> into a great church festival. Neutral eyewitnesses told me that the President kissed the skull of St. Wenceslas, which was handed to him by the Cardinal, in deep reverence. This act is said to have made such a deep impression on M. Hácha that he mentioned it when taking leave of the old Cabinet and welcoming the new one, declaring that he regarded this ceremony as a symbol for the political course of the new Czechoslovakia which, like St. Wenceslas, must have as her highest aim the achievement of a true German-Czech understanding by overcoming psychological obstacles.

It remains to be seen whether the President will be in a position to become the master of his country's destiny. From the point of view of character he has all the necessary qualities. On the other hand, he undoubtedly lacks political experience. This might have unfavorable effects in the Jewish question, for example, on which M. Hácha apparently has not yet any definite view. It is quite possible that in this connection he will not put up sufficient resistance to the various influences which are certain to be exerted upon him, from abroad as well. Hácha himself told his intimate friends that he feared the many influences which would now be exerted upon him, because it was difficult for him to judge which of his advisers was right and was acting disinterestedly, and which was not. In these circumstances it is important that he should have at his side a young, very energetic head of his Presidential Chancellery in the person of the Minister, Dr. Havelka.<sup>2</sup> As regards both his personal and his political character, M. Havelka enjoys a good reputation. He is generally considered as

<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Karel Kašpar, Archbishop of Prague, October 1931–April 1941.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Juraj Havelka was Minister without Portfolio in the Beran Cabinet.

having realized that his people and his country could survive only if, in spite of all psychological obstacles, real confidence in relations with Germany were achieved quickly and without compromise.

It will certainly not be easy for the President to fulfill the representative duties of his office. At least such was the impression gained at the extremely austere election ceremony in the Prague Parliament on November 30.

A sketch of the new President's career, drawn up by the Prime Minister's Press Department here, is appended.<sup>3</sup>

HENCKE

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<sup>3</sup>This is a clipping from the *Prager Presse* of Nov. 24, which has not been filmed.

### No. 144

1613/387164-65

#### *The Foreign Ministry to the Air Ministry*

SECRET

BERLIN, December 5, 1938.

zu Pol. IV 2834 g.

I have been informed by our Chargé d'Affaires in Prague of the letter of November 10, 1938—Min. A I No. 2057/38 geh.—a copy of which is enclosed,<sup>1</sup> to the Air Attaché at the German Legation in Prague, and I have informed the Legation that I have no objection to the communication which the Field Marshal wishes to make to the Czechoslovak Government, but that this communication is not to be made by the Chargé d'Affaires.

Further, in questions which, like the present, touch on matters of foreign policy I request that I should be consulted before instructions are given to the Air Attaché.

By order:  
W[OERMANN]

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 142, enclosure.

### No. 145

1613/387168

#### *The Foreign Ministry to the Legation in Czechoslovakia*

SECRET

BERLIN, December 6, 1938.

Pol. IV 2858 g.

Ten million Czech crowns in Czechoslovak notes for Deputy Kundt's welfare fund are going to the Legation by the same courier.

It is respectfully requested that the notes be held at the disposal of Oberdirektor Kiesewetter of the Kreditanstalt der Deutschen.<sup>1</sup>

By order:  
HEINBURG

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<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "Dispatched Dec. 7 by special air courier; 10 Reichsbank bags; contents: 10,000,000 Czech crowns."

A letter dated Dec. 6 (1613/387166) from the Vereinigte Finanzkontore G. m. b. H. to the Foreign Ministry enclosed a bearer check on the Reichsbank for 1,200,000 RM, convertible into Czechoslovak crown notes, which were to be forwarded to Prague. See also document No. 155.

## No. 146

2396/500326-27

### *Economic Agreement Between the Government of Carpatho-Ukraine and the Gesellschaft für Praktische Lagerstättenforschung*<sup>1</sup>

DECEMBER 7, 1938.

The Provincial Government of the Carpatho-Ukraine makes over to the Gesellschaft für praktische Lagerstättenforschung m.b.H., Berlin, W. 8., Behrenstrasse 39, the entire prospecting rights for minerals in the Carpatho-Ukraine and also the exploitation of these minerals with the proviso that the company is entitled to make over its rights under this agreement to other German companies.

If, as a result of this prospecting, minerals are found to be worth working, the above-named company has the first right to undertake the corresponding development of the minerals. The output is to be used primarily to meet the home requirements of the Carpatho-Ukraine. All surplus quantities will be released for export to Germany. The German side will release to the Provincial Government of the Carpatho-Ukraine for other development all properties the exploitation of which is of no interest to them. In the production of mineral oil, provided a net profit is made, the German side will make over 2 percent of the gross output to the Provincial Government of the Carpatho-Ukraine.

The German party to the agreement will employ preferably Carpatho-Ukraine personnel in any prospecting and production under German direction, insofar as no special expert qualifications are required.

The Provincial Government of the Carpatho-Ukraine will, as soon as possible, amend its legislation so as to insure that free lots and min-

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<sup>1</sup> This is supplementary to a memorandum signed the same day by Keppler and Revay (401/213686-91) which laid down a program of economic collaboration between Germany and the Carpatho-Ukraine, particularly to develop production of timber, hides, wool, and corn, the construction of railways and roads, the conservation of forests, and the building of a suitable capital for the Carpatho-Ukraine.

ing rights lapse immediately if the owner of such rights has not met his production obligations in a satisfactory manner.

For Gesellschaft für praktische  
Lagerstättenforschung m.b.H.

WILHELM KEPPLER

JULIAN REVAJ<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Minister of public works, communications, social welfare, et cetera, in Volosin's Cabinet of October 1938.

## No. 147

2369/495112-14

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

A III 2 h

PRAGUE, December 10, 1938.

Pol. IV 9196.

With reference to my report A III 2 h of November 23.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Remaining German element [*Restdeutschtum*].<sup>2</sup>

The examination of the position of the Germans remaining in Czechoslovakia, undertaken at the instance of the Legation and carried out by direct investigations on the spot, produced in the main the following result which corresponds in essential points with the findings independently established by Deputy Kundt:<sup>3</sup>

The alarming reports reaching the German authorities in the Reich on the position of the remaining Germans are not in general calculated to give a true picture of the conditions actually prevailing. These reports are often designed to persuade the Reich to take possession of additional German-inhabited areas in this country. They are, therefore, as can be proved by concrete cases, often exaggerated and sometimes even invented. This does not mean that conditions for our fellow countrymen remaining in Czechoslovakia are satisfactory. On the contrary, there is no doubt that among many Czechs there is a feeling of enmity toward the Germans, even if a change for the better seems to have set in recently. Further, it cannot be disputed that the economic position of the German remnant is extremely difficult, all the more so as the Czechs are inclined in many cases to make the remaining Germans and Hungarians pay a far-reaching and frequently excessive share in the economic sacrifices necessitated by the change. In conclusion, it must also be said that the subordinate Czech authorities are accustoming themselves only very slowly to the changed distribution of power and in many cases express their displeasure by all manner of chicanery.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5200/E307686-87).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 111.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 151.

Of even greater importance to the Germans than these objective facts, however, is their disappointment that the joy of union with the Reich did not fall to their lot and the fear that the motherland might not show sufficient understanding for their troubles and difficulties. This psychological burden remains particularly strong as long as the liberated Sudeten Germans are in the forefront of general interest, and their fellow countrymen who have remained here are daily reminded of their privileged position in the press and on the radio. This feeling has given rise to a strong internal opposition to the leadership of the Sudeten-German Party and even to Konrad Henlein personally. In a widespread whispering propaganda campaign the opinion is expressed that not only did Konrad Henlein not represent the interests of the German remnant with sufficient energy but that he has now abandoned it altogether. In this situation it is understandable that it is to the advantage of the German remnant, influenced by not always reliable activists, who moreover live mainly in the Reich, to paint their situation in colors as dark as possible. During recent weeks there has in general been no direct persecution of the German remnant by the Czechoslovak Government, either in the cultural or in the political sphere. Neither is there on the whole any question of economic injustice against the Germans organized or directly inspired by the Government. The difficulties lie rather in the fact that, as a result of the events of the last few months, internal tension between Germans and Czechs has continued and finds expression not only in boycott measures but often in violent quarrels. In addition, the members of both ethnical groups are engaged in an intensified economic struggle, in which by the very nature of things the Czechs are at present the stronger party here. A settlement, if it is to be achieved at all, requires first and foremost far-reaching measures, carefully planned psychologically by the Central Government, but which in any case would probably meet with strong internal resistance from parts of the Czech people. In this connection the Prague Government will also have to take measures to remove from their posts a number of Czech officials who are particularly hated by the Germans since the days of militant struggle, and replace them by impartial and unobjectionable persons. Something has already been done in this field, but not enough.

The period of option [*Optionszeit*] will be a critical time for the German remnant. It will not be easy to convince our fellow Germans that in the interests of Germanism as a whole they must not give up their position here and must therefore abstain from exercising their rights of option. In the near future, however, we must expect renewed efforts to achieve another solution. In this matter, acts of force as well as alarming reports are not at all out of the question.

It is obvious that in these circumstances—in spite of the interstate agreements—Deputy Kundt's task of keeping a considerable German ethnical group in the country is extremely difficult. Even now Deputy Kundt is being accused by a not inconsiderable section of our fellow countrymen of trying to build up his own personal power, and for that reason of pronouncing himself in favor of the nonexercise of the right of option. In order to carry out his task Herr Kundt therefore needs not only the economic and political help of the Reich but also, in my opinion, a permanent strengthening of his authority by definite publicity for him by the most authoritative German personages.

Only when our Germans here realize, as a result of the firm and visible establishment of Czechoslovakia's role of dependence on the Reich, the responsible and at the same time advantageous mission which they have to fulfill here as coguarantors of this dependence, and when, further, there is no longer any doubt among the mass of the Czech population that unconditional recognition of the full equality of status of their German fellow citizens is a vital question for their nation, can a real inner contentment of the remaining German element be expected in the course of time.

HENCKE

No. 148

1941/435108

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, December 13, 1938.

Pol. IV 9296.

The Foreign Minister requests that a telegram for information be sent to Counselor of Legation Hencke regarding the visit of Minister Chvalkovsky in the following terms:

The Foreign Minister was in Paris last week and has now left Berlin for a few days. As soon as he returns to Berlin, he will again devote his attention to the Czechoslovak question and to the visit of M. Chvalkovsky which is connected with it. Owing to shortness of time a visit by Chvalkovsky before Christmas must anyway remain uncertain.<sup>1</sup> As soon as a date has been fixed by the Foreign Minister, he will receive fresh instructions.<sup>2</sup>

Submitted herewith to the State Secretary.

BRÜCKLMEIER

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<sup>1</sup> A note by the State Secretary to Ambassador Ritter dated Dec. 17, (2313/-484799) states that Chvalkovsky's visit to Berlin would not take place before the middle of January; it actually took place on Jan. 21, 1939, when he was received by the Führer. See document No. 158.

<sup>2</sup> This memorandum was amended by Ribbentrop and initialed by him.

## No. 149

28/18100

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

[Telegram]

No. 793 of December 14 PRAGUE, December 14, 1938—1:00 p.m.

With reference to my report A III 1 allg. of December 13.<sup>1</sup>

The Foreign Minister's Chef de Cabinet<sup>2</sup> told me in confidence that the Czechoslovak Government intends to make a radio announcement calling upon the Czech population to cease any boycott measures against German shops, workers, etc., in the interest of internal appeasement.

HENCKE

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5201/E307691-700).<sup>2</sup> Huber Masarik.

## No. 150

1941/435110-11

*Memorandum by the Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia*BERLIN, December 15, 1938.  
e.o. Pol. IV 9339.

The new Czechoslovak Government considers it of decisive importance to reach an unequivocal relationship with the Reich as soon as possible. It realizes that the only foreign and domestic policy now possible for the country is one which has the approval of the Reich. The Government knows that any attempt to revert to the policy of Beneš or to pursue a disloyal policy would lead to the annihilation of the state. In my opinion, it is therefore prepared to fulfill all fundamental demands by Germany which affect the future relations between the Reich and Czechoslovakia. Leading men in Prague realize that future far-reaching demands will be made by Germany in the field of foreign policy, military affairs, and economics. They hope, however, that their country can retain her outward independence and that some form may be found for the vassal-relationship which they can justify to their own people. The Czechoslovak public will prefer any clear solution which leaves the country in possession of formal sovereignty to the present state of uncertainty. Small marks of consideration by Germany for the national and traditional feelings of the Czechoslovak people will produce great psychological effects.

Because of actual conviction, discretion, or fear, disloyal acts by the present Government are not to be expected, especially insofar as

the President, the Prime Minister, and the Foreign Minister are concerned. Members of the Cabinet who are not approved by us could be forced to resign. In other ways, too, the Reich would have the opportunity of exerting a decisive influence on the choice of political personages in Czechoslovakia.

Acceptance of the drafts of the agreement<sup>1</sup> by the Czechoslovak Government will not meet with serious difficulties.

Submitted herewith to the Foreign Minister.

HENCKE

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<sup>1</sup>This refers to the draft treaty of friendship and associated military and economic agreements, which Chvalkovsky was to sign on his visit to Germany; not printed (401/213665-76, 401/213658-61, and 1941/435100-01).

## No. 151

1957/437097-100

### *Memorandum by Deputy Kundt*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, December 16, 1938.

Pol. IV 9350.

#### SITUATION OF THE GERMAN ELEMENT [*Deutschtum*] IN THE RUMP STATE OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

As a result of developments since September 12, 1938, and partly as a result of the critical economic conditions prevailing before that date, the German element in Bohemia and Moravia is in a really disastrous social and economic situation. For instance, the German element in Olmütz has always been effectively dependent economically and as regards its social services on its association with the rural hinterland of north Moravia. Even higher education owed its existence to the pupils from this district. The farmers around Olmütz in present-day Czechoslovakia supplied mainly market-garden produce to north Moravia. The new international and foreign-exchange frontier has entirely cut off the economic life lines of this German element in Budweis and Pilsen, also partly in Ostrau, Brünn, Prague, and the town of Iglau. In the case of Brünn and Prague there is also the fact that, being capitals or provincial capitals, they contained the economic, social, and cultural headquarters, or at least the representative departments for the ministries and provincial authorities, as a result of which other people also lived there, such as businessmen, etc., or landlords of residential property. If developments do not occur within a few weeks to reduce the new international

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<sup>1</sup>Ernst Kundt, Deputy of the Sudeten-German Party; after Munich, spokesman for Germans remaining in the Czech State. The original of this memorandum was submitted to Ribbentrop; the copy used here is one sent to Altenburg of Pol. IV.

frontier to conform, at least economically and politically, to the administrative frontier, the remaining German element cannot be restrained from opting and emigrating very speedily. That would in addition mean that the farmers also would then sell their farms or exchange with Czech farmers in the Sudeten Gau, as they would have no market for their produce, and if they do not quickly escape from these conditions they may end within a short period by losing their entire property through distraint on account of taxes. The Czechs are continually endeavoring to effect exchanges. The social misery is particularly great because, during the weeks immediately following October 1, the Germans had been dismissed wholesale from privately owned works of Czech and Jewish firms and because also, owing partly to the critical economic situation of the Czechs, the demand for employment is so great that for the present the Germans, as the weaker, are the under dogs. In addition, the lecturers and junior doctors in the Prague clinics have had no income for weeks and so cannot meet their former obligations. The professors and teachers in the private academy of music also have not received any salary since October 1, and, in general, people in intellectual professions are in distress with regard to the special obligations which they have undertaken such as leases for houses or flats, etc. In their position, they cannot receive assistance as unemployed laborers can, from an ordinary "winter relief" scheme. For these people—and the same applies to businessmen and those who rent shops—the situation, on January 1 will be especially critical, for on that date they have to pay the quarterly rent if their movable property is not to be distrained upon. Many were not even able to pay on October 1.

Recently the feeling among the Czech people against the German element has once more stiffened, with the result that during the last few days there have been fresh dismissals of Germans from privately owned factories; for instance, at the same time that they received an order from the Hermann-Göring Works, the Skoda Works at Pilsen dismissed German instructors and workers in the department concerned. The same tendency is dominant in Witkowitz also, owing to Jewish influence. Jewish influence in general is now again on the increase, and the Czechoslovak Government and employers are being subjected to strong pressure by the Americans and the British not to take action against the Jews. There is also a renewed increase in the whispering propaganda campaign by Masonic circles under the influence of Beneš and in the inflammatory propaganda of the nationalist chauvinists against the German element and Germany. Also the Jewish professors in the German educational institutions are again becoming more insolent.

In general, it is noticeable that those Czechs who until a few weeks ago had expected further action of one kind or another to be taken

by the German Reich are now getting bolder again because what they feared, namely, the complete incorporation of this territory in some form or other into the total sphere of authority of the Reich, has not materialized.

Considering all these circumstances, it is understandable that generally speaking the remaining German element does not believe Deputy Kundt and his colleagues when he says that they should not opt. If it were now made possible for options to be registered at the Legation and the consulates, everyone would rush to opt. This is all the more so as, according to the option agreement, those people who have immigrated since January 1, 1910, can be expelled within 3 months and become stateless, while those who exercised the option would become Reich citizens and could even remain longer. But virtually the whole upper stratum of the German element in the Rump State of Czechoslovakia immigrated after 1910, in particular after the 1918 upheavals. It is therefore absolutely necessary to come at once to some agreement, which can be published, to the effect that neither side will resort to expulsion measures. It is also necessary that agreements be made and published as soon as possible, holding out to the German element the hope that it will enjoy better economic and social conditions within a very short time. Finally, it is necessary that leading authorities of the Third Reich should speak on the radio during the next few days to the remaining German element, so that the latter may know that the Reich still stands behind them and that this German element also not only has a duty toward the Reich but will soon have its lot improved.

KUNDT

## No. 152

Nuremberg document 138-C  
Exhibit USA 105

*Directive by the Chief of Staff of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht*

TOP SECRET MILITARY

BERLIN, December 17, 1938.

WRITTEN BY AN OFFICER

No. 248/38 g Kdos. Chefsache WFA/LIa

Reference: The Führer and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht, OKW No. 236/38 g Kdos. Chefs. LIa. of October 21, 1938.

SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO DIRECTIVE OF OCTOBER 21, 1938<sup>1</sup>

With reference to the "liquidation of the Rump Czech State," the Führer has given the following orders:

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 81. A previous supplement to the Oct. 21 directive was issued by Keitel Nov. 24 on the subject of preparations for the occupation of Danzig and the Memel Territory (Nuremberg document 137-C, exhibit GB 33).

The case is to be prepared on the assumption that no appreciable resistance is to be expected.

Outwardly it must be quite clear that it is only a peaceful action and not a warlike undertaking.

The action must therefore be carried out *only* with the peacetime Wehrmacht, without reinforcement by mobilization. The necessary mobility, in particular safeguarding the transport of the most vital supplies, must be achieved by transfers within formations.

Likewise, the army units detailed to march in must not as a general rule leave their stations until the night before the crossing of the frontier and must not, as previously planned, deploy on the frontier. Administrative transport required beforehand must be kept to a minimum and must as far as possible be camouflaged. Any necessary movements of individual units—especially of motorized formations—to training areas near the frontier require the approval of the Führer.

The Air Force is to act on corresponding lines.

For the same reasons the exercise of executive power by the Commander in Chief of the Army is envisaged only for the newly occupied territory and only for a short period.

The Chief of Staff of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht,

**KEITEL**

### No. 153

2409/511040

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

A III 2 allg.

PRAGUE, December 24, 1938.

Received December 28.

Pol. IV 9575.

Subject: Cabinet meeting of the Czechoslovak Government.

With reference to previous report of December 23.<sup>1</sup>

On December 23 the Prague Cabinet met for a special Ministerial Council at which important decisions affecting domestic policy were made, including the dissolution of the Communist Party in Czechoslovakia and an authorization to the Ministry of Education to suspend or pension all Jewish teachers in all German educational institutions, i.e. both in colleges and in other schools, from January 1, 1939. I beg to submit as an enclosure<sup>2</sup> a report published by the *Prager Presse* on this matter.

**HENCKE**

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2379/497859).

<sup>2</sup> Not reprinted.

## No. 154

147/78786

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, December 28, 1938.

The Italian Chargé d'Affaires today reopened the question of the guarantee of the integrity of Czechoslovakia. He had received instructions from Count Ciano to inform us that in this matter the Italian Government wished to act in concert with us (*procéder d'accord avec le gouvernement du Reich*). Minister Chvalkovsky had let it be understood in Rome that he intended to pay a visit there early in 1939. Ciano had told him that Rome agreed to having this take place in February. I did not give a direct answer to Magistrati's question as to when Chvalkovsky was coming to Berlin. I said I thought this could hardly take place before the date fixed for the reception for the Diplomatic Corps.

Moreover, I avoided going more deeply into Magistrati's expression: "procéder d'accord. . . ." Instead, I told Magistrati that I had recently told the French Ambassador<sup>1</sup> quite frankly that Czechoslovakia was dependent on Germany alone. A guarantee by any other power was worthless. Czechoslovakia had changed since the days when there was a question of a guarantee. It was also my belief that Ambassador Attolico had already been informed directly by the Foreign Minister regarding our attitude in the guarantee question.<sup>2</sup>

Magistrati was aware of that conversation and said that it had seemed somewhat vague; he then, however, abandoned this subject.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Coulondre. See document No. 373.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 408.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Ribbentrop's handwriting: "F[ührer]. Kvalkovsky's visit to Rome."

## No. 155

1957/437101-02

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, January 12, 1939.

SECRET

e.o. Pol. IV 188.

Yesterday Deputy Kundt from Prague called at the Foreign Ministry at the suggestion of Obergruppenführer Lorenz.<sup>2</sup> He stated

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<sup>1</sup> This memorandum is initialed in the margin by Ribbentrop.

<sup>2</sup> Werner Lorenz, head of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle.

that, apart from other current measures of relief, he would require, according to his estimate, the single sum of 1,800,000 RM until April 1, in order to provide relief for the German element [*Volksdeutschtum*] in the Rump State of Czechoslovakia.<sup>3</sup> Herr Kundt's suggestion was that, in view of the heavy financial claims of other current relief schemes on the Foreign Ministry, the Finance Ministry, and the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle, the attempt might be made to obtain this sum from the "winter relief" funds through personal intervention by the Führer. The equivalent of this sum, 15 million Czech crowns, was available in Prague, so that all that was required was to raise the money in reichsmarks. Deputy Kundt's suggestion was emphatically endorsed by Obergruppenführer Lorenz.

It is proposed to ask the Führer to make arrangements for the Winterhilfswerk to allocate the single sum of 1,800,000 RM for the relief of distress among *Volksdeutsche* in the Rump State of Czechoslovakia.<sup>4</sup> The money for the relief would be placed to the current account of the Vereinigte Finanzkontore, in care of Herr Kramer-Möllenberg of the Vereinigte Finanzkontore, 43-45 Unter den Linden. According to Deputy Kundt the matter is urgent, and a decision must be taken before January 15.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 145 and footnote.

<sup>4</sup> In a letter dated Jan. 14 (1957/437104-06) the State Secretary informed all concerned of the Führer's approval of this allocation of funds. A letter from the Vereinigte Finanzkontore to the Foreign Ministry (2379/498041-42) stated that up to Feb. 6 the sum of 8,183,334 Czech crowns, equivalent to 982,000 RM, had been paid over to Kundt.

## No. 156

1941/435128

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 15 of January 12

PRAGUE, January 12, 1939—7: 05 p.m.

Received January 12—9: 00 p.m.

Pol. IV 234.

Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky asked me today to communicate the following to the Foreign Ministry:

In the present tense international situation, the Czechoslovak Government is anxious to assure the Reich Government that it adheres unswervingly to the policy advocated by Chvalkovsky of close political cooperation with the Reich. The Prague Government will endeavor to prove its loyalty and good will by far-reaching fulfillment of Germany's wishes, for example, in the matter of armament deliveries, German military transports, etc.

At the same time the Foreign Minister asked me to call the attention of the Reich Government to the following: A whispering propaganda campaign, evidently emanating from the Sudeten-German Party, was spreading the rumor that the incorporation of Czechoslovakia in the Reich was imminent. The Czechoslovak Government also had information about several letters from Dr. Lokscha, representative of Deputy Kundt in Brünn, to Prince Franz Joseph of Liechtenstein<sup>1</sup> in Vienna, dated December 28, in which Dr. Lokscha said that "in a comparatively short time Czechoslovakia would be incorporated into the territory of the German State"; Deputy Kundt himself, at a meeting in the German House in Prague on December 14, had said that the German element here had held out for 20 years and must therefore have patience for a few more months.

The Foreign Minister did not want to attribute any undue significance to these indications; but they were calculated to induce unrest among the people and to make the Government's position more difficult.

I replied that I knew nothing of such a whispering propaganda campaign, and in particular I was convinced that the statements attributed to Deputy Kundt were either invented or falsely reported.

HENCKE

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<sup>1</sup> Reigning Prince of Liechtenstein, July 25, 1938-.

## No. 157

28/19627

*The Deputy Director of the Cultural Policy Department to the  
Legation in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

No. 9 of January 13

BERLIN, January 13, 1939—8:55 p.m.

Received January 13—10:00 p.m.

For Ministerial Counselor Hetzel.

According to my inquiries the situation is as follows:

The departure of *Volksdeutsche* from Bohemia and Moravia is undesirable; in exceptional cases the consent of Deputy Kundt is essential. In Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine there is no objection to the employment of *volksdeutsch* labor. If the other side [the Czechs] offers *Volksdeutsche* from Bohemia and Moravia in order to get rid of them, it is recommended that the offer should be evaded by means of propaganda.

DR. FAEHNDRICH  
TWARDOWSKI

## No. 158

1941/435131-43

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

THE RECEPTION BY THE FÜHRER AND CHANCELLOR OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK FOREIGN MINISTER CHVALKOVSKY ON JANUARY 21, 1939, FROM 5 TO 6 P. M.

Pol. IV 455.

Chvalkovsky opened the conversation by thanking the Führer for the honor he had conferred upon his country by receiving its Foreign Minister twice within 3 months. He had come here to tell the Führer that, to the best of his knowledge and belief, though under difficult circumstances, he had kept his promise made to the Führer on October 14.<sup>1</sup> He wished to repeat this promise now and to affirm that his sole aim was to enable the two countries to live together on friendly terms.

The Führer must appreciate that he could not achieve his objectives so completely as was possible in the Greater German Reich. Czechoslovakia possessed neither the strength nor the abilities of the German people. He would beg the Führer to inform him of all his wishes so that he could transmit them to the Czechoslovak Government. He was sensible of the fact that in Czechoslovakia much was open to criticism. But his conscience was clear in the sure knowledge of having done everything to insure good-neighborly relations.

The Führer thanked him for his remarks. The foreign policy of a nation was determined by its internal policy. It was not practicable to pursue one foreign policy A and another internal policy B. That would work only for a short time. From the very beginning developments in Czechoslovakia had drifted toward a catastrophe. This catastrophe had been halted through Germany's moderation. If Germany had not been restrained by her National Socialist principles from annexing foreign nationalities, fate would have taken quite another course. What remained of Czechoslovakia today was saved, not by M. Beneš, but by National Socialist policy. Nevertheless, he suspected that the real consequences of this had not been appreciated.

He had to reproach Czechoslovakia with the following:

Up to now there had been no thorough clean-up of followers of the policy of Beneš. The latter were still at work and had in reality strengthened their position of late. They looked to him like drowning people who in their extremity were grasping at a straw and pinning new hopes to it. Much of what one read in the papers was quite incomprehensible. He had the impression that these people in Czechoslovakia were waiting for the great miracle which would, however,

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 61.

never come. Every little sign at once awakened new hope in these circles, whether it was that the President of the United States made a speech against Germany and spoke in favor of Czechoslovakia, or that the British Prime Minister went to Rome, or that an Italian-French tension arose. It should be clear in one's mind that such tensions could have only an unfavorable effect on Czechoslovakia. If they ever looked as if they were going to become a danger, the Führer would act at the very first moment. France was not in the least dangerous to Germany. The bloc consisting of Germany and Italy, to which Hungary and, in certain circumstances, Poland also belonged, was invincible. Hence the Führer could not imagine how Czechoslovakia could hope for anything from the tension between France and Italy. There was only one problem for Czechoslovakia: that was the maintenance of Czechoslovak ethnical life [*Volkstum*]. It was incomprehensible to him that any dreams still existed in Czechoslovakia of a new Czechoslovakia extending beyond her present frontiers. The Führer then spoke of Germany's power and of her economic reconstruction; he remarked on the absurdity of a blockade, her security as regards foodstuffs, her powerful allies. In reality any tension between Italy and France would show only a closer development of German-Italian relations.

No solution was possible as long as it was not realized in Czechoslovakia that, materially and from the point of view of space and economics, Czechoslovakia's destiny was interwoven with that of Germany. It would be madness to think that Great Power politics could still be played in Prague today. Czechoslovakia left to herself could not live. At the moment, she still obtained help from foreign powers such as England and France, but in 10 years at the most she would understand that she could not continue to exist without close affiliation with Germany's economic life. There is only one solution and that is for her to live together with Germany on the closest terms. Czechoslovakia must in all things be allied with Germany, while leading, of course, her own individual ethnic existence. Any argument about historical development was schoolboy nonsense.

Bismarck once made a comparison which came to his mind now: as he reproached the Liberals in the Reichstag for driving the Reich into the abyss, i.e. into the arms of the Socialists, and the Liberals were indignant at this reproach, he said they were like people who wanted to go to Nowawes but boarded the train for Grünau. They asked when the train would arrive at Potsdam and demanded it should stop at Nowawes. They could not be made to understand that this was quite impossible, because the train did not go there. In Czechoslovakia, they were also on the wrong train. They did not want to go in this direction but they had to, because the points were set that way.

The same was true of the Army, which had still not yet adapted itself to present conditions. The strength of the Dutch and Danish Armies, for instance, lay, not in themselves, but in the fact that the world was convinced of the absolute neutrality of these states. When war began it was known that neutrality was a matter of grim earnest with these countries. With Belgium it was somewhat different, because that country had made agreements with the French General Staff. In this case Germany was forced to anticipate any possible action. These small nations were protected not just by their armies, but by the trust that was placed in their neutrality. No one would attack a country which he knew would in any event remain neutral. Apart from the fact that an attack would involve military burdens, such a state could still be useful as a channel for transacting business. Moreover, the position was such that if Czechoslovakia were to become a danger to Germany, 120,000 or 150,000 men were no military counterweight; on the other hand, if Czechoslovakia's attitude toward Germany were decided by mutual trust, 10,000 or 20,000 men would suffice. If he were to be convinced that Czechoslovakia intended to rise at the first outbreak of conflict in Europe, he would call an "energetic stop" in the Czechoslovak question.

He observed a country according to its collective symptoms; he judged calmly, cautiously, attentively. He had to take into account that those who today in Prague stood for common sense might suddenly disappear. Surreptitiously they—not he, the Minister, but other Czech statesmen—would receive encouraging letters from all over the world, from Beneš, from America, from Roosevelt, from all who were agitating abroad against Germany today—letters that incited them to resistance and spoke of a none too remote turn of events. In answer to this, he could only say that no power in the world would send even one soldier to save Czechoslovakia. In September, had the Führer marched in, these states would, at the very most, have "lodged a protest." He, the Führer, would not have allowed himself to be deterred in the very least.

The Führer then spoke at length on the military strength of Germany, about the western front, which was built more in accordance with the principles of war than was the Maginot Line, about the Czechoslovak fortifications, which he had himself seen and considered wrongly designed, about the unassailability of Germany. All Czechoslovakia's hopes of a "new turn" were chimerical. He noticed the tendency of pronouncements in the Czechoslovak press, however, and considered it a dubious symptom.

He advised the Foreign Minister to eliminate everything that could foster this tendency. He should also reduce the army to reasonable proportions, because it did not count anyway. A war could not be waged with Czech arms; at best they could only equip fortifications

and a few forlorn outposts but could not oppose a modern army like the German.

He spoke again about these symptoms of hoping for a turn in European politics and said in this connection that, if a turn should take place, it would bring with it, first and foremost, the annihilation of Czechoslovakia. The Germany of today must not be compared with Germany of the past. From the German tribes a German race had sprung. Evolution in Italy had been exactly similar, and it was a misfortune for England and France that they did not understand this. He continued to speak of Germany's greatness and concluded this theme by saying that he declared once more that, if Czechoslovakia ever thought of being a weapon against Germany, that would be catastrophic, not for Germany, but for Czechoslovakia. If, on the contrary, she fitted herself into the German economic orbit, Czechoslovakia would have her share. Chvalkovsky, who during the discussion had nodded approvingly several times, declared that complete understanding for this idea prevailed in Czechoslovakia.

The Führer remarked that this was not so in all instances; on the contrary, he thought he had even detected a stiffening of policy on Beneš lines. Chvalkovsky reiterated what he had already told the Foreign Minister, that the two press articles submitted to the Führer had been written by a half-Jew and by a Russian. Everything could not be achieved in 3 months.

The Führer continued: Czechoslovakia had within her frontiers the capable, honest, unpretentious peasant who thought of himself and did not want war; she also had the small tradesman, the workman, and the citizen who all thought the same way; but there were other elements too—the chauvinists and the numerous Jews.

With us the Jews would be destroyed. Not for nothing had the Jews made November 9, 1918; this day would be avenged. Today, however, the Jews in Czechoslovakia were still poisoning the nation.

Chvalkovsky drew a picture of how the Jews had lorded it in Czechoslovakia. The worst thing was that they had not allowed the younger generation to assert themselves, and thus there were not enough people today to replace the Jews whom they wanted to throw out. Moreover, the enemies of Germany were not the Nationalists and chauvinists but the Marxists and the Communists who were trained by the Jews. The Communist question had already been solved in Czechoslovakia. Today there were no more organized Communists. Now Czechoslovakia would set about solving the Jewish question. Of course that could not be achieved in 3 months. Jews from Germany and Poland were gathering in Czechoslovakia. The problem was extremely difficult. It was under constant study, for the Jews would not depart voluntarily.

The Führer agreed and said that, instead of rejoicing over events in the United States, it would certainly be more logical to declare solidarity with Germany. Only then could the question be solved. Help could come only from the others, England and America, for instance, who possessed unlimited territories which they could place at the disposal of the Jews.

Chvalkovsky complained bitterly about the British, who had promised so much—for instance, to let 2,000 Jews emigrate to Australia and New Zealand. Today these 2,000 Jews were still in a concentration camp and the British were not making any arrangements to remove them. Czechoslovakia had received the 10 million loan from England, but at the same time she had received instructions as to how it was to be used to help the Jews. He was wondering where and across what frontiers he was to send the Jews. He could not dump them on the German frontier, nor on the Polish or Hungarian frontier. At the Hungarian frontier they had been driven back by the military.

Chvalkovsky remarked that Czechoslovakia, that is, the Government, had today in spite of the Opposition unanimously accepted an arrangement with the German press representative, Gregory.

British, French, and American "help" consisted in a rigorous boycott of Czechoslovakia. The Slovaks in America were the poorest of the immigrants; their standard of living was lower than that of the Negroes. Their number was over one million. These poor creatures were being threatened by the Jews and turned into the street. For this reason action against the Jews in Czechoslovakia had to be slowed down. The concentration camps were visited by English ladies who continually presented petitions and were a nuisance. Australia, on the other hand, did not want to admit the Jews. Czechoslovakia paid the passage of these Jews and they came back after 6 months.

The Führer pointed to the possibility that interested states might take some spot in the world, put the Jews there, and then say to the Anglo-Saxon states oozing with humanity: "Here they are; either they starve to death or you put your many speeches into practice."

Chvalkovsky deplored the fact that Czechoslovakia had not enough censors to control the press effectively.

The Führer replied that one or two articles did not matter, but they were symptoms of a general trend. Czechoslovakia today had 20,000 more soldiers than Germany, a nation of 70 million, had had before the [NSDAP] assumption of power. Was Czechoslovakia still waiting for the "hour"? There was for Czechoslovakia only one hour and that was the hour of recognition that there was but one road, the road with Germany, and that everything else was madness.

Backed up by Mastny, Chvalkovsky spoke again about conditions in Czechoslovakia, about the wholesome peasant class there. Before the crisis these people did not know what they had to expect from Germany. When they saw that they would not be destroyed but that the Germans only wanted to bring their fellow Germans back to their homeland, they breathed again.

World propaganda, against which the Führer had fought so long, was concentrated on little Czechoslovakia. He asked a great favor and it was this, that from time to time the Führer would say a good word to the Czechoslovak people. That might work wonders. The Führer did not know what weight his word carried with the Czechoslovak people. If he would state publicly that he wished to cooperate with the Czechoslovak people (not with the Foreign Minister), that would demolish the entire structure of foreign propaganda.

The Führer ended the conversation by expressing his wishes for a happy future.

HEWEL

No. 159

401/213581-92

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

RM No. 5

BERLIN, January 23, 1939.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN REICH FOREIGN MINISTER VON RIBBENTROP  
AND CZECHOSLOVAK FOREIGN MINISTER CHVALKOVSKY IN BERLIN ON  
JANUARY 21, 1939

Chvalkovsky began by expressing his thanks for the opportunity of discussing with Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop the relations between the two countries. He always liked to come to Berlin, even in the difficult circumstances under which he had had to make the journey 2 months ago, and he still hoped that relations between the two countries would continue to improve. He could declare in all sincerity and complete loyalty that he still stood for his point of view that the best thing for his country was to lean on the German Reich and to strive for the friendliest of neighborly relations with her. At the same time, however, he must ask that Germany appreciate the fact that only a short period of time had elapsed since the change of course in Czechoslovakia, so that the present Czechoslovak Government had not been able to carry out as well and as quickly as they had wished the various internal and external changes which they had in view in their new policy of *rapprochement* to Germany. He ap-

pealed to the magnanimity of the Führer and to the Reich Foreign Minister's appreciation of the great work which would have to be done in the psychological sphere in Czechoslovakia to wipe out the traces of a 20-year-old regime, which was not unlike the system under which Germany had suffered for 14 years.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop replied that he believed Chvalkovsky personally to have the best intentions to develop relations between the two countries in the new spirit. Unfortunately in recent weeks and days certain tendencies in Czechoslovakia had come to the surface, which had not passed unnoticed in Germany and had also found expression in the Czech press. It had been remarked with surprise and astonishment by Germans how, in a section of the Czechoslovak press and even in papers close to the Government, a tone had been adopted which to Germany seemed extremely strange.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop then read the relevant passages from *Venkov* of January 20 and *Národní Hlas* of the same date. "Four months after Munich it is already plain that war is inevitable. . . . It must never be forgotten that the Balkans ceased to be Balkans only when they had freed themselves from the all too anxious protectors from all over Europe, etc." ". . . the present political situation is not looked upon as unalterable and permanent. . . . The neighbors have strayed into our living space [*Lebensraum*]."

He (the Reich Foreign Minister) must quite frankly characterize the tendencies reflected in these articles as extremely dangerous. They seemed to prove that the efforts represented by Chvalkovsky, which were directed toward reasonable agreement with their neighbor, would have difficulty in asserting themselves, especially when one considers that these press articles were passed by the official censor. It looked as though affairs within Czechoslovakia were far from stabilized.

In the further course of the conversation Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop pointed to the fact that practically all of the old Beneš civil servants were still in office; only a few had been dismissed. The "Maffia," too, the well-known secret Czech organization of the war years, was apparently springing up again.

It was also worthy of note that in all economic matters the Jews in Czechoslovakia were coming more and more to the fore. State Secretary Keppler had reported on the rather strange part played by Preiss, the Czechoslovak industrialist.

Furthermore, the dismissal of Germans (*Volksdeutsche* and *Reichsdeutsche*) from the so-called "war factories" [*kriegswirtschaftliche Betriebe*] gave cause for complaint, as did also the difficulties in the granting of permits of residence for *Reichsdeutsche*.

German university clinics, too, were suffering from the boycott by the medical-insurance groups, which were in part under the influence of Jewish doctors, and, as a result, there arose among other things a lack of research material for medical students. In general the treatment of ethnic groups was an important test of Czechoslovakia's will to pursue a policy of close association with Germany. He (the Reich Foreign Minister) reiterated his firm belief in Chvalkovsky's good will in this respect. The impression still however remained that in Czechoslovakia itself conditions lacked stability, and Germany must wait to see whether the course of reason would prevail. Germany would in any case watch further developments carefully.

He (the Foreign Minister) had hoped that, after the favorable turn which relations between Czechoslovakia and Germany at first appeared to take, further stages in the *rapprochement* might have formed the subject of the conversation during Chvalkovsky's second visit. He had again and again postponed the meeting with Chvalkovsky because the position in Czechoslovakia seemed obscure to him, particularly in regard to the party system, which gave people in Germany the impression that with the present system the old parties nevertheless still continued to exist, even though disguised. During the last 10 to 14 days, however, developments of a very objectionable nature had been noted which showed a tendency to alter the policy of close association of Czechoslovakia [with Germany]. Matters of a military nature must also be mentioned in this connection. Hence he had asked Chvalkovsky to come here to clarify the situation personally. But he (the Foreign Minister) must at the outset state clearly and unequivocally that recent tendencies in Czechoslovakia, should they persist, would one day lead to catastrophic consequences.

Chvalkovsky replied that the Foreign Minister's remarks entirely confirmed what he continually told the Czechoslovak Cabinet. He begged to be allowed to quote the Foreign Minister in his future statements to the Czechoslovak Cabinet. As a consequence of 20 years of the Beneš regime, the Czechoslovak administration had, in all its branches, people who were opposed to the new policy and against whom a day-to-day struggle would have to be waged in order to dislodge them finally from their positions. He had purged the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry of the worst representatives of the old political trend. According to the retirement laws such officials were, however, in many instances still entitled to a continuation of their service for the period of some months. This was also the reason for so many of the Beneš civil servants still being in office. They would, it is true, come up for discharge on the expiry of the remaining period of service to which they were entitled, that is, in 1 or 2 months.

To a remark by the Foreign Minister that, according to German information, 90 percent of the followers of Beneš in the administration still held their posts, Chvalkovsky replied that on the Czech side they were faced with the greatest difficulties as regards replacements by young entrants, especially in the foreign service. He did not know, for instance, whom he should send to London, Washington, and Paris to fill the posts which had become vacant or were becoming vacant there. Berlin, too, was causing him anxiety in this respect, for Mastny would soon retire on reaching the age of 65.

Chvalkovsky spoke then of the difficulties he himself had experienced. He had already predicted in 1927<sup>1</sup> that the National Socialist movement would one day rule Germany. Upon this, Krofta, his State Secretary at the time, had replied that this view was a proof of his (Chvalkovsky's) incompetence. Germany would always remain democratic.

For a stricter control of the press, Czechoslovakia would set up an office on the pattern of the German Propaganda Ministry. When the Foreign Minister referred to the inefficiency of the Czechoslovak censorship, he would like to point out in this respect that the censors often did not understand their work very well under the new conditions, and, in censoring recently published press articles, were often guided by obsolete rules adopted during the past 20 years. As an example, the censorship had recently suppressed an article by Mussolini on Beneš. It was of course released for publication the next day on the intervention of the Foreign Ministry. And so it came about that not only Germany, but other countries too, had been making complaints about the Czechoslovak press. Besides, it had to be taken into consideration that in effect Jewish influence in the press was still strong. Even he personally had occasion to feel this influence. Thus, for instance, in connection with the Presidential election, they had invented a Jewish grandmother for him, a Jewish propaganda trick much employed in southeastern Europe nowadays. Imrédy had had a very similar experience with his Jewish press. He, Chvalkovsky, had purged the foreign service. In the press department instituted by Beneš, however, the Jews had held an absolute majority.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop replied that he understood perfectly the difficulties with which Chvalkovsky had to contend in Czechoslovakia. Up to a point one could also understand that things could not be diverted so quickly from the old course pursued by Beneš and adapted to the new line of policy. The multiplicity of symptoms which had appeared lately of a reawakening of earlier tendencies, however, made it seem as if the political development initiated by

<sup>1</sup> Chvalkovsky had been Czechoslovak Minister in Berlin from March 1927 to July 1932.

Chvalkovsky were now reversed, and as if a disguised Beneš policy were being pursued. That was a very sinister development; whither it must lead had been pointed out in the plainest of terms by the Führer and by him (Ribbentrop) during Chvalkovsky's last visit, and, after all, it was a known fact that Germany did not stop at words. "What really are the driving forces in Czechoslovakia?"—that is what is being asked in German circles. Could not Chvalkovsky provide a remedy?

Chvalkovsky replied that much had already been achieved in the 3 months of the new political regime in Czechoslovakia which would formerly have been considered impossible. The Communist Party was wiped out in Parliament, as well as in the municipalities. The majority of the Czech people were convinced that good relations with Germany were the best thing for the country. Relations with the Soviet Union were so cooled off that the Soviet Minister Alexandrovsky<sup>2</sup> did not visit him any more. The Social Democrats too had been driven into the background, although they had not yet entirely disappeared. The Labor Party, founded by some Social Democrats, would not be admitted to the Government in any case. He (Chvalkovsky) begged that Germany should help him in his work in Czechoslovakia.

Here he referred to the case of the seven municipalities in the neighborhood of Taus<sup>3</sup> in Bohemia, which were peopled by the so-called *Hundsköpfe*, an ancient Czech people, for centuries regarded as a frontier guard. What Kaschau was to Hungary, the seven municipalities of the *Hundsköpfe* meant to Czechoslovakia.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop replied that in no circumstances could he enter into a discussion of the German-Czechoslovak frontier, upon which Chvalkovsky explained that there would only be a question of a possible exchange with other areas.

For the rest, Chvalkovsky complained of the restricted liberty of action of the Czechoslovak Government in the Jewish question due to anti-Czech propaganda abroad, which naturally had a vastly greater effect on a small country like Czechoslovakia than on the great German Reich. The British, too, continued to attach new conditions for the protection of the Jews in Czechoslovakia to the 10-million-pound loan granted by them. The Americans threatened boycott and dismissal of all Czechoslovak workers in America if the Czechs took measures against the Jews. Hence in this respect things were very difficult for Czechoslovakia. Germany could help by small proofs of her confidence in Czechoslovakia.

<sup>2</sup> Serge Alexandrovsky, July 1934–March 1939.

<sup>3</sup> Fifty kilometers southwest of Pilsen.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop then came to speak of the Munkács incident<sup>4</sup> and the compensation demanded by the Hungarians and expressed the hope that this matter could be settled with all speed. Chvalkovsky replied that this had already been done.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop replied that he could only emphasize the same thing to Chvalkovsky that he had already stated to Csáky, namely, that Germany had the greatest interest in the establishment of peace between the two countries. In connection with this he mentioned that the Hungarians were prepared to reopen the frontier. Regarding the massing of Czech troops in the area between Brünn and the Brodeck language enclave, to which Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop referred, Chvalkovsky declared his willingness to provide a solution.

In connection with this, Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop gave once more a survey of further German complaints. Former Austrian officers who had refused to serve in the Czech Army had in many cases been given heavy sentences. Release from prison was in this case probably the best solution. Chvalkovsky said that this matter was settled by the amnesty, but he was requested by Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop to examine the question again.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop then returned once more to the question of the press and advised Chvalkovsky to exclude the Jews as far as possible, so that they should have no further opportunity for poisoning the relations between the two countries.

Following a brief remark by the Foreign Minister on the continued permeation of the civil service with followers of Beneš, Chvalkovsky stated in reply to a question that complete freedom of action for the "Landesgruppe of the NSDAP in Czechoslovakia" had been established by a special decree of the Czechoslovak Cabinet, explicitly recognizing the Party. At the Foreign Minister's request, Chvalkovsky promised to furnish Germany with an official notification of this, just as Hungary had done. In reply to an observation by the Foreign Minister, Chvalkovsky explained that the Hitler salute and the wearing of the swastika were not objected to by the Czechoslovak authorities, but that, in view of the large number of Jews and *émigrés* in Czechoslovakia (incidentally, the latter would shortly all be deported), certain difficulties in this respect would still not be quite avoidable in private life.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop drew attention to the expression "occupied territory" [*besetztes oder okkupiertes Gebiet*] still used in official Czechoslovak documents for the Sudeten-German districts [*Gaue*], and Chvalkovsky said that this could only have been due to an oversight by subordinate officials, which he would correct.

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<sup>4</sup> See document No. 217, footnote 1.

Continuing, Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop reverted to the question of the university clinics and the difficulties of the German schools. Chvalkovsky requested authority to discuss such questions directly with Herr Kundt. Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop declared himself in agreement regarding direct contact between Chvalkovsky and Kundt, as well as with Counselor of Legation Wolff, shortly to be sent to Brunn on a special mission.

Chvalkovsky then mentioned that he intended to create a special section at the Foreign Ministry in Prague for dealing with the question of the Germany minority and would then, after discussion with Kundt and Wolff, settle all difficulties in direct agreement with the German Legation.

Here the conversation passed to questions of economics.

In this connection, Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop referred to the question of double tariffs. Joint economic planning and elimination of any kind of competition by either side should be the basis of economic relations between both countries. Regarding other details he referred Chvalkovsky to Ambassador Ritter. Chvalkovsky declared Czechoslovakia's readiness at any time to send a delegation to Germany under the leadership of the appropriate Minister.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop then referred briefly to a lawsuit by the Duchess of Schleswig-Holstein, and Chvalkovsky agreed to examine the matter.

Replying to a question by the Foreign Minister, Chvalkovsky declared that as between Gdynia and Hamburg strictest parity would be maintained by Czechoslovakia.

Upon a further question by the Foreign Minister, he explained the present state of the constitutional question and described Czechoslovakia as a federative state in which the Czech State, Slovakia, and the Ukraine had, through their legislative assemblies, been given constitutions of which the Slovak and Ukrainian were identical.

In summing up, Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop finally repeated that he appreciated the reasons why reorganization in Czechoslovakia was not proceeding quickly. On the other hand, however, he must point out sinister symptoms which were making their appearance in certain circles [*auf einzelnen Gebieten*] in Czechoslovakia and had led almost everywhere to a stiffening of the Czechoslovak attitude toward Germany. Two months ago Chvalkovsky had declared that Czechoslovakia intended to tread the path of absolute orientation toward Germany. It was very strange that in these circumstances a Czech newspaper should have written that the present state of affairs was not unalterable. He, the Foreign Minister, hoped that the course for which Chvalkovsky stood would succeed in elimi-

nating these symptoms as quickly as possible and in enforcing its own views. If the development were ever to take a course other than that indicated by Chvalkovsky, a situation would soon result which would have catastrophic consequences for Czechoslovakia. He, Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop, drew Chvalkovsky's attention to this in all seriousness.

Chvalkovsky replied that he expected much from the Foreign Minister's permission to negotiate directly with Kundt and Wolff, and for the rest, he, Chvalkovsky, begged that Germany would help a little in this work. A good word from Germany would work wonders.

Here Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop interpolated that he had already spoken to the press at Christmas time in this sense. Chvalkovsky begged him to repeat these statements to the press from time to time, upon which the Foreign Minister once more advised him that first of all Czechoslovakia on her part should exclude the Jews from the press.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop then inquired about the position as to reorganization of the Army. Chvalkovsky replied that the Army estimates had been cut by half, that demobilization had been completed, but that, for the rest, no precise plans existed for the reduction of the Army. Everything depended on the frontier guarantee. If the frontier of Czechoslovakia were guaranteed, she could consider herself a neutral state and could do with a very small army. Germany was moreover surely in a position now to give the frontier guarantee for Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovakia had settled the frontier question with Poland by an exchange of notes in which the new frontier demarcation is described as the final settlement of all territorial disputes between the two countries.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop replied that he could not recognize any connection between the question of the reduction of the Army and the frontier-guarantee question, and, for the rest, he repeated his exhortation to eliminate the influence of the Jews. The impression sometimes prevailed in Germany that Chvalkovsky stood quite alone.

In respect to the minority question, Chvalkovsky said, in conclusion, that the work would be made much easier for him if he could be given reciprocity for the Czechoslovak minority in Germany in the matter of schools, etc.

Submitted to Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop according to instructions.<sup>5</sup>

DR. SCHMIDT

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<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "I particularly pointed out to C. that rapid reduction of the Czech Army was essential for our judgment of the situation. v. Ribbentrop."

## No. 160

2139/468073

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 64

BERLIN, January 23, 1939.

The Italian Ambassador today asked me about the progress of the talks in Berlin with Chvalkovsky, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister.

I told Attolico that we had concluded no agreements with Chvalkovsky and had discussed no general topics but had rather recommended that he set his own house in order. A somewhat comprehensive list of German grievances had been submitted to M. Chvalkovsky, so that I assumed he had returned to Prague fully conscious of the magnitude of the task still to be accomplished. I added that we would be interested to know what reports reached Rome from Prague on Chvalkovsky's impressions of his visit here.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 161

1941/435157-60

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

A III 1 b 8

PRAGUE, January 27, 1939.

Received January 30.

Pol. IV 600.

Subject: The Czechoslovak Foreign Minister's visit to Berlin.

The official view taken of the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister's visit to Berlin in the press here and in statements of official personages is on the whole a favorable one. In conversations with members of the Diplomatic Corps and foreign press representatives, the visit is likewise represented by Czechoslovak Government circles as a further stage in their policy of orientation toward the Reich. In this connection, particular reference is made to the fact that Dr. Chvalkovsky was received by the Führer and Chancellor and to the outward form of the reception. The subject matter of the conversations conducted in Berlin is commented on only in very general terms and on the whole evasively.

Even if outwardly a certain satisfaction is displayed, the course of the Berlin conversations actually means a disappointment for the Czechoslovak Government. Leading circles in Prague expected Dr. Chvalkovsky to return with definite basic demands from Germany for a final settlement by treaty of German-Czechoslovak relations.

<sup>1</sup> This report is initialed in the margin by Ribbentrop.

Indeed they were prepared for great sacrifices to be demanded of Czechoslovakia in the military and economic sphere and in foreign policy, but on the other hand, they cherished the hope that by acceding to the German demands they could buy a guarantee of their frontiers and at least formal independence as a state. The very fact that all fundamental problems were left open has still further intensified the feeling of uncertainty about the future which was already prevalent in the Government here. I learn in confidence that the Foreign Minister is wondering whether the warning given him in Berlin is intended to introduce the second stage of a period of probation or to signify the prelude to further decisive measures on the part of the Reich.

At all events the first result of the clear language used in Berlin with M. Chvalkovsky has been an outburst of noticeable activity in acceding to German wishes. It is clear that in his report to the members of the Cabinet and to the leaders of the Unity Party the Foreign Minister left no doubt that recent developments in Czechoslovakia were regarded with distrust by the Führer and Chancellor and by the Reich Foreign Minister and that a number of phenomena were looked upon as a revival of the Beneš spirit. M. Chvalkovsky pointed out at the same time the serious dangers which would arise unless the Czechoslovak Government succeeded very soon in convincing Germany that they have not only the intention but also the ability to stabilize conditions in the country. Under the impression made by the Foreign Minister's statements the following measures have therefore already been put into effect:

1. *De jure* recognition of the Franco Government.
2. Instructions to the press to adopt an absolutely loyal attitude toward Germany.

At the same time the Legionary journal, *Národní Osvobození*, which is closely connected with the traditions of the Czech State, was banned on the grounds that it defended the policy of Beneš, both directly and indirectly. In view of the great political significance of this newspaper, its suppression represents a measure of some importance.

3. Official recognition of the organization and the activity of the NSDAP on Czechoslovak territory.<sup>2</sup>

4. The setting up of a permanent committee of experts drawn from the appropriate ministries under the chairmanship of Krejčí,<sup>3</sup> the Minister of Justice, which will study and settle without delay the grievances of the German group in collaboration with its leaders.

<sup>2</sup>The Legation in Prague telephoned on Jan. 28 (2417/511274) that it had just received a *note verbale* from the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry announcing that the NSDAP and its affiliations might carry out in Czechoslovak territory activities as laid down by State Secretary Bohle, Head of the Auslandsorganisation.

<sup>3</sup>Dr. J. Krejčí was Minister of Justice in the Beran Cabinet.

Deputy Kundt had a detailed talk on this matter with Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky.

The result of the instruction to the press mentioned under point 2 was that the basic tone of nearly all newspapers is now directed toward convincing public opinion here that respect for their great neighbor and the closest association with the Reich in all spheres best serve the interests of the country. In speeches to deputies of the Unity Party, Beran, the Prime Minister, expressed the same ideas.

The Government has made promises in the following spheres:

1. The Cabinet is said to have decided on intensified regulations in the Jewish question. Exact information as to their content has been promised me.

2. The dismissal of various high administrative officials of the Beneš era, demanded by the Legation, has been promised within the next few days. Moreover the purging of the bureaucratic apparatus of supporters of Beneš is to be speeded up.

3. The dismissal of General Krejčí, Chief of the General Staff, has been decided on in principle and is to take place in a week or two—M. Chvalkovsky said informally in a fortnight.<sup>4</sup>

4. Šadek, the Czech Minister of Trade, will arrive in Berlin on January 30 to discuss our economic proposals with Ambassador Ritter. He is said to have received instructions from the Cabinet to reach agreement in accordance with the German demands, especially in the matter of State bank notes.

5. The Foreign Ministry press chief has assured the press attaché of the Legation that, by virtue of an enabling act passed a few days ago, the Prague "Society of Foreign Press Representatives" is to be purged of anti-German writers, and in the future no foreign journalists are to be admitted into this organization without the consent of the Legation.

It remains to be seen whether the activity of the last few days will continue. In view of the delaying tactics favored by the Czechs and the inner resistance of the bureaucracy, which it will probably not be so easy to break, it is well within the bounds of possibility that the measures now undertaken under pressure from Germany will in the end not have the desired practical effect. In addition, the Government is in a very difficult position vis-à-vis the people, because so far it has been unable to record any success either in domestic or in foreign policy. Considerable enmity has been shown toward Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky, and special provisions have had to be made for his personal safety. Typical of the feeling prevailing against him is a joke

<sup>4</sup> Gen. Ludvík Krejčí "resigned" on Feb. 19, after having held the post since 1934. See also document No. 169.

being circulated here that M. Chvalkovsky "is now learning shorthand to be able to keep up with the dictation more quickly." In order to strengthen his prestige with the public the outward circumstances attending the Foreign Minister's reception in Berlin, in particular his reception by the Führer, are being greatly stressed in press reports (SS guard of honor, display of flags on the Adlon Hotel and on the cars). M. Chvalkovsky has told his fellow Ministers that the Führer as well as the Reich Foreign Minister appreciated his personal good will.

HENCKE

[EDITORS' NOTE. In his Reichstag speech of January 30, 1939, Hitler said: "No country appreciates better than Germany the value of genuinely friendly and neutral States on its frontiers. May Czechoslovakia, too, succeed in reestablishing internal order in a manner which will exclude any possibility of a relapse into the tendencies of the former President, Dr. Beneš." Hencke reported on February 10 (1941/435165-68) that the Czechs concluded from the speech that Hitler intended to give Czechoslovakia "another chance," and that consequently they were making every effort to fulfill Germany's demands loyally.]

### No. 162

1648/391438

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 93

BERLIN, February 2, 1939.

The Foreign Minister has decided that the International Commission set up in accordance with the supplementary declaration to the Munich Agreement of September 29, 1938, should, as far as is practicable, be allowed to die a natural death, insofar as it may not already be considered dead.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 163

140/76272

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 107

BERLIN, February 7, 1939.

The Hungarian Minister today handed me the enclosed memorandum,<sup>1</sup> in which he inquired whether the Foreign Minister thought that the work of delimiting the Hungarian-Czech frontier should be

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (140/76273).

speeded up, since the British had envisaged a possible guarantee only after the final demarcation of the frontier.

I answered the Minister somewhat as follows:

It was a considerable time since the British had declared themselves for a frontier guarantee for Czechoslovakia. I could also assure the Minister that these British views were of no interest to us. The only frontier guarantee for Czechoslovakia that could be effective or of consequence for her was a German one. We had, however, postponed this, as conditions in Czechoslovakia had not yet sufficiently calmed down. If M. Sztójay wanted my opinion, I would proceed with the work of the Hungarian-Czech frontier delimitation objectively and in a businesslike manner on the basis of the Vienna Award, without either slowing it down or speeding it up.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 164

140/76275-76

### *Note Verbale from the British Embassy*<sup>1</sup>

No. 54  
(27/9/39)

BERLIN, February 8th, 1939.  
Pol. IV 0812.

In the annex to the Munich Agreement of September 29th, 1938, it is stated that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the French Government stood by their offer in regard to an international guarantee of the new boundaries of the Czechoslovak State against unprovoked aggression and that the German and Italian Governments would, after the question of the Polish and Hungarian minorities had been settled, for their part give a guarantee to Czechoslovakia.

2. In the view of His Majesty's Government, the time has now come to regularise the guarantee in question in accordance with the annex referred to above and His Majesty's Government assume that with the settlement of the Polish-Hungarian minority question, the German Government are of the same opinion. The question of the guarantee was discussed with Signor Mussolini and Count Ciano by the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State in Rome on January 12th. Signor Mussolini's general view was that, before a guarantee could be considered, three questions would have to be settled, namely,

- (1) the internal constitution of Czechoslovakia itself;
- (2) the establishment of her neutrality, and
- (3) the demarcation of her frontiers on the ground as hitherto they had only been shown on maps.

<sup>1</sup> In English in the original. A similar note in French, not printed (140/76274), was presented on the same day by the French Ambassador.

When these conditions were fulfilled, Signor Mussolini thought that a guarantee might be considered, but in the meantime owing to the actions of Germany and Italy, it was believed that Central Europe would remain quiet.

3. His Majesty's Government would now be glad to learn the views of the German Government as to the best way of giving effect to the understanding reached at Munich in regard to the guarantee of Czechoslovakia.

### No. 165

140/76301

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 123

BERLIN, February 9, 1939.

I told the Italian Ambassador today that the Hungarian Government was getting nervous about the Carpatho-Ukraine and was pressing for fresh decisions as to the disposal of this problem.<sup>1</sup> The Hungarian Minister had been told here that Budapest would be informed in good time when in our opinion decisions were to be taken in that matter. The Hungarian Government should simply keep to the Vienna Award.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> A minute of the same date by Altenburg (Pol. IVb) records that he had also had an interview with the Hungarian Minister (Sztójay), who informed him that, according to reliable information, the Hungarian Government expected serious disturbances to break out in the Carpatho-Ukraine during the elections to be held on Feb. 12, in which case the Hungarian Government might be forced to intervene for the protection of its own nationals. Germany's views on this eventuality were requested (140/76302). See also document No. 167 and footnote.

### No. 166

1647/391276

#### *Note by the Head of Political Division IVb*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, February 12, 1939.

In the course of a conversation yesterday the Foreign Minister said that we were not interested in a speedy conclusion of the work of the German-Czech frontier delimitation committee. I replied that this work would in any case be delayed for about 2 weeks in consequence of one of the officials charged with the preparation of the maps being laid up with influenza.

ALTENBURG

## No. 167

140/76308-09

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

BERLIN, February 12, 1939.

URGENT

No. 65

For the Ambassador.

For information. Last week the Hungarian Minister twice put out feelers, the second time very insistently, as to our probable attitude toward direct Hungarian intervention in the Carpatho-Ukraine, as anti-Hungarian activities were going on there and an "explosion" must even be expected there very soon.

We advised the Hungarians in no uncertain terms to refrain and warned them against arbitrary action.<sup>1</sup>

Attolico has been given a general outline of this. At the same time he was told that, as far as we knew, Budapest had only been sounding us.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> In telegram No. 22 of Feb. 12 to Budapest the State Secretary repeated the first two paragraphs and added:

"We particularly asked Hungary not to take any action today, election Sunday in the Carpatho-Ukraine, no matter how things develop today.

"After consulting the Hungarian Foreign Minister by telephone, the Minister assured us that his Government would of course abide by our advice."

## No. 168

F19/053-064

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FÜHRER, PROFESSOR TUCA [*sic*],<sup>1</sup> AND STATE SECRETARY KARMASIN IN THE PRESENCE OF THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1939, FROM 5 TO 6:15 P.M. IN THE NEW REICH CHANCELLERY, BERLIN

After a short welcome Tuca thanked the Führer for granting him this interview. He addressed the Führer as "my Führer" and said that he, although himself only a humble person, could nevertheless claim to speak in the name of the Slovak people. Czech courts and prisons gave him the right to make this assertion.<sup>2</sup> He said that the Führer not only had raised the Slovak question but also was the first to

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<sup>1</sup> Vojtech Tuka, a radical Slovak leader, who was not at this time a member of the Slovak Government. Together with Mach and Murgaš he advocated Slovak separatism.

<sup>2</sup> He had been sentenced in 1929 to a long term of imprisonment for high treason and espionage.

acknowledge the dignity of the Slovak people. The Slovaks wished too, under the leadership of the Führer, to fight for the preservation of European civilization. It was obvious that for the Slovaks continued coexistence with the Czechs had become impossible, from a psychological as well as an economic point of view. The fact that today they were still part of the Czech State was made bearable only by the thought that the present Government was a transitional phase, but he and his fellow-combatants were determined to follow the wishes of the Slovak people and to create an independent Slovakia. The fate of Slovakia lay in the Führer's hands. Just as he had suffered in prison for his convictions, he was also ready to give his life for his ideals. Should it come to a revolt, Czechia would immediately try to suppress it with bloodshed, but one word from the Führer was enough to halt these efforts. The same applied to Hungarian and Polish aspirations, which could likewise be brought to a halt by a word from the Führer. "I lay the destiny of my people in your hands, my Führer; my people await their complete liberation by you." Today the Slovaks were still advancing with faltering steps, but their steps would become more and more determined.

The Führer told Tuca that he would probably not fully understand when he [Hitler] said that until quite recently he had had no idea of the Slovak urge for independence. He had given too much credence to Hungarian allegations. After all, he had been deeply concerned with his own, the German problems, so that it had not been possible for him to study individual Czechoslovak questions closely. Up to 6 months ago he had been under the impression that Slovakia desired reunion with Hungary. He had been assured of this from all sides. It was only in his conversation with Imrédy in September<sup>3</sup> that he had realized that Slovakia had no desire whatever to return to Hungary. Anyhow, since that time he had come to see this question in a different light. At that time, one's thoughts ran entirely in ethnical terms [*Volkstumsbegriffe*], and it would never have entered his head to sacrifice even one human being for goals which the Slovak people never desired. He regarded the Czech people just as objectively as any other, and this so long as the German people were not threatened in their existence and their vital rights. But circumstances were now such that, deep in her heart, Czechia still fostered the desire to join in every anti-German movement. To her the whole purpose of her existence was to take sides against Germany in a possible European conflict and to ally herself with whatever group pursued an anti-German policy. He described this tendency in short as the Beneš mentality. The problem of Czechoslovakia had at first

<sup>3</sup> Hitler's conversation with Imrédy and Kánya at Berchtesgaden on Sept. 20, 1938. See vol. II, document No. 554.

been approached from a purely ethnographic angle and now the Hungarians intended to apply nonethnographic principles. That would not do, and he had warned the Hungarians. Our national account with Czechia was in itself squared. As long as Czechia remained loyal it had nothing to fear, but it certainly looked as if the Czech Government regarded the present solution as an emergency solution, and he noticed with uneasiness that old hopes about former frontiers and old tendencies were coming to life again and were beginning to assert themselves. He saw this in newspapers, speeches, utterances by responsible personages, and from all sorts of other sources. He thought that Chvalkovsky himself had the best intentions, but events do not stand and wait upon the good intentions of individuals. He had left Chvalkovsky in no doubt that the moment he saw that this movement was spreading irresistibly he would act quickly and ruthlessly. Then no one would restrain him and no one would help Czechia, of this he was convinced.

In this connection there was of course one thing to be considered. If it came to a far-reaching solution of this problem, Germany would not remain alone, for then Poland and Hungary would certainly join in. The ethnographic principle would then be overridden, and it lay in the nature of things that Slovakia would be threatened as well. Things might take a bad turn if the others were then to join in an action, which certainly was to be expected. In present-day circumstances, no difference would be made between Czechia and Slovakia, as these were at present still conceived of as a unit. There was a German proverb "Cling together, swing together [*mitgefangen, mitgehungen*]," and such violent developments would not be halted by the rights of the individual.

If the Slovaks had declared their independence at the time of the crisis, the position would have been very simple for us. Slovakia was not a danger to Germany. She had done us no harm, and we would therefore have had nothing to gain by her disappearance. At that time we would have guaranteed her frontiers at once.

The Führer remarked further how insane was the line of thought of some leading Czechs who again and again saw in other cases of tension in Europe a ray of hope for the fulfillment of their foolish dreams of revenge. This was incurable megalomania. Even the Führer of the Greater German Reich would never entertain such dreams. He never thought for instance of taking back Alsace-Lorraine. The Slovaks want to be a free and happy people who decide their own fate; he saw that now. If that had already been clear at the time, he could have drawn his conclusions then. If a conflict were to break out now in which Poland and Hungary intervened, he would have to let it take its course, and it would be unrealistic

on the part of Slovakia to pin her hopes on German help then. After all, the struggle for Pressburg had been very hard and many a Hungarian had not forgotten his part in it. Pressburg was saved for the Slovaks only through the proposal of a plebiscite, about the acceptance of which the Hungarians had doubts. He could guarantee an independent Slovakia at any time, even today. He could not guarantee Czechoslovakia today, for he could not guarantee any arrangement under which he might give the Czechs a free hand to mobilize against Germany again. He had hoped to get on a proper footing with Czechia. Others had, however, predicted to him that it would not work out well, if only because of the Czech mentality which, after all, did exist, and this prediction certainly seemed to him to be coming true. How was it possible for him to guarantee a state, to shield something with his own blood as it were, which was directed against our very selves? The British and French looked down on the Czechs with marked aloofness. Once again the Führer expressed his regret that he had allowed himself to be misinformed by the Hungarians at the time. Had he known then how things really stood in Slovakia, he would have had the Slovak leaders come and would have guaranteed them the integrity of their country—and this still held good today.

The Führer continued to describe the megalomania of Czech politicians who saw in Czechia an outpost of Asia and the Slav world, respectively, against Europe, instead of being what she should be, namely, the outpost of Europe against Bolshevism. He went on to speak about German economic relations with the southeast and ridiculed the allegations of Western politicians that Germany would make the southeast economically dependent on her. This was ridiculous because he, who had to procure eggs, fats, wheat, and other foodstuffs for his people, was far more dependent on those countries than they were on him, since they took only machinery, etc., from us. These countries had to look for markets where they could dispose of their raw materials, and we had to look for markets where we could dispose of our manufactured goods. We were just dependent on one another; any other allegation was mad. The Czechs, however, would not admit this. They preferred to have unemployment rather than to pursue a reasonable economic policy.

The Führer summarized once more by saying :

1. He regretted that he had not known earlier of Slovakia's struggle for independence,
2. Further, he regretted that the situation then was not clear, for otherwise the solution would have been much simpler for all concerned,
3. If Czechia would not content itself with its natural destiny, he saw dark days ahead for Slovakia, too.

Tuca said he knew that the Czech future was dark, and therefore the Slovaks should free themselves from her. The Führer agreed

and expressed once more his apprehension that the followers of Beneš were still being reinforced and their ideas fostered from abroad.

The Führer then recounted once more the developments of last autumn and how it had all come about. Then he repeated that the Czechs were once more beginning to add fuel to the fire, and it could very well be that one day things would slip from their hands. After he had made a few remarks about the strength of Germany and of the German Army, he closed the conversation by saying that he considered it would be a comfort to him to know that Slovakia was independent.

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After taking leave, Tuca declared to me that this interview with the Führer had impressed him so profoundly that without hesitation he would describe this day as the greatest of his life. He had never been able to grasp Germany's unprecedented historical development of the last 6 years. Now that he had listened to the Führer, he could understand it.

HEWEL

No. 169

1941/435169-71

*An Official of the Legation in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

A III 1 b 8

PRAGUE, February 17, 1939.  
Pol. IV 1100.

Subject: Conversation with Foreign Minister Dr. Chvalkovsky.

Foreign Minister Dr. Chvalkovsky, who received me today, noted our wishes regarding the settlement of affairs with the German Bank for Agriculture and Industry in Prague and also regarding the pre-emption rights on the ships of the Czechoslovak Danube flotilla, and promised to recommend their acceptance to the Cabinet. By the settlement of these questions the Czechoslovak Government would also give practical proof of its good will to do everything considered right by the Reich Government for the establishment of good neighborly relations, politically and economically.

The Cabinet in plenary session yesterday passed the budget for 1939. One thousand four hundred and one million crowns are provided for the Ministry of National Defense, which means a reduction by a third compared with the preceding year. The various ministries have been given the duty within their own spheres of activity to save as much as possible from the maximum credit granted them. This will also be done in the case of the Army estimates. Next week the

National Defense Council will meet under the chairmanship of the State President and will vote on further cuts in the Army. He could not yet estimate what concrete reductions the military authorities would concede, but the main opponent in these endeavors, General Krejčí, Chief of the General Staff,<sup>1</sup> whose dismissal was now really to take place, was eliminated. Hence he (Chvalkovsky) was looking forward with confidence to these negotiations, which had as their aim a substantial reduction in the effective strength of the Army. Czechoslovakia had no need of an army, whether for attack or defense. The question was far more a social problem, on account of the thousands of officers and noncommissioned officers for whom employment had to be found elsewhere.

By reorganizing the Army, Czechoslovakia gave up every means of defending herself. Therefore the guarantee of her frontiers, foreshadowed in the Munich Agreement, was all the more important. Psychologically, too, a declaration of the frontier guarantee by the German Reich was of tremendous importance. The opponents of the policy of the Foreign Minister and of the Prime Minister, Beran, who backed him up 100 percent, were saying again and again that the Government was under an illusion as regards Germany; that the Reich did not want to have anything to do with Czechoslovakia and was leaving her to her fate. Meeting German demands and wishes was therefore to no purpose. In proof of this, it was pointed out that the Government had not even yet been able to obtain the frontier guarantee which, however, had been solemnly promised.

"If we had the prospect," remarked Dr. Chvalkovsky, "of being recognized as a neutral state, we would at once be prepared to take measures accordingly and to abandon the whole treaty system pursued heretofore. I would then be in a position to denounce the treaty with France on the grounds that neutral Czechoslovakia could no longer be regarded as a treaty partner of France, and besides I could then consider as nonexistent the pact with Soviet Russia which is part and parcel of our French treaty of alliance. Neither would we feel ourselves any more bound by our obligations toward the League of Nations (e.g. article 16). It is not clear to me whether the accession of neutral Czechoslovakia to the Anti-Comintern Pact is desired by the Great Powers concerned. The security of our neutrality, however, consists in the guarantee of our frontiers by the German Reich."

At the end of the conversation M. Chvalkovsky reiterated that in the interests of his own people he would continue his policy of unconditional cooperation with the German Reich and begged that this

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 161, footnote 4.

task should be made easier for him by a speedy declaration of the guarantee of the Czechoslovak frontiers.<sup>2</sup>

SCHLEINITZ<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "Submitted to the Führer. H[ewel]. Feb. 28."

<sup>3</sup> Counselor of Legation Schleinitz was acting for the Chargé d'Affaires, Hencke, who was ill.

No. 170

1613/387251

*The Commissioner for the Four Year Plan to the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

1631 g

BERLIN, February 18, 1939.

For some time the Reichsbank has been negotiating with the National Bank of Czechoslovakia for the handing over of part of the gold reserve, corresponding to the bank notes taken over. These negotiations have come to a standstill. In view of the increasingly difficult currency position, I must insist most strongly that the 30 to 40 million reichsmarks in gold which are involved come into our possession very shortly; they are urgently required for the execution of important orders of the Führer. As the Czech National Bank will obviously treat the matter in a dilatory fashion and as the discussion of the subject during Minister Chvalkovsky's last visit to Berlin proved unsuccessful, I request that the necessary steps now be taken without delay through diplomatic channels and the immediate settlement of the matter be enforced with the Czechs.<sup>2</sup>

I have sent a copy to the Directorate of the Reichsbank.

GÖRING

<sup>1</sup> This document is initialed in the margin by Ribbentrop.

<sup>2</sup> As a result of this communication, the Foreign Ministry telegraphed on Feb. 21 to the Legation in Prague (1613/387255) urging that this matter be settled forthwith and stating that the amount involved was 391.2 million Czech crowns. The Legation replied on Feb. 22 (28/17667) that action had been taken and that the matter would be discussed by the Czech Cabinet on the following day. Chvalkovsky requested that, in order to make his task easier, the German Government should assume partial responsibility for the Czechoslovak national debt. On Feb. 23 the Foreign Ministry replied (28/19538) that the German Government had not yet come to any decision on this point. See also document No. 201.

No. 171

140/76812

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 161

BERLIN, February 22, 1939.

The Czechoslovak Chargé d'Affaires, Ladislav Szathmáry, desired to speak to me urgently today as he had instructions from his Government which had to be carried out immediately.

The Chargé d'Affaires handed me the enclosed memorandum<sup>1</sup> in which the question of guaranteeing the Rump Czech State is raised and is linked with a solemn obligation of neutrality and nonintervention on the part of Czechoslovakia.

The Chargé d'Affaires added orally that his Government would be grateful to learn with the least possible delay the views of the German Government on this matter.

Quite privately—as M. Szathmáry expressed it—he added that a similar memorandum in French as an *aide-mémoire* (see enclosure 2)<sup>2</sup> would be delivered this morning or had already been delivered, in Rome, London, and Paris. In order that the German Government should, however, be the first to receive knowledge of the *démarche* by the Czechoslovak Government with the Munich Powers, he had made his visit a matter of such urgency.

I replied to M. Szathmáry briefly as follows: whether the *démarche* of the Czechoslovak Government took place half an hour sooner or later here in Berlin seemed to me unimportant. On the other hand, it must strike me as strange that in such a matter the Czechoslovak Government should approach all four Munich Powers simultaneously, without beforehand entering into an exchange of views on the subject with us alone. For the rest, I completely reserved the reply of the Reich Government to the Czechoslovak *démarche*.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (140/76313).

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (2369/495128-29).

No. 172

28/19581

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

No. 49 of February 24

BERLIN, February 24, 1939—7: 50 p.m.

Received February 24—10: 00 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 65 of February 13.<sup>1</sup>

Please inform the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister without delay that in the forthcoming demobilization of the Czechoslovak Army we expect the Czechoslovak Government to release the men of German origin [*Volksdeutsche*] still serving in the Army and to cancel the additional March 1 recruitment. Please add that, by order of the Führer, men of Czech origin [*Volkstschechen*] in the Reich will

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2379/498019). It reported that a number of recruits had been called up for Mar. 1. Most of those of German origin had refused and would prefer to leave the country. On Feb. 15 Altenburg reported to the Foreign Minister (1957/437117) that the head of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle considered this matter so important that it must be submitted to the Führer. A marginal note records that "the Führer has decided." This is confirmed by a minute by Hewel dated Feb. 24 (2379/498020).

not be called up for service with the German Wehrmacht. Report by telegram.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 173

1957/437142

*Deputy Kundt to Counselor of Legation Altenburg*

PRAGUE, February 24, 1939.

Pol. IV 1353.

DEAR HERR GEHEIMRAT: I enclose a report for the Führer and Chancellor<sup>1</sup> which I have sent through the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle. I ask you to inform the Reich Foreign Minister of this.

At the same time I am sending you detailed reports from my headquarters and my local offices on the situation, which have been dispatched to the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle. As I have unfortunately so far received no reply to my telegram sent via Counselor of Legation Schleinitz regarding the question of enlistment of German recruits in the Czechoslovak Army,<sup>2</sup> I obtained an assurance during my conversation today with Prime Minister Beran that the Council of Ministers would pass a resolution today that Germans are not to be enlisted. At present I still have no information as to whether the resolution was actually passed.

The bearer of this letter, Dr. Kier, will give you more information orally about the situation and our requirements.

I am sure that, as always, you will do everything within your power to help me as far as possible in really necessary matters and decisions.

With best wishes,

Gratefully yours,

E. KUNDT

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1957/437127-41). This report, addressed personally to the Führer, enlarges on and brings up to date Kundt's previous report dated Dec. 16 (document No. 151).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 172, footnote 1.

No. 174

2003/442380

*The Office of the Commissioner of the NSDAP for Foreign Affairs to the Foreign Ministry*

For Pol. IVb

BERLIN, February 24, 1939.

Pol. IV 1418.

Subject: Political reports on the situation in Slovakia.

The Office forwards in the enclosure<sup>1</sup> a report on the political development in Slovakia which reached the Office from Dr. W. Mühl-

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2003/442381-84).

berger, the deputy head of the southeast European programs of the official Vienna broadcasting station.

From Dr. Mühlberger's covering letter it can be gathered that definite decisions are to be expected in Slovakia in the month of March. In particular the relationship with Prague is to be cleared up. Judging from previous experiences, it can almost be doubted whether the Slovaks by themselves have sufficient strength for this struggle. In addition the Slovak Government camp is anything but united, and men like Sidor and Durčansky,<sup>2</sup> who, although actually apparently thrown together in a united front vis-à-vis Tiso, face each other like cat and dog. At the moment it undoubtedly seems that Dr. Tuka can be judged in a very favorable light. Dr. Mühlberger hopes to be able to discuss a few important questions with him next Sunday, on the occasion of the Viennese Slovaks' ball. Sidor will also be in Vienna. M. Murgaš, the head of the political staff, has also indicated that he would be present.

By order:  
BÜTTNER

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<sup>2</sup>Karol Sidor was a Minister without Portfolio representing Slovakia in the Central Government in Prague. Ferdinand Durčansky was Minister of Transport in the Tiso Cabinet of Jan. 20, 1939.

## No. 175

140/76289-92

### *Note Verbale to the French Embassy*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, February 28, 1939.

Pol. IV 812 and 819.

In its *note verbale* of February 8, 1939—No. 78<sup>2</sup>—the French Embassy raised the question dealt with in the annex to the Munich Agreement of September 29, 1938, of a guarantee in favor of the Czechoslovak State. Referring to the conversation which took place on this subject in Rome between the Head of the Italian Government and the British Prime Minister, the Embassy expressed the wish of its Government to learn the views of the German Government in this matter. The Foreign Ministry has the honor to reply to this request of the Embassy as follows:

Already during the conversations which took place on the occasion of the Munich conference, the German Government let it be understood in unequivocal terms in response to suggestions put to it, that it

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<sup>1</sup>An identical reply was addressed to the British Embassy (2369/495136). Another draft of the communication (5894/E433374-75) carrying a marginal note by Weizsäcker establishes that Hitler himself drafted the body of the note, beginning with the second paragraph. Both notes were delivered on Mar. 2.

<sup>2</sup>See document No. 164 and footnote.

could consider declaring a guarantee in favor of the Czechoslovak State only if, first and foremost, the other neighbor States of Czechoslovakia would also be prepared to assume similar obligations. For, however slight the potential differences between a guaranteed Czechoslovakia and the German Reich itself might be in the future, the antagonism between this country and its other neighbors might be no less great. The assumption of such guarantee obligations by Great Britain and France in favor of Czechoslovakia does not moreover appear, in the opinion of the German Government, to provide a sure safeguard against the emergence or deepening of such antagonisms and the conflicts which might possibly result therefrom. Indeed, in the light of past experience, the German Government apprehends from the declaration of a guarantee by the Western powers in favor of Czechoslovakia, rather an aggravation of the differences between this country and the surrounding states. It will not have escaped the notice of the French Government, for instance, that between Hungary and Poland on the one hand, and Czechoslovakia on the other, differences of interpretation exist as to the accuracy of the demarcation of the frontier line now agreed upon. The Reich Government and the Italian Government have carried out this demarcation of the frontier line in the hope that through a—as they thought—successful effort they could find a middle line which might meet with the approval of all. Since then the reality has proved that in this ethnographically so deeply divided area, which on this account can in no way be compared with western conditions, an arrangement satisfactory to all concerned can be achieved only with great difficulty. How problematic even the best-meant efforts of this kind can be, the French Government may perhaps best see from the proposals put forward by the British Government for the solution of the Palestine question. Without any doubt the root cause of the crisis-ridden development of this problem lay in the fact that in past years the different Czech Governments, in consequence of military guarantees given them more or less in earnest by the Western powers, believed that they could simply pass to the order of the day over the inevitable claims of the national minorities. From this arose those internal tensions which finally forced the solution of the year 1938.

As it cannot be disputed that even today inside Czechoslovakia the elements responsible for developments at that time are still at work—even though against the present Government—the undeniable danger still exists that guarantees prematurely given would lead not to a reasonable solution of the internal problems of Czechoslovakia, but rather to a stiffening of antagonisms, and might thereby contribute toward inciting fresh conflicts. In the belief that they could pacify this area in which they themselves were perforce mostly interested, the German Government, in collaboration with the Italian Govern-

ment, had at the time taken those decisions on the basis of arbitration, which, as they have since been able to convince themselves, had met with but scant approval on the part of the participants. Hence they are not disposed to contribute unnecessarily by a premature, fresh intervention toward further criticism of their measures in countries with which they otherwise wish to live in peace and friendship. As has already been said, they see in an extension of this guarantee obligation to the Western powers no factor of assuagement of internal passions in the areas affected, but rather one more factor toward the stiffening of irrational tendencies, as was the case in the past. The German Government is at the same time fully aware that, in the last analysis, the general development in this European zone falls first and foremost within the sphere of the most important interests of the German Reich, and moreover not only as seen from the historical viewpoint but also as conditioned by geographical and, above all, by economic factors.

Hence, the German Government believes it to be imperative to await first a clarification of the internal development of Czechoslovakia and the improvement resulting therefrom in the relations between this country and the surrounding states before the time can be considered ripe for a further statement of policy.

## No. 176

140/76319

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 190

BERLIN, February 28, 1939.

Today I received the Czech Minister at his own request. He told me that at 65 years of age he had already considerably passed the official age limit and therefore had to retire. He would presumably be leaving Berlin at the end of March. He then launched forth on a somewhat lengthy and sentimental account of his activities here.

The Minister then mentioned the Czech note regarding the guarantee question, which the Czech Chargé d'Affaires had handed me about a week ago.<sup>1</sup> I told the Minister again that it had struck me as peculiar that the Czech Government had not immediately first appealed to the German Government but to the four Munich Powers. Mastny's arguments in reply to this did not amount to much.

The Minister then went on to talk cautiously about events which might still threaten Czechoslovakia. He clothed his remarks in a criticism of the inexperienced young people in Czechoslovakia, who tried to represent the present state of calm between Germany and

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 171.

Czechoslovakia as only temporary and proclaimed that "war was in sight" for Europe. I told Mastny that, according to my information, this mood was certainly to be found in Czechoslovakia. I thought it was questionable to foster such sentiments alongside the hope for a rebirth of Czechoslovakia in a greater form. Mastny described as a vicious circle the fact that Czechoslovakia could not be consolidated internally in the absence of a frontier guarantee and could not receive a frontier guarantee because she was not internally consolidated. For my part, I reserved a concrete statement on the question of a guarantee for a further conversation.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 177

1647/391294-99

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, March 1, 1939.

Minister Masařik<sup>2</sup> called at the Foreign Ministry this morning by appointment. He stressed emphatically at the outset that he came on the instructions of his chief, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister. The latter would have liked to have come personally to Berlin. He did not, however, wish to trouble the Reich Foreign Minister. On the other hand, the opportunity had presented itself for M. Masařik to travel to Berlin, as he had to inspect the work of the Czechoslovak delegation in the Reich capital and to discuss certain questions relating to the organization of the Czechoslovak Legation here. M. Mastny, the present Czechoslovak Minister in Berlin, was a sick man and, in consequence of his condition, had suffered in recent weeks from increasingly defective memory, for which reason M. Chvalkovsky deemed it desirable to deal with the Foreign Ministry in certain questions through M. Masařik. In virtue of written instructions—stated to originate with Chvalkovsky himself—M. Masařik then produced his arguments.

I. He began by explaining that the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister had been at pains meanwhile to deal with all the points which the Reich Foreign Minister had discussed with him during his visit in January.<sup>3</sup> This had in fact been the case with the majority of the points mentioned. Insofar as this had not already been accomplished, immediate steps were being taken. In this connection M. Masařik drew attention to the instructions issued to the Czechoslovak press, to

<sup>1</sup> This memorandum was initialed by Ribbentrop and marked for Hitler's attention; a marginal note by Hewel dated Mar. 5 reads, "Führer not interested."

<sup>2</sup> Chef de Cabinet to the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister.

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 158 and 159.

the efforts of the Czechoslovak Government for the elimination of non-Aryans [*Arisierungsbestrebungen*], and to the dismissal of followers of Beneš in the Czechoslovak administration. He mentioned the measures taken as regards disarmament and the reductions in the Army estimates. At this point he interpolated the remark that it would surely be appreciated in the Reich that the large number of officers of the old army could not be discharged as quickly as the troops were demobilized. The term "occupied territory" for the liberated Sudetenland had been removed by government decree. The AO had been given the fullest freedom of action in Czechoslovakia. Complaints by the organized German minority would be dealt with by a committee of the interested ministries with Deputy Kundt. Ten German nursing sisters had been appointed to the German clinic in Prague; the school books to which we had objected had been banned, and no more difficulties as regards admission to the schools would be put in the way of Sudeten-German pupils who had fled the country during the previous period.

II. M. Masařík then came to the second part of his visit. He stressed that M. Chvalkovsky had always been an advocate of understanding with Germany and consequently that here in Berlin no doubts should be entertained as to the sincerity of his suggestions. M. Chvalkovsky proceeded from the conception that absolute clarity was the first prerequisite for the future good-neighborly development of relations between Germany and Czechoslovakia. This point of view of M. Chvalkovsky was fully endorsed by the Czechoslovak Cabinet and he, Masařík, could give the assurance that all the wishes of the German Government which might be expressed in connection with the following suggestions would receive fullest consideration:

- 1) The idea of presenting the well-known memorandum to the four Great Powers originated in the Führer's recommendation that it must be Czechoslovakia's objective no longer to play Great Power politics but to confine herself to her own affairs. The Czechoslovak Government was grateful for every piece of advice from the German Government's side as to how this aim of neutralizing Czechoslovakia could be further promoted.

- 2) An agreement between Prague and Berlin on the future of the Carpatho-Ukraine was indispensable. The Hungarians employed every form of propaganda, and in official and unofficial pronouncements claimed the country as theirs. In contrast to this, the Czechoslovak Government stood by the view that on this point the Vienna Award was binding. Regarding internal conditions in the Carpatho-Ukraine, the difficulty for the Prague Government consisted in its having to make good the deficit in the Carpatho-Ukrainian budget and to supply the population with food, while on the other

hand the Carpatho-Ukrainian Government wished by every means to eliminate its [Prague's] influence. In view of this the Czechoslovak Government believed it too had a right to have its say if it had to pay the costs.

M. Masařík remarked incidentally that the Italian Minister in Prague had recently tried, in Hungarian interests, to reach an agreement with the Slovak National Government, by which, in return for the cession of territory around Kaschau, the Carpatho-Ukraine should be left to Hungary. Likewise, the Polish Minister in Prague<sup>4</sup> had on the preceding Thursday discussed similar territorial questions with Slovak Ministers.

3) In accordance with suggestions from the German side on the occasion of the Chvalkovsky visit, the Czechoslovak Government had been at pains to promote the internal consolidation of the country. In this connection Slovak transmissions from the Vienna broadcasting station were found to have a disturbing effect.

4) Polish and Hungarian agitation did not confine itself alone to separation of the Carpatho-Ukraine but also encouraged certain Slovak aspirations toward independence. In this question too the Vienna Award was the basis for the Czechoslovak Government's policy.

5) In order to achieve a frank, honest, and friendly relationship with the German Reich, the Czechoslovak Government is prepared to give the following guarantees:

(a) It begged to be informed as to the Reich Government's wishes regarding the status of the German minority [*Volksgruppe*] in Czechoslovakia. All requests would be given the utmost consideration.

(b) The Czechoslovak Government is prepared to admit into the Cabinet a German Minister to be nominated by Berlin, be it Kundt or someone else. The function of this German Minister would be that of a trustee of Germany in the Cabinet, who, by his presence, would insure that the Cabinet would not take any decisions which were not compatible with friendly relations between Berlin and Prague.

(c) The reorganization and reduction of the Czechoslovak Army was to be carried out exactly in accordance with Berlin's wishes. In order to provide the Reich with the opportunity of observing that these things would really be done with the utmost straightforwardness, the number of military attachés in Prague could be proportionately increased.

(d) A speedy conclusion of the German-Czechoslovak frontier demarcation work would be desirable.

(e) The Czechoslovak Government would favor a further meeting of the German-Czechoslovak committee for the protection of minorities, which was decided upon at the time. In this respect

<sup>4</sup> Kastmierz Papée.

it understood that full parity in the treatment of the Czechoslovak minority in Germany would not be achieved.

(f) The Czechoslovak Government considered it desirable to work out a plan for close collaboration between the two countries in matters of economic and currency policy.

Summing up, M. Masařik said that these were all suggestions and stressed anew that any request from the German side, relative to or in addition to these, would be gratefully received.

M. Masařik then alluded to a number of special economic questions which Ambassador Ritter had at the time broached to M. Chvalkovsky and which he would like to discuss directly with Ministerialdirektor Wiehl.

In principle, I confined myself to listening to M. Masařik's statements [*habe mich grundsätzlich rezeptiv verhalten*] although, as to the statements regarding the points discussed at the time with M. Chvalkovsky, I certainly did express some doubt, in particular, with regard to the treatment of the German minority in Czechoslovakia. I then drew attention to the fact that the National Defense Law<sup>5</sup> was still in force, as well as Cabinet decrees Nos. 244 and 282 which were based upon it. In respect of the memorandum presented to the four major powers, I made the remark that the fact that the Czechoslovak Government had not, in this matter, got in touch beforehand with Berlin alone, had caused annoyance here.

Moreover, I explained to M. Masařik that the questions brought up in the second part of his statement were entirely outside my competence and that I was therefore in no position to express an opinion. I could merely transmit to the proper quarter his request for an interview in this matter with the State Secretary.<sup>6</sup>

ALTENBURG

<sup>5</sup> See vol. II, document No. 3, footnote 18.

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "Herr Altenburg to tell M. Masařik that this request cannot be complied with."

A memorandum by Altenburg dated Mar. 3 (401/213550-54) records that Masařik called on him the previous day to ask what answer he could take back to Chvalkovsky. Altenburg gave evasive answers and indicated that the German Government was far from satisfied with the attitude of the Czechs toward Germany.

## No. 178

F12/430-429

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 196

BERLIN, March 3, 1939.

The Czechoslovak Minister came to see me today at my request. To begin with I acquainted him in a few words with the British and French notes of February 8<sup>1</sup> regarding the guarantee in favor of Czechoslovakia and referred to Mussolini's viewpoint expressed

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 164.

therein. M. Mastny spoke of having heard indirectly of the French note; he had, he said, no knowledge of a British note. I then explained to him in substance the German reply of February 28 to the British and French Embassies here.<sup>2</sup> In conclusion, I told the Minister that the German view of the contents of the Czechoslovak memorandum of the 22nd<sup>3</sup> of the previous month on the same question was evident from our replies of February 28 to Paris and London.

M. Mastny, who during the whole conversation was obviously uneasy, appeared formally to resign himself to this indirect, oral dismissal of the Czechoslovak memorandum of February 22 and thought that he could give an assurance that the Czechoslovak Government would not take any further steps in the guarantee question without first approaching us. M. Mastny commented as follows on our replies to Paris and London:

He was not aware that there was mention at the Munich conference of a guarantee by the other neighbor states of Czechoslovakia. I replied to M. Mastny that he would have to accept this as a fact. The Minister then said that we evidently considered the situation not yet ripe for a declaration of guarantee. On this point he took the liberty of holding a different view. A guarantee given today would be no premature promise; on the contrary, precisely through a guarantee the present state of suspense would be terminated, and the Prague Government would be assisted in its task of getting rid of elements in the country who looked disapprovingly on any orientation toward Germany. Incidentally, these elements were without real influence and were not to be taken seriously.

Without going into further detail on this remark, I replied to Mastny that our information forced us to the opposite point of view; on the contrary, we wished precisely to avoid strengthening the hand of the troublemakers by a premature guarantee.

M. Mastny then proposed bringing in to me Chvalkovsky's emissary, the Czechoslovak Minister Masařik, who he said was just then in the building. Knowing what was in M. Masařik's mind, I declined the proposal.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 175.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 171.

No. 179

F8/0085

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM No. 15

BERLIN, March 4, 1939.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER AND SZTÓJAY,  
THE HUNGARIAN MINISTER, ON MARCH 4, 1939

The Hungarian Minister today put forward the proposal that we and Italy should make a statement to Hungary to the effect that

Hungary had first claim to the territory of the Carpatho-Ukraine, or alternatively, that in any new settlement this area would be awarded to her.

I told the Minister that we could not make a statement of this kind at present. Hungary must be patient; I would inform him if any developments of interest to Hungary should arise in the Czech question.

R[IBBENTROP]

## No. 180

140/76332-34

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 83 of March 7

PRAGUE, March 7, 1939—9: 25 p.m.

Received March 7—11: 59 p.m.

According to reports received by the Legation, the following is the present state of relations between Prague and Pressburg:

1. The main subjects discussed at last week's unsuccessful negotiations between the Central Government and the Slovak Ministers were:

(a) Request from Pressburg for a reduction of the Slovak share of financial obligation for the joint budget.

(b) Questions affecting political personalities, in particular, the Slovak request for the dismissal of General Syrový, Minister for National Defense.

(c) Granting of far-reaching concessions to Slovak Government delegates in joint departments. Validity of Government decrees, etc., in the future to depend on countersignature by delegates of the Slovak Government.

Hitherto the Central Government has opposed the Slovak demands. Negotiations are to be resumed in Prague within the next few days.

2. I learn from a reliable source that two possible results of the negotiations are at present being discussed in Slovak Government circles and among the leaders of the Hlinka Guard.

(a) A few days after resumption of the negotiations the Slovak Government delegation under the leadership of Sidor will bring about a breakdown. Then, on the pretext that it must assume for itself the rights refused by Prague, the Pressburg Government will proclaim the independence of Slovakia as a state and appoint a directorate of several members. At the same time the frontier with Czechoslovakia would be hermetically sealed and a declaration made with regard to closest economic cooperation with Germany.

(b) In order better to prepare the steps intended, the negotiations are to be dragged out until about the end of March, and independence will only then be declared.

(c) Still a third possibility is indicated by those who know the leading personalities of Slovakia, namely, that under pressure from the Vatican the Slovak Government will in the end reach agreement with Prague.

3. Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky told me today of his own accord that the tension between Prague and Pressburg should not be underestimated, but that nevertheless he believed in agreement rather than in a breakdown of the negotiations. Moreover, the Central Government in Prague had told the Slovak Ministers that they were at liberty to proclaim the independence of Slovakia, if they thought this possible and desirable for their country. In reply the Slovak Ministers had again expressed Slovakia's wish to remain in the joint Republic. M. Chvalkovsky added that the Prague Government knew from experience how dangerous it was to try to keep nationalities within a state against their will. At all events he personally would oppose the granting to the Slovaks of such rights as would restrict the Central Government's freedom of action in foreign policy. If necessary he would ask for a vote of confidence.

4. The Czech press gives no clear idea of the degree of tension but rather gives the impression that the question of Slovakia's remaining within the Republic is beyond doubt. On the whole an optimistic view is taken of the chances of agreement by negotiation.

5. The Italian Minister here asked me yesterday whether I, too, had heard rumors that Slovakia was on the point of proclaiming her independence. I replied that I knew the situation only from press reports.

HENCKE

## No. 181

140/76335

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 84 of March 8

PRAGUE, March 8, 1939—1: 50 p.m.

Received March 8—3: 35 p.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 81 of March 6.<sup>1</sup>

1. Yesterday the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister told me of his own accord of the *démarche* of March 6 by the Secretary General of the Hungarian Foreign Ministry. Over and above the information given me by Vörnle,<sup>2</sup> which Chvalkovsky repeated almost word for word, the Hungarian Secretary General further said, according to the Foreign Minister, that the Government in Budapest had no objection

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (140/76324-25).

<sup>2</sup> János Vörnle was deputy to Foreign Minister Csáky, 1939-41.

to the Carpatho-Ukraine's being ruled by Czechs or Poles, as there was no need to fear from them a careless deforestation policy which was a danger to Hungary.

The Foreign Minister told me that he had replied to Vörrle's *démarche* that in his personal opinion, which was probably shared by the Czechoslovak Cabinet, territorial questions between Hungary and Czechoslovakia had been finally settled by the Vienna Award. He had further told Vörrle that his statement to the effect that the Hungarian Government had no objection to the Carpatho-Ukraine being ruled by Czechoslovakia was an interesting new fact for Prague.

2. The Foreign Minister also informed me that the Polish Minister here had told him a few days ago that Poland was not pursuing any interests of her own in the Carpatho-Ukraine but in view of Polish-Hungarian friendship would support Hungary's wishes.

3. M. Chvalkovsky said emphatically how anxious he was to know Germany's concrete wishes on the policy to be pursued by Prague in the Carpatho-Ukraine and Slovakia. In reply I merely pointed out that the Foreign Minister himself had already described the Vienna Award as the guiding principle for Czechoslovakia.

HENCKE

## No. 182

28/17645

### *The Legation in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 86 of March 8

PRAGUE, March 8, 1939—11:15 a.m.

For OKW, General Staff of the Army, Attaché Group.

1. The army, with a strength of 120,000, two annual classes, is at present not ready for action. The earlier class is employed for labor service and training recruits. The new class has just joined. So far troop movements in the direction of Slovakia have not been observed.

2. Slovak Government's demands for independence, at present the subject of negotiations, are so far reaching that they might lead to a breaking off of the negotiations and a proclamation of independence by Slovakia.

3. Hungary has let it be known in Prague that she has no interest in Slovakia. On the other hand, a solution of the Carpatho-Ukraine question is said to be vital. Purchase of the Ukraine has been officially proposed to the Czech Government. [*Ankauf der Ukraine ist tschechischer Regierung offiziell angeboten worden.*]

Hungarian military measures without previous inquiry in Berlin are unlikely.

TOUSSAINT  
HENCKE

## No. 183

140/76340-41

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram Letter

MOST URGENT

PRAGUE, March 9, 1939.

A III 2 h 3

With reference to my telegram No. 83 of March 7.<sup>1</sup>

1. Negotiations between the Central Government and the Slovak Government are being continued today. The latter is represented by Ministers Sidor and Teplansky.<sup>2</sup>

2. According to reports from Slovak economic circles, Tiso and Sidor are said to be more inclined recently to agreement than to breaking away. In contrast to this, the group behind Mach and Murgaš<sup>3</sup> are said to want a definite breakdown of the negotiations and complete separation from Prague. It cannot be seen here how far merely tactical considerations carry weight with Tiso and Sidor.

3. According to statements by the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, the Central Government, contrary to various press reports, asserts that for its part it has so far made no concrete demands to Pressburg. The Slovak Ministers have, however, been told that negotiations on the settlement of mutual relations could serve no purpose until Prague knew whether Slovakia intended finally to remain within the State. The Government in Pressburg had at the same time been asked to formulate its wishes in final form. The Central Government for its part had prepared counterdemands for the negotiations which began today. Chvalkovsky expressed a certain optimism regarding a final settlement. In general, the view held in Czech Government circles is that far-reaching concessions and financial sacrifices on the part of the Central Government would perhaps be accepted by Pressburg and would lead to temporary agreement but that Slovakia, which would thus be put in a more favorable economic position, would proclaim her independence at a moment which might seem opportune to her.

4. Besides the demands mentioned in the previous telegram regarding political matters and political personages, particularly in the army, the Slovaks are said to be making very large financial claims. A total of nearly 4 milliard crowns is mentioned, to be subscribed by Prague—partly as a loan—by the end of 1940.

5. The Hungarian Military Attaché<sup>4</sup> here told Colonel Toussaint in great agitation that Hungary was disturbed by rumors that Ger-

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 180.

<sup>2</sup> Minister of Public Works and Communications in the Tiso Cabinet of Jan. 20, 1939.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 168, footnote 1.

<sup>4</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Solymossy.

many intended to seize Slovakia to prevent any possibility of incorporation with Hungary later. In contradiction of this, the Hungarian Military Attaché claimed to know from a reliable source that agreement was to be expected in the present negotiations between Prague and Pressburg. According to Hungarian reports, the Slovak Ministers at their last visit to Berlin had not obtained the economic help hoped for, so that Slovakia must now seek agreement with Prague.

6. In the event of a breakdown of the negotiations and a possible declaration of Slovak independence, Czech political and economic circles expect far-reaching Slovak demands for an extension of the frontier toward the west. In particular, Pressburg is expected to claim the area of Ungarisch-Hradisch,<sup>5</sup> which is inhabited by Moravian Slovaks. The possibility is also mentioned that Slovakia might demand the Prossnitz<sup>6</sup>-Brünn line, inclusive.

HENCKE

<sup>5</sup> Czech: Uherské Hradiště; in the March Valley, 65 kilometers east of Brünn.

<sup>6</sup> Czech: Prostějov; 50 kilometers northeast of Brünn.

## No. 184

2002/442263-64

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram Letter

MOST URGENT  
A III 2 h 3

PRAGUE, March 9, 1939.  
Pol. IV 1616.

During the meeting of the Council of Ministers, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister urgently requested me at 5:15 p.m. today to come to the Ministerial Office. Chvalkovsky began by asking me to regard what he was about to say not as an official *démarche* but as a purely confidential and personal inquiry.

The Central Government had been informed by the Slovaks that, from the reports of the Slovak Ministers Durčansky and Pružinsky<sup>1</sup> on their visit to Berlin, and in particular on their reception by Field Marshal Göring, the Pressburg Government had gained the impression that the Reich was prepared to grant economic assistance to Slovakia only if the latter proclaimed herself an independent state. Chvalkovsky, from whom the Prime Minister had demanded an explanation, wanted to ask me in strict confidence if I knew anything about this. I replied that I had no information on the Berlin talks in question. However, there was doubtless some misunderstanding.

<sup>1</sup> Mikuláš Pružinsky was Minister of Industry and Agriculture in the Tiso Cabinet of Jan. 20, 1939.

The reference is to a visit to Berlin by the two Ministers early in March, undertaken without the knowledge or consent of the Central Government.

The Foreign Minister further asked me whether it was the wish of the Reich Government to separate Slovakia from Prague. If such plans existed, I, as Chargé d'Affaires, would know about them. He (Chvalkovsky) also thought that, considering the frankness of the discussions with him in Berlin in January,<sup>2</sup> the Reich Government would have mentioned such wishes.

My reply was that I knew nothing of any political plans of the Reich Government concerning Slovakia. In my opinion German-Czechoslovak relations were governed by the Munich Agreement and the agreements concluded as a result of it. Chvalkovsky said in reply to this that he considered it quite possible that, consciously or unconsciously, the Slovak Ministers had wrongly interpreted German statements. He asked me personally to find out in Berlin as quickly as possible but tactfully whether, during the conversations with the Slovak Ministers, the separation of Slovakia had actually been mentioned as a condition for economic help and whether Germany wanted events to take this turn. As the responsible Foreign Minister of the Central Government, it was his right and his duty to ask for confidential information on this. If Berlin wanted an independent Slovakia, then Prague would somehow have to reconcile itself to this solution. He was also man enough to accept this difficult decision calmly. However, as Foreign Minister of the Central Government, he did not want senselessly to pursue a policy which was contrary to Berlin's wishes. He would as soon give up his thankless office today as tomorrow.

I replied by pointing out that M. Chvalkovsky could best obtain information on the Berlin talks direct from the Government in Pressburg. Moreover, because of Field Marshal Göring's absence from Berlin, it would be difficult to obtain quickly more exact information on the course of the conversation, which in my opinion had been wrongly reported. The Foreign Minister urgently repeated his request to have the matter made clear to him personally and wondered whether he could not be given a confidential report today or tomorrow, perhaps by obtaining an answer from Berlin by telephone. I replied that for technical reasons this was scarcely possible.

In conclusion M. Chvalkovsky again wanted to make sure that his step was regarded, not as an official *démarche*, but as a confidential personal request from man to man.

Please give guidance for my attitude.<sup>3</sup>

HENCKE

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 158 and 159.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "On the oral instructions of the RAM, no reply is to be given. A [Itenburg] Mar. 12".

## No. 185

140/76342-44

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb*

URGENT

BERLIN, March 9, 1939.

Counselor of Legation Schubert of the Czechoslovak Legation called on me today to settle some minor complaints and to inform me that he would shortly be recalled to Prague, where, in the course of a reorganization of the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry, he was to take over the new section for German affairs which was to be set up.<sup>1</sup>

While emphasizing that the conversation would be of a purely private nature, he once more pursued a line of thought similar to that developed by Minister Masařik on his recent visit.<sup>2</sup> He declared in this connection that Czechoslovakia was "ready to do anything." One need only know in Prague what was desired and required here. My reply to this was similar to that given by me to M. Masařik.

M. Schubert then referred to rumors. On this point he emphasized that the Legation avoided everything in its reporting which might arouse or increase anxiety in Prague. He wished also to mention these matters here quite privately and to hear my personal views:

1. The Landrat of Landskron issued passports to Sudeten Germans for the journey to Czechoslovakia for 6 months only, with the remark that a longer period was not necessary, since by that time Czechoslovakia would be occupied.

2. An official of the finance control at Eisenbrodt (north Moravia) named Wiedt had said that Germany would occupy Czechoslovakia within 4 weeks.

3. The treasury official Beau at Wimberg (Böhmerwald) had likewise spoken of the imminent occupation of Czechoslovakia by German troops.

4. With reference to the fact that last May the Czechs had been taken in by inaccurate suggestions by the British, M. Schubert stated that his Legation had received information from a French source according to which troop movements were taking place on the German-Czechoslovak frontier and that presumably Czechoslovakia was to be occupied. He emphasized that the Czechoslovak Legation had not transmitted this report to Prague.

5. It was a subject of general conversation in the Diplomatic Corps in Berlin that, with German help, Slovakia and the Carpatho-Ukraine would declare their independence and would be delivered over to the Hungarians in return for help to be rendered to the Reich in any future war against Rumania.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 159, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 177.

I replied to M. Schubert that I knew nothing of these rumors. There was an enormous amount of gossip going on in Berlin, and such reports must be energetically contradicted both in Germany and Czechoslovakia. I ridiculed the rumor spread among the Diplomatic Corps.

In conclusion, M. Schubert remarked that M. Mastny had spoken to Press Chief Dietrich yesterday about the leading article in the VB of the 8th on differences between Slovaks and Czechs. Herr Dietrich had declared that he did not share the opinion expressed in the article and had therefore issued instructions that things of that sort should not be published in the future.

ALTENBURG

No. 186

1271/341700-01

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb*

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, March 10, 1939.

Counselor of Legation Hencke, Prague, telephoned at 9:40 that Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky had informed him that the talks held last night between Tiso and Sidor, the Slovak Ministers, and the Central Government in Prague had broken down because the Slovaks were not willing to give an assurance that they would refrain from proclaiming the independence of Slovakia—if they should think this necessary—nor were they prepared to give assurances that propaganda activity for Slovakian independence in the country would be suppressed. President Hácha had therefore decided to dismiss Prime Minister Tiso, Minister Durčansky, and Minister Pružinsky from their posts. The conduct of affairs had been transferred to the Slovak Minister Civac,<sup>1</sup> who still remained in office. Minister Teplansky had offered him his services. This morning Sokol, President of the Slovak Diet, was arriving in Prague to make proposals to the President for the formation of the new Slovak Government. M. Chvalkovsky had promised Herr Hencke to keep him constantly informed of further developments.

In reply to a question Herr Hencke stated that, according to the provisions of the new Czechoslovak Constitution, the President (Hácha) had the power to dismiss and to summon the Central and Provincial Governments. The right to propose the formation of a new Government, both in Prague and in the Provincial Governments, was vested in the Presidents of the Central Parliament and of the Provincial Diets.

<sup>1</sup> Jozef Sivak, Minister of Education in the Tiso Cabinet of Jan. 20, 1939.

As the Foreign Ministry is not in possession of the provisions of the new Czechoslovak Constitution, which so far are not yet quite definite, I asked Herr Hencke to report at once by telegram on the provisions essential for an estimate of the situation and to let the text of the Constitution—insofar as it is complete—follow by air mail without delay.

ALTENBURG

No. 187

140/76385

*Note by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

MARCH 11, 1939.

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR ATTOLICO

Ambassador Attolico asked me to let him know, through a confidential agent, what we thought about the situation in Czechoslovakia. I replied that at present we had no particular attitude toward the prevailing state of affairs in Czechoslovakia. We were observing the situation, which at the moment was obscure and disturbed, but we hoped that people like Chvalkovsky would succeed in restoring order. We would, of course, be very sorry to see the Beneš spirit regain influence. For the time being, however, we were awaiting developments.

Should the situation alter, he would certainly be informed by us in good time.

HEWEL

No. 188

1271/341710

*The Chief of Staff of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Ministry*

TOP SECRET MILITARY  
BY OFFICER'S HAND ONLY

BERLIN, March 11, 1939.

Subject: Military requirements for an ultimatum.

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On the basis of an order by the Führer the military conditions for an ultimatum are enclosed.

The Chief of Staff of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht.

KEITEL

[Enclosure]

WRITTEN BY AN OFFICER  
TOP SECRET MILITARY

BERLIN, March 12, 1939.

No. 27/39 g Kdos. WFA/L Ia

CONDITIONS FOR AN ULTIMATUM<sup>1</sup>

1. No resistance by armed force or police. Troops to remain in barracks and to lay down arms.
2. Grounding of *all* military, transport, and private aircraft. Aircraft to be parked on peace-time airfields.
3. All antiaircraft guns and antiaircraft machine guns to be withdrawn from their emplacements and stored in barracks.
4. No alterations to be carried out on airfields or their installations.
5. No interruption to public life, but on the contrary work to be continued by all officials, especially those of the railways and post, who are to be held at the disposal of the incoming holders of executive power.
6. No disturbance of economic life; in particular, continued activity of banks, commerce, and industry.
7. Complete reserve in public expression of opinion, whether in the press, theater, radio, or public functions in general.

<sup>1</sup> These terms were handed to Hácha and Chvalkovsky by Hitler on Mar. 15 and were accepted by them unconditionally. See documents Nos. 228 and 229.

## No. 189

140/76378

*The Legation in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 96 of March 11

PRAGUE, March 12, 1939—2:33 a.m.

Received March 12—5:30 a.m.

For Foreign Ministry and Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht, Attaché Group.

The Government here makes a pretense of stability of the domestic situation in press, radio, and conversation with foreign representatives.

Representative of the German *Volksgruppe* deplors the perfectly correct, even accommodating, attitude of the Czechs everywhere.

Scarcely any excitement to be observed among the people.

Military preparedness seems to have been ordered in the barracks in Bohemia and Moravia.

Small-scale military convoys in the direction of Slovakia. Movement of police continues.

Public bus service to Brünn suspended.

Polish military and police reinforcements reported opposite Mährisch-Ostrau.

Reinforcements on the Hungarian frontier reported at the same time.

Representatives of Security Headquarters in Prague talk of a German entry into Prague on Wednesday.

TOUSSAINT  
HENCKE

No. 190

401/213499

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division I*

BERLIN, March 12, 1939.  
Pol. I M 912 g.

The following picture emerged this morning from reports in the hands of the Abwehr:

1. Infantry regiment 39, reinforced, is stationed in and around Pressburg.
2. The 4th Mobile Motorized Division is on the march from Pardubitz. The point of the division has been located not far from Pressburg. Further reports as to the area which the division will occupy are not yet available.
3. The Hungarians have withdrawn nearly all troops from the areas adjoining Germany and are concentrating them in front of the east Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine sectors.
4. The Poles have now assembled in all about one fresh division in and in front of the Olsa area, so that there are now about two divisions in all in this sector.
5. There is no confirmation of the report by a journalist from Pressburg that the Poles are deploying three divisions on the Carpatho-Ukraine front. From reports in the hands of General Keitel up to 11:30 this morning there is no indication of a Polish deployment against the Carpatho-Ukraine.

HEYDEN-RYNSCH

No. 191

140/76405-06

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb*

BERLIN, March 12, 1939.

Herr von Druffel telephoned this afternoon from Vienna to give his personal opinion of Karol Sidor, the new Slovak Minister President.

He said generally that in character Sidor was an oriental. He had quite obviously been driven by the Czechs to fear us and had been misled into thinking that, in the choice between Prague and Berlin, Prague represented the lesser evil for the Slovaks. Among the Slovak people, there were those who held the view that Sidor had not behaved correctly. If he did not succeed in a very short time in securing the release of the prisoners (Tuka, Mach, Deputies of the Slovak Diet, and others),<sup>1</sup> he would scarcely be able to remain in office. Murgaš, the pro-German chief of staff of the Hlinka Guards, had had a conversation with Sidor today and had gained the impression that Sidor was not so much opposed to us as appeared at yesterday's negotiations. He was a personality who was not to be won over by a rapid onslaught but who might be won over in the long run. He therefore recommended rather cool treatment by the press but in such a way that all possibilities for the future were not obstructed. In political circles it was thought that in the end Sidor would after all get the better of the Czechs.

Herr von Druffel's opinion is confirmed to a certain extent by press reports received here, which state that this afternoon Sidor demanded from the Prague Government the withdrawal of the Czech troops within 24 hours and the release of the prisoners within 48 hours.

ALTENBURG

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<sup>1</sup> They had been arrested on the orders of the Prague Government on Mar. 10.

## No. 192

140/76394

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 207

BERLIN, March 12, 1939.

The Czech Minister told me this afternoon in the Opera House, where he was sitting behind me, that he had just handed to the German Government a *note verbale*,<sup>1</sup> stating that in observance of the constitutional ordinances Carol [*sic*] Sidor had been appointed Minister President in Slovakia. The *note verbale* also contained the names of the other members of the Cabinet. The Minister added that he himself was surprised that in the dismissal of the late Cabinet a legal error in form had occurred.

The Minister also asked me who had signed the Slovak Government's appeal to the German Government for help, mentioned in the

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<sup>1</sup> This *note verbale* (1613/387208) announced that the Slovak Cabinet had been nominated by the President of the Czechoslovak Republic at the request of the Presidium of the Slovak Parliament. Other names in the new Cabinet included Martin Sokol (Interior) and Jozef Sivak (Education).

German press yesterday. I answered the Minister by saying that I did not remember the signature.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 193

401/213482

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, March 12, 1939.

In reply to an inquiry by telephone, State Secretary Keppler, Hotel Imperial, Vienna, gave the following information:

In his view the situation was somewhat "jammed" [*verkorkest*]. His impression was that the two "big men" (obviously meaning Seyss-Inquart and Bürckel)<sup>1</sup> had been taken in by [*aufgesessen*] the people there. Sidor had apparently been bribed by the Czechs, and nothing could be done with him. In Pressburg all was quiet at present. It would be rather difficult to gain new points of contact. He, Keppler, was remaining in Vienna for the present on the instructions of the Foreign Minister.

When asked what had happened to the appeal planned by Durčansky,<sup>2</sup> Keppler said that—as far as he knew, through an indiscretion—it was already in the hands of the foreign correspondents.

ALTENBURG

<sup>1</sup> Seyss-Inquart was Reich Statthalter and Bürckel, Gauleiter of Austria.

<sup>2</sup> Durčansky had evaded arrest by the Prague Government and escaped to Vienna.

No. 194

1613/387209

*The Head of Political Division IVb to the Consulate in Pressburg*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, March 12, 1939—10:10 p.m.

MOST URGENT

e.o. Pol. IV 586 g.

No. 4

For the Consul personally.

With reference to telephone conversation of the afternoon of the 12th, the Foreign Minister requests you to support in every way the activities of certain agencies as far as this is possible without compromising your position in Pressburg. This applies particularly to the use of your car.

ALTENBURG<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Altenburg's handwriting: "In connection with this instruction the Foreign Minister remarked that, according to information from Gauleiter Bürckel, Herr von Druffel had not been sufficiently obliging in the matter of offering his car."

## No. 195

401/213483

*The Consul at Brünn to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 6 of March 12

BRÜNN, March 13, 1939—2:00 a.m.

Received March 13—5:00 a.m.

After a calm and dignified commemoration ceremony many Czechs showed their displeasure at the comparatively widespread display of flags in the town and environs and adopted a hostile attitude toward the German population. Individual groups formed processions. In answer to this, Germans gathered in the afternoon for counterdemonstrations which led to skirmishes between the two parties. Toward evening an organized German troop marched through the streets singing battle songs, and incidents increased. There were several arrests, at first chiefly of Czechs and then of Germans. In the late afternoon the local chief of police came to me and appealed for help, as he was anxious to avoid at all costs the use of force against Germans. I told him that I saw no prospect of success from intervention by me, as the German reaction was understandable in view of the deliberate insults and provocations. Demonstrations by both sides continued in the evening; the Czech demonstrations were largely of a Communist nature with cheers for Beneš and Stalin. I hear in strict confidence that the German demonstrations, the organized nature of which has also struck the Czechs, are to continue until Tuesday.

Telegram repeated to Legation.

WOLF

## No. 196

2002/442260

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVa*

BERLIN, March 13, 1939.

Pol. IV 1602.

State Secretary Keppler telephoned from Vienna at 11:50 a.m. today as follows:

There is a possibility that Tiso may come to Berlin. He—Keppler—was asking for instructions as to whether Tiso should come and whether he could be received by the Führer or by the Foreign Minister. In the event of Tiso's visit to Berlin being desired, he suggested that he, Keppler, should accompany Tiso.

If so desired, Durčansky could also accompany Tiso.

He asked to be informed of the decision by telephone.

HEI[NBURG]

## No. 197

140/76418

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PRAGUE, March 13, 1939—12:40 p.m.

No. 104 of March 13

Received March 13—1:45 p.m.

With reference to your telegram 65 of March 12.<sup>1</sup>

Meckel, back from journey to Brünn, Olmütz, Iglau, requests Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle be informed as follows:

“Very great difficulty in rousing feeling among Czechs [*Tschechen in Stimmung zu bringen*]. If anywhere, it still might be possible in Brünn and Olmütz. Nevertheless, more violent action required to create serious incidents. Czech mood one of inclination to side with us. Naturally more out of opposition to Government than out of friendship for Germany.

“Preparations for spare parts [*Ersatzteile*]<sup>2</sup> carried out. End of message from Meckel.”

HENCKE

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (28/19555).<sup>2</sup> Presumably a code word.

## No. 198

140/76419

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BUDAPEST, March 13, 1939—3:30 p.m.

SECRET

Received March 13—5:25 p.m.

No. 34 of March 13

Together with Altenburg I called this morning on the acting Foreign Minister, the Chief of the General Staff,<sup>1</sup> the Prime Minister, and the Regent, who received the suggestion<sup>2</sup> enthusiastically. The Regent is having his boundless gratitude conveyed to the Führer by the Hungarian Minister.

The Chief of the General Staff stated that he must reckon with Czech resistance and especially that he must make certain preparations, as the recruits had been with their units only since February 1. But he would strike within a week at the latest. We pointed out with the greatest emphasis to all these authorities that this would be too late.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. Henrik Werth.<sup>2</sup> The documents throw no explicit light on what this suggestion was, although the outlines of the plot are evident from the Hungarian Regent's reaction to it. See document No. 199.

The Regent, who bound all participants to secrecy on their word of honor, promised, as did the political authorities, to exert appropriate influence on the Chief of the General Staff. Count Csáky is leaving his sickbed to press for utmost speed.

ERDMANNSDORFF

No. 199

F18/367-68

*The Regent of Hungary to the Führer and Chancellor*

BUDAPEST, March 13, 1939.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: Heartfelt thanks! I cannot express how happy I am, for this headwater region [*Quellgebiet*] is, in fact, for Hungary—I dislike using big words—a *vital question*.

Notwithstanding our recruits of but 5 weeks, we are tackling the matter with enthusiasm. The plans are already laid. On Thursday the 16th of this month a frontier incident will take place, to be followed on Saturday by the big thrust.

I shall never forget this proof of friendship and Your Excellency can at all times ever rely steadfastly [*felsenfest*] on my gratitude.<sup>1</sup>

HORTHY

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<sup>1</sup>This letter is handwritten in German by Horthy on the Regent's personal stationery.

No. 200

140/76420

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, March 13, 1939.

Deputy Kundt called on me today accompanied by Dr. Hoffmann,<sup>1</sup> head of the legal department of his Prague office. Dr. Hoffmann gave an account of efforts being made in Prague to form a new Czech national government friendly to Germany. The leader of the movement is the secretary of the Unity Party, Zilka; Count Thun-Hohenstein is being considered for Foreign Minister. Furthermore, General Lienhart and General Fialla (Defense Minister) as well as MM. Chichtalek, Sousedyk, and the engineer Hochmann were to be in the Cabinet. He, Hoffmann, had come to Berlin to receive instructions.

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<sup>1</sup>Not to be confused with Dr. Hamilkar Hofmann, a secretary at the Legation in Prague, who on Mar. 9 was sent to act as consular representative at Chust in the Carpatho-Ukraine. See documents Nos. 210, 215, 235, 237, and 239.

Herr Kundt added that Herr Behrends<sup>2</sup> had let him know through the same channels that a post as Minister for the German ethnic group [*volksdeutsche Gruppe*] is still at his disposal. The Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle, where he had gone in the first place, had referred him to the Foreign Ministry.

I told them that I was not in a position to give them any political directives. My personal view was that Herr Hoffmann should say on his return to Prague that he is not authorized to carry on political negotiations and that, as representative of Deputy Kundt, he should inform them that the latter is still indisposed.

If by this evening Herr Hoffmann does not receive other instructions he will act accordingly.

WOERMANN

<sup>1</sup> An official of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle.

## No. 201

1613/387277-78

*The Foreign Ministry to the Commissioner for the Four Year Plan*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, March 13, 1939.

Sent March 14.

Pol. IV 551 g.

Drafting Officer: Secretary of Legation von Stechow (acting).

With reference to your letter of February 18, 1939, No. St. M. Dev. 1631/39g—and to our letter of February 21, 1939—No. Pol. IV 4579, Ang. II.<sup>2</sup>

Subject: Surrender of gold coverage for Czechoslovak bank notes withdrawn from circulation in Sudeten-German territory.

In continuation of my above-mentioned letter of February 21, I have the honor to inform you that the negotiations concerning the surrender of a part of the gold and foreign-exchange holdings of the Czechoslovak National Bank to the Reichsbank as coverage for the Czechoslovak bank notes withdrawn from circulation in the Sudeten-German area by the Reichsbank were brought to a successful conclusion on March 4, 1939.

The text of the agreement relating to the result of the negotiations conducted in Berlin during the period from February 28 to March 4, 1939, between representatives of the Reichsbank and of the Czechoslovak National Bank has been communicated direct by letter—No. IIa 5848—by the board of directors of the Reichsbank to the Office of the Four Year Plan.

<sup>1</sup> The copy used is a draft initialed by Wiehl, Bismarck, and Stechow.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 170, footnote 2.

The amounts of gold and foreign exchange which the Czechoslovak National Bank has pledged itself to transfer to the Reichsbank were transferred on March 9 and 10.<sup>3</sup>

By order:  
(in fair copy, name of State Secretary)

<sup>3</sup> This paragraph was added in Wiehl's handwriting.

## No. 202

F12/425-419

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FÜHRER AND TISO, THE SLOVAK MINISTER  
PRESIDENT, IN THE FÜHRER'S STUDY IN THE NEW REICH CHANCEL-  
LERY ON MARCH 13, 1939, FROM 6:40 TO 7:15 P.M.<sup>1</sup>

Also present were:

The Reich Foreign Minister	State Secretary Dietrich <sup>3</sup>
Minister of State Meissner	State Secretary Keppler
General Keitel	Minister Durčansky
General Brauchitsch <sup>2</sup>	

The Führer welcomed Minister President Tiso and in a lengthy statement described to him developments in Czechoslovakia. Germany had experienced two disappointments since last autumn. One had been caused by Czechoslovakia, who, partly as a result of lack of good will and partly through weakness, as for example in the case of Chvalkovsky, had not been able to prevent the political situation from taking a turn which was intolerable to Germany. Czechoslovakia owed it only to Germany that she had not been mutilated further. With the greatest self-control Germany had renounced the language enclaves situated on her frontiers, only in order to insure normal living space for Czechoslovakia. No thanks had been received for this. No Czech in Germany had lost his employment. On the contrary, countless Czechs had been accepted by us. No hair of their heads had been harmed; neither had they been insulted or attacked. On the Czech side the picture was a completely different one. The most stringent measures of dismissal had been practiced on Germans. Thousands had become unemployed. Everywhere Germans were being provoked in some way, or there was discrimination against them. The Germans were under constant supervision so that their position was worse than before the September crisis. This development was not in keeping

<sup>1</sup> This conversation was preceded by an interview between Tiso, Durčansky, and Ribbentrop at the Foreign Ministry.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. Walter von Brauchitsch was Commander in Chief of the German Army, 1938-41.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 123, footnote 1.

with the agreements. Until the day before yesterday Germany had endeavored to maintain an absolutely loyal attitude in the press. She had practiced restraint and had refrained from publicizing a great many things which had happened there, in order to keep the atmosphere undisturbed. During this time the Czech press had repeatedly published reports unfavorable to Germany, and certain papers had not desisted from their systematic incitement. Pamphlets and spoken propaganda had continued. The present situation was depicted to the Czechs as a temporary state of affairs, and hopes for a change to Germany's disadvantage were constantly being aroused among the people. The Führer had already told Chvalkovsky this and reproached him because oil was constantly being poured on the flames. Central Europe was a definite compact economic unit which could live only if it were completely at peace. It needed a *détente*. Geographically this was already demonstrated by the fact that Bohemia and Moravia were surrounded by Germany, and Germany could never tolerate a center of unrest in her own sphere.

During recent weeks conditions had become intolerable. The old Beneš spirit had come to life again. The Czech people were being incited to resist. Conditions were uncertain and disturbed. And yesterday there had been the incidents at Brünn<sup>4</sup> and Iglau. Whereas we treat the Czechs in Germany well, there was turmoil in Czechoslovakia. Germany could no longer tolerate these conditions. Also the *Volksdeutsche* there were rebelling, because they could not see why they should be worse off today than previously.

We solved the Czech problem once in accordance with our general outlook [*Weltanschauung*]. But, if this solution did not lead to success, we were resolved to carry it to its conclusion completely without regard to this ideological basis.

Our second disappointment had been the attitude of Slovakia. Last year the Führer had been faced with a difficult decision as to whether or not to allow Slovakia to be occupied by the Hungarians. In thinking that Slovakia wanted union with Hungary, the Führer had misjudged the situation. The reason for this mistake was the distance separating Slovakia from Germany and the weight of the greater problems which at that time overshadowed this problem. It was only during the crisis that the Führer had departed from this idea. Then for the first time he had heard and noticed that Slovakia wanted to lead an independent existence.

In his decisions at Munich the Führer had taken not the course of power politics but that of ethnical principles [*volkspolitische Wege*]. He had done something which had alienated him from his friend Hungary, namely, put this principle into practice for Hungary, too. He had repeatedly explained this months before.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 195.

Now he had sent Keppler as his envoy to Pressburg, and Sidor had told the latter that he was a soldier of Prague and would oppose a withdrawal of Slovakia from the Czechoslovak union. If the Führer had known earlier, he need not have fallen out with his friend Hungary but could have left matters as they were at the time.

He had now summoned Minister Tiso in order to clear up this question *in a very short time*. Germany had no interests east of the Carpathians. It was a matter of complete indifference to him what happened there. The question was, did Slovakia want to lead an independent existence or not? He wanted nothing from Slovakia. He would not stake his people, or even a single soldier, for something which the Slovak people did not want at all. He wanted a final confirmation as to what Slovakia really wanted. He did not want Hungary to reproach him for preserving something which did not want to be preserved. In general, he took a very generous view of disturbances and demonstrations, but in this case the disturbances were only an outward sign of internal uncertainty. He could not put up with that, and he had therefore summoned Tiso to hear his decision. It was a question not of days but of hours. He had previously said that if Slovakia wished to become independent he would support and even guarantee her efforts in that direction. He would keep his promise as long as Slovakia clearly expressed the desire for independence. If she hesitated or refused to be separated from Prague, he would leave the fate of Slovakia to events for which he was no longer responsible. Then he would look after German interests only, and they did not extend east of the Carpathians. Germany had nothing to do with Slovakia. She had never belonged to Germany.

The Führer asked the Reich Foreign Minister if he had anything further to add. The Reich Foreign Minister also emphasized that a decision was a matter of hours, not days. He handed to the Führer a report just received announcing Hungarian troop movements on the Slovak frontier. The Führer read this report, told Tiso of its contents, and expressed the hope that Slovakia would reach a decision soon.

Tiso thanked the Führer for his words. He had long desired to hear from the lips of the Führer the latter's attitude toward his people and his country and how he viewed the problems. He noted what had been said and assured the Führer that he could rely on Slovakia. The Führer would pardon him if, under the impact of the latter's words, he could make no definite statement at once, let alone give a decision. He would retire with his colleague and consider the whole question calmly, but they would prove themselves worthy of the Führer's benevolence and interest in their country. Thereupon the conversation ended.

## No. 203

140/76429-30

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 107 of March 13

PRAGUE, March 13, 1939—7: 25 p.m.

Received March 13—10: 40 p.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 102 of March 12.<sup>1</sup>

1. The feeling of the people against the Government, and in particular against the person of Beran, is increasing. Recent events make it clear even to the most simple-minded Czechs that consolidation of the State has not been achieved either in foreign or in domestic policy and that thereby a serious crisis has arisen, the repercussions of which are unpredictable. Beran's reactionary tendency concerning social policy and his half-hearted measures against the Jews play an important part in this. Rumors continue to circulate of a forthcoming replacement of Beran by a military dictatorship.

2. On the whole Prague is still quiet. For the time being the population is in general outwardly passive, to some extent also resigned. Two incidents, beyond a doubt caused by Czechs, in which two German students had their ears boxed, happened last night. In the German Technical Institute provocative Jews were today thrown into the street by students. A small group of Czechs took their part. The police occupied the entrance to the institute.

On the other hand Germans expressing definitely National Socialist and, at the same time, anti-Czech views, caused hardly any disturbance.

They received emotional support from anti-Jewish Czech organizations (fascists and Vlastka), whose activities have increased since Gajda's<sup>2</sup> reinstatement. Processions of German students were now and then greeted by Czechs with upraised hand.

This does not alter the fact that Gajda's policy is basically anti-German. At present Gajda has concluded a kind of truce with the Government. The fact that by their anti-Jewish activity Gajda's followers often divert the effects of the anti-German feeling among the population is convenient for the Government at present.

The Prague police have been instructed to take no action against Germans, even in cases of provocation.

3. Apparently by agreement with the authorities, the Communists are being confined by their leaders to their meeting places, to avoid clashes with Germans.

4. Incidents reported from Brünn lasted throughout yesterday evening and night. There were incidents of a serious nature in Iglau

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (28/17616).

<sup>2</sup> Gen. Rudolf Gajda was leader of the Czech fascists and connected with the Vlastka organization.

today in which the field police took armed action against Germans. Casualties are reported (DNB report). At Altenburg a Czech soldier slashed a swastika flag with his bayonet. He was at once disarmed by the Czechs.

HENCKE

No. 204

140/76421/1

*The Foreign Minister to the Legation in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

No. 70 of March 13

BERLIN, March 13, 1939.

With reference to today's telephone instruction given through Kordt.<sup>1</sup>

If a communication in writing reaches you from President Hácha, you are requested for your part not to make any written or spoken statement, nor to take any other steps in connection with it. On the contrary, I ask you to transmit any such communication here only by telegram in cipher. Furthermore, I ask you and the other members of the Legation to arrange matters so that during the next few days you are not in a position to receive any communications from the Czechoslovak Government.

RIBBENTROP

<sup>1</sup> An instruction telephoned to Prague by Erich Kordt at 8:30 p.m. on Ribbentrop's orders directed Hencke to decline Hácha's invitation to call on him "in view of the false report which was officially spread recently by the Czechs about an alleged *démarche* on his part with the Czech President" (140/76417).

No. 205

401/213474-75

*Minute by the State Secretary*

No. 209

[Undated<sup>1</sup>]

This evening at 9 o'clock the Reich Foreign Minister received the Italian Ambassador at the latter's request and gave him the following information regarding our view of the situation in Czechoslovakia:

The Prague Government had interfered high handedly both in the Carpatho-Ukraine by appointing a Czech general as Minister and in Pressburg by unconstitutionally dismissing Minister Tiso. In Pressburg it had set up an unconstitutional Sidor Cabinet. Its attitude toward the Germans had caused serious disturbances in Czechoslovakia. Numerous calls for help had reached us. We had sent State Secretary Keppler to Pressburg to negotiate with Tiso there. This

<sup>1</sup> This minute may have been written Mar. 13 because of the events discussed and because Weizsäcker's previous minute No. 208 of Mar. 12 (140/76395) records that the Italian Ambassador intended to ask for an interview with the Foreign Minister on the following day. Weizsäcker replied evasively to Attolico's request for information.

mission of Keppler had not brought complete clarification. Now Tiso had been invited to Berlin so that we could discuss matters with him here. Whether these conversations would lead in the end to a declaration of independence by Slovakia under the leadership of the constitutional Tiso Government remained to be seen.

We were also following conditions in the Czech State itself with great attention. The treatment of German elements [*des deutschen Volkstums*] in Brünn and other places proved the revival of the old Beneš spirit. On his visit to Berlin, Chvalkovsky had been warned of this in vain by the Führer. Conditions there were causing us grave concern.

Our reaction to these events was still uncertain and depended on the Führer. The Führer had recalled Göring in order to discuss the situation with him too. The Reich Foreign Minister promised Attolico to keep him informed as to further developments.

Regarding the attitude of the Hungarians, the Reich Foreign Minister remarked to Attolico that they themselves had of late repeatedly asked us for a free hand in the Carpatho-Ukraine. In view of the turn events had taken there, we were no longer able to restrain the Hungarians and had released them from their undertaking to do nothing without us.

Summing up, the Reich Foreign Minister remarked that as yet nothing definite could be said as to our ultimate reaction. As stated before, we regarded these events with grave concern.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 206

140/76421/2

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PRAGUE, March 13, 1939—11:55 p.m.

No. 111 of March 13

Received March 14—2:30 a.m.

With reference to telephone instructions given by order of the Foreign Minister.<sup>1</sup>

I made the following statement to Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky today at 8:55 p.m.:

"In view of the false report which was officially spread recently about an alleged *démarche* on my part with the President, I must regretfully decline his invitation to visit him. I would have to leave it to the President to have any communications sent to the Legation in writing."

Chvalkovsky, who was already in the castle, was much taken aback and said he could not admit the reason as justified, as no official publication of this false report had been made. He did not know how he

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 204, footnote 1.

was to say this to the President, who was expecting me at 9 p.m. To his repeated inquiry I replied that I could not come.

HENCKE

## No. 207

140/76422

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

PRAGUE, March 13, 1939—11:55 p.m.

No. 112 of March 13

Received March 14—2:30 a.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 111 of March 13.<sup>1</sup>

Foreign Minister called me at 10:20 p.m. and spoke as follows:

He had made my excuses to the President and only wished to tell me that M. Hácha had intended to ask me to transmit to the Führer and Chancellor his request to arrange for a meeting. In reply to a question by him on this subject I repeated that I must leave it to the President to send his communication in writing to the Legation. Chvalkovsky merely replied "Yes."

HENCKE

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 206.

## No. 208

140/76431-32

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 114 of March 13

PRAGUE, March 14, 1939—1:33 a.m.

Received March 14—5:00 a.m.

The Foreign Minister sent for me at midday today.<sup>1</sup>

1. He opened the conversation by asking what the Legation knew about clashes with Germans in Moravia. I replied by referring to the extremely disquieting situation, especially in Brünn and Iglau, where Czech gendarmery had attacked Germans with bayonets and rifles and wounded some. The Foreign Minister made no attempt to excuse the Czechs and said that he had urgently requested the Minister of the Interior to take extensive measures to prevent clashes and to protect Germans.

2. The Foreign Minister then asked most urgently whether I had received official instructions or reports on the Slovak question. I answered in the negative, saying that all I knew about the situation in Slovakia was what had been published. Chvalkovsky went on to say that the present Pressburg Government consisted only of "the

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<sup>1</sup> i.e. Mar. 13, before the issue of Ribbentrop's order to break off contact with the Prague Government. See documents Nos. 204 and 206.

original [*ersten*.] autonomy-minded Slovaks." Sidor was highly respected among the Slovak people. So that my silence might not be taken for agreement, I replied that reports in our hands showed that the attitude of the Slovak people toward the Government was entirely the opposite.

3. The Foreign Minister then mentioned his own difficult personal situation. His conscience could not reproach him with any intention or action directed against Germany. Now he was being overwhelmed with reproaches from his people for his pro-German policy. I replied that the blame for the way things had developed lay with the Czech Government, which had not succeeded in effecting a basic change of policy. The Minister observed that, had he had the power, things would have been different.

HENCKE

No. 209

2002/442271

*The Slovak Minister President to the Führer and Chancellor (Draft)*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

[Undated]

Pol. IV 1709.

In the name of the legal Slovak Government I have the honor to inform Your Excellency that the sovereign Slovak nation has today thrown off the intolerable Czech yoke and, in accordance with the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the population, the independence of our state has been proclaimed. Independent Slovakia is determined to live in peace and friendship with all her neighbors. In the early stages of her development, however, the young state requires strong protection. In the name of the people and of the Government of the new Slovakia, I request Your Excellency, as the Führer of the great German Reich, which under your rule has always supported freedom and the self-determination of peoples, to take over the guarantee for the existence of our state and to take immediately all necessary measures for the protection of its frontiers.

MINISTER PRESIDENT OF INDEPENDENT SLOVAKIA

<sup>1</sup> It appears from Keppler's testimony at Nuremberg that the above telegram was drafted by him and Tiso in a conference at the Foreign Ministry on the night of Mar. 13-14 after Tiso's interview with Hitler. It was intended that it should be approved and sent by the Slovak Diet on Mar. 14, but it was not presented to the Diet because it was feared that approval would not be unanimous, some elements in the Diet preferring an appeal to Hungary. (Official Records, U.S. Military Tribunal, case XI, vol. 31, pp. 12912-13.) The telegram which conveyed to Hitler the Slovak appeal for protection was sent on Mar. 16. It will be published in vol. VI.

## No. 210

140/76460

*The Consul at Chust<sup>1</sup> to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

CHUST, March 14, 1939—3:50 a.m.

No. 37 of March 14

Received March 14—6:15 a.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 36 of March 13.<sup>2</sup>

Prime Minister Vološin had the following manuscript text of a telegram delivered to me by a deputation at 1:30 a.m. with the request for transmission to the German Government:

“To the Foreign Minister, Berlin, Germany. In the name of the Government of the Carpatho-Ukraine I beg you to take cognizance of the declaration of our independence under the protection of the German Reich.<sup>3</sup>

Prime Minister Dr. Vološin, Chust.”

Vološin has given written instructions to the gendarmery commandant in Chust to hand over stocks of arms held in Chust to the *Sitsch* [militia] who are to take over frontier defense on the Hungarian border. General Prchala<sup>4</sup> is alleged to have offered collaboration to Vološin in the event of a declaration of independence by Carpatho-Ukraine with simultaneous independence of Slovakia.

Repeated to Prague.

HOFMANN<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Chust (Magyar: Huszt) is a small town in the Carpatho-Ukraine, near the Rumanian frontier; it was the provisional seat of the new Carpatho-Ukraine Government.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (401/213464).

<sup>3</sup> A further telegram from Chust (140/76480) conveyed a message from Vološin to the Reich Foreign Minister that, in view of the declaration of independence by Slovakia, it was impossible for the Ukrainian people to remain within the federative union of the Czechoslovak State.

<sup>4</sup> Appointed Minister of the Interior, Finance, and Communications in the Carpatho-Ukraine Cabinet on Mar. 6, 1939, following the dismissal of Revay.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 200, footnote 1.

## No. 211

140/76439-40

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division I*

BERLIN, March 14, 1939.

e.o. Pol. I M 935 g.

The following picture emerges from reports in the hands of the Abwehr up to 9:30 a.m. today.

892175-51—22

1. Czechoslovakia. It has been ascertained that reservists have been called up in Bohemia and Moravia. How many have been called up, however, cannot so far be ascertained. Transport of troops from Bohemia, with the exception of southern Bohemia and Moravia, continues in the direction of Slovakia. Part of the troop transports are in an easterly direction. On the whole only recruits remain in the garrisons.

The 4th Mobile Division, which was yesterday reported to have turned toward the northeast, has now been ascertained to be moving in the opposite direction. Thus there are now two parallel columns advancing in a southwesterly direction on Pressburg from the northeast. The Czech armed forces are reported to be showing little enthusiasm for battle.

2. In the Polish troop movements there is an increasingly marked advance in a southeasterly direction, i. e. the deployment area facing the Carpatho-Ukraine. Whereas in the Olsa area there is little reinforcement of troops, transports from the north and west toward the Carpatho-Ukraine frontier are increasing.

3. Hungary. For the present no further special movements are discernible. Reservists have been called up in the three northern corps.

4. In France and Britain no important military measures have so far been noted. (Leave is reported to have been canceled for several garrisons in Alsace.)

V. D. HEYDEN-RYNSCH

## No. 212

2383/499699

### *Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb*

BERLIN, March 14, 1939.

State Secretary Keppler has just received this information by telephone from the Diet in Pressburg:

The Diet has decided on the independence of Slovakia. A Cabinet has been formed with Tiso as Minister President (Sidor, Minister of the Interior).<sup>1</sup> Czech officers have handed over command of the troops to Slovak officers. The Slovaks are in a position to safeguard the security of the country and of the frontiers.

The proclamation of Slovakia's independence will be broadcast at once in Slovak and then in German by the Pressburg radio station. It has been altered from yesterday's text. The spokesman of the Diet could not give a definite answer on the telephone to the question as to whether a telegram would be sent to the Führer.<sup>2</sup>

Calm prevails throughout the country.

ALTENBURG

Note. The German radio has been instructed to pick up the proclamation from the Pressburg station and to relay it immediately.

<sup>1</sup>A further telegram dispatched by Durčansky from Pressburg at 8 p. m. (140/76486) gives the following, among other members of the Cabinet: Dr. Vojtech Tuka (Vice-President of the Cabinet and Minister without Portfolio), Dr. Ferdinand Durčansky (Foreign Affairs), Jozef Sivak (Education), Lt. Col. Ferdinand Čatloš (National Defense), Julius Stano (Transport), and Dr. Mikulaš Pružinsky (Finance). This Cabinet remained in office with certain changes until the election of Tiso as President of the Republic on Oct. 23, 1939, when a new Cabinet was formed by Tuka.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 209, footnote 1.

## No. 213

483/231352-53

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

No. 214

BERLIN, March 14, 1939.

The British Ambassador, who for some days has wished to speak to me urgently, came here this morning to inquire about our views on the state of the Czechoslovak question.

Henderson opened the conversation by saying that intentionally he had not been insistent during the past 8 days, for he wished neither to make a *démarche* with us nor to give the impression that he or his Government was interfering in this matter. The quite preponderant German interest in Czechoslovakia was unquestioned. The British press too had maintained the greatest reserve. It would be gratifying to him, Henderson, if he could transmit a reassuring word to London from our side too. On the other hand it would be fatal, especially for him personally, if the coming visit to Berlin of Stanley,<sup>2</sup> a member of the British Cabinet, were to coincide with violent action by the Reich Government against Czechoslovakia.

To begin with, I explained to the British Ambassador our complaints about happenings in Czechoslovakia. Then I made it clear to him that the Tiso Government was the only rightful one. In reply to a question I furthermore admitted that presumably Tiso was planning a declaration of independence for Slovakia, for which purpose, in fact, the Slovak Diet had been summoned for this morning. We had so far not remonstrated in Prague on account of the outrages against the *Volksdeutsche* in Czechoslovakia and the mass of untrue

<sup>1</sup> The substance of this memorandum was telegraphed on Mar. 15 to London, Paris, and Rome (1941/435212-13). See also German Foreign Ministry, 1939, No. 2, *Dokumente zur Vorgeschichte des Krieges* (hereafter referred to as German White Book), document No. 253.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 305 and 313.

statements in the Czech press and radio; we had, however, the most urgent desire to see order established in this region of central Europe.

I answered a question by Henderson as to whether our interest really lay in the destruction of Czechoslovakia or in the preservation of Czechoslovakia by remarking that we were interested only in the preservation of order; as for the rest we were guided by altruistic motives.

To a further remark by Henderson that he was urging upon his colleague Mastny that his Government should keep in close contact with us and enter into conversations, I replied by saying that we too attached importance to satisfying the above-mentioned legitimate German claims in a suitable manner.

To Henderson's answer that this seemed important to him also as regards the Munich Powers, I replied for my part by saying that the Munich Agreement had aimed at and achieved the preservation of peace; besides, the agreement lay far behind us.

Henderson ended by repeating that German interests were paramount in the Czech area.

V. WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 214

483/231504

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

No. 210

BERLIN, March 14, 1939.

I received the Italian Ambassador at 11 a.m. today and confirmed in the main the statements made to him at 9 o'clock last night by the Reich Foreign Minister.<sup>1</sup> Attolico, for his part, had not much to say in reply but remarked that people in Rome would perhaps wonder why we had given the Hungarians a free hand as regards the Carpatho-Ukraine without first getting in touch with Rome. I told Attolico that, as a matter of fact, the Hungarians had been informed almost at the same time as the Italian Government.

V. WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 205.

### No. 215

140/76447

#### *The Consul at Chust to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

CHUST, March 14, 1939—11:15 a.m.

No. 39 of March 14

Received March 14—12:10 p.m.

An envoy of the Ukrainian Government brings a report that Hungarian troops have crossed the Carpatho-Ukraine frontier near

Podhorjani north of Munkács and are advancing in the direction of Sinadovo Svalava.<sup>1</sup> Estimated strength is four regiments. Czech troops are said to have offered no resistance so far. General Prehala is to order the Czech troops to resist. Ukrainian Government asks the Reich Government to intervene in Budapest so that advance of Hungarian troops may be stopped.

Attempts to reach a peaceful solution of the conflict are at present in progress in Chust between the military and the Sitsch. Machine-gun fire in front of the hotel is still continuing at 9 o'clock.

HOFMANN

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<sup>1</sup> Northeast of Munkács.

### No. 216

28/17598

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

[Telegram]

No. 116 of March 14

PRAGUE, March 14, 1939.

At 11:25 a.m. today Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky sent the following handwritten communication in an envelope marked "confidential" to me at my house, where I am remaining in accordance with telegraphic instruction No. 70 of March 13:<sup>1</sup>

"My dear Chargé d'Affaires: With reference to our telephone conversation of yesterday, I have the honor to inquire through your good offices whether His Excellency the Reich Chancellor would grant President Dr. Emil Hácha the opportunity of a personal interview.

"With the assurance of my highest esteem, my dear Chargé d'Affaires, I am,

"Yours sincerely,

Dr. Chvalkovsky."

End of letter.

HENCKE

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 204.

### No. 217

140/76442-43

*Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, March 14, 1939.

TELEPHONE MESSAGE FROM MINISTER VON ERDMANNSDORFF AT  
11:30 A.M.

Herr von Erdmannsdorff informed me today by telephone that Count Csáky had shown him the draft of an ultimatum which he intended to hand to the Czech Minister in Budapest at noon today.

At the moment, he was with the Regent to get his assent to this. Csáky's draft embodies roughly the following:

The peace of the Hungarian population along the frontier is endangered by events in the Carpatho-Ukraine. There was a probability that the Czechs planned to attack Slovakia from the Carpatho-Ukraine. Hence the following demands were being made by Hungary:

1. Interned Hungarian citizens must be set free at once.
2. The ill-treatment of Hungarian citizens must cease forthwith, and they must at once be given permission to organize themselves without interference.
3. The Hungarian frontier guard must be permitted to carry arms.
4. Czech troops must begin evacuation of the Carpatho-Ukraine within 24 hours.

Further, the Hungarian ultimatum draws attention to the terms of the Hungarian note which was sent to the Czech Government after the Munkács incident at the beginning of January.<sup>1</sup> In this it was stated that, in the event of a repetition of such incidents, the Hungarian Government could not remain indifferent.

The Hungarian Government emphasizes that it could not remain indifferent if a Czech attack were to be launched against Slovakia from the Hungarian-Ukraine frontier. The Hungarian Government awaits a reply to its note within 24 hours, failing which, responsibility for the consequences must fall on the Prague Government.

Herr von Erdmannsdorff added that representatives of the Hungarian press would be assembled this afternoon to be informed of the text of the ultimatum after its delivery to the Czech Minister.<sup>2</sup> Count Csáky was pledging himself personally to the utmost speed, as news had arrived that the Poles have become uneasy regarding German intentions and hence may possibly want to anticipate Germany. So far the Poles have been given no information by the Hungarians. Count Csáky inquired of Herr von Erdmannsdorff whether he should inform the Poles; Herr von Erdmannsdorff has advised against this and therefore no information has been given. According to reports reaching Budapest, the Poles thought the Germans would like to anticipate them. On the other hand it was assumed in Budapest that the Poles would not move if Hungary should invade the Carpatho-Ukraine.

BISMARCK

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<sup>1</sup> A telephone message from Erdmannsdorff on Jan. 6 (401/213617) reported that at 3 a.m. that day a detachment of the Czech Army had crossed the demarcation line northwest of Munkács. The Hungarians had lost two officers and two enlisted men and had captured three Czech soldiers and one machine gun.

<sup>2</sup> Miloš Kobr, April 1933-March 1939.

## No. 218

140/76445

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IVb*

BERLIN, March 14, 1939.

The Ukrainian Press Service rang up the anteroom of Counselor of Legation Altenburg at 1:25 p.m. and gave the following message:

Minister President Vološin has addressed an appeal for help to the Führer and the other Great Powers. All is quiet in the Carpatho-Ukraine; Czech forces have occupied the frontiers; the Ukrainians intend in conjunction with the Czech forces to defend themselves against any attack, even by combined Poles and Hungarians, and in the event of their not receiving help, if necessary, to stir up immediately a general revolt in all Ukrainian areas of Poland.

V. STECHOW

## No. 219

1941/435210-11

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 1039

LONDON, March 14, 1939.

Received March 15.

Pol. IV 1686.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Conversation with Sir Horace Wilson about the Czechoslovak crisis.

Sir Horace Wilson, whom I met today at noon at a social gathering, turned the conversation to the Czechoslovak crisis and referred to the report of a noon paper that the entry of German troops into Moravia was imminent. He expressed some concern about this and said that such an event would confront the public with an entirely new situation.

I replied that the report in the paper seemed to me to be clearly incorrect; events were proceeding relatively calmly and normally; the Slovak Diet had voted for the independence of Slovakia and, if the Czech troops withdrew, then the danger of a clash would be substantially lessened. I pointed out to Sir Horace Wilson that so far the press here had judged the situation very calmly.

Wilson replied that this attitude of the press was due to the continued influence of the Government in this direction; if, however, an invasion by German troops were to take place it would hardly be possible to restrain the press any longer. Besides, pressure from the

House of Commons, which was already asserting itself by numerous questions, would increase further.

I replied to Sir Horace that these fears were, at the least, premature; a continued calm judgment of events in Slovakia and Czechia respectively was to be earnestly desired in the interests of Anglo-German relations. In answer to a general question by Wilson as to the origin of the crisis, I explained to him that during recent months conditions had developed very far from satisfactorily, both in regard to relations between Czechia and Slovakia and in regard to the position of the minorities. While there were some favorably disposed personages in the central administration, there was on the other hand a large preponderance of officials, police, and officers among the provincial authorities who had still continued to administer governmental authority in the spirit of the old Beneš Government.

VON DIRKSEN

No. 220

140/76461

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 67 of March 14

LONDON, March 14, 1939—1:41 p.m.

Received March 14—3:50 p.m.

Attitude of British Government toward conflict between Czechia and Slovakia was further clarified yesterday by Halifax's speech, statements by the News Department of the Foreign Office, as well as by attitudes of press itself. British Government regards constitutional settlement of relations between Slovakia and Czechia as an internal concern of the Czechoslovak State, in which Great Britain has no part. The guarantee of the frontiers of the Czechoslovak State envisaged by Great Britain at Munich is regarded as not yet in force, as the frontier itself has not yet been finally fixed, and the prerequisite for the British guarantee is the undertaking of a like guarantee by other signatories to the Munich Agreement. However, even if such a guarantee already existed, it could come into force, according to statements in the press, only "in the event of an unprovoked attack."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This attitude is confirmed by Chamberlain's reply to a question by Attlee on the same day in the House of Commons (quoted in the German White Book, document No. 257): "I am not sure what the Right Hon. Gentleman thinks that we should do. I might remind him that the proposed guarantee is one against unprovoked aggression on Czechoslovakia. No such aggression has yet taken place."

The more the outward appearance of the right to self-determination of the people concerned is preserved, the greater will be the understanding among the public here for a new and stable settlement, especially as on all sides the desire exists to keep out of a remote affair which does not affect British interests.

DIRKSEN

## No. 221

140/76476

*The State Secretary to the Consul at Pressburg*

Telephone Message

[Undated]

In the course of the action known to you, it is necessary for military reasons that German troops should also cross the Slovak frontier on March 15 and advance to the line Nove Mesto—eastern escarpment of the Little Carpathians—valley of the Waag. At the express request of the Slovak Government, Pressburg will be excluded from occupation. You are requested to bring the above to the notice of the Slovak Government at once. Speed is imperative, as troops will begin to march in at 6 a.m. We naturally expect that the advancing German troops not only will meet with no resistance but will be given all necessary help.

Please report execution of this instruction.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 222

140/76457

*The Legation in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 37 of March 14

BUDAPEST, March 14, 1939—2: 30 p.m.

Received March 14—5: 20 p.m.

For Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht and of the Army.

Operations start on the morning of March 18. In the interval small-scale local raids by military and volunteers: March 14, Munkács and Nagyszöllös; March 15, Ungvár;<sup>1</sup> March 16, Munkács. A Carpathian group in readiness in the Tiszaújlak-Munkács-Ungvár-

<sup>1</sup> The corresponding Czech names are: Mukačevo, Sevluš, and Užhorod.

Nagykapos-Csap-Beregszász area: three infantry brigades, two cavalry brigades, one motorized brigade. Strength of infantry brigades: two infantry regiments, one squadron, six batteries.

Task: to advance with a strong left wing in a northeasterly direction as far as the Polish frontier.

As protection against attack from Slovak territory there are available two infantry brigades north of Komárom, one infantry brigade near Kassa, one brigade at peace-time strength northeast of Budapest.

Formations have been brought up to war strength.

It is estimated that there are one and a half enemy divisions in the Carpatho-Ukraine area.

WREDE <sup>2</sup>

ERDMANNSDORFF

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<sup>2</sup> Colonel Baron von Wrede, Military Attaché of the Legation in Hungary.

## No. 223

1613/387215

### *Memorandum of the State Secretary's Secretariat*

BERLIN, March 14, 1939.

Counselor of Legation Hencke, Prague, telephoned at 2:45 p.m. that the Czechoslovak President, Hácha, will arrive in Berlin tonight.

Because of his heart trouble, the 68 [66] year old President has been forbidden by his medical advisers to make the journey by air. He will therefore leave Prague at 4 p.m. by special train, consisting of a locomotive and a Pullman coach. He will be accompanied by Havelka, his Cabinet Minister, and by Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky.

Further, in view of the state of the President's health, he will be accompanied by his daughter, Mlle. Hácha, who will be attended by Mme. Havelka.

It is requested that the locomotive of the Pullman train be replaced at the frontier by a German locomotive.

Counselor of Legation Hencke thinks that the train will arrive in Berlin at 9 p.m.<sup>1</sup>

Counselor of Legation Hencke asks for immediate agreement by telephone to these arrangements.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The special train reached the Anhalter Station, Berlin, at 10:40 p.m. and was met by Dr. Meissner. Dr. Hácha and his entourage were taken to the Adlon Hotel. At 11:30 p.m. Chvalkovsky had a long conversation with Ribbentrop, who then called on Dr. Hácha at the Adlon. The interview with Hitler (see document No. 228) commenced at 1:15 a.m.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in handwriting: "According to information from the State Secretary's Secretariat the Führer has already agreed to the above arrangements. Counselor of Legation Hencke is being informed."

Stechow, March 14."

## No. 224

140/76474

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 215

BERLIN, March 14, 1939.

At about 6 o'clock this evening the Foreign Minister received the Italian Ambassador and informed him as follows:

The Czechoslovak State is breaking up. The Hungarians have invaded the Carpatho-Ukraine. Slovakia has declared her independence. The rump territories of Bohemia and Moravia are in a desperate state. Chaotic conditions prevail in the German-language enclaves. Incidents have also been reported from the north. There German troops are about to occupy certain areas. The fate of our fellow Germans in Bohemia and Moravia is causing us great concern. The Prague President, Hácha, and Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky, who undertook this on their own initiative, are expected this evening in Berlin. The Führer is absolutely determined to establish peace in Bohemia and Moravia. The future fate and the political structure of Bohemia and Moravia will be discussed today with Hácha. This territory must never again become a military power. The Beneš spirit has again shown its head; our patience is exhausted. Intrigues have been spun with our enemies in the west. An attempt has been made to make Czechia once more a political pawn in the European game. The Führer intends to lance the abscess. The liquidation of this problem is of interest not only to Germany, but also to the Axis. The present event is a useful preparation for a contest in another direction which will be necessary sooner or later and for the tasks which this will bring to the Axis Powers jointly.

The Foreign Minister promised to give the Ambassador further information later on in the evening, probably toward midnight.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 225

140/76468

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division II*

[Undated]

The Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht—Foreign Department (Major von Eisebeck)—telephones as follows:

7:15 p.m. At 5:30 p.m. troops of the Eighth Army Corps marched into the district of Mährisch-Ostrau according to plan and at 6:45 p.m. halted with their eastern columns about 4 kilometers to the south-east of Mährisch-Ostrau, ready for the forward march along the

Czech-Polish frontier. No resistance has been offered. Czech troops were not encountered; the Polish troops remained perfectly passive behind their frontier.

The first detachment [*Abteilung*] of the Leibstandarte occupied Mährisch-Ostrau at 6:40 p.m.; complete calm there. Not a soldier in the streets. Likewise, no resistance to southern column advancing from Freiberg-Frideck. The Commanding General of the Eighth Army Corps is on the way to Mährisch-Ostrau.

Secretary of Legation VON WALLFELD

### No. 226

140/76473

#### *Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb*

BERLIN, March 14, 1939.

Counselor of Legation Hencke informed me at 7:45 p.m. that the Czechoslovak Government had decided to resign but could not carry out this resignation as the President had left in the meantime. There have been disturbances in the Wenzelplatz in Prague, organized by the Right-wing radical, anti-Jewish Leika<sup>1</sup> student movement. Many persons have been injured and taken into custody.

ALTENBURG

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<sup>1</sup> "Vlajka" is meant. This was a Czech fascist organization.

### No. 227

1941/435201-02

#### *Circular of the State Secretary*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, March 14, 1939.  
Sent March 15—5:45 a.m.  
e.o. Pol. IV 1672.

For information and guidance of speech.

The events of the last few days have finally proved that the Government in Prague is neither willing nor able to guarantee a state of lasting peace in the country on the basis of its previous constitution. In Slovakia the illegal measures taken by Prague against autonomy have resulted in a declaration of the independence of the Slovak State by the Slovak Diet. In the Carpatho-Ukraine the appointment of General Prchala<sup>1</sup> has led to severe clashes between Czech soldiers and the Carpatho-Ukraine Home Defense Organization, Sitsch. As a result of these and other incidents on the frontier, units of the Hun-

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 210, footnote 4.

garian Army have advanced into the Carpatho-Ukraine to protect the Hungarian population. From Czechia itself come constant and increasingly urgent appeals for help from the *Volksdeutsche*, who are persecuted by the Czechs. Confusion, unrest, and terror reign in all parts of the country.

In this grave situation the Reich Government, conscious of its responsibility for insuring peace in central Europe and for ending the chaotic conditions on its eastern frontier, which are intolerable for the interests of the Reich, finds itself compelled to initiate the necessary measures. Czech President Hácha is arriving in Berlin tonight at his own request for an interview with the Führer.

Supplement for diplomatic missions only:

A further communication will give you the tenor of the Reich Government's assessment of the situation, to be given to the Government to which you are accredited, and of the decisions thereby resulting for us.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 228

FS/0070-82

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FÜHRER AND CHANCELLOR AND CZECHOSLOVAK PRESIDENT HÁCHA IN THE PRESENCE OF REICH FOREIGN MINISTER VON RIBBENTROP AND CZECHOSLOVAK FOREIGN MINISTER CHVALKOVSKY IN THE REICH CHANCELLERY ON MARCH 15, 1939, 1:15 TO 2:15 A.M.

Others present:

Field Marshal Göring	Minister of State Meissner
General Keitel	State Secretary Dietrich
State Secretary von Weizsäcker	Counselor of Legation Hewel

President Hácha greeted the Führer and thanked him for receiving him. For a long time he had wanted to make the acquaintance of the man whose wonderful ideas he had often read about and followed with interest. (All seated themselves.) Hácha said that up to a short time ago he himself was unknown. He had never mixed in politics but had been merely a law official in the Vienna administrative machine, and as such had deliberately refrained from mixing in politics so as to have a clean record in the eyes of the parties whom, as judge, he had to face. In 1918 he had been summoned to Prague and in 1925 was appointed president of the administrative law court.

As such he had had no connections with politicians, or, as he preferred to call them, "dabblers in politics" [*Politikaster*] and had seldom come into contact with them. He felt obliged to mention at the outset that he had had hardly any connections with the Government either and that his dealings with members of the Government had been limited to a minimum. He had never been *persona grata*. He had met President Masaryk only once a year at the judges' dinner; Beneš he met even less often. On the one occasion on which he had had dealings with the latter there had been misunderstandings. Moreover, the whole regime was alien to him, so alien that immediately after the change of regime he had asked himself whether it was fortunate for Czechoslovakia to be an independent state at all. Then last autumn the task had fallen to him to take his place at the head of the State. He was an old man. He had overcome his scruples when it was presented to him as his patriotic duty to take office. This had brought with it the most difficult task of his life; hence he had ventured to beg the Führer to receive him.

He was convinced that the destiny of Czechoslovakia lay in the Führer's hands, and he believed that that destiny was in safekeeping in the hands of the Führer. He had no need to deplore what had happened recently in Slovakia. He had long been convinced that the different nationalities in this body politic could not live together. Despite similarity of speech, they had developed very differently, and Czechoslovakia was more akin to Germany than to Slovakia, which inclined more toward the Magyars. They had had relations only with the evangelical Slovaks, while the Catholics had been rejected by the Czechs. Those were the reasons why they had never been able to arrive at a satisfactory understanding, and he was glad that developments had taken this course. He was not alone in this opinion, for certainly 80 percent of the population shared it with him.

Half an hour ago he had received the information that the Carpatho-Ukraine had declared its independence. He thought that the Führer's experiences with the Slovaks would be none too good. In the last few days rumors had no doubt reached the Führer's ears of a breach of the Constitution by Prague. This breach would then probably have to be charged to *his* account. However, he was a lawyer and knew that the dismissal of the Government had been carried out on a perfectly legal basis, for the Constitution itself had not been observed by one section of the Czech Government. At the same time, unfortunately, things had happened which he regretted, but which had been caused by measures connected with the maintenance of order. They had not been intentional. Besides, he was not shedding any tears over Slovakia.

Then he came to what affected him most, the fate of his people. He felt that it was precisely the Führer who would understand his

holding the view that Czechoslovakia had the right to wish to live a national life. It was self-evident that Czechoslovakia's geographical position demanded the best relations with Germany. That was the basis for a national life of her own. This conviction was shared by the majority of the Czech people. There were naturally some exceptions, but one had to bear in mind that the new Czechoslovakia had been in existence for only 6 months. Czechoslovakia was being blamed because there still existed many supporters of the Beneš system. But those named were not supporters at all. It was only in journalistic circles that this system still had friends. The Government was trying by every means to silence them. This was about all he had to report.

The Führer replied by expressing regret that he had to require the President to undertake this journey. This morning, however, after long reflection, he had come to the conclusion that this journey by the President, in spite of his advanced years, might be of great benefit to his country, because it was only a matter of hours now before Germany intervened. Fundamentally the German Reich felt no antagonism toward any other nation. We were in sympathy with nations which did us no harm, or at least disinterested in them. Neither did the German people feel any hatred for Czechoslovakia. But Czechoslovakia had adopted a very different attitude toward us. The Führer enumerated various occasions on which this attitude had become apparent in connection with great political events, for instance during the occupation of the Rhineland. At that time Czechoslovakia had addressed a note to France to the effect that, should that country take military measures against Germany, Czechoslovakia was also prepared to cooperate. This Czechoslovakia had done even though the territory in question had been German from time immemorial. She had often shown the same disposition, for instance toward Italy during the Abyssinian conflict, etc. Then in 1938 the situation had become intolerable. Hence on May 28 he had decided to draw the necessary conclusions. He harbored enmity against no nation, but he was a ruthless champion of the rights of his own people, and in this struggle he was determined to employ every means. Here he was the front-line soldier, ruthlessly and without hesitation upholding and defending his convictions. That the Rump State of Czechoslovakia existed at all was attributable only to his loyal attitude. At the risk of incurring the enmity of a friendly Hungary, he had curbed her political ambitions and compelled Hungary to solve the problem, like Germany, solely according to ethnologic principles, and this, although the craziest economic and tariff situations had thereby been created. He had exercised all this restraint, not because he could not have acted otherwise, but because he was convinced that it was the right thing. For the other countries Czechoslovakia had been no more than a means to

an end. London and Paris had shown themselves unable to espouse the cause of Czechoslovakia effectively.

Slovakia was a matter of complete indifference to him. Had she drawn closer to Germany, this would merely have involved a liability for Germany, and hence he was glad not to have it now. He had no interests whatever east of the Little Carpathians. In the autumn he had not wished to draw the final conclusions because he had thought a coexistence possible, but already at that time, and later during his conversations with Chvalkovsky, he had left no doubt that if the Beneš tendencies did not disappear completely he would destroy this state ruthlessly. Chvalkovsky had understood this at the time and had begged the Führer to have patience. The Führer had recognized this, but months had passed without any change taking place. The new regime had not succeeded in making the old one disappear psychologically; he saw this in the press, in propaganda by word of mouth, in the dismissal of Germans, and in many acts that were to him symbolic of the whole situation. He had not understood this at first, but when it had become clear to him he definitely drew his conclusions, for, had things continued to develop along these lines, the relationship with Czechoslovakia would, in a few years, again be exactly where it had been 6 months ago. Why had Czechoslovakia not at once reduced her army to reasonable proportions? Such an army was a tremendous burden for such a state, for it made sense only if it supported the state in its role in foreign affairs. As, however, the Czechoslovak State no longer had a role in foreign affairs, such an army had no justification. He quoted several examples which had proved to him that the spirit in the army had not changed. This symptom had convinced him that the army too was a heavy political liability for the future. Add to this the relentless development of a situation of economic stringency, and furthermore the protests from the minorities who could no longer put up with a life of this kind.

“And so last Sunday<sup>1</sup> my die was cast. I sent for the Hungarian Minister and informed him that I withdrew my restraining hand from that country.”

*We were now faced by this state of affairs, and he had given the order for invasion by the German troops and for the incorporation of Czechoslovakia into the German Reich.*

He wished to give Czechoslovakia the fullest measure of autonomy and her own way of life, more than she had ever enjoyed in Austrian days. Germany's attitude toward Czechoslovakia would be decided tomorrow and the day after and depended on the attitude of the

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<sup>1</sup> Mar. 12. There is no record of an interview between Hitler and Sztójay; the first suggestion to the Hungarian Government appears to have been made by Erdmannsdorff and Altenburg on the morning of Mar. 13. See document No. 198.

Czech people and Army toward the German troops. He no longer had any confidence in the Government. While believing in the honesty and sincerity of Hácha and Chvalkovsky, he had doubts as to the Government's chance of prevailing upon the population as a whole. The German Army had already marched today, and at a barracks where resistance was offered it had been ruthlessly broken; another had surrendered on the arrival of the heavy artillery.

Tomorrow morning at 6 o'clock the German Army was to enter Czechia from all sides and the German Air Force would occupy the Czech airfields. There were two possibilities. The first was that the entry of the German troops might develop into fighting. In this case resistance would be broken by brute force with all available means. The other possibility was that the entry of the German troops would take place satisfactorily, in which case it would be easy for the Führer, upon the reconstruction of Czech national life, to accord Czechoslovakia a generous way of life of her own, autonomy, and a certain measure of national liberty.

At this moment we were witnessing a great turning point in history. He did not want to ill-treat or denationalize the Czechs. He was doing all this not from hatred but in order to protect Germany. If last autumn Czechoslovakia had not given in, the Czech people would have been exterminated. No one would have prevented his doing it. It was his desire that the Czech people should live their national life to the full, and he firmly believed that some formula could be found which would go far toward meeting Czech wishes. If it came to a battle tomorrow, then pressure would create counterpressure. They would destroy one another, and then it would no longer be possible for him to grant the promised concessions. In two days the Czech Army would cease to exist. Naturally, Germans would fall too, and this would engender a hatred which would compel him in self-preservation not to concede any more autonomy. The world would not move a muscle. He sympathized with the Czech people when he read the foreign press. It gave him the impression which might be summed up in a German proverb, "The Moor has done his duty, the Moor can go."

That was the position. In Germany there were two trends, a harsher one which wanted no concessions but, remembering the past, desired bloody suppression of Czechoslovakia, and another whose attitude corresponded with the suggestions he had just made.

This was the reason why he had asked Hácha to come here. This was the last good turn he could render the Czech people. If it came to a struggle, the blood which was shed would drive us to hatred. But perhaps Hácha's visit might prevent the worst. Perhaps it would help toward finding a solution which would carry Czechoslovakia

further than anything she could ever have hoped for in the old Austrian Empire. His sole aim was to provide the necessary security for the German people.

The hours were passing. At 6 o'clock the troops would march in. He was almost ashamed to say it but for every Czech battalion there was a German division. Thus the military action was not exactly small but it was launched on a grand scale. He would like now to advise him [Hácha] to withdraw with Chvalkovsky and discuss what was to be done.

Hácha said that to him the position was quite clear and that resistance was folly. But he asked the Führer how, in the space of 4 hours, he was to set about restraining the whole Czech people from offering resistance. The Führer said he had better consult with his companions. The military machine now already in motion could not be stopped. He should get in touch with his Prague offices. It was a grave decision, but he saw dawning the possibility of a long period of peace between the two peoples. Should the decision be otherwise, he saw the annihilation of Czechoslovakia.

Hácha inquired whether the whole reason for invasion was to disarm the Czech Army. This could perhaps be done in some other way.

The Führer said that his decision was irrevocable. They surely knew what a decision by the Führer meant. He saw no other possibility of disarmament and asked the others present whether they shared his view, which was confirmed. The only possibility of disarming the Czech Army was by the German Army.

For Hácha this was today the most difficult task of his life, but he believed that in only a few years this decision would be comprehensible, and in 50 years would probably be regarded as a blessing.

Hereupon the two Czechs withdrew.

After the discussion between Hácha, Chvalkovsky, and our own representatives, at the conclusion of which they had made up their minds as to the wording of the agreement, the persons mentioned at the beginning of the memorandum met once more in the Führer's study for a final consultation. Once again the military situation was fully discussed, and the Field Marshal described the situation in detail. The Führer thought that perhaps Hácha's message might not have got through to one place or another, which might then lead to clashes, but on the whole the entry of the troops might be expected to pass off without incident.

The Führer continued that he believed, in spite of all the bitterness that would be caused by the entry and occupation by the German Reich, that nevertheless the knowledge would dawn slowly that a century-long coexistence of the two countries would be beneficial. The idea that the two countries would have to fight each other would dis-

appear. Czechoslovakia was embedded in the German Reich, and common sense should make it clear to everyone that the watchword must be a coexistence of the closest kind. Moreover, the problem of denationalization was not involved, as such an idea was in itself quite alien to the Germans and also to National Socialist ideology. We did not desire or intend denationalization. They would live happily as Czechs, and we wished to live happily as Germans. In this respect the German Reich could be extremely generous.

Hácha interpolated that this remark of the Führer was of surpassing importance to him.

The Führer continued that only in the economic, military, and political sphere we could not tolerate opposition. Czechia should keep her own head of the State, and the principles which he would enforce would form the basis for the appeasement of this region for centuries to come.

Hácha interjected that then no buying of souls, as in Austrian times, was on the program and asked whether an economic customs union was planned.

The Führer dismissed the first question with a smile; the Field Marshal answered the second in the affirmative because Germany and Czechia were one economic area. In addition Czechia would receive orders which would certainly double her output.

The Führer said that the Czechoslovak people would gain economically by union with Germany because they would become part of the great German economic area. He did not wish to destroy Czech economy but wished to invigorate it considerably.

Hácha inquired whether precise instructions about this had already been drawn up.

The Führer replied that this was a matter for an economic commission, for the whole thing had come as a surprise even to him. A few weeks ago he had not yet known anything about the whole matter. He spoke once more about that time and the tactics of Beneš, and finally about May 28 when he had disclosed to a narrow circle his decision to act. The Führer concluded with the remark that the agreement which would now be made would have to be final, acceptable, and unequivocal. In any case the Czechs were getting more rights than they had ever accorded the Germans in their territory.

Hereupon the agreement was signed by the Führer, the Reich Foreign Minister, Hácha, and Chvalkovsky.<sup>2</sup>

HEWEL

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<sup>2</sup> The signed copy of the agreement (document No. 229) is identical with the draft prepared by the Foreign Ministry (427/218185-88); the text, with signatures, was telegraphed to the German Legation in Prague later the same day, telegram No. 77 (28/19538). The agreement appears to have been signed at 3:55 a.m.

## No. 229

2871/564244-47

*Declaration by the German and Czechoslovak Governments*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, March 15, 1939.

Pol. IV 709 g.

At their request the Führer today received the Czechoslovak President, Dr. Hácha, and the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, Dr. Chvalkovsky, in Berlin in the presence of Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop. At the meeting the serious situation created by the events of recent weeks in the present Czechoslovak territory was examined with complete frankness. The conviction was unanimously expressed on both sides that the aim of all efforts must be the safeguarding of calm, order, and peace in this part of central Europe. The Czechoslovak President declared that, in order to serve this object and to achieve ultimate pacification, he confidently placed the fate of the Czech people and country in the hands of the Führer of the German Reich. The Führer accepted this declaration and expressed his intention of taking the Czech people under the protection of the German Reich and of guaranteeing them an autonomous development of their ethnic life as suited to their character.

In witness whereof this document has been signed in duplicate.

ADOLF HITLER  
RIBBENTROP

DR. E. HÁCHA  
F. CHVALKOVSKÝ

[Enclosure 1]

BERLIN, March 15, 1939.

The Czechoslovak President, Dr. Hácha, and the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, Dr. Chvalkovsky, have taken cognizance of the demands set forth in the enclosed memorandum, which have been laid down by the German side for the implementation of the military action already begun. In the name of their Government they have given assurance that all necessary measures will be taken immediately in order to guarantee the fulfillment of these demands.

DR. E. HÁCHA  
F. CHVALKOVSKÝ

[Enclosure 2]

The Reich Government demands: <sup>2</sup>

1. that the armed forces and police troops remain in barracks and lay down arms;

<sup>1</sup> This declaration, together with enclosures 1 and 2, is identical with the texts drafted in the Foreign Ministry and dated Mar. 14 (472/218185-88).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 188.

2. that all military, transport, and private aircraft be grounded and that military aircraft be parked on peacetime airfields;

3. that all antiaircraft guns and antiaircraft machine guns be withdrawn from their emplacements and stored in barracks;

4. that no alterations be carried out on airfields or their installations;

5. that no interruption to public life take place; on the contrary, that the continuance at work of all officials be assured, especially those of the railways and post, who are to be held at the disposal of the incoming holders of executive power;

6. that there be no disturbance of economic life and that in particular banks, commerce, and industry should continue their work;

7. that complete reserve be maintained in public expression of opinion, whether in the press, theater, on the radio, or at public functions in general.

Troops who make any preparations to resist will *at once* be attacked and wiped out. Military aircraft which leave their landing grounds will be attacked and shot down. Airfields which take defense measures will be bombed.

H[Á]CH[A]  
F. CH[VALKOVSKÝ]

## No. 230

28/17592-93

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 121 of March 15

PRAGUE, March 15, 1939—2:00 a.m.

1. As a result of the declaration of independence of Slovakia and the Carpatho-Ukraine on one hand and the increasing anti-Government activities of the Vlastka and the followers of Gajda<sup>1</sup> on the other, a state of extreme tension has arisen. The old Government decided on resignation, to be submitted to the President at 4 p.m. The population is resigned and expects a German invasion.

The surprising news of the reception of Hácha by the Führer, which was given prominence by the press and radio, aroused certain hopes.

2. The Czech population is comparatively indifferent to events in Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine; on the other hand the Carpatho-Ukraine representatives here asked for Germany's protection against the Hungarians, who have penetrated 10 kilometers inside the Carpatho-Ukraine, and against the Czechs in the Ukraine. The former Minister Rebay<sup>2</sup> officially notified the Legation of the Carpatho-Ukraine declaration of independence and asked for the protection of the Reich.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 203, footnote 2.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 210, footnote 4.

3. The Consulate at Brünn reports that all is quiet. DNB keeps us continually informed about conditions at Iglau. A more detailed factual report follows after Meckel's return tonight.

4. In the inner city of Prague there were clashes this afternoon among Czechs and between Czechs and Germans. The Czechs were partly Communists. Twenty-four Germans were injured and seven of them were admitted to the hospital. The police not only avoid taking action against Germans but, if possible, avoid intervening at all. On representations by the Legation seven German students who had been arrested were immediately released. At 9 p.m. Gajda informed the Legation that, in view of Hácha's visit, he had withdrawn his men from the streets, and he urgently requested that similar instructions be given to the leaders of the German students. On the other hand, Gajda has asked the leaders of the students to obtain for him Germany's consent to his seizing power by forcible means and a *Putsch*.

Toward midnight the inner city also quieted down on the whole. Loud-speakers are exhorting the people to remain calm.

HENCKE

### No. 231

2313/484454

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVa*

BERLIN, March 15, 1939.

This morning the following report was received from the German Consulate at Brünn by telephone:

The *Volksdeutsche* have seized power in the town of Brünn. The *volksdeutsch* population are joyfully awaiting the arrival of German troops announced for noon today. Calm prevails everywhere. The Jews are remaining in the background. The banks have temporarily suspended payment.

HEINBURG

### No. 232

401/213421

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

No. 216

BERLIN, March 15, 1939.

The Italian Ambassador inquired this morning about the position as regards our action in Czechia. He was interested primarily in the measure of autonomy which Germany would concede to the Rump Czech State. I told Attolico that I hardly thought one could speak

of a Rump Czech State. Perhaps this territory would in the future be split up into two provinces, Bohemia and Moravia. These territories would certainly no longer lead an independent existence as regards foreign policy or military matters. They would be under German protection. The extent of their economic attachment to Germany was not yet quite settled. The preservation of their ethnical individuality would quite certainly be guaranteed to the provinces in question. I expressed myself in somewhat vague terms to Attolico regarding the future status of Slovakia.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 233

F12/405-403

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

No. 217

BERLIN, March 15, 1939.

The French Ambassador called on me at noon today. He began by reading me an instruction which he had received from Paris yesterday and which contained the following on the Czechoslovak question:

The Munich Agreement had been regarded in France as a factor contributing to peace, as a definite stage in Franco-German relations, and as a beginning of Franco-German cooperation. The instruction then touched upon the guarantee annex to the Munich Agreement, then passed on to the agreement for consultation of December 6, 1938,<sup>1</sup> and compared with that Germany's action against Czechoslovakia (namely the invasion of Moravia near Mährisch-Ostrau on the afternoon of March 14). From this the instruction concluded that serious anxiety regarding Germany's attitude toward the rest of Europe was justified. For the rest, the Paris instruction requested the Ambassador to obtain information on the events from official German quarters.

Of his own accord the Ambassador added with some emotion how deeply he had been shocked by the entry of our troops in contravention of the Munich Agreement, in contradiction to the relationship of confidence which he had expected to find here and to the aims which he himself had set for his mission here.

In conclusion, the Ambassador said that he must reserve any statement on the future attitude of his Government.

I at once spoke rather sharply to the Ambassador and told him not to mention the Munich Agreement, which he alleged had been violated, and not to give us any lectures. Munich had contained two elements, namely, the maintenance of peace and French disinterest in the eastern European question. France should at last turn her eyes westward

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 369.

to her empire and not talk of matters where, as experience had shown, her participation had not served the cause of peace.

I then tried to make clear to the Ambassador the events of recent weeks in Czechoslovakia and informed him that Germany would have been forced to decide independently to create order in Czechoslovakia, if the Czech President had not wished to visit the Führer and made the journey to Berlin. If the Ambassador and the French public read the agreement signed on the morning of March 15, they would see that it was a question of necessary action, but also one which was taken in agreement with the Czech Government and in face of which legal aspects of former agreements were void. In conclusion, I said that I could see no occasion for any *démarche* by the French Ambassador, other than a purely informatory one.

The Ambassador then returned to the subject of the premature entry into Moravia. I dismissed this and, adopting a more confidential tone, I told the Ambassador that I was sure that, in view of the agreements reached last night, he would find fresh instructions when he returned to his Embassy, and these would set his mind at rest. In this question it was not worth while exaggerating; it was, however, our common duty to see that Franco-German relations remained unaffected by it as far as possible.

The conversation was at times somewhat animated, but Coulondre kept outwardly calm.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 234

1941/435217

*Ambassador Henderson to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, 15th March 1939.

Pol. IV 1728.

MY DEAR REICHSMINISTER: Lord Halifax has instructed me to take the earliest opportunity to convey the following message to the German Government:

His Majesty's Government have no desire to interfere unnecessarily in a matter with which other Governments may be more directly concerned than His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. They are, however, as the German Government will surely appreciate, deeply concerned for the success of all efforts to restore confidence and a relaxation of tension in Europe. This seems to them more particularly desirable at a moment when a start is being made with discussions of economic subjects to which, as His Majesty's Government believe, the German Government attach not less importance than they do

<sup>1</sup> This document is in English in the original.

themselves, and the fruitful development of which depends so directly upon a general state of confidence. From that point of view they would deplore any action in Central Europe which would cause a setback to the growth of this general confidence on which all improvement in the economic situation depends and to which such an improvement might in its turn contribute.

Yours sincerely,  
NEVILLE HENDERSON

## No. 235

401/213426

*Memorandum by an Official of the Political Department*

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, March 15, 1939.  
e.o. Pol. IV.

Counselor of Legation Hencke telephoned at 2:30 p.m. as follows:

Herr Hofmann had telephoned from Chust this morning to say: the Carpatho-Ukraine Government asked the German Government to state whether it would accept a protectorate over the Carpatho-Ukraine. Hungarian troops were advancing along the whole southern frontier. The Carpatho-Ukraine Government asked the German Government to state as soon as possible whether or not the Carpatho-Ukraine had been promised to Hungary. If Hungarian troops advanced further, the Carpatho-Ukraine Government intended to ask Rumania to occupy its country. Rumania had mobilized three classes.

The hotel in which the Consulate at Chust had hitherto been housed had been damaged by gunfire. Herr Hofmann had moved to 27 Freiheitsstrasse, Chust.

Herr Hencke further stated that the Prague representative of the Carpatho-Ukraine Government had called at the Legation and asked that the Czechs be prevailed upon to send Czech troops in conjunction with the Sitsch to repel the advancing Hungarian troops. Herr Hencke refrained from giving any decision.

TAFEL

## No. 236

401/213395

*The Carpatho-Ukraine Prime Minister to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SIGHET, March 15, 1939.

Received March 15—4:00 p.m.

We proclaim the independence of the Carpatho-Ukraine, and we request the protection of the German Reich. At the same time we inform you that Hungarian troops crossed our frontiers near Mukačovo at 6 a.m. today. We ask for measures against the Hungarians

and protection and help against the Czechs, who are resorting to force.

Prime Minister Dr. Augustin VOLOŠIN  
REVAY on behalf of Deputy Tulek for  
the National Union of the  
Ukraine.

### No. 237

1969/437915

*The State Secretary to the Consulate at Chust*

Telegram

MOST URGENT  
No. 20

BERLIN, March 15, 1939—5:00 p.m.  
Pol. IV 1688.

With reference to your telegram No. 42 of March 15.<sup>1</sup>

Please inform Carpatho-Ukraine Government orally that, Hungarian troops having advanced against Carpatho-Ukraine on a broad front, the German Government advises it to offer no resistance. As matters stand, the German Government regrets that it is not in a position to assume the protectorate.

The case of the District Superintendent at Sevluš<sup>2</sup> cannot be judged from here. In general, I leave it to your discretion, if necessary, to afford protection to certain personages.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (401/213433). When Hungarian troops entered the country, the Carpatho-Ukraine Government, in addition to sending the telegram printed as document No. 236, directed a request through the German Consulate at Chust that Germany assume a protectorate.

<sup>2</sup> This official, as reported in telegram No. 42, requested protection on the ground that he was under the jurisdiction of Bohemia and had therefore become a German subject.

### No. 238

2006/442925

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 219

BERLIN, March 15, 1939.  
Pol. IV 1945.

The Hungarian Minister today repeated to me the assurance that Hungarian troops would not invade Slovakia. The occupation of a few Slovak villages during the last few days was nothing but the carrying out of a Hungarian-Czech-Slovak agreement for determining the frontier.

In reply to a question I confirmed to the Hungarian Minister that the final fate of Slovakia was not yet settled. Orientation toward Germany, however, seemed to me the best solution.

On the subject of Hungary's action against the Carpatho-Ukraine, M. Sztójay also mentioned that neither Poland nor others (Italy) had been informed by Budapest before the beginning of the invasion.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 239

401/213408

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 223

BERLIN, March 15, 1939.

This afternoon I informed the Italian Ambassador by telephone of the present state of the action in Czechoslovakia and the Carpatho-Ukraine. I emphasized at the same time that it did not seem to me that any kind of intervention either by the British or by the French was imminent. In addition I told the Ambassador of the instruction sent to Consul Hofmann at Chust<sup>1</sup> containing evasive statements to be made to the Carpatho-Ukraine Government.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 237.

### No. 240

401/213423-24

#### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, March 15, 1939.

Today at his own request I received the Rumanian Chargé d'Affaires, who had been trying in vain since the evening of the day before yesterday to be received in the Foreign Ministry. He handed me the enclosed *aide-mémoire* which announces Rumania's interest in the settlement of the Carpatho-Ukraine question and asks for information on Germany's point of view regarding the maintenance or alteration of the situation established by the Vienna Award.

I told the Chargé d'Affaires that it was well known that Hungary and Poland had not really accepted the situation created by the Vienna Award and that, according to our information, the Rumanian Foreign Minister<sup>1</sup> in his conversation in Warsaw with the Polish Foreign Minister had departed from Rumania's previous view of the unalterable nature of the Vienna Award. For the rest, I must confine myself

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<sup>1</sup> Grigore Gafencu, December 1938-June 1940.

to receiving the *aide-mémoire* and could make no further statement to him today.

M. Brabetzianu said that he would take up the matter again in a day or two. The reason for Rumania's interest was that a territorial change was taking place on her frontier.

WOERMANN

[Enclosure]

BERLIN, March 14, 1939.

AIDE-MÉMOIRE

The Rumanian Government begs to inform the Reich Government as follows with regard to the events taking place in Czechoslovakia:

1. Rumania has recognized and respected the situation created by the Vienna Award. She has not taken nor will she take any action to alter this situation.

2. If circumstances render it necessary, Rumania would, jointly with all other interested states, take part in the creation of a new permanent settlement in the Carpatho-Ukraine.

The Rumanian Government would therefore be particularly grateful to the Reich Government if the latter would inform it of its attitude toward the maintenance or alteration of the situation created in the Carpatho-Ukraine by the Vienna Award.

No. 241

2050/447249

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, March 15, 1939.

The Japanese Counselor of Embassy <sup>1</sup> called on me today and on behalf of his Ambassador and himself offered congratulations on Germany's action in Czechoslovakia, which would result in a considerable strengthening of Germany in Europe, especially toward the east. He then asked for information on the future fate of the former Czech territories.

I told him that I could give him no definitive information today. He would already have gathered from the agreement between the Führer and Hácha that the erstwhile Czechoslovakia now came under the protection of the Reich, thus becoming a kind of Reich protec-

<sup>1</sup> Uzuhiko Usami.

torate, but with autonomy within the bounds specified in this agreement. At all events, Czechoslovakia would have no armed forces of her own and no independent foreign policy. In the Führer's proclamation the provinces of Bohemia and Moravia were mentioned instead of Czechoslovakia. It was possible that in the future there might be two autonomous entities under the Reich protectorate.

I could not yet give any specific details with regard to the status of Slovakia, which in any case would be completely independent of Prague. He knew of course that Hungary had invaded the Carpatho-Ukraine. Hungary and Poland had always desired a common frontier in this area. Perhaps developments would lead to the fulfillment of this desire. I could tell him nothing definitive about this either.

WOERMANN

## No. 242

28/19537

### *The State Secretary to the Legation in Czechoslovakia*

#### Telegram

No. 78 of March 15

BERLIN, March 15, 1939—7:35 p.m.

Received March 15.

For information and guidance of speech.

I have today telegraphed as follows to London, Paris, Rome, Budapest, Bucharest, San Sebastián, Belgrade, Sofia, Warsaw, and Tokyo:

"Last night at his own request the Czech President was received by the Führer and Chancellor. At the talks which were held an agreement was reached, the text of which is being sent simultaneously by telegram *en clair*.<sup>1</sup>

"You are requested to notify the Government to which you are accredited of the above and of the text of the agreement and to add the following:

"Pursuant to the above-mentioned agreement, German troops crossed the Czech frontier at 6 a.m. today and will take steps to restore order in Czech territory. Dr. Hácha and Dr. Chvalkovsky have given their assent to all necessary measures designed to prevent any resistance and to avoid bloodshed. Instructions to this effect have been sent to the Czech military and civil authorities.

"It is therefore expected that the occupation and pacification of the country will proceed with complete calm and order.[""]

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 229, footnote 1.

## No. 243

401/213392-93

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 42 of March 15

BUDAPEST, March 15, 1939—9:35 p.m.

Received March 16—9:35 p.m.

The Foreign Minister told me:

1. Vološin had demanded by telegram the independence of the Carpatho-Ukraine in return for an offer of permanent friendship and close cooperation; he for his part had sent to him an ultimatum expiring at 8 p.m. today, demanding the transfer to the commander of the advancing Hungarian troops of the authority hitherto exercised *de facto* by him, in order to avoid bloodshed. The Chief of the General Staff<sup>1</sup> had demanded the immediate surrender of Czech troops.

2. Mussolini had sent him congratulations on the Hungarian entry into the Carpatho-Ukraine, and at the same time expressed his anxiety over the fluid situation in Yugoslavia, especially as regards the Croat question.

3. The Polish Foreign Minister had sent a telegram offering to mediate with Rumania, in particular in the Carpatho-Ukraine question, an offer which he had declined with thanks in view of the improvement in direct relations with Rumania. Poland had mobilized a reinforced division on the Carpatho-Ukraine frontier which, however, would cross the frontier only at the request of Hungary.

4. The Rumanian Minister<sup>2</sup> had handed him a note containing the polite proposal that Hungarian troops should not advance east of a line running north from Huszt, in order to tranquilize Rumanian public opinion; naturally this was unacceptable in its full extent. Possible cession of some 15 Rumanian villages situated in the Carpatho-Ukraine was discussed but only on a reciprocal basis. As a defense measure Rumania had ordered the mobilization of three classes. The Rumanian Government proposed the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Carpatho-Ukraine and, if this were no longer possible, a conference of the interested powers. The Rumanian Minister told me that, in view of the general situation, he would recommend that his Government assent to Hungary's action.

5. The Foreign Minister told me that the Hungarian Government would grant autonomy to the Carpatho-Ukraine under its own *voivode*.

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>1</sup> Gen. Henrik Werth.

<sup>2</sup> Raoul Bossy, December 1936–November 1939.

## No. 244

1585/383048-49

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 70 of March 15

LONDON, March 15, 1939—11:17 p.m.

Received March 16—3:20 a.m.

Pol. IV 1732.

With reference to your telegram No. 63 of March 15.<sup>1</sup>

This afternoon I handed to Lord Halifax the text of the agreement and made the prescribed remarks.

In conjunction with this I referred to the intolerable conditions which had developed of late in Czechia through the persecution of the Germans and general lawlessness. I showed moreover how during the past month German-Czech relations had become more and more strained because of the disloyal and antagonistic attitude of the great majority of the Czech bureaucracy. Therefore, when the conflict between Prague and Slovakia broke out last week, repercussions on the German population in Czechia itself had been inevitable.

Halifax expressed regret that the events of the last few days had created fresh unrest and upheavals and had interrupted the process already begun of a general pacification. It was particularly regrettable that military occupation of Czechia should have been considered necessary, despite the fact that, since Munich, the country had in any case lain wide open to Germany's military grasp. Moreover, the Führer had explicitly given the assurance that he had no further territorial claims in Europe. Now, once again, uncertainty as to our intentions was created. Neither was it now possible to go forward for the time being with the . . . (group garbled) visit of the President of the Board of Trade, Stanley, to Berlin <sup>2</sup> and to achieve a settlement of general economic questions which had been begun under such promising auspices. In Anglo-German relations the clocks had been put back considerably.

I replied to the Foreign Secretary by remarking that recent events were, in the last analysis, merely the logical consequence of the creation by the Versailles Powers of the impossible political structure of Czechoslovakia. The solution attempted at Munich was stultified by the unconstitutional action of the Government in Prague against Slovakia. The progress of the conflict with Slovakia, the persecution of Germans, and the development of anarchic conditions in Czechoslo-

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 242.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 305 and 313.

vakia had then led to the rapid development of events. On the basis of negotiations between the Führer and President Hácha, the settlement by treaty was then reached, which was now communicated to the British Government. In any case, there was no connection between these events and Anglo-German economic relations; it was remarkable that every move by Germany gave rise to a storm of indignation, while at the time when Frankfurt and Düsseldorf were occupied, in the midst of profound peace, not a voice made itself heard. Halifax then asked a few general questions about the further development of the constitutional position, to which I replied as far as was possible.

The general mood prevailing here can be described as a feeling of suppressed fury, while on the surface there is a certain show of moderation. It is considered unfeasible to undertake a counteraction in any way forceful or effective, more especially as the French have clearly discouraged it. As I hear upon good authority, the Foreign Minister, Bonnet, told the British Ambassador Phipps<sup>3</sup> today that one could undertake only all or nothing. France had decided on the latter course.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Eric Phipps, April 1934–October 1939.

DIRKSEN

## No. 245

2050/447259-60

### *The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

No. 142 of March 15

PARIS, March 15, 1939.

Received March 16—1:15 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 105 of March 15.<sup>1</sup>

At noon today I gave notification in writing of the German-Czech agreement, as the Foreign Minister was at the Foreign Committee of the Chamber until late evening and could not receive me until afterward. Bonnet took cognizance of my information regarding the agreement and our subsequent course of action without expressing an official opinion; he merely gave it as his personal view that he regarded our action in Czechoslovakia as the heaviest blow yet struck against the friends of peace in Europe who, in the teeth of the storm and the crash of the waves had stood out for the liberation of the Sudeten Germans and, at the cost of the heaviest sacrifices, had secured peace at Munich in the expectation of a stabilization in central

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 242.

Europe. And now after only 6 months, assurances were ignored and incorporation of the Czech people within the frontiers of the German Reich had been effected. In particular, the consultative agreement of December 6 had not been respected. The loss of confidence engendered thereby was in the highest degree regrettable. Europe was too small to endure continuously acts of violence against individual nations. The peace and appeasement policy of the "men of Munich" had suffered a lamentable disaster. And now in every country warmongers who would lead Europe toward catastrophe were bound to gain the upper hand. He viewed the future in a very grave and pessimistic mood.

I made it clear to Bonnet that conditions in Czechia had gradually proved to be unbearable and that on this account the consultative agreement could not be considered applicable, because it was not a question of European conflict but of intervention necessitated by internal disintegration in Czechia and carried out with her consent when, moreover, speed had been imperative.

WELCZECK

## No. 246

401/213373-76

### *Proclamation by the Führer and Chancellor*

[Undated <sup>1</sup>]

In the name of the Führer and Chancellor the decree of March 16, 1939, regarding the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia is hereby proclaimed.

For a thousand years the provinces of Bohemia and Moravia formed part of the *Lebensraum* of the German people. They were arbitrarily torn from their ancient historic setting by force and folly and, by their ultimate fusion into the artificial structure of Czechoslovakia, became a center of constant unrest. Year by year the danger increased that a new and tremendous threat to the peace of Europe would spread from this area, as it had done once in the past, for the Czechoslovak State and its rulers did not succeed in organizing a reasonable coexistence for the ethnic groups arbitrarily united within it, nor in awakening and keeping alive among all concerned the interest in the maintenance of their joint State. In this it showed its inherent inability to survive and has therefore now fallen a victim to actual dissolution. The German Reich, however, cannot tolerate continuous disturbances in these

<sup>1</sup> Signed by Hitler Mar. 16, 1939, in Prague.

areas, which are of such vital importance for its own peace and security as well as for general well-being and general peace. Sooner or later, as the power most interested and most concerned as a result of historical and geographical circumstances, it would have had to bear the heaviest consequences. It is therefore in keeping with the law of self-preservation that the German Reich is now resolved to intervene decisively to rebuild the foundations of a reasonable order in central Europe and to take the necessary steps for this purpose. For in the thousand years of its history it has already proved that, thanks to the greatness and the qualities of the German people, it alone is called upon to undertake this task. Inspired by the solemn desire to serve the real interests of the nationalities living in this area, to insure an individual national life to the German and Czech peoples, and to promote the peace and social welfare of all, I, therefore, in the name of the German Reich decree the following as a basis for the future coexistence of the inhabitants of these areas:

#### ARTICLE 1

The areas of the former Czechoslovak Republic occupied by the German troops in March 1939 form part of the Greater German Reich from now on and, as the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, come under the protection of Germany. Insofar as is necessary for the defense of the Reich, the Führer and Chancellor will issue separate ordinances for individual parts of these territories.

#### ARTICLE 2

The *volksdeutsch* inhabitants of the Protectorate become German nationals and, in accordance with the provisions of the Reich-citizenship law of September 15, 1935, citizens of the Reich. The laws for the protection of German blood and German honor therefore apply to them. They are subject to German jurisdiction. The other inhabitants of Bohemia and Moravia become subjects of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

#### ARTICLE 3

The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia is autonomous and self-governing. It exercises sovereign rights conceded to it within the framework of the Protectorate, in conformity with the political, military, and economic requirements of the Reich. These sovereign rights will be exercised through their own organizations and their own authorities with their own officials.

## ARTICLE 4

The Supreme Head of the autonomous administration of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia will enjoy the protection and honorary rights of the head of a state. The Supreme Head of the Protectorate must have the confidence of the Führer and Chancellor for the execution of his office.

## ARTICLE 5

The Führer and Chancellor will appoint a Reich Protector in Bohemia and Moravia as a guardian of the interests of the Reich. His headquarters will be in Prague. It will be the duty of the Reich Protector, as the representative of the Führer and Chancellor and as the commissioner of the Reich Government, to insure respect for the political directives of the Führer and Chancellor. The members of the Government of the Protectorate will be confirmed in office by the Reich Protector. The confirmation may be withdrawn. The Reich Protector is empowered to receive information on all measures passed by the Government of the Protectorate and to advise the Government. He can protest against measures calculated to harm the Reich, and if there is danger in delay he can order measures necessary in the common interest. Proclamations and laws, as well as the execution of administrative measures and valid court decisions, are to be rescinded if the Reich Protector objects to them.

## ARTICLE 6

The Reich will take over the foreign affairs of the Protectorate, in particular the protection of its nationals abroad, and the Reich will conduct foreign affairs in a way suitable to the common interests. The Protectorate will have a representative with the Reich Government with the rank of Minister.

## ARTICLE 7

The Reich will afford military protection to the Protectorate. For the exercise of this protection the Reich will maintain garrisons and military establishments in the Protectorate. The Protectorate may set up its own organizations for the maintenance of internal security and order. The Reich Government will decide on these organizations and their armament.

## ARTICLE 8

The Reich will exercise direct control over transportation, posts, and telegraphs.

## ARTICLE 9

The Protectorate comes within the customs area of the German Reich and is subject to its customs jurisdiction.

## ARTICLE 10

Until further notice the crown, as well as the reichsmark, will remain the legal currency. The Reich Government will decide the exchange rates of the two currencies.

## ARTICLE 11

The Reich may promulgate legal measures valid for the Protectorate; insofar as common interests demand, and a common need exists, the Reich may incorporate administrative branches into its own administration and set up the Reich authorities required for this. The Reich Government may take measures necessary for the maintenance of security and order.

## ARTICLE 12

The code of law at present valid in Bohemia and Moravia may remain in force insofar as it is not in contradiction to the terms of the assumption of protection by the German Reich.

## ARTICLE 13

The Reich Minister of the Interior, in agreement with the Reich Ministers concerned, will take the legislative and administrative measures necessary for the execution and completion of this decree.

CHAPTER II  
GERMANY AND GREAT BRITAIN  
OCTOBER 1938—MARCH 1939

No. 247

334/196742-52

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, October 1, 1938.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FÜHRER AND CHANCELLOR AND CHAMBERLAIN, THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER, AT MUNICH ON SEPTEMBER 30, 1938<sup>1</sup>

Prime Minister Chamberlain began by stating how glad he was that the four statesmen had succeeded in achieving an agreement on the previous day. He hoped that the Führer, too, was satisfied with it.

The Führer replied that he was especially happy that the hopes of three and one-half million Sudeten Germans, who had been oppressed for many years on end, had recently been fulfilled and that now they had at last the prospect of peace and security.

Thus the most difficult problem that had faced Europe was solved and with this his (the Führer's) chief task had really been accomplished.

Prime Minister Chamberlain replied that he had been informed that Germany would adopt a generous attitude in the implementation of the Munich Agreement. He had not yet heard whether Prague accepted the proposals. Nor did he believe that Czechoslovakia would be so foolish as to reject them. Nevertheless, if she did so, Britain and France would in any case have done all they could for her. If the Czechs should be so unreasonable as to make difficulties by bringing down their Government or by some other means, he (Chamberlain) confidently hoped that, in the case of the measures to be taken by him in this contingency, the Führer would avoid doing anything which would detract from the high regard in which he was held in the world and particularly in Britain, too, since the events of yester-

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<sup>1</sup> For a slightly different text of this conversation, see *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939* (London, 1950), Third Series, vol. II, No. 1223.

day. He (Chamberlain) was thinking in this connection particularly of a bombardment of Prague with the dreadful losses among the civilian population which it would entail.

The Führer replied that he himself had already made proposals for limiting air warfare years ago. He had been in the war himself and knew the effect of bombing from the air from his own experience. What he had been aiming at in the case of his previous proposals was that an air force should never be employed outside the actual battlefield. Unfortunately, all these proposals had been rejected. Perhaps too they were difficult to carry out in actual practice. With reference to Czechoslovakia, he declared that, if that country should be so unreasonable as to reject the proposals, Germany herself would be compelled to take by force what was allotted to her. Efforts would however always be made on the German side to let caution prevail in order to affect the civilian population as little as possible and to confine the operations only to military objectives. Germany would adopt this attitude for the future too, since the prospect of little children perishing in a gas attack on towns was something horrible for him (the Führer).

Prime Minister Chamberlain thanked the Führer for this declaration and added that he had the impression that the agreement achieved yesterday would remain incomplete if not followed up by the settlement of other questions. Therefore, without going into detail in these matters at the present moment, he wished to touch on a few of the problems still awaiting settlement.

He had spoken yesterday with Mussolini about Spain. The time had come to clarify the situation there. In his opinion that meant that the four Great Powers ought now to approach the two belligerent parties in Spain with an appeal to suspend hostilities in order to bring about a solution of the Spanish conflict during the lull thus ensuing. There was now no longer any danger of a Communist Government in Spain, while on the other hand the prospect of another winter campaign without any final decision being reached was fairly certain.

That was why the Powers would have to intervene in order on one hand to ease the general atmosphere in Europe and on the other to create a situation which would enable the Anglo-Italian agreement to enter into force.<sup>2</sup> The Duce had told him (Chamberlain) in reply that "he was tired of Spain," that he would withdraw a large number of his volunteers, and was moreover willing to consider Chamberlain's suggestion.

<sup>2</sup> The Anglo-Italian agreement of Apr. 16, 1938; see vol. I, documents Nos. 728-755, and British White Paper, *Agreement Between the United Kingdom and Italy*, Cmd. 5726.

The Führer repeated to Chamberlain his previous declaration that Germany was in no way interested in Spain from the territorial point of view. All assertions to the contrary were pure invention. Germany had only supported Franco because of her abhorrence of Bolshevism, which she herself had experienced in her own country and actually in Munich. It was not yet quite clear to him (the Führer) whether the danger of a Communist regime in Spain was really past. He did not know either whether there was a basis on which both contending parties could make peace with each other. If all the volunteers were withdrawn, Germany too would naturally withdraw the small contingent of German volunteers. The Germans represented only a fraction of the remainder of Franco's foreign volunteers.

When things became critical in Spain, he (the Führer) had feared that the establishment of a Communist regime in that country would entail the spread of Communism to France, Holland, and Belgium. This fear, too, was one of the reasons why he had supported Franco.

Chamberlain replied that naturally he too could not say whether a cessation of hostilities was possible in Spain. But, if the four Great Powers were agreed that the struggle must cease, perhaps the belligerent parties too would be enabled to bring the civil war to an end. He (Chamberlain) had moreover only wished to inform the Führer of the Duce's attitude and to ascertain the Führer's views.

If the time should come for a more detailed discussion of future relations between Germany and Britain, both countries would of course have demands to put forward. Britain would not make many claims on Germany. He was chiefly anxious that an attempt should be made by joint efforts to get rid of the immense weight of constantly increasing armaments, which swallowed up capital which might be much better employed for improving housing conditions and food production and for raising the standard of living generally. In this connection Prime Minister Chamberlain referred to the Führer's proposals for limiting air warfare. In actual practice the difficulty of carrying out such proposals lay in the fact that nowadays no one believed any longer that his treaty partner, too, would really carry out his treaty obligations in the event of war. The wars in Spain and China, in which the civilian population suffered enormously from bombing, seemed to confirm this view. In such cases it was always asserted that the bombing of the civilian population was unavoidable and that, although only military objectives were aimed at, still the bombs did often go wide of the target as well.

Of the many attempts to effect general disarmament, only one was actually realized and found expression in the naval agreements of Washington and London, in which the signatory powers agreed to divide their ships into certain classes and within these classes to limit

by treaty both the tonnage of the ships and also the caliber of their armament. In this way they actually succeeded by means of an international agreement in keeping expenditure on naval armaments at a comparatively low level. The method was that of qualitative disarmament. It was doubtless the most capable of being put into actual practice, and, particularly because its implementation was easier to control and, in view of the suspicion prevailing today, had certain psychological advantages over the methods of quantitative limitation.

The qualitative method could also be applied particularly well to air forces. A quite distinct type of bomber had emerged as a result of the latest technical developments. One could no longer assert now, as was done a few years ago, that there was no point in limiting the number of bomber aircraft, since after all any ordinary civilian aircraft could be transformed into a bomber aircraft at once. Nowadays this was no longer the case, since, as previously stated, bombers were specialized planes. Therefore, without expecting a reply from the Führer at once, he was of the opinion that the practical way of limiting air warfare was to be found in the abolition of bomber aircraft. The Führer would probably reply that this proposal would founder on Russia. He (Chamberlain) recognized, too, the great difficulty which was inherent in the attitude of Russia. He would like to have it borne in mind however that the highly developed German bomber and fighter aircraft and also the just as highly perfected German antiaircraft artillery would be a sufficient protection against an invasion from Russia—which moreover he did not fear at all—particularly since Czechoslovakia now no longer entered into the question as a base. He therefore asked the Führer whether he was prepared to be a party to an international agreement of this sort.

The Führer replied that the same conditions applied for the limitation of an air force as for the naval agreements. As soon as one country freed itself from the obligations of such an agreement, others would be obliged to follow suit automatically. That had already been experienced in connection with the naval agreements of Washington and London when Japan withdrew from the agreements and thus caused America and Britain to do the same, one after the other. The position was similar in regard to the ban on bombing from the air. Only when the whole world accepted the abolition of this weapon could the ban be realized. He (the Führer) had already made proposals to this effect years ago. According to these only the retention of fighter and reconnaissance aircraft was to be permitted, for the bomber was the negation of the idea on which the Red Cross Convention of Geneva, which aimed at excluding noncombatants from the effects of war, was based. When war, and in particular air warfare today, showed the tendency to involve the whole population

without regard to whether they were combatants or noncombatants this seemed to him (the Führer) to be positive barbarism. Modern bombers had a radius of 6,000–8,000 kilometers.

With reference to Russo-German relations it should be borne in mind that Germany did not wish to export her form of government, while Russia just lived on the export of her ideology, behind which stood the whole of the Red Army. Germany was separated from Russia by Poland and the Baltic States. Poland was a Great Power. Her powers of resistance ought certainly not to be underestimated but on the other hand they could not be gaged accurately. The powers of resistance of the Baltic States were simply nil. He did not know whether Czechoslovakia would change her outlook toward Germany. But even if she were not to take any active measures against Germany and limit herself to holding airfields ready for the landing of Russian planes, she would still constitute a considerable danger. Two to four thousand Russian bombers could be brought to Czechoslovakia within 1 to 2 hours. Fighter aircraft and anti-aircraft guns were no protection against vast numbers of this sort, especially not in the case of Germany, all of whose industrial centers were situated near the frontiers and therefore could scarcely be warned in good time of an impending attack. Only if bombers were abolished universally could the question be solved.

Prime Minister Chamberlain stated that he interpreted the Führer's words to mean that the latter did not regard the possibility of the abolition of bomber aircraft as being completely out of the question if it could be effected universally, i.e. if Russia, and naturally Japan too, would be parties to the agreement.

The Führer again referred to the progress inherent in the Red Cross Convention of Geneva, in which the signatories pledged themselves to refrain from things which were formerly regarded as a matter of course, such as the killing of the wounded, prisoners, and noncombatants. An agreement of this sort was only possible if the whole world was a party to it. The same applied also to an agreement for the abolition of bomber aircraft.

Prime Minister Chamberlain then went on to speak of economic questions. He stated that the view expressed fairly often in German quarters that Britain wished to encircle Germany economically and in particular to disturb her trade with southeastern Europe was completely wide of the mark.

The Munich Agreement which had just been achieved would assuredly contribute toward the assuagement of political passions but would also have to be made to serve economic progress. Here he had a reduction of international trade barriers particularly in mind.

The Führer replied that Germany maintained principally economic relations with southeastern Europe and had no political ties with these countries. In the economic field Germany was the natural partner of the Danube Basin whose surplus agricultural products and raw materials she could take and in return for which she could deliver the industrial manufactured goods [not] produced in the Balkans themselves. Germany needed raw materials and food. Above all, her food requirements were increasing, and therefore he attached extreme importance to such mutual trade with producers of raw materials and food.

The impossibility of mutual trade on this basis was an essential reason for the difficult economic relations between Germany and America; Germany could only pay with manufactured goods, since she had no foreign exchange. But, since America herself produced industrial products on a large scale, she was not willing to take German industrial products.

He (the Führer) would be glad to discuss the restoration of world economic prosperity with Chamberlain in greater detail some time. At the moment there was not sufficient time for this, as an exchange of views of this kind would certainly take hours. Today he merely wished to set forth his basic theory, namely, that the restoration of world trade could not come about by artificial means, loans and the like, but by a natural economic exchange between producers of raw materials and manufacturers of industrial products. The new world trade would have to be built up on a lasting exchange between the two groups of producers. The fact that this theory was not false was evident from the German example, for German economy, too, was built up on this principle of exchanges between the individual classes of producers.

Prime Minister Chamberlain replied that in a country with a strong central power much was of course possible which was considerably more difficult to carry out when regulating world trade among separate countries. He too believed that economic questions would have to be reserved for a more detailed special conversation. He wished to remark today that, even if the economic theory advanced by the Führer was correct, loans could in any case facilitate the flow of the stream of products to be exchanged. He had moreover only wished to hear the Führer's views on the various problems and thanked him for the frank and candid information which he had given him.

Chamberlain then submitted to the Führer a joint Anglo-German declaration for publication in the press. The Führer expressed his willingness to sign this declaration together with Chamberlain, which noticeably caused Chamberlain great satisfaction. He thanked the Führer warmly for his willingness and underlined the great psychological effect which he expected from this document.

Submitted herewith to the Führer and Chancellor in accordance with instructions.

DR. SCHMIDT

No. 248

1585/382860-73

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 4069

LONDON, October 3, 1938.

Pol. II 3083.

Subject: The course of the Czechoslovak crisis during the past fortnight.

Ever since September 9 the British and French Governments were at heart prepared to admit a solution of the Sudeten-German problem whereby the integrity of the Czechoslovak State would not remain inviolate. It was during these days that the memorable conversation took place between Lord Halifax and Corbin, the French Ambassador,<sup>1</sup> on which I reported in detail in my telegram No. 407 on September 10.<sup>2</sup> On that occasion Lord Halifax informed the French Ambassador that it was impossible for an Anglo-Saxon nation to take up arms in order to hinder the implementation of the right of self-determination of a nation of three and one-half million people by means of a plebiscite. Such action would be contrary to the highest principles by which the Anglo-Saxon nations wished to see their destinies governed. To this Ambassador Corbin replied that the French Government fully shared this point of view. France, too, would not take up arms in order to prevent a morally and intellectually well-developed ethnic group from exercising the right of self-determination. This decision was of course only valid on one condition: France would never allow her Czechoslovak ally to be attacked by force. If Germany should make this attempt, France would in all circumstances fulfill her obligations under the alliance with all the forces at her disposal.

Lord Halifax thereupon put on record that the views of the French and British Governments were identical on all points; in the event of violent action by Germany against Czechoslovakia France could count on armed assistance from Britain.

In this connection it is interesting to recall that shortly before this conversation the *Times* adopted a positive attitude toward the question of self-determination for the Sudeten Germans in three articles which caused a sensation throughout the world.<sup>3</sup> There was much

<sup>1</sup> Charles Corbin, May 1933-July 1940.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. II, document No. 450.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. II, document No. 443 and footnote 63.

speculation at the time as to whether the British Government had perhaps inspired these articles. In fact, at the instance of Masaryk, the Czech Minister, a statement was issued by the Foreign Office to the effect that these articles in no way reflected the views of the British Government. I have reason to suppose, however, that while it was not the Foreign Office, it was very probably the Office of the Prime Minister at No. 10 Downing Street, which, if it did not actually approve their publication, nevertheless permitted it.

On Sunday, September 11, the British Government found itself obliged to issue the statement to Reuters and the foreign press, the contents of which were approved by the Prime Minister and which are reproduced in my telegrams Nos. 410<sup>4</sup> and 411 of the 12th instant. In his great speech in the House of Commons on September 28, Chamberlain described himself as the originator of this statement ("I made a statement to the press. . ."). I would prefer not to give the text of it again here. In any case it involved a definite statement of British policy, the gravity of which could no longer be doubted. The Embassy reported on the significance of this statement in its telegram No. 410,<sup>4</sup> which dealt with the case of a violent attack by Germany on Czechoslovakia. It said in this telegram:

"The possibility can be discounted that such a far-reaching definite statement could have been made only for the purpose of intimidation. The complete change which British public opinion has undergone during the last fortnight places the British Government in a position to implement tomorrow the policy announced today."

In this connection attention was drawn to the resolution by the Trades Union Congress and the warning article by Garvin in the *Observer*.<sup>5</sup>

The British pronouncement was obviously intended as a hint to Germany that she was in a position to acquire by peaceful means what she could demand for herself by supreme historic right. The intention was to provide the Reich Government with data for assessing the situation before the speech by the Führer scheduled for the Party rally at Nuremberg. The pronouncement accordingly has nothing of a threat about it either but only puts on record what has meanwhile become general knowledge of British public opinion.

In his closing speech at the Party rally at Nuremberg on September 12,<sup>6</sup> the Führer put forward the demand for self-determination for the Sudeten Germans. The response by British public opinion to this demand was not at first uniform. The Opposition described the demand as quite impossible, while some of the newspapers supporting

<sup>4</sup> Vol. II, document No. 458.

<sup>5</sup> On Sunday, Sept. 11; J. L. Garvin, editor, 1908-42.

<sup>6</sup> See *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler*, edited by Norman H. Baynes (London, 1942), vol. II, pp. 1487-1499.

the Government, among them the *Times*, advocated the view that peace and order could no longer be restored in any circumstances by granting so-called autonomy to the Sudeten Germans. It was therefore as well to make the painful cut at once, instead of waiting for developments whose consequences could not be foreseen. On Tuesday, September 13, Konrad Henlein then declined to conduct any further negotiations with the Czechoslovak Government on the basis of autonomy.<sup>7</sup> I will describe that evening when exceedingly disquieting reports on conditions in the Sudetenland reached London as the prelude to the first climax of the crisis. That night the whole of London was under the impression that the Führer would, on the following day, implement his decision to afford the Sudeten-German people the assistance to which this ethnic group had a claim as part of the whole German nation. The tension mounted enormously during Wednesday. Then, when at 9 o'clock in the evening the announcement agreed upon between the Reich Government and the British Government was made over the radio that Chamberlain would fly to Berchtesgaden next day, there was a veritable outburst of jubilation. The prospect of a peaceful solution to the crisis seemed possible, and the favorable mood continued when the Prime Minister returned and on September 16 and 17 held momentous discussions with his own Cabinet and with the French. British public opinion was prepared to show complete understanding for our wishes.

The situation changed when, at the beginning of the following week, the German press began to put forward the complete destruction of Czechoslovakia as the actual aim of German policy. On the first day there was still a tendency to look upon the article on the subject in the *Völkischer Beobachter* as a slip of the pen. But when, from Tuesday onward, the German press unanimously advocated the point of view that *delenda est Czechoslovakia*, a really devastating reaction set in. By a supreme effort Chamberlain had just converted the Cabinet, public opinion, and the French to the view that the Sudeten-German territories would have to return to Germany, when the German press loudly announced that a new situation had now arisen. The Czechs had taken too long a time to assent to the Anglo-French plan, and now only the complete destruction of the Czech State could fully meet the German demands. I am aware that the German press purposely left the most important point undefined, namely, whether "complete destruction of the Czechoslovak State" merely meant what I should describe as ethnic most-favored-nation treatment for Poland and Hungary, or whether Germany intended to seize the whole of Bohemia, that is to say purely Czech territory. Here at any rate it was thought that the conclusion to be drawn from this attitude was

<sup>7</sup> See vol. II, document No. 473.

that Germany intended to disregard her ethnic aims and to embark now on a course of unrestrained imperialism. Wild rumors were current about alleged utterances by the Führer, who had set the Oderberg-Pressburg line as the objective to be attained and that, too, only as a basis for further plans for conquest in the Balkans and eastern Europe. These rumors were disseminated and believed not only by gullible persons but also in circles whose judgement I should have assessed more highly. I know from a sure source that these alleged plans of the Führer's were even discussed in the Cabinet, and even high-ranking officers saw fit to arrange on the map military promenades which might have emanated from the fancy of a military-college cadet after a fortnight's training. Meanwhile the German press and radio campaign was intensified; it seemed henceforth no longer a means for supporting our policy, but the effect it had here was as if successful enemy propaganda had caused bad feeling against us.

It was in this atmosphere, which resembled a veritable witches' Sabbath mood, that the Prime Minister was seen off to Godesberg. The mood had now changed seriously to our disadvantage. The people felt they had been touched on their most tender spot, because they had the impression that a British Prime Minister was to negotiate under pressure from a foreign power. In no case will British pride countenance this. During these days a whole crop of statements by simple folk from among the people came to the personal knowledge of my colleagues and myself, which suggested that the man in the street would also have understood if the Prime Minister had refused to negotiate any further. The whole nation realized that any break in negotiations would mean war, and they were resolved to go to war, as they thought, to restore order once more by force.

The tension became intolerable and the crisis reached its second climax on Friday, September 23, when the news of the hitch in the negotiations came through. That evening it became known in the statement by Sir Horace Wilson that Chamberlain would pay the Führer a final visit and would then return to London next morning, without a communiqué's being issued on the result of the talks. I often wondered that evening whether the British people who were friendly to us, my colleagues, and even I, had not been the victims of a tremendous piece of bluff by the British. However, in view of what I saw, I am bound to deny this categorically even today. On Friday, September 23, after 8 p.m., the whole British nation was prepared to take up arms if the Government gave the signal. It is very difficult to find a rational explanation for this psychological process. It is certain that that dogged spirit of determination prevailed which has always predominated in the British Empire at decisive moments.

The feeling of relief which resulted at 2 a.m. on September 24, after the communiqué on the negotiations became known, was not so great by far as I should have expected. The distrust of the aims and methods of our policy was far too deeply ingrained for anyone to believe in a real relaxation of tension. In addition, the French and the Czechs were intentionally causing pessimism at this juncture. Corbin, the French Ambassador, told me at the airport on Saturday morning shortly before the arrival of the Prime Minister from Godesberg, "I have no favorable impression and regard the future with pessimism." When I replied that the German memorandum<sup>8</sup> did not seem to me to contain much more than what the Anglo-French plan provided for in any case, he shrugged his shoulders resignedly, saying, "Not much more. We have exhausted the last possibility."<sup>9</sup>

On Saturday afternoon a Cabinet meeting was summoned, in the course of which it was decided to invite the French Ministers to London again for the following Sunday, September 25. I lunched with Mr. Strang<sup>10</sup> that Sunday and gained the impression during this conversation that there was considerable opposition on the British and French side to the acceptance of the Godesberg memorandum. Mr. Strang gave me a copy of the full text of the memorandum, with which the Embassy had been acquainted only from a telegraphic summary of its contents from the Foreign Ministry. The fixing of a time limit (cession of the territory by the Czechs on October 1) had evidently aroused particular annoyance. The version is current in London that this fixing of a time limit was not done until the last moment and had been inserted in the German memorandum without prior notification to Chamberlain.

Meanwhile it became known that the Czech Government obstinately refused to accept the conditions of the Godesberg memorandum. As far as I can see, the British and French Governments did not make any very substantial efforts to force Czechoslovakia to make further concessions, obviously because Chamberlain himself was convinced that public opinion in Britain would not approve the German demands and that he was thus exposing himself and his work to the risk of a fall. It was known here that on Monday Chamberlain had sent Sir Horace Wilson, his closest collaborator, to Berlin with a personal message for the Führer and that Sir Horace had had the opportunity of seeing the Führer before his speech of September 26. The strong language in the Führer's speech had a further very sobering effect on public opinion in Britain. If the people had hitherto still counted on a peaceful solution, from now on, however, war seemed unavoidable.

<sup>8</sup> Vol. II, document No. 584.

<sup>9</sup> The quoted passage is in French in the original.

<sup>10</sup> William Strang, Assistant Under Secretary at the Foreign Office, September 1939–November 1943.

All the mobilization measures, about which the service attachés reported in detail, became known. Any one could see from the preparations made that the Government was seriously preparing for war, which might break out in the shortest possible time.

The declaration of a guarantee, which the Prime Minister made early in the morning of September 27, made no difference at all to this view, when he said that he saw that the Führer did not believe Czechoslovakia's assurances; Great Britain was therefore prepared to regard the keeping of the promises made as a "moral responsibility"<sup>11</sup> for herself.

That Tuesday, feverish preparations were being made for war throughout the whole of London. No one could any longer fail to recognize the determination to go to war in the event of a German entry by force into Czechoslovakia. A slight hope was still placed on the further conversation which, it was announced, Sir Horace Wilson was to have with the Führer on Tuesday morning. The unsuccessful outcome of this conversation became known after Wilson's return.<sup>12</sup> The Prime Minister drew attention to the extraordinary gravity of the situation in a speech on the radio on Tuesday evening. His words did not fail to make an impression on the British people. During those days the Embassy was swamped by inquiries from Reich Germans. Everyone wished to know whether it was advisable to leave the country. From Monday evening I gave instructions for them to be told that no one could be prevented from leaving but that on the other hand the Embassy could not accept the responsibility for recommending that they leave. The trains for the Continent must have been crammed with departing Germans during those days.

As I learned from a reliable source, the British Government had decided on Tuesday afternoon to evolve one last plan providing for the evacuation of the Sudeten-German territory in three stages, as follows: first of all the occupation of the towns of Eger and Asch; on October 3 the meeting of a German-Czechoslovak commission with a British representative, which was to decide on the further territory to be occupied; on October 10 occupation of the zone determined to date; final taking over of the whole territory by October 31.<sup>13</sup> On Wednesday, I immediately forwarded by telephone this plan, about which I learned on Tuesday night, to Secretary of Legation Brücklmeier, who told me however that this solution too had little prospect of success.

Thus came the morning of that eventful Wednesday, September 28, 1938. Parliament was due to meet at 3 p.m., when Chamberlain intended to review the policy of the British Government during the

<sup>11</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>12</sup> See vol. II, document No. 634.

<sup>13</sup> This plan was conveyed to the Foreign Ministry officially by Sir Neville Henderson at 11 p.m. on Sept. 28; see vol. II, document No. 655 and enclosures.

crisis. On the evening before and on the morning of September 28, I received a number of British politicians, who all awaited with despair the inevitable catastrophe. Among them was Lord Brocket,<sup>14</sup> whom I urgently gave to understand once more that the situation of the Sudeten Germans made any further waiting by the Führer impossible.

The information had also leaked through from a source unknown to me that the Führer was waiting for the Czechs' reply to the Godesberg memorandum until 2 p.m. In the excitement the fact was overlooked that this alleged ultimatum was not really addressed to the Czechoslovak Government but that the Führer had only expressed to the British his expectation of receiving a reply by that time. The British politicians whom I have mentioned understood perfectly that something would have to be done for the Sudeten Germans and soon, too, but none knew a way out of the situation which seemed completely out of control. On the morning of September 28, Dr. Hesse<sup>15</sup> had the conversation with Sir Horace Wilson which was telephoned by the Embassy,<sup>16</sup> and from which it was evident that the British Government would then not yield any further. British pride had been touched on too tender a spot. Sir Horace still trembled with the emotion caused by the interview he had had with the Führer on the morning of the previous day. I myself rang up Counselor of Legation Erich Kordt in the Foreign Minister's Secretariat once again shortly after 11 o'clock to draw his attention to the gravity of the situation; if Germany were to march into Czechoslovakia there would be a big war and not merely a little one. On both sides there was a feeling of complete hopelessness. About 12 o'clock on Wednesday morning I learned from a French source that the Prime Minister had made some approach, not defined in detail, to Mussolini. It was generally assumed that this involved mediation by the Duce. I cannot enumerate all the rumors to which this report gave rise. One of these was that the Führer had at the instance of Italy declared himself prepared for the occupation of the Sudeten-German territories by Italian and British troops. The real facts became known only from Chamberlain's speech in the House of Commons at 4 p.m. From an eyewitness I received a description of the last moments before the announcement of the news: a messenger handed a note to Lord Halifax, who was sitting in the gallery of the House of Commons. Lord Halifax read this note, showed it to the former Prime Minister, Lord Baldwin, who was sitting next to him, then got up and went out. The House had followed the scene with breathless suspense. Suddenly the messenger appeared in the House of Commons and handed the note to Sir John Simon,<sup>17</sup> who read it immediately and showed it to

<sup>14</sup> Arthur Nall-Cain, Baron Brocket.

<sup>15</sup> See document No. 251, footnote 1.

<sup>16</sup> See vol. II, document No. 657.

<sup>17</sup> Chancellor of the Exchequer, May 1937–May 1940.

Sir Thomas Inskip, the Minister of Defense, who was sitting beside him. Both seemed unable to believe properly what they saw in front of them. Then the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose and went to the dispatch box to hand it to Chamberlain. The Prime Minister did not notice the note at first. On a second sign from Sir John Simon he pushed the note impatiently aside and not until Sir John Simon himself pressed the note into his hand did he pause for a moment in his speech to read the contents. The House saw the note shaking in his hand, and the old man suddenly grew pale. Then he began in a toneless voice: "I have something further to say to the House. I have just been informed by Herr Hitler that he invites me to meet him at Munich tomorrow. He has also invited Signor Mussolini and M. Daladier. Signor Mussolini has accepted, and I have no doubt that M. Daladier will do the same. I need not tell the House what my answer will be." The excitement in the House must have been unparalleled. Only just before, the Prime Minister had been speaking with great gravity and firm determination of how Britain would take up arms, and now there suddenly appeared one last hope of a solution on an international scale. The House, including the Left Wing, cheered the Prime Minister enthusiastically.

In a few minutes the good news was known throughout the whole of London. The Opposition was speechless at first. The somber catastrophe had been seen too close ahead for it to have been possible to place the trivialities of party politics in the foreground.

On the following morning almost all the members of the Cabinet were gathered at Heston airport to wish the Prime Minister luck on his journey. Among them I noticed also Mr. Duff Cooper, the First Lord of the Admiralty, with his wife. He had meanwhile tendered his resignation owing to his differences of opinion with the Prime Minister on the question of foreign policy. The Prime Minister seemed sprightlier than ever and even managed to say a few joking words into the microphone. He was particularly cordial on taking leave of me. I had the feeling that he was certain of the success of his mission.

During Thursday the public waited in suspense for any communication from Munich. They breathed again when optimistic commentaries were published in the early hours of the evening. The news of the signature reached London about 2 a.m. and evoked indescribable rejoicing. Particular interest was aroused by the information that the Prime Minister would see the Führer once more on the following morning. On Friday morning I received a large number of persons from all sections of the population who came to congratulate me. There emerged quite spontaneously from the depths of the soul of the British nation the long-cherished desire that *at last*

there might now be a reconciliation with the great German enemy of the World War. Judging from my observations this desire is genuine. It has been realized how shabbily the defeated enemy was treated at Versailles and afterwards. A breach has really been made here which can have the most far-reaching consequences if one strikes while the iron is still hot.

It was in this spirit that the British nation received the joint declaration by the Führer and the British Prime Minister, which is couched in language of grandeur and simplicity comprehensible to every Englishman. When I arrived at Heston airport with Embassy Counselor von Selzam and Dr. Hesse of the DNB, we were greeted most cordially on all sides. The Prime Minister received my congratulations with visible pleasure: "Your people gave me a wonderful reception." The enthusiasm reached its climax when Chamberlain stepped to the microphone and waved in the air the paper bearing the Führer's and his signatures. The cheering which followed the reading of it made a deep impression on me and likewise the reception which the whole of London gave old Chamberlain in the early hours of the evening. When the King and Queen appeared together with Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain on the balcony of Buckingham Palace, the otherwise unemotional British were no longer recognizable. The newspapers declared that no British soldier or statesman had been given such a reception since Wellington's return from the battle of Waterloo. Very impressive too was the Prime Minister's indication that a message of peace had now come from Germany for the second time in 60 years.

The Prime Minister spent the week end with his wife at Chequers, from which he did not return until early this morning. In the meantime the Opposition had also found its voice again. I refer to today's *Daily Telegraph* and the organs of the Left Wing. But the British nation is much too pleased at having avoided the test of a war of annihilation for the efforts, however zealous, of the Prime Minister's opponents to bear fruit. The debate in the House of Commons, which began at 3 p.m. and which I listened to, was a success for the Prime Minister. First, Duff Cooper, the First Lord of the Admiralty who had resigned, opened the debate with a strong attack on the Prime Minister's policy. The speech was outstanding as a piece of oratory. Nevertheless, Mr. Duff Cooper did not succeed in effacing the impression that he was more concerned about a good political starting point than with the over-all interests of the nation. Then, with the House in breathless suspense, Chamberlain rose to give what was in its simplicity and objectivity a brilliant rhetorical performance. When he ended with the words: "It is to such tasks—the winning back of confidence, the gradual removal of hostility between nations until they feel that they can safely discard their weapons, one

by one, that I would wish to devote what energy and time may be left to me before I hand over my office to younger men,"<sup>18</sup> applause rang out from all sides of the House. The speech by Attlee, leader of the Opposition, although a good oratorical performance, made a colorless impression with its eternal repetition of the concepts of collective security, the League of Nations, and the struggle by the democracies against Fascism.

In all the speeches, even Duff Cooper's, the hope was voiced that a new chapter in European history might now have begun, and this hope is stronger in British hearts than the echo of the hackneyed phrases with which the inept attempt was made at Versailles and Geneva to build up a better world.<sup>19</sup>

TH. KORDT

<sup>18</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>19</sup> Marginal note: "Very good report; please forward to all missions abroad and Government offices. B[ismarck], Oct. 6."

## No. 249

140/75722-23

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 483 of October 7

LONDON, October 7, 1938—9:14 p.m.

Received October 8—12:20 a.m.

1. During a conversation today with Halifax<sup>1</sup> and a discussion of results of the Munich conference, the Foreign Secretary said that the British public was grateful to the Führer for his attitude, which had made possible a peaceful settlement of the Czech crisis. He hoped that a further extension of the basis for Anglo-German relations found in the Munich conversation between the Führer and Chamberlain would shortly be made possible.

2. Halifax then mentioned reports which had reached him from various quarters concerning ill-treatment of those Sudeten Germans who did not belong to the SDP,<sup>2</sup> and in particular not only those who had fled and been sent back by the Czech authorities but also those who had remained in their homes. He would be grateful if by means of relevant German reports he might be enabled to combat such assertions, the spreading of which might in fact hamper the advocates of friendly Anglo-German relations in the realization of their aspirations.

<sup>1</sup> See also *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Third Series, vol. III, No. 164.

<sup>2</sup> Sudeten-German Party.

I replied that I knew nothing of such instances and it was probably a case of tendentious reports. I request instructions by telegraph.<sup>3</sup> I had the impression that Halifax wished for a correction of these rumors because the Opposition intends to use them for renewed attacks on the Government.

3. In reply to my question about the significance of the passage in Sir John Simon's speech (see my telegram No. 482 of October 6, paragraph 5) <sup>4</sup> on the Soviet Union's contribution toward the guarantee of Czechoslovakia, Halifax said that the British Government did not wish to exclude the Soviet Union from the political life of Europe; if she therefore desired to accede to the guarantee declaration for Czechoslovakia, the British Government would welcome this. Simon's speech did not, however, mean that the British Government wished to influence the Soviet Union in this direction. The British Government had not yet taken a final stand on this problem.

4. With reference to the Anglo-Italian discussions on Spain, the Foreign Secretary said that the purpose of these was the establishment of a common basis for the four Powers represented at Munich with the aim of terminating the Spanish Civil War by bringing about an armistice, or by other means. He denied the accuracy of today's press report that the British Government had rejected the Italian offer to withdraw 10,000 volunteers and had demanded the withdrawal of the volunteers according to categories.<sup>5</sup>

DIRKSEN

<sup>3</sup> Weizsäcker replied by telegram on Oct. 10 (140/75724) personally to the Ambassador, saying that the German Government had no intention of making any statement on the treatment of Sudeten Germans on German territory. He referred to Hitler's Saarbrücken speech of Oct. 9, in which, he said, a certain passage had been prompted by Lord Halifax's appeal. The passage in question runs as follows: "We cannot tolerate any longer the tutelage of governesses! Inquiries of British politicians concerning the fate of Germans within the frontiers of the Reich—or of others belonging to the Reich—are not in place."

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (140/75710-17).

<sup>5</sup> See vol. III, document No. 662.

## No. 250

140/75772-73

*Ambassador Dirksen to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

CONFIDENTIAL AND PERSONAL

LONDON, October 11, 1938.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: I would not like to omit giving you a short account of some impressions created here by the Führer's Saarbrücken speech.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On Oct. 9. See *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler*, vol. II, pp. 1532-1537; also document No. 249, footnote 3.

The press, to be sure, especially in the provinces, criticized the observation that Great Britain should not bother her head about German domestic affairs. But this rebuff is not likely to leave any lasting resentment, for responsible circles have quite taken the hint and do not deny that our objections to being lectured by governesses are justified.

Questions are frequently asked as to the reasons for the controversial tone of the speech regarding Great Britain, which has caused all the greater sensation in that, having regard to the Munich declaration, courteous references to Great Britain had been expected or at any rate such as would not militate against a further normalization of Anglo-German relations. Mention of the difficulties which the British Government now faces in Palestine touched on a sensitive spot.

The point of view repeatedly emphasized by our friends in the Conservative Party seems to me particularly worthy of attention. It is said that the Führer, by mentioning Churchill, Eden, and above all Duff Cooper,<sup>2</sup> has given these individuals just the opportunity for emerging once more from the eclipse which they had suffered. The mere fact that the Führer actually considered them worthy of mention now gives them a platform from which to publicize their views and aims with some hope of a hearing from the public. Chamberlain's position is thought to have been made thereby more difficult, simply because public opinion in England is always inclined to protect its fellow countrymen, regardless of the party to which they may belong, when they are attacked by a foreigner. How far the fear is felt that the leaders of the Conservative groups in opposition may have gained a new lease of life can be clearly appreciated from the fact that attempts will probably be made to put obstacles in the way of a reply by the above-named persons or at the very least to exercise some influence over its phrasing. Churchill originally intended to include an answer to the Führer in a broadcast to America last night. It is learned today that the talk has been postponed until Sunday. I have grounds for assuming that attempts will be made to forbid the broadcast altogether if Churchill refuses to accede to the wishes of the Government.<sup>3</sup>

As we see things here, it would be most desirable that Churchill, Eden, and Duff Cooper should not be honored with any further attention, even if they should still comment publicly on the Führer's speech.

<sup>2</sup> The passage in question runs: "It only needs that in England, instead of Chamberlain, Mr. Duff Cooper or Mr. Eden or Mr. Churchill should come to power, and then we know quite well that it would be the aim of these men immediately to begin a new World War."

<sup>3</sup> On Oct. 16 Churchill broadcast to the United States in reply to the Führer's Saarbrücken speech.

I am enclosing Duff Cooper's point of view as published in today's *Evening Standard*.<sup>4</sup>

DIRKSEN

<sup>4</sup> Not reprinted.

No. 251

438/220966-72

*Ambassador Dirksen to State Secretary Weissäcker .*

LONDON, October 12, 1938.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: Enclosed I am forwarding to you a letter to Herr von Ribbentrop, which contains the memorandum also enclosed, and in addition a duplicate of my letter to the Foreign Minister. All details can be seen from these two communications. I would now ask you to submit this letter to the Foreign Minister as soon as he has time to read and discuss it.

With best wishes,

Yours ever,

DIRKSEN

[Enclosure 1]

October 12, 1938.

MY DEAR FOREIGN MINISTER: Dr. Hesse,<sup>1</sup> who had a detailed conversation a few days ago with Mr. Stewart,<sup>2</sup> the Press Chief and Adviser to Prime Minister Chamberlain, has drawn up a memorandum on this conversation which he has handed to me with the request for onward transmission to you. I am all the more pleased to submit this memorandum because it appears particularly important to me, and besides it also gives an insight into the tendencies prevailing in authoritative British quarters.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours sincerely,

DIRKSEN

[Enclosure 2]

LONDON, October 11, 1938.

MEMORANDUM

I had an interview with a confidential agent of Neville Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, who in the course of a lengthy conversation gave me among other things the following instructive information:

<sup>1</sup> Hesse represented both the Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro and the Dienststelle Ribbentrop in London, as well as assisting Dr. H. S. S. Fitz Randolph, the Press Attaché at the Embassy.

<sup>2</sup> George F. Stewart, previously of the News Department of the Foreign Office, member of the Prime Minister's Office at No. 10 Downing Street, 1929-40.

1. During the recent critical days the Prime Minister had actually made decisions entirely alone with his two intimate advisers and in the last decisions had no longer asked the opinion of any member of the Cabinet, not even of Lord Halifax, the Foreign Secretary. The reason for this was that Chamberlain believed he ought to bear his extremely heavy responsibilities alone. In the end the Prime Minister had not received assistance or support of any kind from the Foreign Office, which on the contrary had striven during the last 3 days to sabotage his plans and commit Great Britain to warlike action against Germany. The final outcome was therefore due exclusively to Chamberlain, who had however thereby ignored the provisions of the British Constitution and customary Cabinet usage.

2. My informant expressly drew my attention to the fact that an extremely bitter feeling against us prevailed in the whole of the Foreign Office. He thought he could assure me that there they had sworn to be "revenged" on Germany and particularly on von Ribbentrop. We should not allow ourselves to be deceived in this matter; in all future moves it was important that all major questions should be dealt with direct, thus bypassing the Foreign Office and also Sir Nevile Henderson, since it had unfortunately become apparent that the latter was not completely reliable when forwarding communications. Furthermore, the Foreign Office would always be brought in by Henderson, and thus there was the risk of causing all kinds of obstruction and undesirable publicity.

3. The British people were now beginning to reflect on the results of Munich. An extremely difficult situation had thus arisen, in which we on the German side had it in our power to influence British public opinion to a far greater extent than we imagined. It was particularly important that in these times care should be taken to avoid giving the impression of German interference in British affairs. Above all, the informant thought, it would be wrong for us on the German side to take up the challenge of the Opposition and try conclusions with them. The Opposition group comprising Eden, Churchill, Duff Cooper, Attlee, Sinclair, etc., would receive undesirable publicity from any German attack. A German attack on these personages would to a certain extent provide a sort of gratuitous advertisement for them.

4. On the other hand, if we wished to do something positive, it was especially important for us to emphasize again and again that we trusted Chamberlain because he wanted peace and for us to stress our wish to live in lasting friendship with the British people. As a matter of fact it was desirable for propaganda to be put out which would manifest the desire on the part of Germany for friendship between the British and German peoples.

5. As far as the Czech question itself was concerned, it was important that, in order to create a favorable impression in Britain, we

should avoid two things: "boasting" and "bullying."<sup>3</sup> In particular it would make a fatal impression if we were to threaten too much with our military strength. The latter would be extremely dangerous for the efforts of all friends of peace and all friends of Germany in Britain. My informant emphasized here that the British decision in the Czech conflict, and Chamberlain's attitude in particular, had never been dictated by a consciousness of military weakness but exclusively by the religious idea that Germany must have justice and that the injustice of Versailles must be made good.

6. The question whether we wished to continue further the policy initiated in the Anglo-German friendship protocol of Munich, I was assured, was regarded by the Prime Minister as being of the greatest importance. My informant maintained that the impression about this prevailing in London was by no means unanimous. If we wished to continue to help the Prime Minister, it was of the greatest importance that further declarations and speeches should be made, in which in particular the line "Never again war between Britain and Germany" should be followed, while at the same time we should however have to make similar declarations to France as well to avoid giving the impression that we were intending to separate Britain and France.

7. My informant further recommended that restraint should be exercised in the colonial question, and above all that German colonial demands should not be put forward publicly, because this would make it impossible for the Prime Minister to win over the Dominions for the German demands. Any raising of the colonial question publicly would let loose propaganda by all our opponents in the Dominions and thus commit the Dominions before the Government in Great Britain found any opportunity to discuss matters objectively. My informant hinted at the same time that this question could only be solved parallel with the disarmament question and that the latter would have to have priority.

8. My informant then drew attention to the importance of the armaments problem at some length and with special insistence. The informant thought that something would have to be done in this sphere in particular in order to strengthen Chamberlain's position. If Chamberlain had success in the disarmament question, he would find an opportunity to go to the country for a general election. By giving Chamberlain success in the disarmament question we had it in our power to stabilize or not to stabilize pro-German tendencies in Great Britain. To an objection that this was difficult ground, he replied that it was important in this instance to make a moral impression. At this point I had the impression that perhaps something on the following lines had been considered by the Prime Minister's advisers

<sup>3</sup> In English in the original.

or else by the Prime Minister himself: Is not a four-power declaration perhaps possible, a declaration in which the four Powers would declare that with their present armaments, or on the completion of their present armaments program, they had attained the maximum in armaments which they required for their security? Thus, as far as arms and their security were concerned, they would be "satisfied."<sup>4</sup> The four Powers would thus declare that they had no intention of exceeding this level of armaments in order by the declaration to create an atmosphere which would allow preparations to be made within a short space of time for a pact on the limitation of armaments and thereby for progressive disarmament. The information about this seemed an important suggestion to me.

9. My informant emphasized repeatedly that it was important to act soon and do something on the lines he had mentioned, because otherwise there was danger of scar tissue forming and causing inflammation of those wounds which, according to a widely held view, had been inflicted on British prestige by the outcome of the Czech crisis.

DR. FRITZ HESSE

<sup>4</sup> In English in the original.

## No. 252

1398/360511-25

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 4232

LONDON, October 15, 1938.

Received October 19.

Pol. II 3214.

### POLITICAL REPORT<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Great Britain after the September Crisis.

- I. Reflections and Doubts.
- II. The Opposition to Chamberlain.
- III. Disposition to Rearm.

<sup>1</sup> This report was initiated by Ribbentrop and passed by him to the Führer. Only the two final sections of the lengthy document—those dealing directly with Anglo-German relations—are printed. In the earlier sections Dirksen, who had returned to his post on Oct. 6, analyzed the "second thoughts" of the British people after Munich and in particular the tactics of the Opposition to Chamberlain. He emphasized that pro- and anti-Munich was a division which cut across party lines, and that the most prominent opponents of the Munich policy were to be found in the ranks of the Conservative Party. A section is devoted to an examination of the press and parliamentary campaign in favor of the speedy completion of rearmament, but Dirksen concluded that British rearmament was not inspired by "Jingoism or explicit hostile intent against Germany," and that a German initiative in the disarmament question was hoped for. Before reporting on Anglo-German relations, the Ambassador discussed the new tendencies in Anglo-French and Anglo-Russian relations. He noted the unsparing press criticism of recent French policy, coupled with openly expressed aversion to the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, official British policy remained based on the Anglo-French alliance. On the other hand, the establishment of a German sphere of influence in southeast Europe was now being mooted in the popular press.

- IV. Views on Foreign Policy.
- V. Feeling Toward Germany.
- VI. The Strength of Chamberlain's Position.

#### V. *Feeling Toward Germany*

In Great Britain thoughts and considerations on foreign policy are centered on Germany, and this is not only a result of the September crisis as such but also of the drawing up of a balance sheet on foreign policy as has been described above.

Mentally the average Englishman has in no way altered his attitude toward the German as a result of war apprehensions and preparations. Apart from a few cases of German servant girls being dismissed in an unfriendly way, no instance of inconsiderateness or of forceful threats by Englishmen against Reich Germans working here has come to my notice. On the contrary, a hearty and friendly farewell on leaving and just as friendly a greeting on return has been the rule.

The anti-German circles among the public here (trade unions, Jews, pacifists, some of the intelligentsia) have of course redoubled their previous efforts to poison relations. In a moment a new atrocity legend was started about the Sudeten-German left-wing refugees; 800,000 Czechs had been included on false pretenses in the areas ceded to Germany; the new frontier was described as far exceeding that of the "Godesberg ultimatum." Further reports were spread abroad that the restoration of Eupen-Malmédy, Danzig, and Alsace-Lorraine was demanded. This campaign, however, produced very little effect. The "man in the street"<sup>2</sup> did not allow himself to be duped by it; circles which are politically conscious react on different lines.

It is in these politically conscious circles that relatively the greatest reserve as regards Germany is to be found. With a great many of them—this is particularly the case, for example, among members of the House of Commons—discontent or wounded self-esteem from their belief that Great Britain has bowed to a threat of war is mixed with anxiety whether, as a result of the concessions made, one can now really be sure of a lasting peace. The ill-disposed persons, who put no faith in the Führer's promise that he has no further territorial claims in Europe, are joined by those who consider that National Socialism is too dynamic, even with the best intentions, to be satisfied with what it has attained or to be able to keep the peace for any length of time.

On top of this, supporters of the Government are somewhat perturbed by the Führer's Saarbrücken speech.<sup>3</sup> It is regretted that, as a result of his attack on Churchill, Cooper, and Eden, he has given a fresh lease of life to these politicians, who are not in themselves

<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 249, footnote 3, and document No. 250, footnotes 1 and 2.

considered dangerous, and has thus made Chamberlain's position more difficult. A warmer appreciation, too, of Chamberlain's efforts had been expected. The reference to Palestine was taken as interference in the internal affairs of Great Britain.

By contrast, it is characteristic that the general public is beginning to evince some comprehension of the Führer's speech. It is likewise significant that it should be two newspapers with mass circulations which point out the full inward justification for the Führer's criticisms on some aspects of British public life: the popular car manufacturer, Lord Nuffield, in an interview to the *Daily Express* (Oct. 12), and an article by Baxter<sup>4</sup> in the *Star* (Oct. 13), in which he shows up in a masterly way the spitefulness of the speeches made by the Opposition Conservatives and describes the Führer's answer to them as a well-deserved retort.

But whichever attitude the individual Englishman adopts at the moment toward the German problem, on one point there is complete agreement here: that the declaration signed at Munich by the Führer and Chamberlain is only a commencement and must be followed by a decision on one of two alternatives. These alternatives are either the settlement of the questions still in dispute between Germany and Great Britain and the establishment of lasting friendly relations, or the failure or omission of such negotiations, involving the risk of a fresh crisis.

There is no doubt whatever that the overwhelming majority of the British people desire the first alternative. Over and above this desire, people are already getting uneasy over some of the problems to be settled. The British public well realizes that the question of the limitation of armaments will prove the most difficult and decisive one at this settlement. The urgent wish that conversations with Germany on this point should start can be deduced from the hopeful speculations mentioned above that Germany would take the initiative in the question of the limitation of armaments.

People are also fully aware of the fact that an understanding must be reached on Germany's colonial demands. Purely on their own initiative and without any prompting from a third party, both press and Parliament recognize this German claim. Numerous reports are also reproduced from our former colonies, protesting against their return to Germany. It seems permissible to argue by contraries that these protests are reactions against official investigations into the colonial question.

#### VI. *The Strength of Chamberlain's Position*

One thing, however, is certain, regardless of the attitude taken by the individual Englishman—even should he exercise political influ-

<sup>4</sup> Beverley Baxter, Conservative M.P. since 1935.

ence—to the question of agreement with Germany: the entire British nation will follow Chamberlain's lead. His position with the general public is so strong that even fanatical anti-Germans or political intriguers would not be able successfully to oppose any attempt by Chamberlain to arrive at a lasting agreement with Germany on the basis of the Munich protocol.

The British public anxiously awaits the steps which the Prime Minister, who returns to London in a few days from a short holiday, will now take in order to bring to a happy conclusion the ambition of his life, to further the pacification of Europe by a settlement with Germany. Any agreements which he may eventually conclude with Germany or with other countries in the course of these efforts are assured, even in the future, of the unanimous approval of the British people. Quite irrespective of the fact that a democratic Britain under the most varied Cabinets has previously adhered to a consistent foreign policy (alliance with Japan 1902–22, prewar entente with France and Russia), the general aim of British policy in Europe—the preservation of her present possessions in the face of many difficulties in other parts of the world—is, with her French ally becoming weaker and the friendship of America frequently being felt as oppressive, too firmly rooted in public opinion for Chamberlain's successors in the visible future to dare to undo any Anglo-German agreement which he may reach.

DIRKSEN

### No. 253

140/75774–75

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Dirksen*

BERLIN, October 17, 1938.

DEAR HERR VON DIRKSEN: In reply to your friendly letter<sup>1</sup> about the treatment of the British rearmament campaign in the German press (beginning with *D.A.Z.* and then *B.B.Z.*, *V.B.*,<sup>2</sup> *Frankfurter Zeitung*, and *Kölnische Zeitung*) I should like to inform you that this campaign was instigated on the direct instructions of the Foreign Minister. The object was to split public opinion in England, that is, to achieve a breach between those who on no account would want a war with Germany and those who held the view that, at Munich, England had recoiled before Germany and demanded an increase and acceleration of rearmament in order to face up squarely to Germany

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, Berliner Börsen-Zeitung, Völkischer Beobachter.*

"next time," regardless of the consequences. With the slogan "maximum rearmament to defend the freedom and security of the Empire," the warmongers like Duff Cooper have started a hysterical war scare and warlike mood, which actually threaten to lead to a catastrophe one of these days. Inskip's cautious speech is a welcome though partial result of the German campaign.

According to instructions the French are to be left out of this, although their press in part gives every cause for reproach on account of its anti-German attitude.

I just wanted to give you a short summary of the official line, as it is naturally of interest for you and covers everything essential.

Things here are moving rapidly but not in the direction of a German-British *rapprochement* at present.

With best greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,  
WEIZSÄCKER

P. S. As soon as I can find time, I will write further on the subject of the final sentence.

### No. 254

438/220973

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Dirksen*

BERLIN, October 17, 1938.

Sent October 18.

DEAR HERR VON DIRKSEN: I received your letter of the 12th,<sup>1</sup> together with the memorandum by Dr. Hesse, from Dr. Kordt today. I must confess that, even before I had spoken with Dr. Kordt, I hesitated somewhat to forward the letter to the Foreign Minister in its present form. If you attach importance to it, I will of course do it. On the other hand, I wonder whether the arguments of Dr. Hesse do not tend too strongly in a direction which, as things are now, is not the same as that taken here. Perhaps I shall find time shortly for a few further lines, for now 3 weeks have already gone by since Munich, which says a good deal in view of the present tempo of affairs.

Best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours,  
WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 251.

## No. 255

2526/520159

*The Director of the Press Department to the Embassy in Great Britain*

Telegram

No. 365

BERLIN, October 17, 1938—9:00 p.m.  
P 9337.

For the Ambassador.

You are requested to arrange for qualified German correspondents in London to write against British rearmament in the same manner as the representatives of the *Völkischer Beobachter* and of the *Börsen-Zeitung* are doing, with the object of causing a split in the British public and of obstructing the success of the rearmament campaign which the warmongers are conducting under pretext of a national emergency.

ASCHMANN<sup>1</sup>

N.B. By order of the Foreign Minister.

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<sup>1</sup> Gottfried Aschmann, Director of the Information and Press Department of the Foreign Ministry, 1936-39.

## No. 256

2526/520143

*The DNB Correspondent in London to the DNB in Berlin*

LONDON, October 18, 1938—5:26 p.m.  
Pr. 572.

For Dr. Rau.<sup>1</sup>

In continuation of our conversation today I would also like to draw your attention to the following:

1. The whole program of armaments measures demanded here does not extend to the strengthening of the Navy, the Air Force, or the Army; it is limited moreover expressly to the so-called organization of military supplies on a war basis, e. g. air-raid precautions, armaments plants, and recruitment of skilled workers, etc.

2. No member of the Government or the Government parties has given the German danger or German hostility as the reason for rearmament. That has been done exclusively by members of the Opposition and Opposition newspapers, to which must recently be added the *Daily Telegraph* as well.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hermann Rau was chief editor of the foreign service of DNB. See document No. 251, footnote 1. Dr. Rau transmitted the letter to Aschmann.

3. The Government's plans, as we reported authentically yesterday, are much less important than the sensational press maintains.

4. None of the Ministers or newspapers has demanded that Britain should have the largest air force, or that Britain should have a larger air force than Germany. The demand has always been only that Britain should have parity in the air with the greatest air power on the Continent. Besides, in the air question, no one is of the opinion that Germany has any superiority, except for circles supporting Churchill, whose motives for spreading this assertion are transparent.

5. It must be regarded as extremely improbable that, in view of the state of affairs prevailing hitherto, Attlee, Churchill, Eden, and Sinclair will be taken into the Cabinet. It is the Opposition which is constantly putting forward demands that this should be done. On the other hand, the Government intends to remain a Conservative Government and is all the less likely to deviate from that character since Chamberlain's policy has continued to gain ground. All his opponents have recently met with serious difficulties in their constituencies.

DR. HESSE

### No. 257

2005/442780-84

#### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

B 3130

LONDON, October 19, 1938.

W VI 3067.

Subject: Conversation with Leith-Ross on economic cooperation.

I enclose for the Foreign Ministry a memorandum of a conversation between Sir Frederick Leith-Ross and Counselor of Legation Rüter and Oberregierungsrat von Süsskind-Schwendi.<sup>1</sup>

Leith-Ross made some very interesting remarks on the idea of economic cooperation between the four Great Powers in Europe, which are worthy of special notice in view of the fact that Leith-Ross exercises a very considerable influence on British economic policy.

V. DIRKSEN

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<sup>1</sup> Baron von Süsskind-Schwendi was an official of the Reich Ministry of Economics. Rüter (see appendix I), formerly Commercial Counselor at the German Embassy in London, was in England at this time as leader of a German economic delegation. The real object of the delegation was the negotiation with the Eire Government which led to the conclusion of a German-Eire trade agreement on Nov. 3. The German delegates, however, found time to break their journey in London on Oct. 17 and 18 and have confidential and unofficial talks at the Board of Trade to explore the possibility of increasing German exports to the British Colonies. Rüter's accounts of these meetings are recorded in delegation reports No. 1 (2496/518008-14) and No. 2 (5203/E307708-14) of Oct. 17 and 19; not printed.

[Enclosure]

MEMORANDUM OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN SIR FREDERICK LEITH-ROSS  
AND HERREN RÜTER AND VON SÜSSKIND ON OCTOBER 18, 1938

Leith-Ross had expressed the wish for a talk with Herr Rüter during his stay in London and agreed that Herr von Süsskind should also take part in the conversation.

To start with, Leith-Ross referred with regret to the difficulties which had arisen in connection with the drawing of the Austrian loan securities. He was quite aware that the German Government refused to recognize the trustees. On the other hand, however, the trustees were nominated in the general bond and had no power to withdraw from their obligations as laid down in it. If the German Government does not offer to the trustees any redeemable loan securities, it is running the risk of having to pay a much higher price, which economically would be of no advantage to Germany. In his view, it must be possible for the German Government to give even the most noncommittal authority to the Bank of England, which would thus be able to retain the basic principles of the general bond without there being any formal necessity for the German Government to recognize the trustees.

To this the German representatives could only answer that they were not acquainted with the details of the question.

Leith-Ross continued by saying that these introductory remarks were to him only of secondary importance, since he desired to utilize this opportunity to discuss matters of far greater consequence. At the interview which had taken place in Munich between the Führer and Chancellor and Mr. Chamberlain in connection with the Munich negotiations, discussion also took place on future Anglo-German cooperation. It was at that time, too, that the well known Declaration was signed by both statesmen. Mr. Chamberlain had attributed very great significance to this signature and was disappointed that in Germany no particular value had hitherto been placed on the importance of this Munich declaration. This inference is drawn in Great Britain particularly from the fact that the Declaration was not stressed in the Führer's speech at Saarbrücken.<sup>2</sup> The British Government, however, would very much like to know the attitude of the German Government toward the question of cooperation in the economic field between the four Powers, Germany, Great Britain, France, and Italy.

Leith-Ross mentioned in this connection that M. van Zeeland happened to be in London and coupled with this the query, "What was the

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 250, footnote 1.

opinion in Germany on the van Zeeland plan?"<sup>3</sup> He had of course no official instructions to discuss all these matters and was speaking in confidence and only for himself; but, as economic adviser to the British Government, he was responsible that no suitable chance of furthering cooperation between the nations of Europe should be let slip. European economy likewise, especially when confronted by the ever growing strength of the economy of the United States of America, would be in serious danger if the four European Great Powers worked against one another instead of cooperating.

Leith-Ross was of the opinion that all the nations in Europe were suffering from the same kind of difficulties, which they were hardly likely to surmount by means of their own resources alone and that fruitful political cooperation also was only conceivable if based on a common economic policy.

Leith-Ross put forward the suggestion that representatives of the four Powers should meet in the very near future for a completely unfettered discussion, at which, however, each should not consider exclusively his own advantage but at which an entirely objective examination should be made as to what the four Powers could contribute to stimulate their own reciprocal trade and that of the world. He was convinced that such an objective examination of the economic set-up in each country would reveal a way out of the present difficulties.

To take southeast Europe as an example, the Balkan countries were still forced to import colonial produce and similar goods. They procured nothing to pay for such imports from their exports to Germany, since these brought them in no foreign currency. He had therefore already considered whether it might not be possible for Great Britain, France, and Holland to allocate to Germany a larger total of foreign currency—he mentioned a figure of 25 percent more. The foreign currency thus made available could then be used by Germany to pay for her imports from the Balkan countries. These countries would then in turn be in a position to buy colonial produce, and world trade would thus receive a stimulus. He was unable to say at the moment how far it would be possible to solve the question of currencies or that of the lifting of exchange restrictions, but it was certainly possible that an answer could be found to these questions as well if there were honest cooperation.

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<sup>3</sup> On Jan. 26, 1938, the Belgian statesman, van Zeeland, published a "Report on the Removal of Obstacles to International Trade," which became known as the van Zeeland plan. His main proposal was that the machinery of the Bank of International Settlements should be used to enable creditor countries to resume foreign lending, to adjust the external debt of debtor countries, and to establish a common fund to facilitate international trade.

In the course of the conversation, the German representatives answered Sir Frederick that we, as indeed also appeared from the repeated declarations of leading German statesmen, were by no means fundamentally opposed to economic cooperation with the rest of the world. The fact that at this very moment a German economic commission was in Great Britain to discuss how reciprocal trade might be extended testified to the German attitude. As far as the van Zeeland plan was concerned, it was not considered by Germany, or indeed by other countries, as at all a suitable basis for discussion. It was, however, perfectly possible that certain of the proposals contained in it might serve as a basis for future discussions. The main problem for Germany is her lack of foreign currency. She has no problem of unemployment, but instead one of shortage of labor and need for raw materials, foodstuffs, and fodder. She could increase very considerably her purchases on the world market, especially as she desires for her people an ever higher standard of living, but she must be given the opportunity of earning the necessary foreign currency. Although many international economists had admitted theoretically the justice of the German claim for better sales outlets so as to stimulate world trade, yet hitherto it was but seldom that we had seen practical conclusions drawn from those theoretical doctrines.

The German representatives promised to convey the British suggestions to Berlin and hoped shortly to be able to inform Sir Frederick whether the German Government was prepared in the near future to enter on informal discussions jointly with the three other European Great Powers. At the same time, Sir Frederick was requested to bring to the notice of the German Government any positive proposals which he might have to make.

Leith-Ross asked the German representatives on no account to miss giving him another opportunity for an exchange of views on their return from Ireland.

## No. 258

2526/520162

*Ambassador Dirksen to Minister Aschmann*

A 4230

LONDON, October 19, 1938.  
P 9496.

DEAR HERR ASCHMANN: I should be grateful for a brief interpretation of your telegraphic instruction No. 365 of the 17th.<sup>1</sup> Do you want a correspondent here to report to his newspaper in Germany on the lines you indicated, or do you want a "Letter to the Edi-

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 255.

tor" published by the person concerned in one of the leading newspapers here?

In this connection I would like to draw attention to the leading article "Drive for Peace" in the *Times* today, which explains what the aims of the Chamberlain policy are and in which the writer takes up the separate points of criticism of the Prime Minister's policy. Furthermore, insofar as it is not to serve for the defense of British overseas interests, the emphasis in the rearmament campaign here is in the field of organization and intensification of defensive measures.<sup>2</sup>

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours,  
DIRKSEN

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<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "In view of Hoare's speech [reply] in 10 days' time A[schmann] Oct. 21."

## No. 259

2496/518015-16

*Counselor of Legation Rüter<sup>1</sup> to Counselor of Legation Clodius<sup>2</sup>*

DUBLIN, October 20, 1938.

DEAR HERR CLODIUS: I should like to give you the following brief report on the course of our negotiations in London and Dublin up to now:

I. Regarding the unofficial talks in London on our suggestion for customs in Britain and the British Colonies, you already have the mission's reports Nos. 1 and 2 of the 17th and 19th.<sup>3</sup> The negotiations were friendly; in particular the Colonial Office's readiness to meet our wishes seemed to me greater, and more interest was shown in the matter than on the occasion of previous negotiations. Nevertheless, one was struck by the fact that the Board of Trade was particularly insistent that nothing about these talks should become known to the press or to the public. The political situation is still too delicate for that; evidently the Board of Trade is afraid of the dreaded questions in the House of Commons, which of course reassembles on November 1.

II. More important than these talks, and very surprising to me, were the suggestions for an exchange of views by leading economists of the four Great Powers, which Sir Frederick Leith-Ross made in his conversation with Herr Süsskind and myself.<sup>4</sup> Our report on this has reached the Foreign Ministry through the Embassy in London.

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 257, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> Clodius was deputy director of the Economic Policy Department of the Foreign Ministry.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (2496/518008-14, 5203/E807708-14).

<sup>4</sup> See enclosure to document No. 257.

If these suggestions are taken in conjunction with Chamberlain's plans aimed at the same objective, which are mentioned in the press, their genuineness and importance ought not to be underrated in Berlin either. I think I am right also in saying that the Ministry of Economics has waited eagerly for such a suggestion, and I am therefore very impatient to know how it will be received.<sup>5</sup>

III. Here in Dublin yesterday, the day we arrived, only informatory discussions took place at first with the Irish delegation, in which the mutual premises for the negotiations were laid down. None of the questions raised was dealt with in detail or settled then. Meanwhile it appears that the Irish Government is primarily intent on fixing favorable prices for Irish produce (livestock, butter, and eggs). Together with Ministerial Counselor Schuster<sup>6</sup> I shall first of all discuss these questions today with the Ministry of Agriculture here; it will depend on the result whether the representatives of the three supervisory departments concerned will have to be requested to come here next Monday, a prospect which Herr Schuster has already held out to the three men concerned.

At this stage I cannot say anything about the duration of our negotiations in Dublin. We are in agreement with the Irish that they will, it is hoped, be completed by the 27th of this month.

I should be grateful if you would forward a carbon copy of this letter to Herr Seelos.<sup>7</sup>

With my best wishes I remain,

Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

RÜTER

<sup>5</sup> A memorandum by Clodius on Oct. 24 pointed out that, while the attitude of Sir Frederick Leith-Ross toward closer economic cooperation between the four Great Powers in Europe might be regarded as a friendly gesture on the part of England, his statements were too indefinite to be acted upon by the Foreign Ministry, quite apart from the fact that the present did not seem to be an opportune moment for carrying through such a plan. (2496/518012)

<sup>6</sup> Presumably Ludwig Schuster, an official of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

<sup>7</sup> Rüter's colleague in the British section of the Economic Policy Department of the Foreign Ministry.

## No. 260

1585/382891-97

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

LONDON, October 31, 1938.

Received November 2.

A 4394

Pol. II 3410.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: The British Government's intentions regarding the commencement of talks with Germany.

Thanks to invitations for the last two week ends I have had the opportunity of having detailed exchanges of views with two members

of the Cabinet—the Home Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare,<sup>1</sup> and the Minister of Transport, Burgin; these conversations were supplemented by conversations with other people in political life closely acquainted with the Prime Minister. I draw from this the following picture of the attitude of the British Government toward Germany:

## I

Chamberlain has complete confidence in the Führer. The taking over of the Sudeten-German territories without a hitch and the demobilization of the German Army have strengthened his conviction that the course he took, leading up to the Munich decisions, was the proper one. Now Chamberlain intends to take new steps shortly to bring about a settlement with Germany. As a result of the settlement of the Czech-Sudeten-German problem and also of the Führer's declaration that Germany had no further territorial claims to enforce in Europe, basic obstacles in the way of an Anglo-German settlement had also, in his view, been simultaneously removed. The Munich protocol had laid the foundation for a reshaping of Anglo-German relations. A lasting *rapprochement* between the two countries is regarded by Chamberlain and the British Cabinet as one of the chief aims of British foreign policy, because world peace can be secured in the most effective manner by this combination.

In the opinion of authoritative political circles, to which Sir Samuel Hoare also gave expression, no time is so favorable as the present one for bringing about such a settlement; in Chamberlain the British Government possesses a statesman for whom the attainment of the objective of an Anglo-German *rapprochement* was simultaneously dictated by the head and by the heart. As a result of the part which Chamberlain had played in the September crisis, his position was extraordinarily strong among the British public. The Conservative majority was unassailed. A general election to be held in the not too distant future would stabilize it for a number of years. The present mood of the public was favorable for an Anglo-German settlement, despite the intrigues of the Opposition which are conditioned by domestic politics.

From the mood prevailing in Government circles it can be expected that Chamberlain will shortly make proposals to the Führer for a continuation of the policy initiated at Munich.

## II

For such talks, agreements on the armaments question and the humanizing of war are to be regarded as those subjects which interest

<sup>1</sup> In his final survey of his Ambassadorship, September 1939, Dirksen refers to the week end which he spent about this time with Sir Samuel Hoare at Petworth House (No. 29 in *Documents and Materials Relating to the Eve of the Second World War*, vol. II, published by the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

the British most. In particular, an exchange of views on questions of air warfare is naturally regarded as urgent here. What questions are to be put forward in detail cannot be established at present with complete certainty. One thing only is certain, namely, that the ministries concerned are at present occupied in examining the proposals which might be submitted to the German Government.

According to statements made to me by Sir Samuel Hoare, they will apparently involve two sets of subjects:

(1) Questions of humanizing air warfare (ban on poison gas and bombing of cities).

(2) Discussions on compiling definite guiding rules for the construction of bomber aircraft with a view to opposing the excessive extension of their range caused by technical progress.

Sir Samuel Hoare stated in this connection that during his 7 years as Air Minister he had been able to observe how technical progress had tended to slip from human control.

The great difficulties facing German agreement to quantitative limitation are appreciated here. Britain therefore understands that all discussions on limiting air armaments will have to be carried out with Germany simultaneously keeping an eye on Soviet air power. At least, in answer to my statements regarding this, Sir Samuel Hoare let slip the observation that, after a further *rapprochement* between the four European Great Powers, the acceptance of certain defense obligations, or even a guarantee by them against Soviet Russia, was conceivable in the event of an attack by Soviet Russia.

### III

The colonial question was not broached in my conversations with official personages. From information I have received from friendly persons about the attitude of Chamberlain and other members of the Cabinet toward this question and from the treatment of the colonial question in the press here, the general attitude of the British Government can nevertheless be established with certainty.

The British Government is fully aware that satisfaction of Germany's legitimate colonial claims is a prerequisite for a complete Anglo-German settlement. It is even possible that it will take the initiative. The press, too, is already discussing the colonial problem in detail.

Reports from the City point to equally intense preoccupation with the colonial problem, and here they are concerned with the question how Germany could pay compensation for capital invested in our former colonies since the end of the war; the heavy fall in many gold shares is likewise to be traced back to the discussion of the colonial question. The fact also deserves to be emphasized that anxiety about

colonial demands by Poland prevents a positive attitude from being adopted toward our colonial claims.

It is pointed out in political circles that a thorough and lengthy preparation of British press and public opinion is a prerequisite for a favorable settlement of the colonial question; in contrast to the leading political circles (Parliament, etc.) the average elector does not correctly understand the cession of overseas territories under British rule. There is a certain unmistakable tendency in the press to draw attention to impending changes of territory by pointing out the difference between colonies and those mandated territories ceded to Britain for temporary trusteeship only. They have already gone so far as to recognize Germany's theoretical claim to the removal of the degrading terms of the dictated Treaty of Versailles and to the return of the whole of her colonial possessions; in actual practice, the demand for the return of what was formerly German East Africa for the time being still meets with strong opposition in certain circles; matters are not substantially different in the case of German Southwest Africa.

#### IV

Consideration is likewise being given here to the technical implementation of the discussions envisaged with Germany. Chamberlain is considering the question whether he should make proposals for such discussions at once or whether it would be more expedient to wait until the German Government has completely settled the urgent domestic and foreign problems which have arisen through the cession of the Sudeten-German territories to the Reich and the reorganization of Czechoslovakia's relations with her neighbors.

This much can be regarded as certain concerning the general attitude of Chamberlain or of the British Cabinet: for the British Government a satisfactory solution of the armaments question, which would allow it in particular to save face at home, is the starting point for the negotiations vis-à-vis the public; the British Government would prefer to reach its objectives by means of direct and bilateral discussions with Germany. If these direct bilateral Anglo-German discussions should not lead to this objective, the attempt would probably be made from the British side to include Italy and France in quadripartite negotiations.

#### V

I confined myself for the most part to listening when the arguments described above were discussed. To statements on the question of the limitation of armaments, I replied on the lines of the guiding principles laid down by the Führer. Whenever I was asked about the colonial question, I expressly pointed out that, as a logical consequence

of the shameful provision of the dictated Treaty of Versailles, Germany's claims to their return included the total extent of her former colonies.

V. DIRKSEN

No. 261

2005/442775

*The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Great Britain*

BERLIN, November 3, 1938.

W VI 3067.

With reference to your report of October 19, B 3130.<sup>1</sup>

In view of the absence from Berlin of the responsible authorities concerned, no decision has yet been taken with regard to the suggestion of Sir Frederick Leith-Ross that an informal discussion should be arranged between economic representatives of Germany, Italy, Great Britain, and France. In the event of the conversations' being continued before further instructions reach you in London, I would ask the German representatives to make no comments until further notice and, if possible, to obtain more precise information on any other proposals which Leith-Ross may have to make for the economic co-operation of the above four Powers.

By order :  
WIEHL

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 257.

No. 262

2005/442776-77

*Unsigned Memorandum*

CONVERSATION BETWEEN HERR WIENKE (REICHSBANK) AND  
MR. F. T. ASHTON-GWATKIN ON NOVEMBER 6, 1938

Ashton-Gwatkin, head of the Economic Department of the Foreign Office, observed in the course of an interview that, as Czechoslovak matters had been settled, he was now working on a plan for world economic settlement. He remarked that the van Zeeland plan<sup>1</sup> could hardly be considered a basis for practical agreements and that he was now endeavoring to discover a solution which would be really acceptable. Ashton-Gwatkin described German currency legislation as greatly obstructing the expansion of world economy. His friend,

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 257, footnote 3.

Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, had therefore proposed to Herr Rüter that Germany should not procure her imports from the British and French colonies by barter arrangements or through ASKI,<sup>2</sup> but should once again pay for them in foreign currency. If so, both the British and French Governments were prepared to grant Germany a 25 percent higher allocation of free foreign currency from the financial agreement.<sup>3</sup> He was convinced that German currency regulations could not be swept away at one blow but that cancellation must be effected step by step and the Leith-Ross proposal would be the first step to that end.

Ashton-Gwatkin then touched again on the possibility of granting larger credits to Germany. To the objection that Germany could not accept such credits or loans unless she were certain that the payment of interest and the amortization of the capital would be guaranteed to her by means of exports, Ashton-Gwatkin replied: The Anglo-American trade agreement<sup>4</sup> is practically completed. The conclusion of this agreement not only will be advantageous to the contracting parties, but will certainly also prove to be so for Germany. The British Government enjoyed such close relations with the American Government that it could without doubt exercise its influence on the United States to purchase more European products on the assumption that Germany was aiming at an economic understanding.

Ashton-Gwatkin was asked whether, before any steps were taken, information could be given to the German Government as to the probable course of the pound sterling and the dollar. Ashton-Gwatkin answered with alacrity that he was sure Great Britain and also the United States could give the desired guarantees in this respect to the German Government if there were real anxiety in Germany on the question. He would be glad to have the opportunity of putting his ideas before responsible persons in Berlin toward the end of this year.

Further, Ashton-Gwatkin brought up the subject of uneconomical competition by Germany, which in his view was promoted by the German system of subsidizing exports, and thought that an agreement on markets and prices between German and British industry was an urgent necessity. He referred particularly to the need for the conclusion of an Anglo-German coal agreement.

Ashton-Gwatkin also inquired as to the possibility of assimilating the value of the reichsmark to that of devalued currencies and was of the opinion in this connection that a measure of this nature would not have the effect of raising prices in Germany inasmuch as, because

<sup>2</sup> *Ausländer-Sonderkonten für Inlandszahlungen*, a system of paying for imports and exports by means of blocked transactions. See *Foreign-Trade and Exchange Controls in Germany*, Report No. 150, Second Series, 1942, pp. 15-28, published by the U.S. Tariff Commission.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "Leith-Ross did not say this; see my memorandum. Rü[ter]."

<sup>4</sup> This agreement was signed at Washington on Nov. 17, 1938.

of equalization taxes, payment of bonuses, and so on, prices in Germany were on a level with those of the international market.

### No. 263

2496/518020-22

*The German Economic Mission in Great Britain to the  
Foreign Ministry*

DELEGATION REPORT NO. 3

LONDON, November 7, 1938.

Received November 11.

W VI 3279.

With reference to delegation report No. 2 of October 19, 1938, and to sections VI and VII of the appendix to delegation report No. 1 of October 17, 1938.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Anglo-German coal cartel.

I. The delegation, on its return from Dublin to London, resumed today the unofficial discussions on Anglo-German economic questions with the representatives of the Board of Trade. The conversation turned first of all once more to the British desire for agreement between German and British industry on the question of sales and prices in the markets of third countries. The British delegation also emphasized that it considered the most important point was that the negotiations for an Anglo-German coal cartel should be brought to a speedy conclusion, and to this end presented a memorandum, "The Problem of the Coal Export Trade," dated November 7, 1938, prepared by the British Ministry of Mines.<sup>2</sup>

The German delegation stated in reply that, according to their instructions, they would like to leave any discussion on the question of the coal cartel for further negotiation between the interested German and British parties. They promised, however, to convey the memorandum to the appropriate German authorities. It is enclosed herewith.<sup>3</sup>

The delegation requests that a translation of the memorandum be made in Berlin and forwarded to the agencies concerned.

II. The contents of the memorandum can be summed up in brief as follows:

1. British sales of coal on the world market have dropped by 20 percent since 1933; German sales have increased by a third.

The ratio between the export of British and German coal in 1933 was as 5 to 3, in 1937 as 1 to 1.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 257, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> This is a literal translation of the German term. Whenever it is used in this chapter, the Mines Department of the Board of Trade is meant.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (5203/E307722-31).

2. British coal prices from 1931 to 1936 remained at a figure of 16/- to 16/4d and rose in 1937 to 17/-; German coal prices decreased from RM 13.70 to RM 9.23. This could only have been achieved by an export subsidy, which must be described as uneconomical.

3-5. Particular instances of German price cutting: Portuguese railways; electric-power stations in Le Havre; Cokeries de la Seine.

6. The British offers did not overstep legitimate economic bounds.

7. The decrease in British sales is taking place not only in the so-called "competitive" markets but also in markets where previously British coal was unchallenged. This has caused increased unemployment in Great Britain and a shifting of the British balance-of-trade with third countries and, as a consequence, public complaints. As a further consequence it was predicted that the British coal industry would carry through a proposed plan to introduce a production tax on coal in order to assist export, which would start a price-cutting war with all its consequences, from which no one but the consumer countries would benefit.

8. To avoid this, it is proposed to establish an international coal cartel.

9. Previous attempts to set this up have been fruitless. The Anglo-Polish agreement of 1934 was a beginning. More important is an Anglo-German agreement.

10. The general situation is favorable enough to promise success to further negotiations. Agreement between the Rhine-Westphalia Coal Syndicate and the Central Council of Colliery Owners on the nature and functions of a cartel has already practically been reached. Admittedly agreement on the division of markets will be difficult of attainment.

11. In this last respect, both Governments should exercise their influence; the interested British parties will abate their previous claims.

12. The British Government expects benefits from an agreement to accrue to Germany as well.

13. German coal policy is certainly based *no longer* on anxiety to remove unemployment but on the necessity to obtain foreign currency.

14. From this point of view, it can be said that German prices on the various coal markets of the world are on the average some 15 percent to 20 percent below the British, so that theoretically there is the possibility of increasing them considerably.

15. Even if under a cartel German coal exports drop by a fifth, they will earn *more* foreign currency than before; it may even perhaps be possible to give up the export subsidy.

16. The British Government will support its own exporters [*Interessenten*] in the fight for a fair share of world markets.

17. The British Government is, however, of the opinion that a price-cutting war should be avoided by means of a cartel agreement.

The German Embassy in London has received a copy of this report and enclosure.

RÜTER

No. 264

2526/520160-61

*Minister Aschmann to Ambassador Dirksen*

BERLIN, November 8, 1938.

zu P 9496.

DEAR HERR VON DIRKSEN: I would like to point out the following in answer to your kind inquiry (of October 19)<sup>1</sup>: it is still urgently desired that no chance for an attack on Duff Cooper, Churchill, or Eden should be missed, whenever they afford the slightest opening for it. The general lines of this attack were indicated in brief in my telegram No. 365 of October 17.<sup>2</sup> It should be pointed out that the propaganda for rearmament emanating from this quarter is subversive, that is to say that it is not carried on out of anxiety for the security of the country but has as its real object to create in England an anti-German war psychosis in order to exercise pressure on the Government through public opinion throughout the country so that rearmament, receiving renewed impetus, would entail enormous new financial and taxation burdens. The aim of the above-named politicians means in effect that their efforts are bound to result in a lasting and intolerable tension in Great Britain, in crises and, finally, in a general catastrophe.

The above-named persons and their associates are so given to speechifying and publish so many articles that opportunity after opportunity occurs to pillory them as suggested above.

Although this policy will also be followed here as before in leading articles, it would much facilitate the campaign and give better results if German correspondents in Great Britain could also be given a clear idea of what is wanted, so that they may cooperate on the same lines. At the moment when this letter is being dispatched, I need only refer you to the Führer's speech of yesterday.<sup>3</sup>

Yours, etc.

A[SCHMANN]

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 258.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 255.

<sup>3</sup> The last sentence is inserted in handwriting. It presumably refers to Hitler's speech at Weimar on Nov. 6, when he implied that Churchill and his supporters were trying to foment discord in Germany.

## No. 265

2005/442778-79

*Ambassador Dirksen to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

LONDON, November 9, 1938.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: The head of the Economic Department in the Foreign Office, Mr. Frank T. A. Ashton-Gwatkin, who, as you know, was at the time a member of the Runciman commission and whom we know as fully appreciating our economic claims in the Balkans, met Prince Max Hohenlohe<sup>1</sup> yesterday and mentioned to him tentatively his intention of going privately to Berlin in order to discuss economic questions with responsible persons there.<sup>2</sup> He inquired if by any chance there might be a possibility of a conversation with Field Marshal Göring on the Four Year Plan. He stressed particularly the private nature of the proposed journey, about which nothing should be allowed to leak out.

Prince Hohenlohe is leaving for Berlin today and will have the opportunity of meeting State Secretary Brinkmann<sup>3</sup> on Saturday, the 12th. He intends at this meeting to inform Herr Brinkmann of the conversation with Ashton-Gwatkin.

In this connection, I would like to remark that a journey of this kind can hardly take place without the knowledge of his superiors, in particular of Cadogan, Lord Halifax, and possibly even Chamberlain. I am strengthened in this belief by the fact that Mr. Jebb, Cadogan's private secretary and former colleague of Ashton-Gwatkin, mentioned a few days ago when talking to a member of the Embassy that Ashton-Gwatkin would certainly have interesting information to give us. He was only awaiting a favorable opportunity, which had now apparently occurred through the chance meeting with Prince Hohenlohe.

Prince Hohenlohe states that Ashton-Gwatkin also mentioned the intention of another person in a similar position—Hohenlohe understood he was in the Board of Trade—of going to Rome in the near future, likewise in a private capacity.

A carbon copy of this letter is enclosed.<sup>4</sup>

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

DIRKSEN

<sup>1</sup> Prince Max von Hohenlohe-Langenberg, member of an old Austrian family with estates in Bohemia, had acted as an intermediary for the Sudeten-German Party and had known Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin in Prague. See vol. II, document No. 1, footnote 4.

<sup>2</sup> This visit took place Feb. 19-26, 1939; see document No. 309.

<sup>3</sup> State Secretary in the Ministry of Economics. A Foreign Ministry memorandum dated Nov. 14 (2005/442785-86) records Prince Hohenlohe's impressions of his visit to London.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note: "To Ministerialdirektor Wiehl: Will you answer this letter for me? W[eißsäcker]. Nov. 11."

## No. 266

2496/518026-28

*The German Economic Mission in Great Britain to the  
Foreign Ministry*

LONDON, November 9, 1938.

W VI 3309.

MINUTE ON A CONFERENCE WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FEDERATION  
OF BRITISH INDUSTRIES IN THE PRESENCE OF MEMBERS OF THE BOARD  
OF TRADE ON NOVEMBER 9, 1938

## Present

## For Germany:

Counselor of Legation Rüter  
Oberregierungsrat Baron v. Süsskind-Schwendi  
Reichsbankoberinspektor Wienke

## For Great Britain:

Mr. Palmer	} of the Board of Trade
Mr. Forsyth	
Mr. Wills	} of the Federation of British Industries
Mr. Locock	
Mr. Ramsden	
Mr. Glenday	

I. It was briefly repeated by the British that, in any agreement on British tariff reductions, reciprocal action must be demanded from Germany. Tariff demands could not be made vis-à-vis Germany, as tariffs in Germany today played only a subordinate role in imports compared with the allotment of foreign currency. Germany's *quid pro quo* must consist in granting a guarantee to British industry that Germany would not compete unfairly with British industry, either in the British or in world markets, by means of export premiums or subsidies. German tariff wishes referred in a great many cases to such tariff charges in which increases had admittedly taken place as a protection against German imports. As a matter of fact the British Government was not opposed to reducing these charges again, on condition however that Germany grant part of the market to British industry. The British Government could therefore only proceed in earnest to lower tariff charges if agreement on prices and markets were reached between the industries of both countries.

II. The German side again pointed out Germany's necessity to export goods and emphasized that there should not be so much talk about uneconomical competition. People were always asking Germany for results and asking her to open up her market for other goods, without

anyone's giving Germany the necessary means by granting her opportunities for export. On the one hand, Britain always asserted that it was Germany's business to make efforts to sell her goods on the British market and when Germany made such efforts they then spoke of uneconomical competition and raised the tariffs. In spite of this, Germany was prepared to examine the suggestions of the British Government and to support the attempt to bring the industries of both sides to the conference table, for naturally Germany was not so much interested today in the volume of export trade as in seeing that this export trade should be profitable.

III. The representatives of the Federation of British Industries stated their willingness to open discussions with the Reich Federation of Industry in the near future. At the same time it was agreed that the negotiations should be regarded as confidential and without obligation and that at first only the managerial officials of both groups should exchange views to see whether a basis could be found for separate talks between the individual industrial units within the Federations. The British delegates proposed London as the place for the first meeting but at the same time emphasized their willingness to transfer part of the negotiations to Germany at a later date. We promised to convey this suggestion to the German authorities and to give the British an answer immediately.

RÜTER

No. 267

2496/518023-25

*Minute by the Head of the German Economic Mission in Great Britain*

LONDON, November 10, 1938.

e.o. W VI 3302.

In connection with the interview which Oberregierungsrat Baron von Süsskind and I had 4 weeks ago with Sir Frederick Leith-Ross,<sup>1</sup> I visited him today (Herr von Süsskind was at a meeting and unable to accompany me) in accordance with Foreign Ministry instructions to the Embassy in London, for the purpose of spinning out matters as far as possible.

Sir Frederick accepted without demur my statement that it had not been possible in the meantime to obtain from appropriate German authorities a decision on his suggestions and merely stressed once again that these suggestions had been made by him in a purely private capacity. He argued in favor of them in much the same way as 4 weeks ago, emphasizing especially a certain disappointment felt in Great

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 257 (enclosure). •

Britain that, in spite of repeated British advances, there was in Germany apparently still no great readiness to build upon the basis of the Munich Agreement (here I referred to the speech of the Reich Foreign Minister to the Foreign Press Association in Berlin and to the great disappointment felt in Germany at the renewed talk of rearmament in Great Britain). In reply to my various questions, however, he made no further suggestions as to the agenda for a conference between the authoritative economists of the four Great Powers. He mentioned only that some 18 months ago he had had a talk with Herr Schacht, President of the Reichsbank, on this subject, apparently somewhere near Basel, and that his views on the general lines of the conference were the same as then: a discreet and completely informal meeting of the participants. On my asking whether he already had in mind any particular French or Italian representative, he replied that this was not the case; M. Rist perhaps for France, but he doubted whether he was quite suitable.<sup>2</sup>

Sir Frederick took particular note of my statement that his suggestions of granting Germany a larger allocation of foreign currency in order to pay for deliveries from the Balkan countries and of the possibility of colonial produce being imported by the Balkans had aroused particular interest in Berlin. He then mentioned that some time ago Reich Minister Funk had made a similar proposal for a tripartite agreement: German imports of cotton from the United States to be paid for by German exports to Great Britain.

He further remarked, incidentally, that official conferences on economic pacification could not stand on their own but must be included in the larger framework of a general political pacification.<sup>3</sup>

RÜTER

<sup>2</sup> Charles Rist, professor of political economy; French delegate to the special advisory committee of the Bank for International Settlements in Basel from 1931.

<sup>3</sup> In a further minute (2005/442784) Rüter records that, in a personal conversation the same day, Leith-Ross had expressed his fear of a collapse of the Chinese currency and suggested that Britain and Germany, whose interests in China were similar, should cooperate in mediating for the conclusion of peace between China and Japan.

## No. 268

2421/511303

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 505 of November 15

LONDON, November 15, 1938—10: 08 p.m.

Received November 16—1: 20 a.m.

Oswald Pirow, the South African Minister of Defense, leaves this evening for Berlin by the regular train via Holland. It has been

possible to get the following information as to the object of his journey to Europe, about which little has been made known to the public:

1. Conversations regarding delay in delivery of army equipment, especially aircraft, were the reason for his journey to London.

2. Furthermore, South Africa's attitude in the event of a European war was also discussed. At the dinner given yesterday at the South Africa Club, Pirow stressed that the decision would be taken by the Union Parliament in accordance with the circumstances. It was made clear that South African interests would alone decide.

3. Technical aspects of the defense program of the Union were also discussed.

4. The motive for the visit to Lisbon was the desire to establish cooperation with Portugal for the airline Cape Town-Windhoek-Angola-Congo, to round off the existing service of the Union Airways Cape Town-Rhodesia-Congo. It is doubtful whether colonial questions were discussed as well on this occasion; members of the South African High Commissioner's office here deny this, but add, however, that Pirow had not been very communicative even toward his own colleagues.

5. Pirow's fundamental attitude toward the colonial question is characterized as follows by members of the High Commissioner's office here: recognition in principle of a German colonial claim which must be satisfied. He wants, however, to see the claim to Southwest Africa settled as far as possible by other means, in which connection the payment of a sum of money plays a part.

6. A visit to Brussels on the return journey is, so far, on the program. The reason is likewise negotiation about air connections.

Written report follows.

DIRKSEN

## No. 269

1585/382910-14

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 4706

LONDON, November 17, 1938.

Received November 23.

Pol. II 3651.

### POLITICAL REPORT

With reference to my report A 4394 of October 31, 1938.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Changes in Anglo-German relations in the last few weeks.

The conclusion reached in the above-mentioned report, namely, that in the near future Chamberlain would probably propose to the German Government the opening of talks based on the Munich protocol, no

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 260.

longer applies now. In the last few weeks events have taken place and trends have come to the surface which will at the very least cause a delay in Great Britain's intended *rapprochement* to Germany.

This delay can be attributed to three separate facts.

One reason of a more technical nature for hesitation is the invitation of the French Government to Chamberlain and Halifax to visit Paris. For reasons of time alone it would not have been possible to approach Germany with proposals for the development of mutual relations *before* the visit to France; all the less so because this topic and France's fear of a too compliant attitude on Chamberlain's part toward Germany would obviously be one of the most important questions to be discussed in Paris.

More important than this particularly technical reason, which in the end need only have resulted in a postponement of a few weeks, is a second reason of a more concrete nature which has had the effect of arousing greater reserve toward Germany. The British Cabinet and opinion in political circles were convinced that by their attitude during the last few weeks and in particular as a result of various speeches by Chamberlain, Hoare, Halifax, and other members of the Cabinet, they had given such clear expression of Britain's desire for a development of relations with Germany that they felt entitled to expect an answering echo from authoritative German quarters. As this echo was not forthcoming, they concluded that Germany did not at present want a clarification and improvement of Anglo-German relations, or that at least a certain reserve was advisable for Chamberlain if he did not wish to give his political opponents an all too convenient chance to attack him.

If this lack of response from Germany provided a practical reason for delay, this would only have meant that an approach to Germany would have taken place later and with different tactics. The fact remained that Chamberlain had thought talks to be possible and desirable.

Postponement of the talks for an as yet undetermined period came about only as the result of the third circumstance: the political repercussions of the intensification of the anti-Jewish movement in Germany caused by the murder of Counselor of Legation Ernst vom Rath. It would be beyond the scope of this report to describe in detail the reception here in England of events in Germany during the last week.<sup>2</sup> In

<sup>2</sup> A minute by Woermann (2421/511300-01) records that the British Charge d'Affaires, on Nov. 14, protested against an article in the *Angriff* of Nov. 8, which accused certain Members of Parliament of responsibility for the murder of vom Rath, Third Secretary at the German Embassy in Paris. He was killed on Nov. 7, 1938, by a Polish-Jewish youth named Herschel Grynszpan. On Nov. 10 anti-Jewish rioting took place in Germany, and on Nov. 12 decrees were issued in Germany imposing a collective fine of one milliard RM on the Jewish community; their insurance claims for damage were confiscated, and they were excluded from economic and cultural life.

view of the British public's well-known lack of understanding for and antipathy to the treatment of the Jewish question by National Socialist Germany in the last months and years, it was naturally to be expected that a fresh wave of anti-German feeling would set in. The completely different ideological attitude of the public here, the anti-German attitude of the largest section of the British press, and the strong Jewish influence in high places, which is only partly noticeable on the surface, were reasserted in full measure on this occasion.

For the question under discussion, namely, the further shaping of Anglo-German relations, only the two most important *political* effects of the anti-Semitic wave in Germany need be mentioned: the pessimism which has overtaken just those sections of the British public who actively supported Anglo-German friendship, and the deterioration in Chamberlain's position.

For the anti-German circles in Britain, the excesses against the Jews and the new legal measures were only grist to the mill; whereas for pro-German circles, yielding to the atmosphere here and to press propaganda, it was a severe shock. Their confidence in the possibility of an Anglo-German understanding is shaken; their effectiveness is crippled. The Cabinet lacks their moral support and their encouragement. In number and significance the extent of these circles is very much greater than appears outwardly.

Closely bound up with this is the loss of prestige which Chamberlain himself has suffered through the set-back in Anglo-German relations. Chamberlain, who had previously adopted as his motto a settlement with the totalitarian states, has since Munich, and especially since the signing of the Anglo-German protocol, simply become the protagonist of collaboration with Germany. The more marked this development, the more vulnerable he becomes to his numerous political opponents at home at every set-back. Chamberlain's opponents have lost no time in exploiting the fresh anti-German wave to criticize him and to renew their contention that collaboration with a country in which such brutalities are possible must be rejected for ideological reasons. France's much publicized refusal to consider Germany's colonial demands has been eagerly seized upon and endorsed by anti-German circles in Britain.

As long as this mood prevails, it will be impossible for Chamberlain to consider carrying out his plan of attempting a settlement with Germany on a broad basis. It remains to be seen whether, in addition to this, Chamberlain himself has changed his mind, as is asserted in well-informed circles. Experience has shown that trends, such as are to be seen in British public opinion at present, recede again after a short time and that political perspicacity regains the upper hand over emotional impulses.

## No. 270

1585/382908-09

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM No. 257

BERLIN, November 18, 1938.

Pirow, the South African Minister of War, accompanied by Gie, the South African Minister here, called on me today at 5 p.m. Mr. Pirow began by thanking me for his invitation to Germany and went on to discuss individual economic questions. He said that the Union of South Africa wanted to establish a double air line to Europe via both West and East Africa, for which they would like to use Junkers aircraft exclusively. Speaking in detail of the economic position of the Union of South Africa, Mr. Pirow said that the high price of gold had at present created a favorable economic situation. On the other hand, however, wages were rising and this affected particularly the agricultural population of the Union. He could foresee that in a short time the farmers of the Union would have to be subsidized and, consequently, although outwardly things were splendid, the economic situation was unsound. Mr. Pirow emphasized that he set great store by close economic relations with Germany. Unfortunately the treatment of the Jewish question in Germany was causing him great difficulties. In his opinion something must be done to solve the Jewish question. The other countries must state their willingness to receive German Jews as much as possible; at all events this would only be possible if they received part of their capital which was tied up in Germany. A solution might perhaps be found if Jewish capital tied up in Germany could be used as security for loans by foreign countries and then released in certain installments.

I explained to Mr. Pirow that the strife being stirred up in the world today made a solution of the Jewish question more and more difficult. I further told him that in view of President Roosevelt's extremely strange statements we had felt obliged to recall Ambassador Dieckhoff to report. Mr. Roosevelt seemed to forget completely what America had done to us in the war, and he also seemed to me to be strongly influenced by Jews. I could not imagine that his views were shared by the American people.

On the subject of the colonial question, I merely said that the matter did not seem to be acute at present but that it could be discussed in a few years—5 or 6.

Mr. Pirow also told me that the position of Chamberlain and Halifax was not particularly strong. Chamberlain had told him that he would lose all the next by-elections if his policy of *rapprochement*, which he wished to continue, should prove unsuccessful.

RUBBENTROP

## No. 271

217/147842-54

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

BERCHTESGADEN, November 24, 1938.

CONVERSATION AT THE BERGHOF BETWEEN THE FÜHRER AND MR. PIROW,  
SOUTH AFRICAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND COMMERCE, ON NOVEMBER  
24, 1938

After a short introductory conversation, the Führer said that Germany could not procure, in larger quantities, luxury articles which must be imported from abroad, because of foreign exchange. Pirow thereupon expressed the hope that stronger trade relations would develop between Germany and South Africa, as Germany needed a great many commodities which South Africa could deliver, and conversely South Africa was also a market for German goods. Pirow mentioned the *Volkswagen* as a potentially very favorable article for South Africa to purchase. A short conversation ensued on the *Volkswagen*, which could hold its own anywhere in the world because of its cheapness and low fuel consumption. Pirow said that no preferential tariffs could be granted for the German-made small car, as this was impossible in view of the other countries. But for that very reason there were great prospects for the *Volkswagen*. It could serve as an object of barter between Germany and South Africa, as with equal tariffs it remained absolutely competitive. The same applied to German radio sets. He further mentioned that the South African-Italian shipping agreement would expire soon. It had not worked well and would now "probably be sold to the highest bidder." He thought that Germany, too, might become a competitor in this field. This would be very agreeable to South Africa as, in the balance of trade with Germany, shipping freights would greatly help. He said that shipping agreements with Germany depended on the conference and that he was surprised that the British allocated only 5 percent of German goods going to South Africa to German ships, while conveying 95 percent themselves. The Führer was interested in this question and asked for further information. The Führer then spoke at some length of his work for economic reconstruction in Germany, depicting the hopelessness, especially in the economic field, which prevailed in Germany when he assumed power. Germany could use a further two million tons of shipping space. Unfortunately, he could not build these ships at present, as the shipyards were overwhelmed with orders from abroad and orders destined to fill the gaps in Germany's naval rearmament. Pirow said this was a pity and expressed the opinion that these freights might have been included in the German-South African trading balance. He then went on to say how significant German-South

African trade relations might be for foreign policy. Chamberlain paid a good deal of attention to the South African Prime Minister. Pirow asked the Führer if he was aware that during the crisis South Africa had made very great efforts for peace. Finally, peaceful settlement between Germany and Britain was of decisive importance for the development and well-being of the nations.

The Führer said that Anglo-German relations could not be consolidated as long as Britain took the view that Germany was not a Great Power and that she must be influenced and controlled by Britain and tied to the latter's apron strings. After 1918, when Germany was in a state of internal collapse, Britain had been accustomed to dealing with creatures who could now be proved to have been in the pay of foreign powers. They had become accustomed to withholding from a Great Power rights which were granted as a matter of course to every small country, as for example, Holland, Belgium, and Switzerland. It was said today that Germany was a country of barbarians and that everything that had been good had vanished from Germany. Exactly the opposite was the case. Never before, following a revolution of such magnitude, had even the greatest political opponents been treated with such indulgence. Anyone who had fled from Germany must have been in fear of the police because of crimes committed. Britain must forget all this and realize that she was face to face with the strongest power in Europe and act accordingly before her relations with Germany could again be on a sound and positive footing.

The treatment of the colonial question was also bound up with this. Britain, with her 45 million inhabitants, required a quarter of the world as living space. All other states, such as Holland, Belgium, France, etc., needed vast areas overseas and regarded them as a vital necessity. Nothing was granted to Germany, the greatest nation in Europe, with her 80 million inhabitants. This was a state of affairs which could not last forever. Britain must also accustom herself to the idea that, if she interfered in German domestic policy, she would be sharply repulsed by Germany.

Pirow replied that the British fully understood this. The realization that Germany was the [leading] world power, however, had only come after the Munich Agreement.

The Führer said that he knew the limits of his power and would not call Germany the greatest power in the world, but in Europe, whereupon Pirow asserted that for him Germany was the greatest power in the world, and in this connection he asked the Führer to help such men of good will as Chamberlain and Halifax. Relations between Germany and Britain depended on him alone. If he turned his back on Britain, the war party would come into power and this

would end in a terrible world war. If he would help the British statesmen, a happy cooperation might be the result. The Führer asked what he meant by "help," whereupon Pirow broached the Jewish question. He said that it was certainly not the right of the British to intervene in the internal politics of the anti-Jewish campaign, to which, however, the Führer answered that it was even their duty to intervene. He was so disgusted with the agitation and the debates on the Jewish question in Britain, in which he had not heard a single positive proposal. In Germany at present there were 141 human beings per square kilometer. Nine-tenths of the Jews living in Germany had immigrated from the east during the last decades. Although they arrived with nothing, today they possessed 4.6 times per head as much as their hosts, and it was now being demanded that they should be allowed to take this accumulated wealth away with them. "They have broken faith with the German people. The British ooze humanitarian sentiments and do nothing to help." When the German middle class had collapsed, not a word had been said. But the problem would be solved in the near future. This was his unshakable determination. It was, however, not only a German but a European problem. The Jewish problem was raising its head everywhere today, in Poland, in Czechoslovakia, and also in France and Britain. For us the Jews represented a collective community. "Whatever is done to us by them, is done to us by the whole Jewish community. If a German abroad is murdered by a Jew, this consequently reflects on the Jews in Germany." The British had taught us this kind of judgment. They too treated Germans throughout the world as a collective community. Although the Kaiser had been held responsible for the war, Germans throughout the world had been oppressed, deprived of their capital, and all their assets had been stolen. What Germany was doing with the Jews today was no different. Furthermore, he wished to point out that in the whole terrible struggle which he had conducted, he had no assassinations on his conscience. He had never adopted these methods. The murders committed during the troubled period could not be put down to the account of the National Socialists but to the account of the national groups which were far removed from National Socialism. "What do you think would happen in Germany, Mr. Pirow, if I withdrew my protecting hand from the Jews? The world could not imagine it."

Pirow agreed with the Führer in everything but thought that there should be collaboration with Britain and America to solve the Jewish question. Besides the Jewish question there was also the refugee question. He could see that Germany could not allow capital to leave the country, but he wanted to know if Germany was willing to help in solving this question. The Führer asked what form he imagined this

collaboration would take. The Jews would one day disappear from Europe. Many countries were already regarding the activities of Jews within their frontiers with indignation.

The Führer once again described his work of financial reconstruction. In 1933 he had taken over Germany with 83 millions in gold and foreign currency. He had immediately been forced to introduce an energetic control of foreign exchange to prevent the German people from starving. He had put German economy in order and, for example, had enormously increased Germany's steel production, and he could not take the responsibility for giving to the Jews the small amount of foreign exchange available in the country.

Pirow said he thought that foreign countries were prepared to contribute to the solution of the Jewish problem. Many countries would perhaps receive Jews. He asked officially whether Germany was prepared to help. The Führer said that Germany had already tried to help. He mentioned the idea of State bonds for Jews.

Pirow said that the solution of the Jewish question raised two important points. This was an official proposal:

1. Germany did not need to pay a penny in foreign exchange, but an international loan would be subscribed to defray the expenses of the emigration and resettlement of Jews. Germany must merely assume the service for this loan in the form of exchange of goods.

2. The question of territory. Here Germany must help by providing territory; in fact, Germany should offer one of the former German colonies.

When the Führer said that we had no colonies, Pirow replied that an offer to settle Jews in German colonies would create a new situation in the international discussion of the colonial problem.

The Führer said that, even if he personally were willing to do this, he could not do it in the face of the German people; they would not understand why areas in which the blood of so many German heroes had been shed and in which a Lettow-Vorbeck<sup>1</sup> had fought should be put at the disposal of the bitterest enemies of the Germans.

Pirow expressed his appreciation of that.

The Führer interjected that South Africa could not even understand that Southwest Africa should be returned to Germany.

Pirow said that things had changed a great deal in South Africa since 1918, and they were therefore willing for negotiations. "We want Germany to get exactly what she had." Southwest Africa was a source of economic difficulties for South Africa, as it was a great competitor. It was also of great military and political importance for South Africa. South Africa did not want to go to war with

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<sup>1</sup>The general who continued the campaign in German East Africa until after the armistice of Nov. 11, 1918.

Germany over Southwest Africa; she would rather obtain other areas for Germany in exchange.

The Führer asked what the position was with regard to East Africa.

Pirow stated that East Africa was a country which was already integrated, as a result of its internal relations, in the great stretch of territory of the whites in Africa, which extended in a chain from Abyssinia to the Cape. This was a community of a white master race as opposed to the Negroes.

The Führer asked if Germany would constitute any exception there.

Pirow: "Yes and no." No, because Germany naturally would represent and defend the view of the whites. Yes, because Germans would certainly stand outside this community, for they would always be Germans first and Africans second, whereas the Africans had a feeling of independence.

Breaking off this question, the Führer said that today the Governments had all stated their attitudes on the colonial problem so decisively that it was useless to go on discussing this question. It must be brought up again in 5 or 6 years.

In contrast to the Jewish problem, Pirow then mentioned the refugee problem.

The Führer spoke at some length on what he understood by the refugee problem. Germany had absorbed one and one-half million refugees from the ceded areas, who, however, had proved useful to the German people because of their industriousness. The Jews, however, had no intention of working in East Africa but meant to engage in trade as guests.

Pirow said that the Führer underestimated Germany's power. He could not imagine the tremendous effect upon the world which any gesture would make. Any conciliatory step toward Chamberlain and Halifax would be of untold help to them. He had only to say: "Germany is ready to cooperate; what are your proposals?" That would have a great effect on the world.

The Führer replied that he knew these proposals already.

Pirow referred to world Jewry, which could solve the problem.

The Führer: World Jewry did not want the Jews to disappear from Europe but regarded the Jews in Europe as an outpost for the Bolshevizing of the world. The Jews hated him because he had prevented the further Bolshevizing of Europe.

Pirow said that the Führer should bring world Jewry into opposition with the National Socialists.

The Führer replied that he was only exporting one idea. This was not the idea of National Socialism; for, as long as other nations had not grasped this idea of power and creative force, Germany was greatly strengthened thereby. He was, however, exporting anti-Semitism.

Pirow thought that international Jewry would be pleased if it could cause discord between France and Britain and the Führer and his people by means of the Jewish question.

The Führer replied that every state was already putting up a defense against the Jewish question.

Pirow was of the opinion that Chamberlain must change his policy unless the Jewish question was solved.

The Führer said that there would be no war on account of the Jewish question. If there were, however, this would prove that Britain was ruled by a mentality which did not want peace with Germany. Warmongering could not be overcome by giving ground. Germany today held a position in the world and was assured of it, and, if Britain wanted to take action against Germany, let her try. The Führer was ready. If Britain rearmed, he would rearm twice as fast. If Britain trained 100,000 men in the Air Force, he would train 300,000. They would never catch up with him. If an Adolf Hitler had been at the head of Germany during the war, the war would not have been lost.

He had spent a lifetime fighting for Anglo-German understanding. He had recorded this in his book *Mein Kampf*. He had sent his best man, namely Ribbentrop, to London, knowing that he regarded Anglo-German understanding as his life's work, but no one had been more basely treated by Britain than he, the Führer. He had received nothing but kicks. Sad at heart, he had finally decided to liquidate the work of his youth when he saw that Britain would not cooperate. But Britain should not indulge in false hopes. Here arms opposed arms. When Pirow again mentioned Chamberlain and Halifax, the Führer said that he had the impression that these two were both dancing on a tight rope. Behind them were the real wirepullers, the press and the Opposition.

Pirow said that it was known in London that the press was not so important. Now, just before the new rearmament, the time was ripe for understanding. The people wanted friendship with Germany. The Führer should put himself in Britain's position. Britain today was the second nation in Europe, Germany the first. The Führer should give Britain time to get used to this idea.

The Führer: If Britain had been clever, there could be the closest relations of friendship between Britain and Germany. Germany as the strongest military power in the world, Britain as the strongest naval power, would represent the most gigantic force in the world.

Pirow said that all this depended on the Führer, on a gesture which the British people would understand. That would strengthen the position of Chamberlain and Halifax and enable them to translate this idea into reality.

## No. 272

2129/464890-91

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST SECRET

ROME, November 28, 1938—10:00 p.m.

No. 313 of November 28

I asked Ciano, who requested me to come to see him this evening about another matter, what his impressions of Minister Pirow's visit today were. His negative judgment of Pirow's personality could not have been more damning. It had been impossible to conduct any serious conversation with this man who was floundering about in world history. Among other similar stupidities, he had suggested that Mussolini should mediate between Hitler and the Jews. The conversation had accordingly been a short one and, apart from the visit to the Duce, he had taken no notice of this strange visitor who had come here uninvited. After his talk with Pirow, Mussolini had summed up his opinion of him by saying that he was an outstanding example of the rapidity with which a race living in another latitude could deteriorate. It was almost impossible to believe that Pirow's father had been a German. Pirow was quite right when he always described himself as an African.

Ciano said that the question of German colonial demands was not discussed at all.

MACKENSEN

## No. 273

2005/442791-94

*The Embassy in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

B 3516

LONDON, November 28, 1938.

W VI 3494.

With reference to our report B 3340 of November 7, 1938.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Conversation with Ashton-Gwatkin, head of the Economic Department of the Foreign Office.

1. British economic policy in the Balkans.
2. Ashton-Gwatkin's plan for an exploratory visit to Berlin.

1. During a conversation which a member of the Embassy had on another matter recently with Mr. Frank T. A. Ashton-Gwatkin, head of the Economic Department of the Foreign Office, they discussed among other things British economic policy in the Balkans. Ashton-

<sup>1</sup> Not found, but see document No. 262.

Gwatkin referred to the Prime Minister's statement in the House of Commons that the British recognized that Germany was the principal buyer of the products of the Balkan States and could in consequence claim a position of precedence in the Balkans; opportunities for the British did however exist because the Balkan countries needed certain products which they could not obtain from Germany. Britain was therefore making an effort to take advantage of these existing opportunities and if possible to keep her trade at the present level. Mr. Gwatkin said that there had not been the slightest change in this attitude, and he could tell me in confidence that the statement made by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons had been drafted by Leith-Ross and submitted to the Prime Minister with the agreement of the Foreign Office. The statement therefore represented at the same time the views both of Leith-Ross and of the Foreign Office.

In the conversation with Counselor of Legation Rüter,<sup>2</sup> Leith-Ross himself had indicated how, by recognizing German economic priority in the Balkans by means of granting Germany a greater foreign-exchange clearing balance, she could be put in a position to enable the Balkan countries to buy certain commodities not obtainable from Germany, e. g. colonial products, and thus to revive world trade somewhat at least at one point. This idea of Leith-Ross meant again only a definite recognition of German priority in the Balkans. Ashton-Gwatkin further emphasized that there was no need to become unnecessarily alarmed by newspaper reports on projects for loans to the Balkan countries. All authoritative official quarters in Britain, particularly the Treasury, were convinced that loans without an economic basis were useless and that such projects should therefore be opposed. It should therefore not be believed that Britain was giving political loans to the Balkan countries. At the talks with the Rumanians, begun on the occasion of King Carol's visit<sup>3</sup> but still in their initial stages, there was no question of a loan but of certain economic projects which came within the scope of the Export Credit Guarantee Department. If—and this was by no means decided yet—the Department approved the projects for the building of grain silos in Rumania as economically sound, it would be quite possible that the Department would, within the framework of its statutory activity, grant an export credit guarantee for the building of these silos to the branch of British industry concerned with this. This was nothing special; it was just the normal business of the Export Credit Department, whose function it was to promote British exports. The only project which had so far aroused serious interest regarding Rumania, and which therefore had been more closely examined, was the build-

<sup>2</sup> See enclosure to document No. 257.

<sup>3</sup> A state visit to England, Nov. 15-18, 1938.

ing of grain silos. All other statements which had appeared in the press were mere speculations on something that had only been hinted at in the conversations so far.

2. At the end of the conversation, Ashton-Gwatkin said that he had by no means abandoned the idea he had previously expressed of visiting Berlin. He would like to establish contact with authoritative economic quarters in Berlin in order to have conversations on the lines of the Leith-Ross ideas about how trade could be promoted and where trade barriers could perhaps be removed. So far he had no definite plans.

The Embassy would be grateful for instructions with regard to the plans of Ashton-Gwatkin to make an exploratory visit to Berlin.<sup>4</sup>

By order:

WEBER<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup>In a telegram dated Dec. 3 (2005/442798-99), the Embassy was informed that Ashton-Gwatkin's visit to Berlin would be welcomed by the authorities concerned; a suggested date was asked for. See also document No. 309.

<sup>5</sup>Dr. W. M. Weber, Commercial Attaché at the Embassy in London.

## No. 274

2539/520686

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 520 of November 30      LONDON, November 30, 1938—9: 52 p.m.  
Received December 1—1: 30 a.m.

1. With reference to the memorandum of November 7 on the Anglo-German coal agreement handed to the German commercial treaty delegation.<sup>1</sup>

2. The Under Secretary of State for the Ministry of Mines announced today on behalf of the British Government: the British mining industry has informed the Government of the result of the negotiations which took place on Monday, November 27, with representatives of the German coal-mining industry, Janus [and] Russel. The German delegates have gone to the utmost limit in conceding, on the basis of the total export of the seven main coal-producing countries for 1936-37, a British quota of 48 percent and a German of 31 percent. On the other hand, the British delegates are of the opinion that the utmost concession would be a British quota of 53.1 percent and a German quota of 25.5 percent, based on the total export of the seven main coal-producing countries<sup>2</sup> for 1929 (1936).

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 263.

<sup>2</sup>The German text has *Hauptkostenländer*; this has been taken as a misprint for *Hauptkohlenländer*, as above.

3. The British Government considers that the approximation of views of the two interested parties exceeds all expectations but that complete agreement cannot now be attained unless both Governments exert their influence. The British Government therefore affirms its readiness to compel the British mining industry to give way to the extent of half the difference which still exists between the two offers, if the German Government will decide on the same action with regard to the German mining industry.

4. As I see the matter from here, I recommend that the German coal industry should be influenced as suggested. Failure of the negotiations would mean a price-cutting war and thus a loss to Germany of foreign currency. Moreover, an agreement would have the most favorable effect on the whole field of Anglo-German relations.

5. Please telegraph instructions.

DIRKSEN

No. 275

1580/382118-21

*The Embassy in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 4890

LONDON, November 30, 1938.

Received December 9.

Pol. II 3872.

Subject: Chamberlain's and Lord Halifax's discussions in Paris.

Enclosed is submitted a memorandum on a conversation which Counselor of Legation von Selzam had with Mr. Strang, the head of the Central European Department of the Foreign Office, on the subject of the discussions held in Paris.<sup>1</sup> Strang accompanied the Prime Minister and Lord Halifax on that occasion. I would especially draw attention to Strang's remarks on the question of the guarantee of the Czech frontiers. Sir Orme Sargent<sup>2</sup> also expressed special interest in the guarantee question to Counselor of Embassy Kordt.

By order :

TH. KORDT

[Enclosure]

LONDON, November 29, 1938.

I called on Strang today in another connection and at the same time spoke to him about the Paris discussions. In the course of the conversation Strang made the following statements :

<sup>1</sup> For a record of the Anglo-French conversations held at the Quai d'Orsay on Nov. 24, see *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Third Series, vol. III, No. 325.

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Under Secretary of State in the Foreign Office, August 1933-September 1939.

The actual discussions had lasted altogether for slightly more than 5 hours. This was a very short time in which to go really deeply into the various subjects, especially when one considered that much time was lost in interpreting. The discussions had the character of an exchange of views.

The main subject had been the relations between Britain and France. No new obligations of any kind had been entered into. Britain's obligations vis-à-vis France were well-known, i.e. the Locarno Pact and the agreement of March 1936. The staff talks which had already been envisaged then were being continued. They were of a purely technical nature, that is, the staff talks were intended to consider and create the technical conditions necessary for the carrying out of Britain's obligations under the Locarno Pact and the agreement of March 1936.

The second main subject had been the relations of France and Britain with Germany. In this the contemplated Franco-German declaration<sup>3</sup> played a part. The French had given detailed information regarding the contents of this declaration and the events leading up to it.

A great part of the time had been taken up by the exchange of views on the question of guaranteeing the Czech frontiers. The matter was a very complicated one. It was for the moment still uncertain which countries would participate in the guarantee. It was also necessary to decide whether each prospective guarantor should undertake an individual guarantee or whether all guarantors should guarantee collectively. In the latter case there was the question whether the guarantee would also come into effect if only a part and not all of the guarantors were agreed that a case for the guarantee had arisen. The whole matter was very obscure (Strang's remarks on the subject left me with the impression that this problem was not being thought out in all its possibilities either in Paris or London, let alone that a common policy had been found).

The French had stated that it was intended to make the Legations in Bucharest and Paris, respectively, into Embassies. Corresponding decisions had not yet been made in London.

The Far Eastern war and the refugee problem had been touched upon.

Nothing had been said on the subject of Palestine, the Anglo-American trade agreement, or any British financial help for France. In this connection Strang observed that he knew nothing of any intention in the City to make a loan to France (see my telegram No. 514 of November 23, 1938).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See chapter III, documents Nos. 343-369, *passim*.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (1580/382107).

There had also presumably been opportunities during private conversations at meal times to discuss questions which had not been dealt with during the official talks, but he knew nothing about that.

E. VON SELZAM

No. 276

1628/389419

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 4803

LONDON, December 3, 1938.

Received December 9.

Pol. I 573.

Subject: British proposal for an additional protocol to the Anglo-German naval treaty of 1937.

The Foreign Office official who deals with naval affairs has transmitted to the Embassy the enclosed communication with its appendices,<sup>1</sup> with a request that I should convey to the Reich Government the draft of an additional protocol to the London naval treaty of 1936 and to the bilateral naval agreements concluded by the British Government. The draft protocol relates to a broadening of the respective provisions for the giving of advance notice and the exchange of information (part III of the Anglo-German naval treaty of 1937).<sup>2</sup>

The official letter explains that the suggestions are based on conversations which have taken place over the last few years on the occasion of various naval negotiations. During these negotiations the question was discussed whether it was desirable at the time to work out a draft protocol concerning the giving of advance notice and the exchange of information by all the powers who were signatories of the London naval agreement of 1936 or of the bilateral naval agreements concluded by the British Government. I request that the draft be examined and would be grateful for instructions.

VON DIRKSEN

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1628/389420-24).

<sup>2</sup> The Anglo-German and Anglo-Soviet naval agreements were both signed on July 17, 1937.

No. 277

1585/382937-38

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 530 of December 6

LONDON, December 6, 1938.

Received December 7—9 :10 a.m.

Pol. II 3841.

The visit of the Reich Foreign Minister to Paris has aroused very considerable interest in the press here. It has been known for some

time through reports from Paris correspondents that the real purpose of the visit lay in the signing of a joint declaration, more or less on the lines of the Anglo-German Declaration at Munich.<sup>1</sup> Strangely enough, the press has so far refrained from any editorial comment. The impression gained from conversations varies. The Left, the opposition groups within the ranks of the Conservatives, and pro-French circles make no secret of their anxiety that the visit might lead to a *rapprochement* which might have disturbing results for Anglo-French relations. In the Foreign Office too a certain uneasiness is to be observed, and this is noted by the French with a certain amount of malicious pleasure [*Schadenfreude*] and not a little complacency. On the other hand political circles known to be definitely pro-German and to support Chamberlain's peace policy see in the signing of the Declaration a further contribution to the pacification of Europe. It is pointed out in these circles that Chamberlain's position in the eyes of the general public can only be strengthened by the signing of the agreement, as after the Anglo-German Declaration it was Conservative circles who reproached Chamberlain for having acted without previous consultation with France. This has taken the wind out of the sails of those critics.

For the rest, public opinion is speculating on what else might be discussed at the talks. The Franco-Russian agreement is mentioned in particular, as well as Italy's alleged claims to Tunis, Corsica, and Nice. Reports from Rome and Paris are now trying to give the impression that Italian press propaganda is extremely displeasing to us at present, whereas at first it was said that this procedure was one to which Germany had agreed. In any case the impression prevails here that the Italians have deliberately staged the propaganda campaign in question just at this juncture in order to counteract a Franco-German *rapprochement*. On the other hand it is only logical that the assurance given to the British Ambassador by Ciano that the Italian Government did not identify itself with the demonstration in the Italian Chamber was sufficient reason for Chamberlain to pass over the questions addressed to him in the House of Commons yesterday. The Foreign Office was unquestionably surprised at the demonstrations and feared a deviation from the recognition of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean area agreed upon in the declaration of January 2, 1937, and confirmed in appendix I to the Anglo-Italian agreement of April 16 of this year.<sup>2</sup> The representations made in Rome were for this reason and not on account of French interests.

DIRKSEN

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. II, document No. 676.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 247, footnote 2.

## No. 278

1628/389429

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division I*

BERLIN, December 10, 1938.  
zu Pol. I 573 Ang. III.

Submitted to the Deputy Director of the Political Department for the Under State Secretary.

The British proposal<sup>1</sup> means a change from the bilateral agreements between Germany and Britain to a collective agreement on exchange of information between Germany, Britain, America, France, Italy, Russia, Poland, and probably also the Scandinavian States and Turkey. Objections arise from our general opposition to collective agreements, in particular however from our opposition to the resumption of direct treaty relations with Russia. As a reason for our refusal, we could say merely that there was no Russian contribution comparable to the German contribution, as Russia is exempted from the exchange of information for the Far East fleet.

After consultation with the Navy, contact should first of all be established with Rome.<sup>2</sup>

K[AMPHOEVENER]

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 276.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 279.

## No. 279

2129/464896-97

*The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Italy*

SECRET

BERLIN, December 15, 1938.  
Received December 21, 1938.  
Pol. I M 4882 g.

## I

I request you to inform the Italian Government confidentially that we have started conversations with the British Government in order to exercise our right under the Anglo-German naval agreements of 1935 and 1937,<sup>1</sup>

1. to build up German submarine tonnage to 100 percent of that of all the members of the British Empire and
2. to install on the two 10,000-ton cruisers of subclass 3b under construction heavier armament than on the last two cruisers of subclass 3a allowed to Germany.

<sup>1</sup> See *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Third Series, vol. III, Nos. 422, 429, 431-433.

The British Government has been informed that Germany considers herself forced to utilize to the full the possibilities afforded to her by the agreement with Great Britain, in order to protect her communications by sea in the event of warlike developments. Reports of the dimensions of heavy cruisers under construction by the Russians provide a further reason for the projected improvement of the cruisers. (Cf. the Anglo-German exchange of notes of July 17, 1937, published by the British Government; circular instruction of July 26, 1937, Pol. I 3738 g.)

As was to be expected, the German *démarche* has met with objections from the British Government, which we propose however to override.

## II

You are further requested to inform the Italian Government that we have received from the British Government a note with the draft of an additional protocol to the naval agreements at present in force.<sup>2</sup> According to this, the proviso for the mutual exchange of information on naval construction would be extended to apply to all sea powers bound to Great Britain by treaty, whereas at the moment only Great Britain, the United States, France, and Italy exchange reciprocal information on the basis of the London naval treaty of 1936. Germany, the Soviet Union, and Poland, however, only exchange bilateral information with Great Britain, on the basis of their individual agreements with her. The British proposal means therefore a collective agreement between all the above-mentioned sea powers, which would probably be joined by the Scandinavian countries and Turkey.

Our objections to the proposal arise out of our general attitude toward collective agreements, but our main objection is against any fresh direct treaty relations with the Soviet Union. We could justify our rejection of the proposal for the simple reason that no Soviet contribution equivalent to the German would be made, since the Soviet Union, in the Anglo-Soviet naval agreement of July 17, 1937, is specifically released from giving information on her naval construction in the Far East. (Cf. appendix 2 to the above-mentioned circular instruction of July 26, 1937.)

Presumably the British Government has made the same proposal to the Italian Government. It would be of interest to learn the attitude of the Italian Government to it.

By order:  
WOERMANN

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 278.

## No. 280

1585/382939-40

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

SECRET

No. 546 of December 16

LONDON, December 16, 1938.

Received December 19—10:30 a.m.

Dr. Schacht, President of the Reichsbank, who has spent 3 days in London as the guest of Mr. Montagu Norman,<sup>1</sup> will leave for Berlin early on Saturday. He has told me the following about the result of his talks:

1. He had a long conversation on the subject of Jewish emigration from Germany with Lord Winterton, President of the Evian Conference; Mr. Rublee, President of the International Refugee Committee; and Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, Chief Economic Adviser to the British Government. At this talk he expounded the plan of moving 150,000 Jews from Germany within a few years and resettling them abroad; funds to a total of one and a half milliard marks would have to be raised by a foreign syndicate, interest to be paid and the funds redeemed by Germany by means of additional exports. This plan was accepted as a basis for discussion by Messrs. Winterton, Rublee, and Leith-Ross. The further course of the talks is to be discussed as soon as Herr Schacht has reported in Berlin and the guiding principles for further negotiations have been established by us.

2. The President of the Reichsbank then had discussions with Mr. Stanley, President of the Board of Trade, Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, and various leading City financiers on questions of general significance interesting to both parties, in particular the possibility of extending international trade, the restoration of the freedom of foreign exchange, and the conditions necessary to bring these about. Among the persons to whom he talked he encountered a lively interest in his ideas and willingness for positive cooperation. It was agreed to continue the exchange of ideas. President Schacht had the impression that Mr. Stanley, the President of the Board of Trade, would be prepared, if need be, to come to Berlin for such an exchange of views.<sup>2</sup>

3. President Schacht also had a lengthy conversation with Mr. Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, at which Chamberlain evinced interest in economic questions and showed that he was well-informed. On this occasion the Prime Minister broached the Chinese problem, which he said was of general importance, and hinted that cooperation

<sup>1</sup> Rt. Hon. Montagu Norman, Governor of the Bank of England, 1920-44.

<sup>2</sup> In a memorandum dated Jan. 11, 1939 (1585/382989), Wiehl, Director of the Economic Policy Department, recommended that Oliver Stanley's proposed visit to Berlin should be encouraged and asked for instructions.

was desirable. In reply Herr Schacht pointed out our special relationship toward Japan in view of our treaties.

4. President Schacht did not follow up Lord Halifax's suggestion for a conversation, as he was anxious to avoid all appearance of leaving the sphere of purely economic talks. For the same reason he also avoided having a conversation with Lord Londonderry,<sup>3</sup> for which the latter made great efforts, or with other political personages.<sup>4</sup>

DIRKSEN

<sup>3</sup> Secretary of State for Air, 1931-35; Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Lords, June-November 1935.

<sup>4</sup> In a letter to Wiehl dated Dec. 17 (2005/442803-04), Dirksen wrote that Schacht's visit had been a great success. See also Dirksen's memoirs, *Moskau-Tokio-London* (Stuttgart, 1949), pp. 237-238.

## No. 281

2196/473541-44

*Ambassador Dirksen to State Secretary Weizsäcker*<sup>1</sup>

LONDON, December 16, 1938.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: I gather from secret telegram No. 433 of December 15,<sup>2</sup> which bears your signature, that you have returned to duty and am delighted that we are again working together. I hope your leave gave you a good rest; I heard from my sister that you and your wife had also been in Rome.

The memorandum, mentioned in telegram 433, from the Italian Chargé d'Affaires on the attitude of the Italian Government toward the Tunis question,<sup>3</sup> naturally interested me very much; particularly perhaps the penultimate paragraph, in which the Italian Government tentatively offers its services as mediator to improve Anglo-German relations. I should like to say a few words on this; when it suits our purpose to achieve a *détente* with Great Britain, we shall not need an Italian advocate to help us. We would merely have to revert to the various British suggestions and would be quite certain of finding in Great Britain even now a readiness to negotiate on an Anglo-German agreement. Only the day before yesterday Halifax referred to Anglo-German relations, on the occasion of handing to me a note in reply to our information on the Navy (submarines and heavy cruisers).<sup>4</sup> He said that he had been thinking very seriously about the tension which had set in during the last 2 months and had been won-

<sup>1</sup> This original is initialed by Ribbentrop.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> Not found, but see document No. 284.

<sup>4</sup> See *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Third Series, vol. III, Nos. 429 and 432.

dering how a new atmosphere could be created. He would be grateful to me if I could give him any advice on the subject.

I told him in reply that the tension in our mutual relations was attributable to a series of facts which had emerged both on our side and on the British since the Munich Agreement. I did not wish to go into detail again now, so as not to waste too much time. It seemed preferable to consider the present situation and to proceed from there. I would not consider it out of the question, by calming down the press [*presse-mässige Beruhigung*], to evoke a better atmosphere in which constructive work might proceed. The tension caused by the Jewish question would certainly relax for the most part if we were ready to help actively in the departure of the Jews; with regard to this, the conversations now being conducted in London by the President of the Reichsbank would undoubtedly be of importance.

I thought further that various points of contact existed in the economic field which might lead to agreements, directly fruitful and positive for economic life and thus indirectly for political relations as well. I mentioned the coal negotiations and the imminent conversations between the representatives of the two industries on the drawing up of an agreement covering prices and markets. President Schacht also intends to explore such possibilities.

I then touched on the possibility of reaching agreement on making air warfare more humane. This in itself, perhaps, only affected a limited sphere but still its psychological effect should not be underrated.

I have heard meanwhile from Herr Woermann, who wrote to me on the subject on December 9,<sup>5</sup> that for the time being we have no intention of displaying any special initiative in the question of humanizing air warfare. However that may be, this is a province in which we might obtain fairly comprehensive results relatively quickly if by any chance we were to alter our attitude.

To return to the beginning of my letter: the British are still anxious for a *détente* and an agreement with Germany, although the situation of the British Cabinet in this respect has of course become infinitely more difficult than at the time immediately after the Munich conference. Chamberlain's position has been much weakened since then, and he is at the moment apparently making every effort to regain lost sympathies by playing the strong man vis-à-vis Germany (speech in the House of Commons on the Memel question; speech to the Foreign Press Association at which I, as is well-known, refused to be present on account of the text of the speech; <sup>6</sup> yesterday's speech on the occasion of a luncheon in the House of Commons in honor of

<sup>5</sup>Not found.

<sup>6</sup>See *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Third Series, vol. III, No. 432.

Herr Schacht, when a warning note was sounded as to the financial resources of Great Britain in the event of a war with Germany). How long Chamberlain can keep his place is thus a question about which I am by no means so confident as I was a month or two ago. If therefore there should be any wish on our side for a certain degree of *rapprochement*, I would be in favor of not waiting too long.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,  
DIRKSEN

P.S. I have received meanwhile a confirmation of my opinion mentioned above, that a *rapprochement* to Great Britain in the economic field can be achieved and is desired by the British Government. Information has just reached me that Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin's journey to Germany deserves special attention; he is reputed to be, so to speak, only a forerunner and herald for Lord Runciman, whom the Government would like to send to Germany in order to put the final touch to the economic agreements which Ashton-Gwatkin is to initiate.

## No. 282

2496/518040-41

### *The Ministry of Economics to the Foreign Ministry*

II Bg. 22714

BERLIN, December 19, 1938.

W VI 3735.

Subject: International Coal Agreement.

With reference to letter of December 14, 1938, No. W VI 3663.<sup>1</sup>

I request that the following reply be made to the inquiry from the German Embassy in London:

Statistics of the various coal-exporting countries hitherto brought to the cognizance of the German Government are not drawn up uniformly and clearly demonstrate the difficulties which have so far stood in the way of the establishment of a quota ratio fair to all. In contrast to the contention of the British Ministry of Mines, the German view is that the problem of the inclusion of coke export and bunker-coal business is not only not insoluble but that it is an essential prerequisite of fair quotas for all countries. How the British proposal, as given in a telegram of November 30, 1938,<sup>2</sup> that the difference still existing between the two offers should be covered equally, would work out cannot yet be determined therefore; moreover, the representatives of the German mining industry are of another opinion with regard to the nature and amount of the mutual offers, as the previous private negotiations have shown.

<sup>1</sup> London telegram 541 of Dec. 13 (5203/E307732-34) was repeated to the Ministry of Economics for comment under No. W VI 3663.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 274, paragraph 3.

The German Government considers that in the question of quotas, which is also important to private industry, a tolerable and just solution for every country can and must soon be found, especially as agreement has been reached in the course of the previous conversations on the majority of the basic questions, and all parties have recognized the economic expediency of a firm agreement. The German Government is much concerned to insure that German economy continues for the time being to earn at the very least the previous amount in foreign currency. If, as is generally the expectation, the representatives of the mining industry fail to make any progress within a reasonable space of time toward an understanding in the indubitably thorny question of quotas, then the German Government is ready to discuss this problem directly with the British Government.<sup>3</sup>

By order:  
KLINGHOLZ

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<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "Telephoned to the German Embassy in London. Rü[ter]. Dec. 19."

A report dated Dec. 22 from the London Embassy (2496/518042-43) records that this message was immediately passed on to the British Department of Mines, where it was received with great satisfaction. The latter would press the British coal industry to renew negotiations at once with the Rhine-Westphalia Coal Syndicate and welcomed the German Government's suggestion of a direct discussion should these negotiations fail.

## No. 283

2129/464905-06

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

ROME, December 23, 1938.

SECRET

No. 8264

Subject: Anglo-German naval agreements. Exchange of information on naval construction.

With reference to instruction Pol. I M 4882 g of December 15.<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with the above-mentioned instruction, I informed the head of the appropriate department in the Foreign Ministry here and delivered the two memoranda.

The Italian Government has also received the British Government's proposal mentioned in paragraph II. It has given no answer to this and will not do so without previously consulting us. I beg to reserve for a further report the attitude of the Italian Government, a statement on which was promised to me.<sup>2</sup>

PLESSEN

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 279.

<sup>2</sup> In a minute of the same date (2129/464904-05) Plessen wrote that Count Vitetti of the Italian Foreign Ministry described the memorandum concerning Anglo-German naval agreements as important but considered the other memorandum, i.e. on the proposal to extend the exchange of information, as without significance since "in every case only *that* information was exchanged which was already known to the government in question from other sources." As for Germany's reluctance to share information with Russia, "in his view the Russians receive via France the information which we give to Britain, just as they doubtless receive the information Italy gives to France."

## No. 284

2441/514642

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, January 2, 1939.  
e.o. Pol. II 20.

The Italian Chargé d'Affaires mentioned to me again today the offer, previously made to the Reich Foreign Minister by Count Ciano, to be our spokesman in the Anglo-German differences of opinion and to work for a settlement on the occasion of Chamberlain's visit.

I told Magistrati that I had no wishes to that effect to communicate to him from the Foreign Minister.

Magistrati then touched on the Tunis question, which was to be discussed between Mussolini and Chamberlain in spite of French opposition.<sup>1</sup> For the rest, Magistrati was not informed about his Government's real intentions at the talks.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> See *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Third Series, vol. III, Nos. 482-485.

## No. 285

1585/382965-87

*The Minister in Eire to the Foreign Ministry*

CONFIDENTIAL

DUBLIN, January 3, 1939.  
Pol. II 64.

A 1

Subject: Conversation with Prime Minister De Valera.

When I called on Mr. De Valera, the Prime Minister, on December 31 to express my good wishes for the year 1939, he told me in the course of the conversation which ensued that, immediately before Neville Chamberlain decided to fly to Berchtesgaden during the September crisis, he himself had been seriously considering appealing both to the Führer and Chancellor and to Mussolini and making an effort for the preservation of peace—not in his capacity as President of the League of Nations Assembly, which had taken him to Geneva, but as the Prime Minister of Eire. He had spent a whole night working on the drafts, which were still in his possession. Even before he had finally decided whether there was any point in sending the letters, he had received the news of Chamberlain's decision to go to Berchtesgaden. He had most warmly welcomed this news but had been the only one to hold that view in the League of Nations Assembly.

Mr. De Valera added that so far he had spoken to no one about this matter and asked me, too, to treat it as confidential. He mentioned it in the course of a conversation on the present mood in Britain and the feeling prevalent there that the Munich agreements had represented a political defeat for Britain, in order to say that if such a feeling had already been present in other countries it was to be found primarily in Britain, as could be understood.

Mr. De Valera then emphasized his recognition of the achievements of the Third Reich and said that he had the greatest admiration for the recovery made after defeat in the World War. At the same time, he gave me to understand that, if the September crisis had led to war, there would have been a great danger that what had been achieved would be annihilated again.

With regard to the Irish attitude toward questions of major policy insofar as they concerned Germany, he remarked in passing that Ireland felt herself to be "impartial."<sup>1</sup>

In the course of the conversation I also formed the impression that, as is almost without exception the general opinion here, Mr. De Valera too is at present watching the further development of Anglo-German relations with definite concern and fears that, in the event of a fresh crisis, a repetition of Munich would be impossible. As on a former occasion, he again expressed his regret that church questions in Germany, especially the conflict with the Roman Catholic Church, greatly prejudiced the general feeling toward Germany in Ireland, which formerly had been definitely favorable to Germany.

When the question of Jewry in Germany was briefly touched upon and I said that National Socialist Germany's procedure against the Jews must primarily be explained by the behavior of the Jews after the war, Mr. De Valera merely answered briefly that he was fully aware of this.

HEMPEL<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Eduard Hempel, German Minister in Eire, July 1937-May 1945.

## No. 286

1404/380686-99

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 6

LONDON, January 3, 1939.

Received January 6.

Pol. II 63.

#### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: 1939—Year of decision for Great Britain's foreign policy.

#### 1. *European Cooperation—or not?*

The inter-relation between the four Great Powers of western Europe, of which the Munich conference provided the most striking

instance, is so close and so decisive that the winding and unwinding of the threads by which each of the four was bound to the other almost exclusively determined world events up to the turn of the year. And thus, under the pressure of natural developments, the question whether a continuation of the policy of cooperation inaugurated at Munich or individual action of the four Powers should decide the destiny of Europe receded at first into the background. Even Chamberlain, the strongest supporter of European "Quadruple Directorate" policy, has been forced to realize this during the last 3 months. British policy in its relations with Germany, France, and Italy has been confronted with a series of separate problems which are in no wise in harmony with the "spirit of Munich." Imminent developments, however, are likely to justify the British Prime Minister to this extent, that already in the near future British foreign policy will inevitably be faced with the question—Will there be European cooperation or not? This inference can be drawn from a comprehensive survey of the evolution of the relations between Great Britain and her three other partners in the Munich conference.

## 2. *Anglo-French Relations*

Chamberlain's foreign-policy program—agreement with the totalitarian states while still retaining a close friendship with France—has not been brought any nearer to fulfillment. If a forward step was taken in one direction, it was sure to be followed by a backward step in the other. Even relations with France were not unclouded; the Anglo-German agreement at Munich had caused ill-feeling in France, for she was afraid that Great Britain might sacrifice still more of France's interests in eastern Europe on top of those already given up in Czechoslovakia. In Great Britain post mortems carried out after the September crisis had led to an extremely pessimistic appraisal of France's value as an ally. This feeling was strengthened by the shock caused to the Daladier Cabinet as a result of the issue of the Reynaud decrees for the reorganization of the finances and by the threat of a general strike. Although French ill-humor was appeased by the visit to Paris of Chamberlain and Halifax, and Daladier's political successes at home calmed the worst apprehensions, yet anxieties enough still remained; definite stabilization in France was still very remote; French policy stood in the way of Chamberlain's desire to grant belligerent rights to both parties in the Spanish Civil War and thus gradually to throw his weight on the side of Franco (cf. Hemming's report);<sup>1</sup> Italian claims on all manner of French territories provided a new direct threat to Britain's ally and presented her foreign policy with the most undesired problem of assistance in the event of a

<sup>1</sup> See vol. III, documents Nos. 696 and 701.

Franco-Italian war. A strictly juridical reply to a question asked on this point in the House of Commons that Great Britain was not bound by any treaty obligations in this matter, had, in view of French anger at this lukewarmness, to be expanded and improved by a warm profession of friendship in the Prime Minister's next speech. In London the signing of the Franco-German protocol<sup>2</sup> and the visit to Paris of the Reich Foreign Minister met with a certain amount of jealous uneasiness, while on the other hand in Paris Chamberlain's impending visit to Rome, coinciding with a moment of growing deterioration in Franco-Italian relations, increased ill-feeling.

Relations with France since Munich have thus by no means been free from friction and disappointment, and now a shifting of the balance to the detriment of Great Britain is beginning to be noticeable as well in the tactical relationship of the two countries. While Great Britain played the leading role and held the initiative as compared with France during the Czechoslovak crisis, it appears now as if Daladier and Bonnet are egging on the British Government to a more determined policy, inasmuch as they make it quite clear to the latter that any loss of French prestige in Europe, as for instance by giving in to Italy or to Franco, would automatically be followed by a corresponding weakening of Great Britain.

### 3. *Anglo-Italian Relations*

It has been Chamberlain's fate that his only positive success during the last few months in his efforts to reach agreement with the totalitarian states—the putting into effect of the Anglo-Italian treaty—should have been rendered doubtful by the course of events. Even the legal interpretation which allowed him to take this step, namely, that the withdrawal from Spain of 10,000 Italian volunteers<sup>3</sup> could be considered as fulfilling the prescribed condition for a "settlement"<sup>4</sup> of the Spanish question, was open to question and lost still more validity from the fact that a further determined effort to end the Civil War by giving Franco moral support was wrecked on the French Government's opposition already mentioned.

The second attempt at a *rapprochement* with Italy, the inquiry concerning a visit to Rome, was criticized even by friends of the Prime Minister as too marked an abandonment of calculated British reserve.

From the political point of view, this initiative was much endangered by the "Tunis-Corsica-Nice" demonstration,<sup>5</sup> which to a certain extent cut the ground from under Chamberlain's visit. The

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 369.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. III, document No. 678.

<sup>4</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 412.

only way to save appearances was the method adopted by the British public of considering the Italian claim to Tunis as a tactical maneuver, not put forward seriously but in order to realize other aims on which discussion was quite possible—Italian participation in the administration of the Suez Canal and the granting of certain rights in Djibouti. The politically minded public in Great Britain was endeavoring to bridge the interval before Chamberlain's arrival in Rome by minimizing the importance of the Italian claims. Chamberlain's effort to find a *modus vivendi* between Italy and France is therefore to be restricted to direct discussions. However correct the information may be that the British Prime Minister, deferring to French wishes, will not act as mediator, yet it is certain that he will set himself the task of improving Franco-Italian relations for the simple reason that this is an urgent necessity for Great Britain. For the British Government, albeit reluctantly, has left no doubt what its eventual attitude will be in the event of a serious Italian threat to Tunis by its declaration that the Anglo-Italian treaty clause covering the maintenance of the *status quo* in the western Mediterranean is also valid for Tunis. And thus only a little reflection is needed on the value to Great Britain of France as an ally and on the importance of an Italian Tunis as a possible threat to British lines of communication in the Mediterranean, to leave no doubt as to the decision which Great Britain would take in case of necessity (even though she would formally retain her freedom of action until the last minute).

These considerations lead simultaneously to an evaluation of the imminent discussions in Rome; they will be of decisive importance, not only to Anglo-Italian relations but also politically to the whole of Europe; should no satisfactory settlement be reached on Italian claims to Tunis, then the keystone of Anglo-Italian relations will be shattered; the conflicting interests of Great Britain and France and of Italy in the Mediterranean will have proved to be irreconcilable.

#### 4. *Anglo-German Relations*

Any such negative result of the discussions in Rome would have all the more far-reaching consequences in that Great Britain's relations to the other totalitarian Great Power, Germany, are clouded and strained. Chamberlain is farther now from his real goal, the establishment of Anglo-German friendship, than at any time since the Munich conference. The difficulties in the way of an agreement with Germany have been increased for him, not only as regards his German fellow-negotiator, but also with respect to the feeling in his own country. The attitude of the individual British citizen toward Germany has fundamentally altered during the last 3 months. The overwhelming majority of the British people were ready after Munich

to build up again close and friendly relations with Germany, even at the cost of some sacrifices, whereas now this feeling has given way among a broad section of the population to a sense of disappointment, of doubt as to Germany's intentions, of lack of comprehension of her attitude, and of aversion.

This swing in public opinion was caused not so much by events themselves in Germany, by carping speeches from Germany, or by attacks in our press as such. The British man in the street realized, albeit tardily, that the British public's clamor for rearmament after Munich must encounter indignant surprise on our part and lead to verbal recrimination. He perceived that politicians of the Duff Cooper or Churchill stamp, attacked by Germany, are dangerous political poison mongers. He had understanding for the wave of anti-Jewish feeling in Germany which followed the murder of vom Rath, paralleled by the general increase of anti-Semitism in Great Britain. He even considered the anti-British campaign of the German press as not unjustified or, at the very least, as understandable.

There are three matters, however, which have always been incomprehensible even to the well-disposed Englishman—and indeed especially to him—and which influence his attitude toward Germany:

1. Certain features of the anti-Jewish agitation in Germany, such as the burning of synagogues or reports of the misery of refugees, which are presented with ever new variations by an anti-German press, partly influenced by the Jews.

2. The fact that the numerous friendly speeches of Chamberlain and other members of the Cabinet, intended for Germany, have met with no response.

3. The German press campaign about alleged discreditable behavior on the part of the British troops in Palestine. This is universally resented as intentionally insulting the British Army, which is using strong measures in Palestine not on its own initiative but by direct order of the Government. (Isolated incidents of atrocities alleged by the Arabs are laid at the door of the police—special constabulary.<sup>6</sup>) We have thus forfeited, in particular, the friendship of a valuable section of the British nation, the ex-servicemen.

The unsympathetic attitude of the British public toward Germany, resulting from this swing of opinion, is not yet so general or so strong as to make impossible any further attempts by Chamberlain to reach agreement. Hitherto, reasoned political judgment has kept the upper hand over sentiment. "Four hundred thousand Jews cannot be allowed forever to affect adversely the destiny of 120 million human beings"—this remark is frequently made in conversation. It is real-

<sup>6</sup> In English in the text.

ized more and more that Germany, since Munich, has become the preponderating power on the continent of Europe; and this realization is coupled with a readiness to acknowledge the fact. Indeed, even more than this, a further German penetration toward the Ukraine, whose conquest by Germany is firmly believed in Great Britain to be timed for the spring of 1939, would be accepted. "Let us forget the bulging granaries of the Ukraine and think rather of those in Canada"—this is how a British newspaper expresses metaphorically the self-sufficiency of the Empire. There is, however, a wish to learn what Germany's aims are and a desire for negotiations with Germany by which to achieve clarification and pacification of the world political situation, delimitation of spheres of interest, and economic agreements.

It was this doubting, impatient, and yet expectant attitude of the British political public which enabled Chamberlain, after a series of unfriendly remarks in various speeches, to express, in a positive and friendly speech during the last session of the House of Commons before the Christmas recess, the wish for an agreement with Germany without arousing opposition in Parliament. In this speech occurred for the first time a reference to the silence we have so far observed.

It is not hard to infer from the course of events hitherto that Chamberlain and the British Cabinet will proceed to examine the foreign political situation afresh if this renewed British appeal elicits no response from Germany. This development is therefore to be expected when the result of the Rome visit is available and Parliament reassembles—that is, at the end of January.

By that time the essential relevant conditions will exist for further decisions to be made on foreign policy, to which necessities of home politics will likewise contribute. Chamberlain's position has suffered various relapses during the last few months thanks, not so much to other contentious questions such as the tempo of rearmament, agricultural demands, etc., as to the lack of successful results in improving relations with the totalitarian states. Should even this last period of grace bring no sudden change, then either Chamberlain's Cabinet as now constituted will be endangered or it will have to adjust its aims in foreign policy to correspond with those of the majority of the politically minded public. Even Chamberlain, with his extremely forceful character, will not be able to avoid this rule of the democratic game.

##### *5. The Other Alternative*

What other alternative policy, however, is there for Great Britain? Hitherto Chamberlain has been able to reduce to silence the opponents of the "Munich policy" by pointing out that the only alternative

meant a European war. But, having regard to future foreign policy, this objection is invalid. There are possible lines of foreign policy open to Great Britain in which a direct danger of war is not entailed. They have already been partially discussed in the press, albeit in a restrained manner.

Theoretically, there are three other alternatives for Great Britain, but, in practice, two of these can be dismissed without further ado: the policy of isolation, advocated once more on this occasion by the Beaverbrook press, cannot be seriously pursued in this era of shrinking distances and of the ever-increasing ties linking Great Britain to Europe; to try to strengthen the British position by closer liaison with the Soviet Union, as Garvin once proposed in the *Observer*, is a threat rather than a practical policy. The British public generally is much too convinced of the impotence of Russia to include this country in the sphere of practical politics.

The only possible alternative which can be seriously considered is to foster closer political ties with the United States. Such an arrangement would offer Great Britain full support and the same security as would agreement with the totalitarian powers. A part of the British press advocates this arrangement. The Government has already taken preliminary steps to this end. The Anglo-American trade agreement<sup>7</sup> was signed on behalf of Great Britain mainly from political motives. The visit of the King and Queen to the United States in the spring of 1939 will afford further opportunities for *rapprochement*. Eden's journey to America has as its main object the improvement of the political atmosphere, since Eden, in contradistinction to other British politicians, particularly the more aristocratic members of the Cabinet, is much liked there.

However few the obstacles foreseen in Great Britain on the part of the present American Government to such efforts at a *rapprochement*, however easy and obvious such an arrangement might therefore be, Great Britain would nevertheless enter into it most reluctantly. In a union of this kind Great Britain would play no more than the role of "junior partner".<sup>8</sup> The sympathy of the U.S.A., which already is often enough found oppressive, would become a heavy burden. The officiousness with which Roosevelt declared a few months ago that the Monroe Doctrine also applied to Canada has not yet been forgotten. From the point of view of the British Empire as well, any closer connection with the U.S.A. would be prejudicial. Even now the sympathies and community of interests with America felt by Canada and Australia are viewed with alarm. Above all, however, psychological reasons argue in a contrary sense; fundamentally the

<sup>7</sup> Signed at Washington on Nov. 17, 1938.

<sup>8</sup> In English in the original.

Englishman dislikes the American. Both from the sentimental angle as well as from that of common sense, the target aimed at by Chamberlain's present foreign policy better reflects the desires of the British people. Nevertheless, association with the United States would be preferred to completely unstable relations with the most important European powers.

Some months are likely to pass before these decisions mature, and the question arises whether Chamberlain will take a new line in foreign policy or appeal to the electorate. The same interval can be reckoned on before another question, the rearmament tangle, which equally affects home and foreign politics, must be answered. The battle between Chamberlain and the Opposition, particularly his opponents in his own party, is coming more and more to a head. The point at issue is whether rearmament should be carried out according to Chamberlain's plans, through the usual channels and with due regard to the normal economic structure of the country, or ruthlessly and with serious encroachments on the economic initiative of private firms, as his opponents wish. This struggle, which assumes every day a clearer aspect and will be influenced by developments in foreign policy, will probably also be decided during the next session of Parliament. Until then the way is open for German policy to reach political agreement with Chamberlain's Cabinet, which even at this hour still desires such a settlement.

V. DIRKSEN

### No. 287

167/132780-85

#### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

CONFIDENTIAL  
A 72

LONDON, January 4, 1939.  
Pol. V 289.

#### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Britain's attitude toward eastern European questions.

##### I. Press and public opinion

- (a) the Memel question
- (b) the Ukraine
- (c) Poland
- (d) Germany's eastern European policy in general

##### II. The views of informed circles

I. During the last few weeks the British press and public opinion have concerned themselves more and more with the question as to what aims Germany is pursuing in eastern Europe. The subject of these reflections is primarily the Memel question, the Ukraine ques-

tion, and German-Polish relations. In the face of this, interest in Czechoslovakia continues to wane, possibly because the transformation and reorientation of this state is taking a course different from that expected and desired here.

(a) The Memel question was followed with particular attention here during the elections of December 11.<sup>1</sup> From reports from Berlin, Kaunas, Warsaw, and Memel, it was generally assumed here before the elections that the reincorporation of the Memel territory in the Reich was immediately imminent. When, contrary to expectations, nothing happened in December, the view was generally held that the Führer had only postponed the solution of the Memel question, if only for a short time. It remained to be seen whether the solution would be one achieved by force or through agreement with Lithuania. Lithuania, however, could only be warned that she was playing the same role as Abyssinia or Czechoslovakia. Neither the League of Nations nor the signatories of the Memel agreement were likely to come to the help of Lithuania after Britain and France had not even fought for Czechoslovakia. The Anglo-French *démarche* in Berlin in favor of respecting the Memel statute and Chamberlain's statement on this in the House of Commons on December 12 are judged merely as a reservation of rights.

(b) The press here is following developments in Carpatho-Ukraine and in the Ukrainian areas of Poland with even greater interest. The newspapers have printed detailed reports on the efforts of Poland and Hungary to achieve a common frontier and on their intrigues in Carpatho-Ukraine. Similarly, great attention has been given to events in eastern Galicia, the move for autonomy by UNDO<sup>2</sup> and the oppressive measures of the Polish Government. It is frequently asserted that German agents are active in these areas, but no proof of this is given. The *Manchester Guardian*, on the editorial staff of which there are doubtless well-informed experts on Poland and the Ukraine, gives particularly detailed reports on the Ukraine question.

Such reports and observations are always published in a more or less clear connection with alleged German plans for expansion. It is regarded here as fairly certain that Germany is playing with the idea of forming a Greater Ukrainian State and will sooner or later implement this aim. For Germany it is supposedly a question of bringing the grain, iron, coal, and heavy industry of the Ukraine into the service of her own economy and industry. However, there is still no clear idea as to how Germany will realize these plans, although military action at a chosen moment is expected. It is always emphasized, however, that such aims would of necessity bring Germany into conflict

<sup>1</sup> See vol. v of this series.

<sup>2</sup> *Ukrainska Nacionalne Demokratichne Objednanie* [Party].

not only with the Soviet Union but also with Poland. The possibility of joint German-Polish action against the Soviet Union is hardly considered.

(c) German-Polish relations are therefore studied with great interest in the press and political circles here and are frequently discussed. It can be observed that Poland does not enjoy any great sympathy in Britain at present. Poland's "ambiguous" attitude adopted toward her French ally during the last few years and in particular her policy during the Czech crisis have not been forgotten here, and it is noted without any feeling of sympathy that Germany will now present her with the bill for Teschen. At a chosen moment Germany will demand from Poland the return of Danzig, the Corridor, and perhaps other areas and will also cut off her Ukrainian territories. In doing so, she will use the demand for "the right of self-determination" with the same success as against Czechoslovakia. Germany will close the pincers on Poland in the north through Lithuania and in the south through Czechoslovakia.

It is generally accepted as a fact that in the last few months German-Polish relations have cooled off considerably. The Polish-Soviet declaration of November 26, 1938,<sup>3</sup> is regarded as the chief symptom of this.

(d) In all discussions on the situation of Poland and the Soviet Union there can be noted in the British press a fundamentally different attitude from that adopted toward the Czech question. Whereas in the latter question the British press from the start took the view that Britain could not disinterest herself in the fate of Czechoslovakia, such statements with regard to Poland and the Soviet Union are now entirely lacking. The press refrains from any expression of opinion which might hint at British intervention in eastern Europe and, although it reports political developments in this area with great interest, the reports are like those of an impartial observer. Statements on France's probable attitude, which might in large measure determine Britain's position, are also almost entirely absent.

Typical of this attitude is a leading article appearing in the *Daily Telegraph* on December 19, which simply states that the loss of the Ukraine would be a particularly severe blow for Russia, as it would mean the loss of one-fifth of her population, the most important coal mining and industrial area, and access to the Black Sea. The increase in economic and military power for Germany would be enormous. Poland had realized the danger threatening her and was now turning to the Soviet Union. But would not this reorientation of her policy prove too late to save her from the fate of Czechoslovakia?

Even the Opposition press refrains from demanding that Britain should commit herself in eastern Europe; however, it is trying to make capital out of this question by repeatedly pointing out Germany's

<sup>3</sup> See vol. 7 of this series

imperialist intentions and the failure of Chamberlain's policy of appeasement in this sphere as well.

II. At present the following may be said regarding the views of interested and influential political circles on possible German plans in eastern Europe: it can be assumed with certainty that they are reconciled to a reincorporation of the Memel territory into Germany and will offer no resistance. However, it would be preferred if, in solving this problem, Germany avoided the use of force and threats, as this would give the Opposition fresh chances for attack and furthermore would render Chamberlain's position more difficult.

With regard to any further German plans directed against Poland and the Soviet Union, authoritative circles probably have no firmly defined views. It can be assumed that, in accordance with the basic trend of Chamberlain's policy, they will accept a German expansionist policy in eastern Europe. In this connection the Polish question recedes into the background as compared with the Ukrainian question. It is expected that the first move for a new order in eastern Europe will arise out of the Ukrainian question, which would be tackled by Germany and brought to a head. Those who know Russia express the opinion that a rising in the Russian Ukraine has never, since the Revolution, had so much chance of success as today, provided that it receives support from outside. Such support could only come from Germany. All depends, however, on the preparatory publicity for such action by Germany. If Germany takes precipitate action without adequately preparing European public opinion, does not show sufficient reasons, and proceeds by force, it is feared that this would be regarded by France as an unprovoked attack on the part of Germany, which would ultimately necessitate her intervention. Because of its inevitable repercussions, such a development would be undesirable to the British in the extreme.

If, on the other hand, a Ukrainian state were to come into being with German help, even if this were of a military nature, under the psychologically skillful slogan freely circulated by Germany: "Self-determination for the Ukrainians, liberation of the Ukraine from the domination of Bolshevik Jewry," this would be accepted by authoritative circles here and by British public opinion, especially if consideration for British economic interests in the development of the new state were an added inducement for the British. Britain would never allow a conflict to arise over the realization of the right of self-determination. In certain circles, however, the idea is also prevalent that a German expansionist policy toward the Ukraine would be welcomed by many who are not well disposed toward her or who fear her, as it is thought that in this way Germany's attention would be diverted from western Europe for a long time to come.

VON DIRKSEN

## No. 288

1665/398799, 398826-35

*The High Command of the Navy to the Foreign Ministry*SECRET  
SK 16BERLIN, January 4, 1939.  
Pol. I M 55 g.

Attention Counselor of Legation v. Kamphoeverer or his deputy.  
Enclosed are two copies of the record,<sup>1</sup> prepared by the German side, of the meeting with the British Naval delegation at the headquarters of the [German] Navy on December 30, 1938.<sup>2</sup>

This record has already been submitted directly by this office to the Führer and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht.

As we may perhaps still have to make alterations in the text, the draft record should not be forwarded to the Embassy in London before January 8.

At the same time we shall send a copy of the record to the Naval Attaché at the London Embassy.

Signed in draft, SCHNIEWIND<sup>3</sup>

[Enclosure]

CONFIDENTIAL

RECORD OF A MEETING HELD AT THE GERMAN MARINELEITUNG  
ON 30TH DECEMBER, 1938

## Present:

Konter-Admiral Schniewind  
Kapitän zur See Fricke  
Korvettenkapitän Neubauer  
Kapitän zur See Siemens (Naval  
Attaché)  
Kapitänleutnant (V) Riebel<sup>4</sup>  
Baron Marschall von Bieberstein

## Present:

Vice-Adm. A. B. Cunningham,<sup>4</sup> C.B.,  
D.S.O.  
Capt. V. H. Danckwerts, C.M.G., R.N.  
Commander L. H. Bell, O.B.E.  
C. G. Jarrett, Esq.  
Capt. T. H. Troubridge, R.N. (Naval  
Attaché)  
Adrian Holman, Esq., C.M.G.

<sup>1</sup> The enclosure referred to is the German record (1665/398800-19). It agrees substantially with the English record, which was forwarded to the Foreign Ministry on Jan. 12, 1939, by the British Embassy in Berlin. The English record is reproduced here; the German version will be found in the German edition of this volume.

The minutes of the meeting were finally agreed to by the German Government, with a few minor alterations, in a *note verbale* addressed to the British Embassy on Jan. 31 (1665/398866-68). A more detailed record of these conversations is given in *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Third Series, vol. III, appendix VII.

<sup>2</sup> This conference was the result of a proposal made to Lord Halifax by the German Ambassador on Dec. 20, 1938; see *ibid.*, documents Nos. 438, 442, and 448-455.

<sup>3</sup> Chief of Staff of Naval Warfare Directorate.

<sup>4</sup> Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff, 1938-39.

<sup>5</sup> This name, which appears in the German version, was omitted from the English version. reproduced here.

## GENERAL

Admiral Schniewind began by recalling the circumstances in which the delegates had met, and emphasized that the German Government had no intention whatsoever of dispensing with the discussions provided for in the Anglo-German Naval Agreements of 1935 and 1937 before proceeding to build up to parity with the British Commonwealth of Nations in submarines, or to convert the Cruisers K and L from sub-category (b) to sub-category (a).

Admiral Cunningham replied that, while His Majesty's Government in no way denied the right of the German Government to build up to 100 per cent of the British submarine tonnage if circumstances required it, they were convinced that such a step, when it became known, as would ultimately be inevitable, would have a profoundly disturbing effect on British public opinion, which might well feel that the increase was directed primarily against Great Britain. While the German decision as regards the armament of Cruisers K and L was much less important, so far as its effect on public opinion was concerned it could not, coming in conjunction with the submarine decision, create any other than a very disturbing impression, particularly as it might well lead to the end of the cruiser holiday in the class of vessels concerned, to which His Majesty's Government and other Governments, as well as world opinion, continued to attach the highest importance.

## I. SUBMARINE TONNAGE

Admiral Cunningham went on to enquire whether the German Government could not stop short of the full 100 per cent allowed for under the Treaty. Could they not accept a much smaller increase than the full 100 per cent? He asked what submarine tonnage Germany considered necessary for her own security. He pointed out that in the course of the 1935 negotiations, according to the British records, the German representatives had stated that the absolute requirement for German security was 45 per cent of the submarine tonnage to which the British Commonwealth of Nations was then limited (namely 52,700 tons); and the circumstances in which an excess over this ratio was contemplated were (a) a general submarine parity agreement, and (b) a decrease in the total British tonnage below 52,700 tons. In point of fact no general parity agreement had occurred, and the total British submarine tonnage had meanwhile increased to 70,000. The British delegation would therefore be glad to learn what circumstances had arisen which had induced the German Government to depart from this original figure of absolute requirements.

Admiral Schniewind said he would like to reply first to some of Admiral Cunningham's general remarks. He observed that the German Government had carefully considered the probable consequences of any decision to exercise their rights under the 1935 Agreement. As regards the effect on British public opinion, he felt that the real issue had been settled at the conclusion of the 1935 Agreement, when Germany was publicly given the right to increase to 100 per cent of the British tonnage in submarines. An increase of submarine tonnage, whenever announced, must exercise some adverse influence on public opinion, but on behalf of the German Navy he could state positively that the proposed increase of tonnage was not aimed against any other nation.

The decision of the German Government was based on their feeling of responsibility to their own people, whose security, in the present general political situation, demanded, in their opinion, an increase of the German submarine tonnage.

As regards the British proposal for an increase which would stop short of 100 per cent, Admiral Schniewind maintained that the estimation of absolute requirements in the submarine category was not a matter of arithmetical calculation,

but one mainly dependent on political issues. The Führer, after full consideration, and bearing in mind that the German Navy was the only Navy now subject to quantitative limitation, had decided to make full use of all the opportunities allowed by the Anglo-German Agreement. In view, therefore, of the instructions which they had received, the German representatives were unable to agree to any lower figure for German submarine tonnage, though they would, of course, report to their higher authorities the views expressed by the British delegation.

Captain Danckwerts, after emphasizing the value placed by Great Britain on the Naval Limitation Agreement voluntarily concluded by Germany, made the alternative proposal that, in announcing their decision to exercise their right to build up to 100 per cent of British submarine tonnage, the German Government should explain publicly that the new submarine construction to be started in 1939 would only bring their percentage up to such and such a figure—say 60 per cent—and that a similar statement should be made in each succeeding year in which the German Government might find it necessary to enter upon a further increase. The British delegation were convinced that, presented in this form, the German decision would have a much less disturbing effect on British public opinion.

Admiral Schniewind undertook to lay this suggestion before his higher authorities at the first opportunity.

Continuing, he pointed out that to obtain parity would take time and that actually the increase in submarine tonnage would be gradual. The situation was that the submarines which would bring the German tonnage up to the 45 per cent figure would not be completed until the middle of next year. The first submarines to exceed this figure would be laid down after the middle of next year. He felt bound, however, to express the purely personal opinion that an annual announcement might revive unnecessarily any disturbance which the original German decision might cause to British public opinion. He also drew attention to the fact that the German Government were very anxious that this claim should be finally settled by the present conversations.<sup>6</sup>

## II. CONVERSION OF CRUISERS FROM SUB-CATEGORY (B) TO SUB-CATEGORY (A)

Admiral Cunningham opened the discussion by referring to the reason advanced by the German Government in their Note of early December for the decision to convert two cruisers to 8" gun armament. According to the information possessed by the British Admiralty, which they considered reliable, Russia had two sub-category (a) cruisers completed for certain and perhaps also a third in the Black Sea, while only three more were under construction. These figures took into account Russia's Far Eastern construction. In sub-category (a) cruisers, therefore, Russia had not reached, and did not seem likely to reach, the number, (namely 7), which in 1937, she had declared her intention of building. In the exchange of Notes of 17th July, 1937, the German Government had expressed their willingness to remain content with 3 such vessels so long as the Russian total did not exceed 7.

Captain Danckwerts added that this question was of the greatest importance because of the probable effect on the cruiser holiday of an increase in the number of German sub-category (a) cruisers. In 1937, it was clear that if such a development were to occur, France, for example, would feel unable to continue to adhere to the holiday, which in itself had been extremely difficult to achieve, particularly because the U. S. Navy favoured heavy cruisers. The proposed

<sup>6</sup>Footnote in the original: "For further discussion of this subject see the concluding section of this record."

German action would, therefore, almost certainly result in the widespread building of sub-category (a) cruisers, and the disappearance of the one general quantitative limitation remaining after 1936, namely, the cruiser holiday.

Admiral Schniewind answered, first, that as regards Russian building, the German Government, after weighing all their information with the greatest care, felt certain that the seventh sub-category (a) cruiser was actually under construction, and they also had good reason to believe that others had been started. Each country naturally preferred to rely upon intelligence obtained through its own organization. So far as concerned the exchange of Notes referred to by the British representatives, Admiral Schniewind remarked that on this subject there appeared to be some difference of opinion as to the interpretation to be placed on the agreement reached in 1937. Certainly, the German Government had always considered themselves free to build 5 sub-category (a) cruisers if Russia should build 7, while, if this latter figure were exceeded, Germany might claim the right to build more than 5. Moreover, Admiral Schniewind was convinced that the exchange of Notes must be read in the light of the oral discussions and agreements which preceded it, and of which it was intended to be the record. In this connection he drew attention to the fact that Mr. Eden's Note of 17th July, 1937, mentioned specifically, not the actual construction by Russia of large cruisers, but only an announced Russian intention to proceed to such construction. He accordingly suggested that, during these negotiations, a clear distinction was drawn between actual building and a mere intention on the part of the Russian Government. Germany entered into the exchange of Notes only because H.M. Government had undertaken to bring pressure to bear upon Russia to induce her to abandon this intention. He then read an extract from a German record of a conversation between Herr Woermann and Sir Robert Craigie, in which the former had clearly stated that the actual construction of 7 cruisers of sub-category (a) by Russia would have to be considered a "special circumstance" within the meaning of the phrase later incorporated in the penultimate sentence of paragraph 2 of Mr. Eden's note previously mentioned.

The German Government had taken the possible loss of the cruiser holiday fully into account, but they must decline all responsibility for any breakdown since, in their view, the initiative had come exclusively from Russia who must therefore shoulder the entire blame.<sup>7</sup>

Nevertheless, Admiral Schniewind would naturally bring to the notice of his Government the views expressed on this subject by the British delegation, and would also draw their attention to the difference in the information of the two Admiralties as regards the extent of Russian building in sub-category (a) cruisers.

In reply to a further question concerning publicity on this subject, Admiral Schniewind stated that the German Government would have no objection to the publication of their intention to convert the two cruisers, nor to the communication thereof to the other powers with whom Great Britain had similar Naval treaty relations, provided that it were made clear that in this matter the German Government were acting within their rights and that they accepted no responsibility for any eventual breakdown of the cruiser holiday.

<sup>7</sup> This attitude was confirmed by a further draft note, dated Jan. 5, 1939 (1665/393820-23), forwarded by the German Navy to the Foreign Ministry. The final note on this subject to the British Government was forwarded by the Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in London on Jan. 10 (1665/393824), and the Embassy was instructed on Jan. 16 (1665/393837) to hand it immediately to the British Government.

## SUBSEQUENT PROCEDURE

Finally, as regards procedure generally, it was agreed that the German Government would return an official written answer to the various suggestions and observations put forward by the British delegation, and that, pending the receipt of this written answer, no further details of the German claims would be made public.

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The meeting then proceeded to discuss certain other outstanding questions, of a secondary nature, arising out of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement. These were:

## III. FUTURE PROCEDURE IN CONNECTION WITH FORECASTS OF BRITISH NAVAL STRENGTH

With regard to the future forecasts of British Naval strength to Germany, Admiral Schniewind stated that the British Note on this subject had only been received that day in the German Admiralty. In these circumstances, it was decided that it would be better to deal with any points that might arise from a study of this Note in writing. An unofficial explanation of some of the points in the British Note was furnished after the general discussion by Commander Bell to the German officers immediately concerned.

## IV. PROPOSED PROTOCOL FOR GENERAL EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

Admiral Schniewind stated that before the German Government could accept this protocol they must be sure that no regional reservations would be made, such as the Soviet Far Eastern reservation. Although the German Government agreed that such an exchange of information might have a tranquillising effect, they felt that this extension of the exchange of information could only take place in an atmosphere of confidence. An exchange already took place between Germany and the United Kingdom in such an atmosphere, but the same conditions did not apply between all other powers concerned. To the German Government, therefore, the time did not seem to be ripe for the extension of this agreement.

Admiral Cunningham asked that a written reply should be returned to the British proposals on this question.

## V. VOLUNTARY LIMIT OF 40,000 TONS PROPOSED BY GREAT BRITAIN FOR CAPITAL SHIPS

Admiral Schniewind indicated that the German Government were reluctant to enter into any fresh undertakings of this kind, although as a matter of fact the new capital ships which Germany intended to build in the near future would not exceed the limit which the United Kingdom is at present observing. In coming to this decision, the German Government were greatly influenced by the fact that the German Navy is at present the only one subject to quantitative limitation. For this reason they felt bound to retain the greatest possible measure of freedom to take full account in their own construction of the latest developments in foreign naval building. A written reply to this effect would in due course be returned to the representations made by the British Government.

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Later on, the meeting reassembled, when Admiral Schniewind announced that he had consulted General-Admiral Raeder<sup>\*</sup> with regard to the British proposal for the gradual increase of German submarine tonnage in accordance with

<sup>\*</sup> Commander in Chief of the German Navy, 1935-43.

percentages to be announced annually. General-Admiral Raeder considered that an arrangement of this character would not be compatible with the decision of the Führer and Reichskanzler that Germany must be entirely free to develop her naval strength to the fullest extent possible within the scope of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement.

In these circumstances, General-Admiral Raeder suggested for consideration the following alternative formula for the announcement of the decision to build up to 100 per cent of the total British submarine tonnage:

"The German Government have informed His Majesty's Government that they have decided to avail themselves of their right to build up to parity with the British Commonwealth of Nations in submarines. In consequence, from 1939 onwards a gradual increase will take place in the percentage of German submarine tonnage, in relation to the total British tonnage, as new German submarines are laid down."

In making this suggestion, Admiral Schniewind added, for the unofficial information of the British delegation, that submarines built, building, or ordered for the German Navy in 1939 would not cause the German percentage to exceed 65 per cent of the British total.

Admiral Cunningham in reply stated that the British delegation would naturally still prefer their suggested solution of publishing percentage increases for each year. Any announcement by Great Britain would, of course, be worded so as to avoid any implication of an undertaking on the part of Germany to keep within the agreed figure.

No details of the German proposals would be published at present, but eventual publication was for the United Kingdom a necessity. It was hoped, therefore, that the German authorities might re-consider this question before agreement was reached on what should be published.

## No. 289

2496/518046-51

*The Reich Federation of Industry to the Foreign Ministry*

H/63/III

BERLIN, January 4, 1939.  
W VI 52.

For the attention of Geheimrat Rüter.

Subject: Trade with Great Britain. Cooperation between the Federation of British Industries and the Reich Federation of Industry.

DEAR GEHEIMRAT: With reference to your telephone conversation with our Herr Koppen, we have the honor to enclose for your information the record made by the Federation of British Industries of the meetings of December 20 and 21,<sup>1</sup> together with a memorandum on the same subject for the head of the Reich Federation of Industry.

Heil Hitler!

By order of the Board of Directors, Reich Federation of Industry:

KOPPEN  
HIPP

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

[Enclosure]

December 29, 1938.  
W VI 52.

Attention: Baron v. Brackel.

Subject: Trade with Great Britain.

Cooperation with the Federation of British Industries.

In the late summer of this year the writer, while making a journey of investigation in England, paid a visit to the Federation of British Industries and discussed in an entirely noncommittal way with the directors the question whether it would not further an increased exchange of goods between German and British industry if conferences took place, similar to those which were regularly held between the leading German and Italian industrial organizations. The Federation of British Industries, without displaying any special interest in the matter, promised to give the proposal a more detailed examination.

Quite unrelated to this matter, the Board of Trade in November got in touch with the German governmental commission on its way to Dublin<sup>2</sup> and proposed that to assist expansion of Anglo-German trade German and British industry should start negotiations with the object of coming to an agreement on prices and markets. As a matter of fact, the Board of Trade had in the June negotiations promised to consider how Anglo-German trade might be broadened, but its efforts, which depended merely on official instructions, had produced little result.

The Ministry of Economics inquired of the Reich Federation of Industry whether it was prepared to enter into such negotiations, and we naturally at once signified our consent; the conferences are to relate to commodity sales on the German and British markets and also on third markets. The negotiations between the governing bodies of the two directing organizations could not be started immediately, as the Federation made it a condition that, in all future negotiations, other basic points such as the promotion of exports, methods of payment by ASKI currency,<sup>3</sup> registered marks or blocked balances, and so on, must be discussed. We refused this demand on the ground of secrecy and because the Reich Ministry of Economics and the Reichsbank were the only authorities competent to deal with these questions. Then, in December, an invitation was received from the Federation to visit London for preparatory discussions. Dr. Koppen and the writer attended conferences in London on December 21 and 22 which, contrary to expectation, passed off very smoothly. For the following reasons we had expected opposition from the British:

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 259 and 263.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 262, footnote 2.

1. Reaction to the German anti-Jewish measures of November 10;
2. Strengthening of the British position as a result of the conclusion of the Anglo-American agreement; <sup>4</sup> and
3. The hopes of British industry of being able to increase their exports considerably, aided by the proposed government subsidies.

Our fears were groundless, because

1. The boycott by Jews is presumably very much more noticeable in individual business than in official negotiations.

2. The Anglo-American agreement had by no means given universal satisfaction in Great Britain, particularly among British industrialists. They are afraid of being led into a position of economic and therefore political dependence on the United States of America. We confirmed the Federation in this opinion, pointing out that Great Britain was part of Europe and that the goal which must be aimed at was the creation of a strong economic unit comprising Germany, Great Britain, France, and Italy.

3. As we learned at the last minute, export subsidies were not being made available either for coal or for other exports. The Government fights shy of setting up such a complicated investigation system as, for instance, exists in Germany. If, however, they grant concessions to exports without some similar method of supervision, then governmental resources will be pledged to excess, since it will not be possible for long to confine assistance only to certain branches of export. The other industries would also claim equal privileges.

It is probably precisely this last circumstance, that is, the refusal of the Government to provide export subsidies, which has induced the Federation to display good will in the negotiations. In any case, our proposals were accepted without argument, and the British forbore to insist on their frequently expressed desire that promotion of exports, ASKI currency, registered marks, blocked balances, et cetera, should be discussed. The following points offered the only really substantial difficulties during the negotiations:

(a) If, for example, the British Government in deference to the wishes of German industry reduces the import duty on any particular product, it would then be impossible to prevent, by virtue of the most-favored-nation clause, other competitive countries such as Japan and Belgium from being placed in a position to supply in increased quantities the very goods for which Germany should have received specially favored treatment. We suggested, in order to preclude this danger, that subsections should be inserted in the British customs tariff which would apply specially to the products of German industry. The Federation would discuss this point with the Board of Trade.

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<sup>4</sup> Signed Nov. 17, 1938.

(b) If, in accordance with our wishes, the import of any particular product of German industry substantially increased, the Federation demanded compensation for the prejudice thus caused to British industry. We took the view that no compensation would be necessary, since there should be an expansion of trade and only additional deliveries were under consideration. If that, however, is impossible, a way must be found to compensate British industry in a third market. This step must naturally not have the effect of correspondingly reducing deliveries from German industry to the third market in question. This would merely mean a change of direction for German exports and not an increase in them.

(c) The Federation seemed inclined to arrange delimitations of third markets for a whole series of commodities. We put forward our objections with particular reference to the question of advertising.

(d) It frequently happens that we cannot prevent a relocation of industry [*Industrie-Verschleppung*], since it was pointed out that, if Germany did not supply the production machinery [to third countries], British industry would undertake delivery. With reference to this point, we have suggested to the Federation that the relocation of industry should be discussed in the course of the proposed meeting between the two directing organizations. The conception "relocation of industry" is completely new to British industry. The Federation, however, showed great interest in it and was very ready to enter into a discussion of the question, having regard particularly to the extensive industrialization of British India and South Africa, which has caused Great Britain to lose such a considerable proportion of her export trade.<sup>5</sup>

There was complete agreement that two main delegations [*Hauptdelegationen*] should also be formed for this purpose on the model of the German-Italian industrial conferences. These delegations could discuss basic questions such as, for example, problems connected with the relocation of industry. Their main function will be, however, to settle by virtue of their authority any disputed questions which may arise during industrial group discussions [*Fachbesprechungen*].

It is proposed to arrange the first meeting of German and British industrialists in February. The meeting place will be in Germany, at some spot convenient for the British, for example, Bonn. As a result of the conferences which have taken place in London, we have already listed 18 points which can be discussed by the British associations and the German groups or subgroups [*Fach- bzw. Fachuntergruppen*]. These points affect various commodities in such economic groups as the

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<sup>5</sup> A memorandum by Ritter dated Jan. 4 (2946/518052-54) records that the British spokesmen "were interested in further discussion of a common Anglo-German defense against *Industrie-Verschleppung*, that is, agreement on a common policy toward countries where loss of markets threatened because of the rise of their own industries."

iron, steel, and tin-plate industry, the wood-working industry, the chemical and pottery industries, and so on. The Federation will apply to the British associations for the purpose of laying before them detailed proposals for the negotiations.

The Governing Council of the Federation meets on January 18. It will pass a resolution on the measures agreed on between us and the Board of Directors of the Federation, subject to the approval of the Governing Council. This delay is most regrettable but cannot be avoided. It is so far fortunate in the sense that Dr. Koppen and the writer have been invited to the annual dinner of the German Chamber of Commerce in London, which takes place on January 23. We shall therefore be able to arrange directly with the Federation, provided that it has received the consent of the Governing Council, the place and date of meeting as well as the problems to be discussed. As experience has shown, agreements of this kind can be achieved far better by personal contact than by correspondence.

DR. HIPF

## No. 290

1585/382947-50

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 2 of January 5

LONDON, January 5, 1939.

Received January 6—11:10 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 1 of January 2.<sup>1</sup>

1. I waited until today to carry out the step ordered in the above-mentioned telegram in order to be able to speak to Lord Halifax personally, as he has been absent on Christmas leave. I protested in the strongest terms against the grave insults to the Führer and leading statesmen of Germany expressed in the article by Wells in the *News Chronicle*,<sup>2</sup> and pointed out that in recent months the Embassy had unfortunately been obliged to make an ever increasing number of complaints about insults to the Führer; I brought these insults to the attention of Lord Halifax by quoting individual cases. The most serious insult, however, was contained in the New Year's article by Wells in the *News Chronicle*, which seemed less to proceed from the intention to criticize, while not shrinking from insults, than to have been written for the sole purpose of heaping serious calumnies upon the Führer and Chancellor and his closest colleagues.

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> In two articles entitled "1939—What Does It Hold? A Forecast", appearing in the *News Chronicle* on Jan. 2 and 3, 1939, H. G. Wells had described Hitler, Göring, and Goebbels as "certifiable lunatics" and referred disparagingly to the forthcoming Royal visit to the United States.

I knew quite well that the British Government rejected the possibility of exerting direct influence on the press as uncalled for and that it also pointed out the lack of legal powers. I had also noted that Wells' two articles did not even stop at derogatory criticism of the King and Queen and that they grievously slandered Chamberlain.

These circumstances, however, could not alter the fact that the numerous insults to the Head of the German State and the impossibility of adequate amends being made deeply offended German national sensitiveness and could not but have injurious results for Anglo-German relations. I was therefore anxious to bring the question up for discussion again, as to whether some sort of remedy could not be found, at least for the future.

Lord Halifax replied that he had no hesitation in describing the article in question, which he had seen, as the most shocking insult to the Führer which he had read in the press so far. He therefore wished to express to me his very deepest regret at these insults to the Führer and asked me to convey this regret to the German Government. He fully realized that, in view of the whole conception of the State in present day Germany, insults to and derision of the Führer must have far-reaching and lasting consequences. On the occasion of his visit to Berlin, he had had a serious talk with Minister Goebbels on this subject. On that occasion Minister Goebbels had depicted to him the peculiarities of the National Socialist conception of the State and the position occupied in it by the Führer; he had also expressly warned him of the political consequences of derision of or insults to the Führer. On his return to England he—Halifax—had done his best to prevent excesses in the press; he had had discussions with two well-known cartoonists, one of them the notorious Low, and with a number of eminent representatives of the press, including the editor of the *News Chronicle*, and had tried to bring influence to bear upon them. He had been successful up to a point. It was extremely regrettable that numerous lapses were again to be noted in recent months; an explanation, although not an excuse for this, was to be sought in the fact that such defamatory articles, as for example the one in question, were written primarily for reasons connected with domestic politics in order to attack the Government. One must also take into consideration the acrimonious feeling in politics generally, which was prevalent at the moment.

In reply I told Lord Halifax that the present state of affairs could not continue. I had to request that an improvement be brought about in some way or other in order to avoid unpleasant political consequences.

Lord Halifax promised to do everything possible within his sphere of influence in order to prevent such insults to the Führer in the future.

2. As in the opinion of the legal adviser to the Embassy there is sufficient ground for a successful libel action, I ask you to consider whether in the case in question it would not be advisable to bring a libel action against the *News Chronicle*.<sup>3</sup> It is quite possible that, in view of the perfectly clear facts of the case, the newspaper would be so heavily fined that it would suffer a considerable financial loss, which would have a deterrent effect on other press organs.

Written report follows.

DIRKSEN

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Marschall von Bieberstein's handwriting: "As far as I know, the slandered person must appear personally before the Court."

## No. 291

1585/382990-92

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 90

LONDON, January 9, 1939.

Received January 11.

Pol. II 98.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Great Britain and President Roosevelt's message to Congress.

President Roosevelt's message of January 4, in the first part of which he inveighs against the authoritarian states, has met with universal approval in the public opinion of this country and in the press of all parties. Although Roosevelt did not mention Germany, the newspapers here assume at once that his attacks were primarily directed against that country. One cannot escape the impression that a certain satisfaction is evinced here that the strong cousin on the other side of the ocean has used language which they would often like to use themselves, but which so far they have not had sufficient courage to use. There is almost an undertone of applause that Roosevelt has acted up to the motto: "England expects every American to do his duty."<sup>1</sup>

In recognition of the effect of the American President's words on British public opinion, Chamberlain made his well-known statement in agreement.<sup>2</sup> I hear in confidence that—as might perhaps have been expected—the idea of this initiative, which is in itself unusual, originated not with the Foreign Office but with Chamberlain himself. The statement was certainly drafted in the American Department of the Foreign Office.

The following are the principal motives which may have induced Chamberlain to take this course: By agreeing with the observations of the President of the United States, which have the full approval

<sup>1</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>2</sup> On Jan. 5, 1939.

of British public opinion, the Prime Minister showed that there was no divergence in matters of ideology [*weltanschauliche Dinge*] between the opinion of the British public and that of the Prime Minister and that he does not hesitate to adopt an attitude on these lines even when this must be interpreted in foreign policy as ranging himself against the totalitarian powers. Chamberlain now obviously takes the view that in any case little damage can be done to Anglo-German relations at the moment. In domestic policy, Chamberlain has unquestionably strengthened his position by this action.

Further, an opportunity presented itself here for the Prime Minister to make a personal contribution in the sphere of Anglo-American relations. This was an answer to the critics who had recently been saying that in his endeavors for a settlement with the Axis Powers the Prime Minister had been neglecting relations with the United States. In this connection it might be mentioned that in the *Sunday Times*, "Scrutator," who is in close touch with Chamberlain, already talks of the existence of a moral alliance between the two states. By his statements Roosevelt has begun to give a political character to this moral alliance, in spite of the different nature of the political antagonisms between the United States and Germany and between Great Britain and Germany. It is obvious that the idea of amending the Neutrality Act has in any case given rise to the feeling in wide circles in Great Britain that the position of the United Kingdom vis-à-vis the totalitarian states has been strengthened. Chamberlain's statement on the American President's message was therefore also meant to return thanks for moral backing, which Chamberlain imagines he has received for his conversations in Rome.

Besides that, it was a means of proving to American public opinion, which continues to moralize against the Munich Agreement, that he was capable of taking a different line.

V. DIRKSEN

## No. 292

2614/525540-44

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 170

LONDON, January 12, 1939.

Received January 14.

Pol. VIII 87.

Subject: The situation in the Far East.

Enclosed is a memorandum on a conversation which a member of the Embassy had with Mr. N. B. Ronald, deputy head of the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office.

V. DIRKSEN

[Enclosure]

LONDON, January 10, 1939.

Today I had a conversation with Ronald, who is at present in charge of the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office in the absence of the head of the Department. In the course of the conversation he made the following remarks:

He regarded the present Japanese Cabinet<sup>1</sup> as a kind of "stopgap"<sup>2</sup> Cabinet. The significance of the change of Cabinet could not quite be overlooked. Apart from the disappearance of Admiral Suetsugu, the Minister of the Interior, known to have radical views, the most important factor was the departure of Ikeda, Minister of Economics. He was an important man. The reasons for his departure might have been twofold. On the one hand, it might be that Ikeda had not been able to agree to the possible intention of a more radical transformation of the whole industrial and economic life to a war basis—as he expressed it: "regimentation of the Japanese nation."<sup>2</sup> Another reason, however, might have been that he no longer felt that certain preconditions for the successful continuation of the war existed. The economic situation was now a peculiar one. Whereas on the one hand it was certain that the Navy, for example, had sufficient armaments and funds at their disposal and that enormous stocks of certain products, as for example, "piece goods",<sup>2</sup> were available, it was also certain that other branches of Japanese production were suffering extreme shortages. It was possible that Ikeda regarded the functioning of just these branches as being of special importance for the continuation of the war, while the military took the opposite view. The foregoing were, however, only surmises on the reasons for Ikeda's resignation. At all events it was certain that the situation in Japan at present was "very patchy."<sup>2</sup>

We then went on to speak of the war itself. The intention of the Japanese to incorporate the provisional governments in the provinces occupied by them into one united body could not be carried out for the present because the person chosen by them had absented himself in Peking. They had then thought of assigning this task to Wang,<sup>3</sup> but as a renegade and a traitor to the cause of Chiang Kai-shek, Wang was not exactly the right man. However the Japanese were "very patient and tenacious people"<sup>2</sup> and would probably continue their efforts at consolidation.

<sup>1</sup> Prince Konoye's Cabinet having resigned on Jan. 4, 1939, a new Cabinet was formed the same day by Baron Hiranuma.

<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>3</sup> Wang Ching-wei, former Premier, expelled from the Kuomintang on Jan. 2, 1939, for advocating acceptance of Prince Konoye's peace terms.

According to Foreign Office reports there was not the slightest reason to assume that Chiang Kai-shek intended to give up resistance. In these circumstances there was the danger that the whole of northwest China would slowly be driven into the arms of the Bolsheviks and that the unofficial Soviet advisers, who were already active there, would be given official status. The Bolshevization of northwest China was not in Britain's interest, nor—as he assumed—in ours.

I then went on to speak of the new road from China to Burma and of the British financial support for the Chinese. Ronald said that this was a matter of financing the execution of a contract for heavy vehicles for which the £500,000 was mainly to be used. When I then mentioned the British ship which had recently come to Rangoon with Russian war matériel on board (see report No. 3280 of the German Consulate General in Calcutta of December 13 last<sup>4</sup>), Ronald said that he knew exactly which ship I referred to. It had recently been off Hong Kong when Canton was captured. It had then tried in vain to discharge its cargo in French Indochina, had not been able to unload in Singapore either, and had finally proceeded to Rangoon. It was lying there now. In this connection he mentioned that two German ships of the Rickmers Line had unloaded war matériel for the Chinese, one in Rangoon and the other up-river in Burma. The Japanese knew about this transport of war matériel by the Rickmers Line. Ronald then said with a smile that even totalitarian states could not cancel shipments of war matériel from one day to the next. Contracts were after all still valid and must be carried out in the interests of exporters and manufacturers.

Ronald then said that what the British wanted most of all was Anglo-German cooperation in the Far East. The Foreign Secretary was particularly interested in this, but unfortunately we would not consent to it. His view was that the main reason for failure to reach such cooperation might well be our relations with Japan. The second obstacle was the Americans, who did not want to see Anglo-German cooperation. The British had tried in vain to point out to them that Anglo-German cooperation in the Far East could only further a general settlement, which in the end the Americans also wanted. However, they had not given up hope. Perhaps Germany's point of view would after all change one day.

V. SELZAM

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<sup>4</sup> Not found.

No. 293

1665/393838-39

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 13 of January 16

LONDON, January 16, 1939—9:16 p.m.

Received January 17—12:15 a.m.

Pol. I M 191 g.

With reference to your instruction Pol. I M 56 g of January 10<sup>1</sup> and telegraphic instruction No. 13 of January 16.<sup>2</sup>

I intend to hand over the note to Cadogan, Under Secretary of State, on January 18. As regards treatment by the press, I should like first to suggest to Cadogan that no communiqué be issued. If, however, the British regard a communiqué as desirable, I should at the same time hand over a German draft, for which I suggest the following text:

"In December last the German Government notified His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of its intention to exercise certain rights granted to it under the Anglo-German naval agreements of June 18, 1935, and July 17, 1937.

"The questions arising from the assertion of these rights by the German Government were the subject of a friendly discussion in Berlin on December 30, 1938.<sup>3</sup> The German Government promised to forward a comprehensive statement to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. On January 18 the German Government addressed to the British Government the written statement envisaged at the above-mentioned friendly discussion.

"According to this statement Germany will, as from 1939, put into effect the already announced expansion of the German U-boat fleet up to parity with Great Britain by gradual use of the percentage ratio until the treaty limit is reached. Furthermore, Germany will alter the armament of two 10,000-ton cruisers now being built. A statement to this effect was also made to the British Government last December. It is emphasized that, in this case too, it is a question of exercising a right assured by treaty."

I request instructions by telegram by the morning of January 18.<sup>4</sup>

KORDT

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1665/393824). This repeated to London the German memorandum of the conversations of Dec. 30 and a note (1665/393800-23) giving the final German views on the submarine tonnage and cruiser-armament questions.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (1665/393837). This directed the handing over of the note and the submission of a press communiqué for approval in Berlin.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 288, enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> The Foreign Ministry replied by telegram No. 15 of Jan. 17 (1665/393840) that a press communiqué was essential and that the text proposed above should be agreed with the British but with the omission of the second mention of "friendly" at the end of the second paragraph and of the words "already announced" at the beginning of the third paragraph. A telegraphic report on the agreed text was to be submitted for the Führer's approval.

## No. 294

1665/393874

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

323

ROME, January 16, 1939.

Pol. I M 382 g.

Subject: Tonnage limitation of capital ships.

With reference to the draft<sup>1</sup> of the German Government's reply to the British Government relating to the limitation on tonnage of capital ships, recently handed to Admiral Raineri-Biscia in Berlin, the head of the appropriate department of the Foreign Ministry here delivered today to Counselor of Embassy von Plessen a copy of the Italian answer which will be sent to the British Ambassador here today.

I have the honor to submit a copy and a translation of the document.

V. MACKENSEN

[Enclosure]<sup>2</sup>

1665/393876

ROME, January 16, 1939.

Pol. I M 382 g.

**YOUR EXCELLENCY:** In reply to the note which your Government addressed to the Royal Ambassador in London, dated December 1, relative to the tonnage of capital ships, I have the honor to inform you that, although the new maximum limit fixed for capital ships in the protocol of June 30, 1938, additional to the naval treaty of March 25, 1936, is 45,000 tons, the Italian Government has no intention of exceeding the limit of 40,000 for the ships which will be eventually laid down in 1939.

My Government has always been of the opinion that the displacement of capital ships should be kept as low as possible; and it hopes that the reciprocal intention of Great Britain and Italy not to exceed the limit of 40,000 tons may contribute toward the acceptance in the future, as now, by all the powers which are linked by naval agreements with Great Britain, of the idea of not exceeding this limit and that on these bases it will be possible to reach a general agreement.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1665/393869-73). For the final version of the German reply see document No. 311.

<sup>2</sup> The copy used is in Italian in the original. The German translation sent to Berlin by Mackensen is 1665/393875. There is also an English translation, prepared by the Foreign Office and sent to the German Embassy in London (2130/465388); in this version, Ciano's letter is dated Jan. 17.

If the Italian Government should find it necessary to construct capital ships of a tonnage exceeding 40,000, it will not fail to give notification of it to the other interested parties, in accordance with the provisions of the treaty of London of 1936.

Pray accept, Your Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.

CIANO

## No. 295

1665/393841-42

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

### Telegram

No. 15 of January 18

LONDON, January 18, 1939—9: 12 p.m.

Received January 19—12: 45 a.m.

Pol. I M 248 g.

With reference to telegraphic instruction No. 15 of January 17.<sup>1</sup>

At 4 o'clock today I handed to Cadogan the note<sup>2</sup> as arranged and at the same time gave him the press communiqué.

Cadogan read the document and his first remark was that no legal objections to the German action could be raised. At the Berlin negotiations, however, the point had been mentioned that at first Germany should not exceed 65 percent of the total British submarine tonnage. In reply to this, I said that the Reich Government was not in a position to undertake further promises and obligations.

Continuing, Cadogan made a few remarks on the danger threatening the cruiser holiday by the change in armament of cruisers K and L. I referred him to the concluding paragraph of our note, whereupon Cadogan said that reports on Russian construction did not tally. I took advantage of the opportunity to point out to Cadogan that Russian plans for construction had purposely not been mentioned in the communiqué. He readily agreed with this and described the draft communiqué as correct; he must, however, have it studied and would then inform me.

Cadogan then went on to speak of the questions which might be expected in the House of Commons on the naval question. The British Government might easily find itself in an awkward position if it were asked about the special circumstances on which the Reich Government based the change in armament of the two cruisers. It might be obliged to mention that Germany's reason referred to Soviet construction. If the Government were then asked whether Britain was

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 293, footnote 4.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.*, footnote 1.

in possession of similar information, it would have to answer regardless of consequences. I contradicted Cadogan and asserted that the text of the agreements did not demand uniformity of views on the existence of "special circumstances." Besides, the Government could say that an answer to this question was not in the national interest. Cadogan said he thought that such an evasive answer was hardly possible. He had mentioned this eventuality to me only in case the British Government were later accused of ambiguous behavior. In reply I maintained our point of view.

KORDT

No. 296

1665/393848-50

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 21 of January 23

LONDON, January 23, 1939.

Received January 25—10:25 a.m.

Pol. I M 356 g.

With reference to my telegram No. 20 of January 21.<sup>1</sup>

The Foreign Office this afternoon handed to a member of the Embassy the following draft of a statement which coincides in all essential points with the text proposed by us:<sup>2</sup>

"Draft communiqué. In December last, the German Government notified His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of their intention to avail themselves of certain rights under the Anglo-German Naval Agreements of June 18th, 1925 [1935] and July 7th [17th], 1937.

"On December 30th, friendly discussions took place in Berlin with regard to certain questions arising out of the exercise by the German Government of these rights. The German Government then agreed to furnish His Majesty's Government with a statement in writing.

"On January 18th the German Government addressed to His Majesty's Government a written statement of their intentions as explained in those discussions.

"According to that statement, Germany will progressively increase her submarine tonnage up to parity with that of the Members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, beginning in the year 1939 and continuing until the treaty limit is reached.

"Furthermore, Germany will arm the two 10,000 ton cruisers K and L now under construction in such a manner as to change them from cruisers of sub-category (b) to cruisers of sub-category (a). In doing so Germany exercises a right to which she is entitled by treaty."

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1665/393846).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 293. This draft is in English in the original.

A striking feature is the rewording of the last paragraph, in which the British clearly wish to emphasize that, by the change in armament, the two cruisers K and L come into the category of heavy cruisers. I assume that this alteration was made at the request of the Admiralty, to whom a breakdown of the building holiday is less inconvenient than to the Foreign Office.

The British Government has expressed no special wishes regarding the date of publication. I therefore request to be informed simultaneously of the approval of the text of the announcement and of the date of publication by DNB.<sup>3</sup> In doing so, it must be taken into consideration that the British must be given sufficient time to release the report to the morning papers before they go to press. Publication in the morning press is recommended, because midday and evening papers here are inclined to give a sensational character to all reports of this kind.

VON DIRKSEN

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<sup>3</sup> A Foreign Ministry minute of Jan. 26 records that the OKM had agreed to the wording of the communiqué, which was to be submitted by the Foreign Minister to the Führer for his approval (1665/393855). A further minute of Feb. 2 (1665/393860) states that the Foreign Minister and the Führer had approved the text, which was to be published in the German and British press on the morning of the 3rd.

## No. 297

1665/393861

### *The High Command of the Navy to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

BERLIN, January 24, 1939.

SK 56/39

Pol. I M 360 g.

For the attention of Counselor of Legation von Kamphoeverer or his deputy.

Subject: British proposal for communicating estimated strength of the British fleet for the next 4-5 years.

Previous references: Pol. I M 5060 geh. of December 30, 1938; SK 399/38 geh. of October 24, 1938.<sup>1</sup>

The Naval Attaché in London has received the following instruction from the High Command of the Navy:

The Führer has ordered that the demand put earlier by the High Command of the Navy to the British Government, that the latter should periodically announce the estimated strength of their fleet 5 years in advance and in reply to which the British made a corresponding proposal, is not to be pursued further. No reply will there-

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

fore be made to the British proposal. An attempt is to be made to let the matter sink into oblivion.

Should further steps be taken in this matter by the British, a fresh decision will be made on future procedure.

You are requested to inform the Embassy in London to this effect.

By order:  
Signed in draft, SCHNIEWIND

### No. 298

1665/393891-92

*The High Command of the Navy to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

BERLIN, January 24, 1939.

SK 55/39

Pol. I M 415 g.

For the attention of Counselor of Legation von Kamphoevener or his deputy.

Subject: General exchange of information.

Previous references: Pol. I 573 II of December 10, 1938.<sup>1</sup>

Enclosed are three copies of the draft of a note from the German Government to His Majesty's Government, in answer to the British proposal for a general exchange of information.<sup>2</sup> The German view has already been conveyed orally to the British delegation at the conversations of December 30, 1938.<sup>3</sup>

This point was also discussed with the Italian naval officers on January 6, 1939, in order to insure an attitude similar to Germany's on the part of the Italian Navy to the British proposal, which was also made to Italy.<sup>4</sup> A memorandum on this conversation is being forwarded for your information in appendix 2 to my letter SK 54/39 geh.<sup>5</sup>

By order:  
Signed in draft, SCHNIEWIND

[Enclosure]

SECRET

DRAFT OF A GERMAN NOTE IN ANSWER TO THE BRITISH PROPOSAL FOR A GENERAL EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BETWEEN THE TREATY POWERS

The German Government has made a detailed study of the proposal submitted in the note of His Majesty's Government of November 29,

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 276. This proposal was repeated to the OKM under No. Pol. I 573 II.

<sup>2</sup> This note was handed to the Foreign Office by the German Embassy in London on Feb. 15 (2129/464931-32).

<sup>3</sup> See enclosure to document No. 288.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 294 and enclosure.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (1665/393869-73). The Italian representatives were Vice Admiral Raineri-Biscia and Rear Admiral Count de Courten.

1938, for a generalizing of exchange of information pursuant to part III of the existing naval agreements.

The German Government is in principle well disposed toward the British proposal and confirms its view expressed on previous occasions. It is, however, of the opinion that:

1. In such an exchange of information important units of the naval forces of a power may not be excluded;
2. That such an exchange of information, if it is to have its full effect of reassurance, must include all major naval powers;
3. That, among the individual powers who are to participate in the exchange of information, there must be a general atmosphere of greater confidence than is at present the case, to the regret of the German Government.

The German Government therefore sees no possibility at present of participating in a general exchange of information as proposed by His Majesty's Government.

## No. 299

2540/520695

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 23 of January 24

LONDON, January 24, 1939.

Received January 25—10:00 a.m.

W VI 303.

Several British guests, such as Secretary of State Hudson<sup>1</sup> and Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, at yesterday's dinner of the German Chamber of Commerce, took the opportunity to point out that a visit to London by Funk, Reich Minister of Economics and President of the Reichsbank, would certainly be well timed for extending the informal economic conversations started in October of last year. The *raison d'être* of the visit could be given as the imminent conclusion of the coal negotiations between the German and British mining industry. Even though this only represents an understanding between the two industries, nevertheless, the British Government has attributed so much importance to this long-desired agreement that, according to the British view, a visit by the Reich Minister of Economics and President of the Reichsbank would be fully justified on this occasion. The British Government considers that this visit would provide an opportunity to start informally a wider range of economic conversations.

The German representatives made no comments on the British suggestions.

<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Under Secretary of the Board of Trade.

I request instructions whether any further steps should be taken about the proposal.<sup>2</sup>

DIRKSEN

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<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "Counselor of Legation v. Rintelen—for information. I will lay the matter before Ministerialdirektor Wiehl for his decision, as he is due back from Warsaw on Jan. 28. Rüter."

On Jan. 30 Wiehl, who had attended the Chamber of Commerce dinner, requested an opinion from the Ministry of Economics on the proposal that Funk visit London (2496/518055).

### No. 300

1585/383012

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 24 of January 25

LONDON, January 25, 1939—2:10 p.m.

Received January 25—4:35 p.m.

Pol. II 275.

Prime Minister Chamberlain, whom I met yesterday at a party, expressed to me in a long talk his apprehensions at the tension in Europe. I replied that I should have supposed his conversations with Mussolini in Rome<sup>1</sup> would at least have reassured him as to the peaceful intentions of Germany and Italy.

Chamberlain agreed to this and referred to his hopes that a dangerous sore point would shortly be eliminated by the ending of the civil war in Spain. He then, however, harked back again to his pessimistic view of the present situation in Europe and remarked that it would be of the utmost significance if the Führer and Chancellor could in the near future make a reassuring statement on the world situation. I pointed out to the Prime Minister that the Führer, both in his New Year's message and in his address to the Diplomatic Corps at the New Year's reception, had expressed himself emphatically in a constructive sense and had mentioned the Munich conference as well as the statesmen who had taken part in it. Unfortunately, this pronouncement had hardly been noticed in the British press. Chamberlain answered quickly that due attention had been paid to the pronouncements by the official circles concerned.

In conclusion, I made it clear to Chamberlain that in order to calm the atmosphere everywhere it was necessary that the general tone, particularly that of the British press, should also be in harmony and reminded him that only yesterday, Wells, the author, had renewed

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<sup>1</sup> Chamberlain and Halifax were in Italy from Jan. 11 to Jan. 14.

in the *News Chronicle* his shocking insults to the Führer.<sup>2</sup> Chamberlain deplored these attacks and admitted that the *News Chronicle* was in fact the most dangerous British newspaper and that it had even attacked the King, the Queen, and the British Government in an irresponsible way.

DIRKSEN

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<sup>2</sup> In an article appearing in the *News Chronicle* on Jan. 23, 1939, H. G. Wells replied to Mr. Lyons, the Australian Prime Minister, who had rebuked him for attacking the head of a friendly state, and defended his right to do so. See also document No. 290, footnote 2.

### No. 301

2539/520687-89

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, January 26, 1939.

#### PRESENT POSITION OF THE ANGLO-GERMAN COAL NEGOTIATIONS

On the occasion of the informal discussions on Anglo-German economic questions at the beginning of November 1938,<sup>1</sup> the British delegation expressed the urgent wish that the negotiations on an Anglo-German coal cartel should be brought to an early conclusion. They handed over a memorandum drawn up by the British Ministry of Mines on "The Problem of the Coal Export Trade" dated November 7, 1938, which sets out very objectively and convincingly the mutual advantages of the cartel but which in conclusion suggests that the British Government will support its interested parties in the struggle for a fair share of the world market by introducing a tax on production and by subsidies insofar as agreement is not reached.

Agreement between the Rhine-Westphalia Coal Syndicate and the Central Council of Colliery Owners on the form of a cartel already had practically been reached. Difficulties arose, in particular, in reaching agreement on the distribution of markets and the inclusion of the export of coke and the bunker-coal trade in the actual export of coal.

On November 30, 1938, the British Ministry of Mines informed the German Embassy in London (W VI 3476) <sup>2</sup> that, on the basis of the total export of the seven main coal countries in the years 1935-37, the representatives of the Rhine-Westphalia Coal Syndicate had conceded a British quota of 48 percent and a German quota of 31 percent as the extreme limit. On the other hand the British, on the basis of the total export of the seven main coal countries in the years 1929 to

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 263.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 274.

1936, wanted to establish a British quota of 53.1 percent and a German quota of 25.5 percent. The British Government proposed that both Governments should prevail upon their interested parties to agree to split the remaining difference.

The German Government stated its agreement in principle to this (letter of the Reich Ministry of Economics of December 19, 1938) <sup>3</sup> but reserved a final decision, as it could not yet estimate the effects of the British proposal, partly as regards the still existing difference in the quotas of both sides and partly as regards the difference in the statistical returns of the various coal-exporting countries and the inclusion of the export of coke and the bunker-coal trade. The quota question, however, must be solved now that agreement had been reached in the previous conversations on the majority of the fundamental questions and all participants had recognized the economic expediency of a firm agreement. The German Government, however, considered it very important that Germany should receive at least the same foreign-currency proceeds from the export of coal as before (W VI 3735).<sup>3</sup>

According to a report from the Embassy in London dated December 22 (W VI 3790),<sup>4</sup> the British Ministry of Mines was even prepared, in the interest of bringing about an understanding, to include a clause in the agreement to the effect that a reexamination should take place, if the foreign-currency proceeds from German coal exports sank below the level prevailing before the conclusion of the agreement. Further, the Ministry of Mines wanted to put pressure on the interested parties in Britain by reserving the right to discuss the quota question directly with the German Government, if, contrary to expectations, the British mining representatives did not reach agreement when negotiations with the Rhine-Westphalia Coal Syndicate were resumed.

At a meeting of the Reich Ministry of Economics in the middle of January under the chairmanship of Major General von Hanecken <sup>5</sup> it was decided that we attach special importance to receiving the same foreign-currency proceeds as before, if we give way to the British in the question of the coal-export quota.

According to a telegram from the German Embassy in London of January 24 <sup>6</sup> and a statement from the Reich Ministry of Economics (Ministerial Counselor Gabriel), the negotiations resumed between the interested parties in London are nearing conclusion.

RÜTER

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 282.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (2496/518042-43).

<sup>5</sup> Major General von Hanneken was head of a Department in the Reich Ministry of Economics.

<sup>6</sup> Document No. 299.

## No. 302

2005/442815-16

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, January 27, 1939.

Subject: Anglo-German industrial negotiations.

Submitted to Ministerialdirektor Wiehl on instructions received through Attaché Steg.

1. Baron von Süsskind of the Reich Ministry of Economics and Herr Hipp of the Reich Federation of Industry returned to Berlin from London only on the evening of January 27; so far I have been able to speak only to Herr Hipp on the telephone on the result of the further negotiations in London.

2. Herr Hipp's impression was that the Federation of British Industries was less enthusiastic than before about the continuation of the conversations and the start of official negotiations; he attributes this to British anxiety about political developments and to the impression made by the change in the presidency of the Reichsbank;<sup>1</sup> British industrial circles assume that Germany will force her export trade by all means.

3. On the other hand official personages spoke *in favor* of starting the conversations; for example, Leith-Ross suggested this to the Embassy, and Mr. Hudson to Herr Hipp. Hudson said that it would be a great achievement if in the near future some 10 agreements could be concluded between the German and British industries taking part.

4. The officials of the Federation agree that the main delegations of industrialists of both sides should meet in February to discuss general questions; they do not think, however, that they will be able to bring together by that time a sufficient number of representative members of *individual* British industries who could negotiate with German representatives of similar groups. *We* on the other hand consider it important that the main delegations should have meetings at the same time with as many group delegations as possible so that concessions which must be made by one group can be offset by advantages for other groups.

5. It is at present expected, but not yet definitely settled, that the main delegations should meet at Düsseldorf on February 28 or March 1. The Federation has promised to send to the Reich Federation of Industry as soon as possible a list of those British organizations

<sup>1</sup>On Jan. 20 Hitler had dismissed Schacht from his post as President of the Reichsbank and appointed Minister of Economics Walther Funk in his place for a period of 4 years. Schacht remained a member of the Reich Government in his capacity as Reich Minister without Portfolio. Funk continued to exercise his previous functions as Minister of Economics.

which are prepared to negotiate. It is agreed by the German side that at first only British wishes and suggestions shall be the subject of negotiation.

6. The main German delegation will be led by Herren Ernst Poensgen, v. Schnitzler (I. G. Farben), and Junghans (watch and clock industry).

RÜTTER

### No. 303

1585/383019-20

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 27 of January 28

LONDON, January 28, 1939.

Received January 29—10:00 a.m.

1. The negotiations between the representatives of the Rhine-Westphalia Coal Syndicate and the Mining Federation<sup>1</sup> of Great Britain have achieved a positive result this afternoon, after further discussions lasting 2 days.

During these negotiations a crop of new difficulties arose. If only in view of her own export organization and control, England could not waive inclusion of bunker coal. To this fact Germany could not close her eyes. After lengthy arguments, coke was included in the comprehensive quota. Furthermore, difficulties arose because Great Britain refused to recognize that the present German exports to Ireland were completely abnormal. The British delegation finally gave way on this point.

Taking as a basis a coal export ratio of 30 (German) to 50 (British), a total percentage was worked out (coal, coke, briquettes, including bunker coal) of 32.08 for Germany and 46.27 for Great Britain.

2. In the course of the conferences the representatives of both sides strove with the greatest pertinacity to gain their points, and the British Ministry of Mines was repeatedly compelled to exercise a restraining influence on the representatives of the British mining industry. It must be recognized that the Ministry of Mines throughout kept in closest touch with the Embassy, which for its part was thus enabled to lend added emphasis to the German claims.

3. At the conclusion of the conference the representatives of the German and British mining industries issued jointly to the press a statement couched in the following terms:

"Following the discussions which have been taking place for some time between the representatives of the principal European coal-pro-

<sup>1</sup> "Mining Association of Great Britain" was its correct title.

ducing countries with a view to reaching an international coal agreement, it was arranged that meetings should take place between the representatives of the British and German coal industries, as the two countries predominantly interested in the export trade, with a view to ascertaining whether a basis of agreement could be reached between them and thus facilitate the future negotiations among all of the countries concerned. The meetings between the representatives of the British and German coal industries have succeeded in settling all points of difference, and it is now proposed to resume the negotiations among the whole of the countries interested with a view to reaching a general agreement.”<sup>2</sup>

4. Bearing in mind the importance for the complete range of Anglo-German economic relations which is attributed here to the agreement, I recommend a suitable appreciation of it in the German press.

DIRKSEN

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<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

## No. 304

2005/442817-18

### *Ambassador Dirksen to Ministerialdirektor Wiehl*

LONDON, January 30, 1939.

DEAR HERR WIEHL: I am sending you herewith, as a souvenir of our joint appearance at the German Chamber of Commerce dinner<sup>1</sup> in London, a clipping from the *Evening News*<sup>2</sup> which has just come into my hands. You will note that we have both been “put through the hoop” in it, although not in an unfriendly way.

I hope that you have pleasant memories of your all too short day here in London; to me the exchange of views was both valuable and constructive. In the meantime, it has been endorsed by the conclusion of the coal agreement. Hudson told me again the next day during a reception at the Embassy what great significance he attributed to this agreement. In connection with it, he paraded an imposing list of branches of industry, all of which stood ready for negotiations with our industries. He concluded with the hint that, in the event of Anglo-German agreement, the Americans would also cooperate and suggested all manner of very optimistic results for world economy.

We have got the impression that the Federation of British Industries is somewhat lukewarm and is inclined to treat the conversations as unimportant, both with reference to their scope and also as regards those taking part. I have already spoken about this with Herr Weber,<sup>3</sup> asking him to draw the attention of the Board of Trade to

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 299.

<sup>2</sup> Not reprinted.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 273, footnote 5.

these tendencies. The British Government, as you yourself will have noticed, is very good at negotiating agreements between industries and likes bringing obstinate delegates forcibly round the conference table. It is more than likely that, without this assistance, the coal negotiations likewise would not so soon have come to a positive conclusion.<sup>4</sup>

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,  
DIRKSEN

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<sup>4</sup> Wiehl replied on Feb. 3 (2005/442822 and 2186/472333), expressing satisfaction with his visit to London and saying that, in spite of the difficulties, he was trying to arrange further reciprocal visits.

### No. 305

2539/520690-91

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 29 of January 31

LONDON, January 31, 1939.

Received February 1—10:35 a.m.

1. I learn from authoritative official quarters (Sir Frederick Leith-Ross and Under Secretary of State Cole) that the British Government has asked the Mining Federation [*sic*] of Great Britain to give a dinner to celebrate the successful conclusion of the Anglo-German coal negotiations to which Funk, Reich Minister of Economics and President of the Reichsbank, is to be invited as guest of honor from Germany and Oliver Stanley, President of the Board of Trade, to represent Great Britain. As the President of the Board of Trade wishes to visit Germany, the British Government would be glad if Germany could reciprocate the British invitation by inviting Mr. Oliver Stanley to a dinner in Berlin.

2. The Mining Federation of Great Britain will presumably comply with the British Government's proposal. The objection that such a celebration of the Anglo-German coal agreement might lead to misinterpretations on the part of other countries interested in the coal question has been considered but found to be invalid, especially as the British Government obviously intends to protect the interests of other countries, particularly the importing countries, from encroachment by an international coal cartel by proposing to the governments interested an agreement for supervising the cartel.

3. Sir Frederick Leith-Ross told me that, in the view of Government circles here, the Führer's speech<sup>1</sup> had laid the foundation for the contemplated exchange of visits between the two Ministers of Economics and for a further active development of economic questions between Germany and Great Britain. They were, therefore, also prepared to have the invitation announced directly by the Government, in this case by the President of the Board of Trade, if this would facilitate the visit of the Reich Minister of Economics.

4. I request telegraphic instructions as to what attitude is to be adopted toward the suggestions of the British Government.<sup>2</sup>

DIRKSEN

<sup>1</sup> In his Reichstag speech of Jan. 30, Hitler said: "Germany has no territorial claims on England and France except the return of her colonies. . . . For in what way, for instance, do the interests of Great Britain and Germany clash? I have stated often enough that there is no German, and above all no National Socialist, who even in his most secret thoughts has the intention of causing the British Empire any kind of difficulties. From Great Britain, too, are heard the voices of men who think reasonably and calmly, expressing a similar attitude with regard to Germany. It would be a blessing for the whole world if mutual confidence and cooperation could be established between the two peoples. The same is true of our relations with France." (German White Book, p. 257.)

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 308 for reply.

## No. 306

2496/518058-60

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, February 1, 1939.

e.o. W VI 367.

Subject: Anglo-German economic negotiations.

1. At last year's Anglo-German governmental conversations, the aim of which was an expansion of Anglo-German trade and of the German market in the British Commonwealth, it was agreed that *industry* on both sides should try to find a basis for agreements on markets and prices on the British market and on other disputed markets. Germany's intention in this matter is by such agreements to deter the British from the protective measures announced against German exports.

2. In the last few days agreement has been reached on *coal*, the most important commodity in Anglo-German relations: 32 percent of the total coal export of all European coal-exporting countries has been allocated to Germany and 46 percent to Great Britain. On this basis negotiations are to be opened with the industries of the other coal-exporting countries (principally Poland, Belgium, Holland, France) on a general coal cartel.

The guiding principle given to the German negotiators was that, in the event of any quantitative reduction of our exports, we should still receive at least the same proceeds in foreign currency by obtaining higher prices.

3. In the meantime the directing German and British industrial groups have agreed that, for a number of additional kinds of goods (e.g. scissors, razor blades, locks, sanitary pottery, etc.), the representatives of the groups of both sides shall meet at the end of February to negotiate on minimum quantities and minimum prices of German sales on the British market and on a delimitation of the world market.

In this field, too, the instructions given to the German negotiators have been to assure for us at least the same foreign-currency earnings by increasing our prices in the event of any quantitative limitation of German exports; apart from this an increase in our prices would lower the amount of "export subsidies" to be paid by us.

The negotiations will be supervised by the appropriate ministries and will extend over several months. Thus the British protective measures can presumably be prevented in the first place for the duration of the negotiations and for good, if the negotiations are brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

4. Submitted herewith to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister with the request for approval for continuing the talks on the lines indicated.

WIEHL

### No. 307

2447/514928

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 34 of February 4

LONDON, February 4, 1939—12:26 p.m.

Received February 4—3:45 p.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 29 of January 31.<sup>1</sup>

Yesterday's speeches by Lord Halifax and Hudson emphasize anew the great importance for the further development of Anglo-German relations attached by the British Government to an Anglo-German economic agreement. In view of this I should be grateful if an early visit by Minister of Economics Funk could be arranged. Should

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 305.

this not be possible during February, a definite promise for a future date is most desirable in order to activate further the Anglo-German commercial questions already under discussion.

I request telegraphic instructions.

DIRKSEN

### No. 308

2496/518061

*The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Embassy  
in Great Britain*

Telegram

No. 26 of February 6

BERLIN, February 6, 1939—10:30 a.m.  
zu W VI 371.

With reference to your telegram No. 29 of January 31.<sup>1</sup>

Please adopt the following attitude toward the suggestions reported:

Minister of Economics Funk has so many engagements as a result of assuming office as President of the Reichsbank that he is quite unable to find time for a visit to London in the near future. With regard to the desire of the President of the Board of Trade to come to Berlin (cf. also your telegram No. 546 of December 16,<sup>2</sup>) the Reich Federation of Industry would gladly invite Stanley to an official dinner in Berlin in connection with the coal agreement and with reference to other industrial conferences in prospect. During this visit Stanley would also have the opportunity of talking to the Reich Ministers of Economics and Foreign Affairs.<sup>3</sup>

In case of acceptance, please inform by telegram what dates would be convenient.<sup>4</sup>

WIEHL<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 305.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 280.

<sup>3</sup> A minute dated Feb. 6 (2496/518062) records the Foreign Minister's decision that the visit of the President of the Board of Trade to Berlin should be arranged first, and then Funk might perhaps pay a return visit to London later on.

<sup>4</sup> The Ambassador replied by telegram No. 37 of Feb. 8 (1585/383028) that the President of the Board of Trade accepted the invitation and that either Mar. 9 or 10 would be suitable. A Foreign Ministry telegram of Feb. 9 (2005/442824-26) informed the London Embassy that these dates would not suit Herr W. Zangen, head of the Reich Federation of Industry, and requested the Embassy to arrange a date about the middle of March.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note in Wiehl's handwriting: "Ministry of Economics agrees to dispatch of this telegram (message from Ministerial Counselor Bergemann)—Reich Federation of Industry is ready to issue the invitation (Dr. Siehl)." The telegram was initialed by Ribbentrop and Weizsäcker before dispatch.

## No. 309

5204/E307742

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*BERLIN, February 7, 1939.  
zu W VI 421 I.

Mr. F. T. Ashton-Gwatkin, head of the Economic Department of the Foreign Office, has informed the Embassy in London that he would like to make the informal visit to Berlin planned by him for the discussion of economic questions, between February 17 and 28, if this time is agreeable to the German authorities concerned.<sup>1</sup>

The Embassy in London has asked for instructions.

When Ashton-Gwatkin announced his intention earlier in December, Minister President Field Marshal Göring informed him then that he was prepared to receive him.

The Reich Ministry of Economics expects that Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin will be received by the Reich Minister of Economics and by State Secretary Brinkmann.

In the Foreign Ministry arrangements will be made for Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin by the Economic Policy Department.

If desired, a meeting between him and some prominent economic personages can be arranged.

Submitted to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister with request for a decision whether, and if so when, the Foreign Minister wishes to receive Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin.<sup>2</sup>

WIEHL

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<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 265 and 273.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in handwriting: "Yes. R[ibbentrop]."

## No. 310

2496/518063-64

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*BERLIN, February 7, 1939.  
zu W VI 520.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Anglo-German coal agreement.

Respectfully submitted to Ministerialdirektor Wiehl.

1. According to a report from the Ministry of Economics (Bergrat Röwer), only an oral Anglo-German coal agreement has been arrived at between the representatives of the Rhine-Westphalia Coal Syndi-

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5203/E307736). This is a DNB release dated Feb. 7 reporting Stanley's statement in the House of Commons on the Anglo-German economic negotiations.

cate, acting on behalf of the German coal industry, and the Mining Federation [*sic*]. No written agreement ensued. The only document agreed on in writing was the communiqué given to the press, which was reproduced on page 2 of the London Embassy telegram No. 27 of January 28.<sup>2</sup>

2. Agreement has so far been reached only as to the quotas to which Germany and England would be entitled in the future out of the total exports of all European coal-exporting countries. The quotas are, as stated in the London telegram, 32.08 percent for Germany and 46.27 percent for England; since the agreement covers coal, coke, briquettes, and bunker coal, this represents an over-all ratio of 30 percent for Germany and 50 percent for England.

3. It is now proposed to start negotiations with the other coal-exporting countries, Poland, Belgium, Holland, and France, on the distribution of the remaining 20 percent.

4. It will be only when these negotiations are terminated that a sales quota for each exporting country on the world market and the fixation of prices in the individual markets will be discussed; neither the German nor the British delegation has hitherto committed itself in this respect. But the British have accepted the German point of view that German sales, even though the volume of exports be less, must earn as much foreign currency as before.

RÜTER

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<sup>2</sup> Document No. 303.

## No. 311

2129/464927-28

### *Note to the British Government*

A 453

LONDON, February 14, 1939.

DEAR SECRETARY OF STATE: On behalf of my Government I have the honor to reply as follows to Your Excellency's note of June 30, 1938, No. A 4850/55/45.<sup>1</sup>

The proposal made by His Majesty's Government that European naval powers should declare their readiness not to build for the present any capital ships of over 40,000 tons displacement has been closely studied by the German Government. This study has been delayed because guns of the maximum caliber of 40.6 cm. as laid down by treaty were new for the German Navy, and therefore constructional plans had first to be worked out to calculate the tonnage determined by them.

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1624/388297-98). A copy of the reply was forwarded to the Foreign Ministry on Feb. 16 (1665/393896-98).

In studying the question the German Government was guided by the same considerations as His Majesty's Government, namely, that it was in the interests of all naval powers not to increase the tonnage of capital ships above the absolute essential. The examination has now been completed. As a result it can be stated that the type of capital ship envisaged comes within the tonnage intended by the British Government, according to its statement, for the new ships of the Lion class.

The German Government, however, is anxious to avoid entering into any particular formal obligation as to the size of capital ships which departs from the general rule, as it is, in principle, of the opinion that binding agreements of a qualitative nature in the field of naval armament cannot be made on a regional basis but must include equally all powers bound in any way by treaty. The German Government expresses the hope that His Majesty's Government will succeed in its efforts to prevent all powers bound to it by treaty from building capital ships exceeding the tonnage at present recognized as expedient by it and by the German Government. If this were not so, developments would ensue in the sphere of capital-ship construction, the results of which cannot be foreseen.

Please accept, dear Secretary of State, the assurance of my highest esteem.

VON DIRKSEN

### No. 312

1585/383034

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

RM 11

BERLIN, February 16, 1939.

e.o. Pol. II 533.

#### VISIT OF THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER

Ambassador Henderson stated that Chamberlain now as before desired to proceed on the lines of the Munich conference and expressed his particular satisfaction at the prospective visit of Oliver Stanley to Germany and the possible return visit of Minister of Economics Funk.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop replied that for his part he was fully in accord with intensified economic cooperation between the two countries.

Henderson then let it be understood that he would like to get in touch with Field Marshal Göring in order to arrange a visit by the Chief of the British Air Staff<sup>1</sup> to Germany and eventually perhaps one by the British Minister for Air.<sup>2</sup>

The Foreign Minister again stressed the importance of first making progress in the economic field and pointed out in this connection the necessity for an improvement in the tone of the press. When this improvement had taken place, it would then be possible to think about a visit by representatives of the Royal Air Force.

The Foreign Minister told Henderson in conclusion that, before such visits were arranged, the subject must again be thoroughly discussed with him (the Foreign Minister).

Submitted herewith according to instructions to Herr von Ribbentrop, Foreign Minister.

SCHMIDT<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Air Chief Marshal Sir Cyril Newall, 1937-40.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Kingsley Wood, Secretary of State for Air, May 1938-April 1940.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Paul Schmidt, who had been employed as an interpreter in the Foreign Ministry since 1923, was at the beginning of 1939 posted to Ribbentrop's Secretariat with the rank of Minister (see his memoirs: *Statist auf Diplomatischer Bühne, 1923-45*, Bonn, 1949, p. 466).

## No. 313

483/231350

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 152

BERLIN, February 17, 1939.

The British Ambassador told me today that Oliver Stanley, President of the Board of Trade, would be in Berlin on March 17. He, Henderson, would like to give a dinner on March 18 and also invite the Reich Foreign Minister to it. He would like, moreover, to introduce the British Minister to Field Marshal Göring as well and, if the Führer were present in Berlin, to request an audience for Stanley.

Henderson then went on to say that he would like, if possible, to arrange for the Chief of the Air Staff or for Kingsley Wood, Air Minister, to visit Berlin. In the meanwhile, the visit of Minister of Economics Funk to Great Britain might perhaps take place.

I told the Ambassador firmly that he must follow the usual channels and notify the Foreign Ministry if the visit of Kingsley Wood or of his Chief of Staff were to be seriously considered.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 314

2496/518065-68

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, February 18, 1939.

e.o. W VI 569.

With reference to the industrial conversations, the Reich Federation of Industry has sent me the enclosed memorandum, et cetera,<sup>1</sup> for information.

It has been submitted to the German Embassy in London.

RÜTER

[Enclosure]

## MEMORANDUM

H 1259/III

February 2, 1939.

W VI 569.

Subject: Trade with Britain. Cooperation between the Federation of British Industries and the Reich Federation of Industry.

In the negotiations between the Federation of British Industries and the Reich Federation of Industry, at which Britain was represented by Messrs. Locock,<sup>2</sup> Ramsden, Glenday, and McKechnie and Germany by Dr. Hipp, agreement was reached comparatively quickly on a date for a meeting. The Reich Federation of Industry was anxious that the meeting should not take place before February 15, as the head of the Federation, who intended to open the first session, was on leave until that date. In the ensuing period the British industrialists concerned were unable to attend so that February 28 or March 1 were considered as the first suitable dates. As regards the place of meeting, the British from the start declared themselves in agreement with all our proposals. They agreed in particular to the choice of Düsseldorf.

The British expressed the wish that at the first session only the two main delegations should meet, that only subjects of a general nature should be discussed, and that it should be decided which industrial groups should then meet for negotiations.

It appeared that the Federation of British Industries was no longer so much interested as before in negotiations between German and British industry. This may be attributed to two causes:

<sup>1</sup> Also enclosed was a list of categories of commodities suitable for discussion at the Anglo-German conversations; not printed (2496/518069).

<sup>2</sup> Guy H. Locock, Director of the Federation of British Industries.

1. The Federation of British Industries has recently again demanded the application of coercive methods against countries which use unfair trading methods toward Britain and in this connection has referred specially to Germany.

2. The resignation of Schacht, the President of the Reichsbank, seems to have aroused the belief in Britain that after 5 or 6 months Germany's internal finances will have become so bad that we shall no longer be capable of competing in the export market. They are therefore trying to postpone the date for negotiations in the belief that we would be easier game at a later date. At present we are a treaty partner on an equal footing, even if not in a position to make demands; in 5 or 6 months we would in the British view be the suppliants.

3. The Federation will have great difficulty in persuading the industrial firms who are members of the Federation to enter into negotiations with Germany. The reason for this may lie not so much in unwillingness of the firms to negotiate with Germany as in the opposition of the British industrialist to any controlling organization. In addition to this, the Federation seems reluctant to have to exercise a kind of supervisory function over the group delegations in its role of main delegation, even if it were fully empowered to do so by the Government.

I arrived at the latter supposition principally because of the Federation's offer to have only the main delegation meet first and the group delegations later if need be. In general, too, the Federation showed considerably less interest. There was absolutely no question of Peter Bennett, the President of the Federation, taking part. Not even Locock, the Director of the Federation, wanted to attend the conversations in Germany. Sir William Larke, chairman of the Tariff and Commercial Relations Committee of the Federation of British Industries and director of the British Iron and Steel Federation, had been nominated as chairman of the main British delegation.

I told the Federation that we could see no prospect of success at all in discussions between the main delegations. Practical work must be done, and that was possible only if the group delegations were the focal point of the meetings, in accordance with the wishes of both Governments.

In the course of the further and extremely difficult negotiations with the Federation, at which I mentioned among other things the interest expressed to me by Hudson in early conversations on industrial problems, the Federation stated that they would take steps within the next 2 or 3 weeks to send us a list of those industries which were prepared to negotiate with their German opposite numbers. I thereupon proposed that the German invitation to the meeting should not

be sent until we were in possession of this list, and the agreement of German industry had been obtained. This proposal was obviously displeasing to the Federation.

The situation in Britain appeared to me extremely tense. In contrast to former occasions the British Government is definitely friendly toward Germany and German industry, whereas, on the other hand, British industry, which previously maintained generally good relations with Germany, is very aggressive. The reason may be that the Government has already realized that Britain's sole opportunity of playing as decisive a part in world trade as formerly may in the future lie only in being able to act as a mediator between the extreme capitalist economic system of North America and Germany's economic policy, which is directed to buying and selling.<sup>3</sup> In consequence the Government is greatly interested in the conclusion of agreements between German and British industry.<sup>4</sup> It is typical that in the many speeches at the annual dinner of the German Chamber of Commerce in Britain no German representative mentioned the industrial negotiations, while, on the other hand, the two chief British speakers, Hudson and Carlow,<sup>5</sup> spoke of the future agreements. Chamberlain, too, mentioned the discussions in his last two speeches.

Mr. Hudson, who is normally very aggressive toward Germany, adopted a very optimistic tone in conversation. He thought that after the conclusion of a coal agreement between Germany and Britain and various other agreements, particularly in the field of machine construction, all points of friction would be eliminated from Anglo-German trade.

DR. HIPP

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<sup>3</sup> This presumably refers to transactions by barter, as against the Anglo-American system of free exchanges.

<sup>4</sup> In a dispatch from London dated Feb. 18 (2496/518072) the German Ambassador ascribed the evident anxiety of the British Government to come to a trade agreement with Germany to the need for countering the financial pressure which was being exercised by the United States of America on the London money market.

<sup>5</sup> Charles A. Carlow, President of the Institution of Mining Engineers.

## No. 315

2497/518149-51

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, February 20, 1939.

zu W VI 723.

### 1. *Purpose of Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin's Visit*

Mr. F. T. Ashton-Gwatkin, head of the Economic Department of the Foreign Office, is staying in Berlin from February 19 to February

25, 1939, in order to have informal conversations with leading German personalities on economic questions of interest to both countries. In this matter he might be particularly anxious to clarify the conditions under which an Anglo-German economic *rapprochement* and an easing up of international economic relations are possible.

## 2. *Anglo-German Economic Relations*

As a result of the devaluation of the pound sterling and of the introduction of the high British protective tariff (autumn 1932), German exports fell from 1.2 milliard RM in 1930 to 380 million RM in 1934. After the conclusion of the Anglo-German payments agreement in 1934, exports to Britain again rose to 432 million RM in 1937 and amounted to 351 million RM in 1938. Germany's surplus from trade with Britain, amounting to 68 million RM in 1938, is more than absorbed by our financial obligations (Dawes and Young loans, Austrian loans, standstill). Our heavy deficit in trade with the British dominions and colonies is thus not balanced by our trade with Britain; on the contrary Germany is in debt to the whole British Empire to the sum of 161 million RM.

## 3. *Reasons for the Decline in German Exports to Britain*

- (a) The Jewish boycott is particularly strong in Britain.
- (b) For some months an intensified antipathy to German goods has been evident among widening circles of the British public.
- (c) The change-over of the whole of British industry to a war footing by making itself in large measure independent of foreign countries.

## 4. *Possibilities for the Extension of Anglo-German Trade*

- (a) Propaganda in Britain against the admission of German goods must cease. Authoritative British circles finally ought to repudiate the idea that Germany alone is to blame for the decline in British exports and realize that, on the contrary, other countries too have improved their position at the expense of Britain (e.g. as the United States has done in South America).
- (b) Our purchases of British goods are based on the sale of German goods in Britain. It is thus up to the British alone to increase Anglo-German trade.
- (c) Sympathetic support during the industrial conversations planned for March might, among other things, contribute to this.
- (d) Britain should finally stabilize the rate for the pound.
- (e) British banking institutes should grant Germany the necessary credit facilities.
- (f) Britain should abolish the most oppressive of the British tariffs in accordance with our list of requests recently handed over.
- (g) Britain should relax the Ottawa system.

Another interesting fact is that the total exports of the former German colonies, now under British administration, to all countries amounted in 1938 to roughly 175 million RM, which corresponds to the debit balance of German trade with the British Empire.<sup>1</sup>

WIEHL

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "To be submitted to the Foreign Minister for the conversation with Ashton-Gwatkin. W[iehl] Feb. 20." See document No. 317.

### No. 316

2447/514931-34

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, February 20, 1939.

Subject: Conversation with Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin.

The first conversation with Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin yielded little result economically. He made no new proposals, for the most part refrained from comment, and said that he was only preparing the way for later conversations, e.g. those with Mr. Stanley, President of the Board of Trade. Britain was of the opinion that economic agreement must be reached between the two countries this year in order to put an end to the armaments race. He agreed with me when I objected that the ending of the armaments race seemed to me to depend on a political rather than on an economic understanding. We also agreed that, after an understanding in the political field and on armaments, an extension of economic relations would automatically follow, as the economic agreements existing between the two Governments were sufficient in themselves for the present situation and in general were not in need of improvement but that the main reason for the decline in trade was to be sought rather in the psychological attitude of British public opinion toward Germany. When I asked whether I could discuss with him the comparatively less important measures, such as preferential tariffs, increased admission of German goods into British colonies, etc., Ashton-Gwatkin answered in the negative, saying that he had not been instructed or empowered to do so.

The following details can be noted from the long conversation:

1. Preparation for Stanley's visit. Ashton-Gwatkin was not aware of the intended duration of Stanley's visit or about his plans but will make inquiries. I mentioned press reports that Hudson would also come with Stanley. Ashton-Gwatkin replied that Hudson would like to come too as he was the chief protagonist in Britain of the [policy of] industrial agreements with Germany. I said in reply that Hudson's visit would be useful in connection with the industrial negotiations, even if he himself did not intend to take part in them.

2. Preparations for the industrial negotiations. I asked Ashton-Gwatkin which British industries were prepared to negotiate and pointed out that it was advisable to start by choosing those industries in which prospects for agreement were the greatest. He agreed with me and will get in touch with the representative of the Federation of British Industries here.

3. When I asked on what, in his opinion, economic understanding between the two countries mainly depended, Ashton-Gwatkin mentioned the removal of foreign-exchange control, the preconditions for which could be created by an agreement on an exchange equalization fund similar to that which existed between Britain, France, and the United States, with the participation of several other states. Britain could agree to contribute 100 million pounds sterling for this task, if she could, in return, save many times more on armaments expenditure.

4. I referred to the proposal<sup>1</sup> by Leith-Ross for three-cornered transactions, according to which we would, by means of a greater foreign-exchange credit balance in trade with Britain, be placed in a position to pay for part of our purchases from the Balkan countries with foreign currency, which the latter could use to buy colonial products from the British possessions. In objection to this, I said that our foreign-exchange credit balance with Britain was only a theoretical one, and that in practice we bought so many essential goods from Britain in excess of our obligations that our export surplus no longer served to cover our financial obligation, and that our balance of payments with Britain was therefore unfavorable.

5. I described the Ottawa treaties as among the main obstacles to a revival of world trade and pointed out that if Britain continued to abide by them, and thus stifled German trade with the British Empire and reserved this Empire for herself as a great economic sphere, she could not put obstacles in Germany's way if she wanted to create a similar great economic sphere in Europe. Ashton-Gwatkin agreed with me and said that he himself had stated in a memorandum for the British Government that economic interlacing between Germany and the countries of southeast Europe was based on as natural foundations as those between Britain and her overseas possessions.

In conclusion I told Ashton-Gwatkin that I was not the proper authority for the discussion of political and armaments questions but that I would gladly be at his disposal at any time during his stay for the further discussion of economic questions.<sup>2</sup>

WIEHL

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 257, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> In another minute (2497/518145-47) describing the same conversation, Wiehl records that Ribbentrop had given instructions that any further talks with Ashton-Gwatkin were to be confined to economic questions only and were not to lead up to questions of foreign policy.

## No. 317

F19/065-71

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

RM 12

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND ASHTON-GWATKIN, HEAD OF THE ECONOMIC DEPARTMENT OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE, ON FEBRUARY 20, 1939, 5:30 P.M.

Ashton-Gwatkin told the Foreign Minister that he had come to Berlin to conduct discussions on how to improve Anglo-German trade relations. The Foreign Minister replied that an increase in the volume of Anglo-German trade would be heartily welcomed and asked for concrete proposals. Ashton-Gwatkin was very reserved on this question. He rather gave the impression of wanting to learn from the Foreign Minister how far Germany was prepared for a further *rapprochement*. When, however, the Minister for his part expressed no special wishes or proposals, Ashton-Gwatkin said in reply to further questions that it was true that he had concrete ideas but that these extended beyond the limits of economy into the sphere of politics.

Confidence played a great part in Anglo-German trade relations. Confidence between Germany and Britain was very strongly influenced by the questions of peace and disarmament.

In itself he very much welcomed the coal agreement already concluded and had great hopes from the meeting between the Federation of British Industries and the Reich Federation of Industry, planned for the near future.

The Foreign Minister then spoke at some length on the German point of view. A clearing of the atmosphere between the two nations must be regarded as the basis for closer Anglo-German cooperation. As long as the powers opposed to Germany, whether from nationalist or—as was more often the case—from ideological motives, be they Jewish or Bolshevist, were given a free hand to continue to stab in the back men of good will, as he knew Chamberlain and Halifax to be, settlement on a broad basis was hardly to be thought of.

The Foreign Minister then spoke at length on our economic system, which necessity had forced upon us but in which we had succeeded beyond all expectations, on the Four Year Plan, and on the possibility of a free economic policy with the outside world without foreign-exchange restrictions. The lack of gold had compelled us to think of ourselves. The Four Year Plan was to make us as far as possible economically independent. It could be imagined that, by means of strict self-sufficiency, decreasing imports, and increasing exports, a

gold reserve with which free trade could one day again be carried on would again be built up in Germany. For the present our foreign trade was dependent on barter, which in itself was indeed probably a sound principle. Germany could import a great deal more from Britain if Britain would only buy more. On the contrary, however, there was in Britain an intense boycott of German goods.

Ashton-Gwatkin said he thought that in itself the Anglo-German payments agreement was functioning well, that therefore the machinery of Anglo-German trade was satisfactory and only required to be extended. However, at the moment he could make no concrete proposals on how German exports to Britain might be increased. He said, however, that Anglo-German trade relations were of both economic and political value for world politics and world peace and asked whether Germany, too, realized this.

The Foreign Minister answered in the affirmative and said that he was very optimistic in this respect too, but he wondered whether the time was ripe for it, as close trade relations with Britain were of course only conceivable if there were close political cooperation, which in its turn was possible only if the atmosphere were so clear that one could build on a sure foundation. This clear cooperation with France and Britain was rendered more difficult by the fact that the responsible men, even if they had the best intentions, were restricted in their actions because they were dependent on their Parliaments and had always to take the Opposition into consideration. He quoted as an example the German colonial demands. He could imagine that a man of good will, such as Chamberlain, would accede to Germany's demands for colonies but that, nevertheless, he would never be able to put forward and carry through this proposal in its entirety, as he was too dependent on the composition of Parliament; its members were partly opposed to him, not altogether for impartial reasons, but would oppose any conciliatory measure toward Germany either for reasons of party politics or on ideological grounds. The Foreign Minister quoted several examples in support of these remarks and mentioned in particular the position in France, where both Daladier and Bonnet had the best intentions, but it was not known whether these men would still be at the helm tomorrow, so that it was impossible to make long-term plans.

The Foreign Minister went on to speak of the Anti-Comintern Pact, which had not been concluded against the democratic states but which on the contrary must actually strengthen the national governments of the democratic states. If Spain had become Red, France would have followed suit, and this would have had very severe repercussions on Europe and on Britain too. Germany had realized this

in time and had put her volunteers and other assistance at Franco's disposal, and he was convinced that a Nationalist Spain would mean a peaceful bloc which would trade with all countries, including Britain. Thus the spirit of Versailles, and above all the spirit of Bolshevism, would slowly be overcome, and the more it was overcome the stronger would be the position of the national governments in the various countries.

Ashton-Gwatkin said that the Treaty of Versailles had surely ceased to exist and the idea of Bolshevism had already been defeated. The Foreign Minister contradicted this and pointed to the policy of Roosevelt as the exponent of all Jewish, Bolshevik, and anti-German forces.

Returning to the economic field, the Foreign Minister mentioned the Führer's statement<sup>1</sup> that it would have been economically more astute of Britain to come to an agreement of reason and moderation with Germany on political and colonial questions rather than to take a course which perhaps yielded enormous dividends to international armaments profiteers, but which imposed the heaviest burdens on the peoples. Presumably the German colonial possessions, together with the rejection of Germany's claim to equal political and military rights with Britain, would alone cost Britain more than 20 milliard gold marks in a short time.

Ashton-Gwatkin fully agreed with this.

As a further example of lack of understanding by the British, the Foreign Minister quoted the loan negotiations shortly after the Austrian *Anschluss*.

In conclusion, the Foreign Minister pointed out that he, along with the Führer, believed in a long era of peace and was optimistic also with regard to Anglo-German relations but that he thought that the solution of this question must take its own time and was in fact dependent on the atmosphere prevailing between these nations.

Ashton-Gwatkin thanked the Foreign Minister most cordially for the long interview which he had accorded to him and for the many interesting ideas, which would be extremely valuable to him in his task. He suggested that the Foreign Minister should invite Sir Horace Wilson to Germany. The Foreign Minister replied that a visit from Sir Horace Wilson would give him great pleasure but said that such a visit could not take place until clearer relations existed between Germany and Britain.

HEWEL

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<sup>1</sup> In his Jan. 30 Reichstag speech. See *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler*, vol. II, p. 1575.

## No. 318

2496/518083-85

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 694

LONDON, February 20, 1939.

Received February 22.

W VI 729.

Report for the [Foreign] Minister.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: The significance of Stanley's and Ashton-Gwatkin's Berlin visits.

A significance beyond that of the discussion of current economic questions is attached to the visit to Berlin of Oliver Stanley, President of the Board of Trade. It takes place at a time when British commercial policy is faced with grave decisions of a general character. The result of the Berlin conversations may have a decisive influence on the outcome of these decisions.

In a word the Government is faced with the following question: Is British commercial policy to follow in the wake of the United States or to seek to maintain its independence by closer cooperation with Germany, i.e. with Europe?

This alternative has arisen as a result of American pressure on Britain and of the general uncertainty of the world economic situation. Jewish high finance in the United States is trying to force Britain into cooperation with America and to deter her from cooperation with the totalitarian states.

The British Government has striven so far to maintain its economic independence. Evidence of this is provided by its intensive measures to protect British currency against American maneuvers for devaluation and the drift of capital to America.

It appears that this resistance can only be continued with some hope of success if the economic uncertainty weighing upon Europe and the lack of confidence give way to a more favorable atmosphere and the creation of new opportunities for production.

The obvious purpose of the visit to Berlin of Oliver Stanley, President of the Board of Trade, and of Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin was to ascertain whether the German Government was prepared to enter into economic cooperation of this kind. The conclusion of the coal agreement and the forthcoming industrial conversations have inspired a confident mood in the British Government in this respect.

In the event of the Berlin talks failing to open up such possibilities, the door has been left open by the British for cooperation with the

<sup>1</sup> The dispatch is initialed by Ribbentrop.

United States. The conclusion of the Anglo-American trade agreement<sup>2</sup> resulted mainly from political considerations. Stanley's forthcoming journey to New York to visit the World's Fair would offer an opportunity for preparing the way for an economic agreement of this kind. I mentioned in my report of January 3, 1939, No. A 6,<sup>3</sup> that there might at the same time be a parallel trend toward the United States in foreign policy.

There is no need to point out that the British Government would prefer to maintain its independence vis-à-vis the United States of America.

It is also known from reports of the Embassy that public opinion here is becoming more and more accustomed to the idea of giving precedence to Germany in east and southeast Europe.

Report B 514 of February 18<sup>4</sup> set out in more detail the individual possibilities for increasing German exports by means of an economic understanding with Britain.

V. DIRKSEN

<sup>2</sup> Signed Nov. 17, 1938.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 286.

<sup>4</sup> In this dispatch (2496/518072-78) the Ambassador outlined the potentialities for Anglo-German cooperation of "inflating world outlets" for their combined production. Britain's share in this continued effort would be principally to provide the necessary capital, while Germany's contribution would consist in long-term undertakings to purchase raw materials such as cotton. This would entail the additional advantage for Germany of making her independent of cotton imports from the United States.

## No. 319

2496/518070-71

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, February 21, 1939.

zu W VI 580.

Subject: Mr. Hudson's visit to Berlin.

On instructions from the State Secretary I telephoned the following information to London today to Ambassador von Dirksen, in reply to his telegram No. 42 of February 18:<sup>1</sup>

During my first interview yesterday with Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin,<sup>2</sup> I mentioned reports in the press that Mr. Hudson intended to come to Berlin with Mr. Stanley on March 17. Ashton-Gwatkin replied that Hudson would in fact be very glad to come here because he was the

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5203/E307737).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 316.

main promoter in Great Britain of the proposed industrial conferences. To this I remarked that in this connection a visit by Hudson to Berlin might be of value.

We were astonished to see this morning in headlined British press notices that Mr. Hudson actually wanted to travel via Berlin to Warsaw and Moscow for economic conversations with the Soviet Government, as a result of which an improvement in the political relations between Great Britain and Soviet Russia was also expected. The Prime Minister confirmed in the House of Commons that this journey to Russia was intended, and the press yesterday reported a statement by Lord Halifax on these Anglo-Russian conversations more or less on the lines that Great Britain in these critical times was forced to look for friends wherever she could find them. It had appeared somewhat strange here that Hudson's visit to Berlin, for which the German invitation has not even been announced yet, should be combined with this journey to Russia. The Embassy was requested to report whether this double purpose, as reported in the press, is correct.

Herr von Dirksen commented that he had heard that Hudson would return from Berlin to London before setting out on his journey to Russia. He further called attention to the fact that it was well known he would mention Stanley's forthcoming visit to Berlin in his speech this evening at the Mining Federation [*sic*] dinner. In view of the press announcement that Hudson as well as Stanley intended to come to Berlin, it would naturally arouse much comment if he only mentioned Stanley in his speech and not Hudson as well. I answered the Ambassador that it was hardly possible for him to mention Hudson, considering the uncertainty which still existed as to Hudson's Berlin visit. I promised Herr von Dirksen to telephone to him again, if my opinion was not confirmed by higher authority.

After consultation with the State Secretary, I refrained from telephoning again.

Submitted to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister.

WIEHL

Addendum. I also spoke in the same sense later to Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin, whom I met at lunch. He told me that, when I had spoken to him at our first interview of Mr. Hudson's intention to come to Berlin, he had been in doubt whether to inform me that a visit by Hudson to Moscow was also under consideration in London. In the end he had refrained, since he did not know whether Hudson's visit to Moscow had already been definitely decided on in London.

## No. 320

2497/518152-55

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*BERLIN, February 24, 1939.  
zu W VI 723.CONVERSATION BETWEEN FUNK, REICH MINISTER OF ECONOMICS, AND  
MR. ASHTON-GWATKIN IN BERLIN ON FEBRUARY 23, 1939

After a few introductory personal remarks Reich Minister Funk expounded to Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin his views on the future shaping of German financial and economic policy as follows:

It was his intention to bring Germany out of economic isolation and to enable her to participate to a greater degree in world trade. He considered that a gradual relaxation of foreign-exchange restrictions was necessary for this. He had in mind the creation of a so-called commercial mark [*Warenmark*] intended for foreign transactions. The different types of marks (registered marks, Aski marks, etc.) in use at present would disappear. Dr. Schacht, it was true, had been able to play with great genius on the flexible currency instrument of his own creation; he, Funk, however, was in favor of making a clean sweep and of creating a single currency for foreign trade in the form of the commercial mark, with the object of using it as normal international currency without any foreign-exchange restrictions. At the same time, owing to the higher level of prices in Germany, the present domestic mark would have to remain, as a change in the present price level in Germany was impossible for a long time.

One of the preconditions for the creation of a normal currency situation in Germany was the clearing up of the debt question. The present position, which was unworthy of a great nation, must be brought to an end by an international consortium buying up at a rate of 30-35 the German foreign loans (Dawes and Young) which were at present spread over the most varied international markets, while the fixing of a price [*Limit*] would be left by Germany to this consortium. Germany would then convert the old loans bought up by the consortium with the help of a new international loan to be subscribed. This new loan must be of such a kind as to enjoy the fullest confidence of the international subscribers.

Economically the Anglo-German trade agreement<sup>1</sup> formed a satisfactory basis for mutual relations. However, one must go further

<sup>1</sup>The revised Anglo-German Payments Agreement, signed July 1, 1938. See *Documents on International Affairs, 1938*, vol. II, pp. 97-98.

than that, and in this connection the coal agreement had been particularly welcomed in Germany. Great hopes were also placed on the forthcoming industrial conversations. The underlying idea of joint participation in foreign markets was greatly welcomed by Germany.

Ashton-Gwatkin listened with great attention and several times had Reich Minister Funk's remarks translated into English again. He showed special interest in the plans for loan conversion. He asked various questions, e.g. whether the settlement of the Jewish question was included among the conditions necessary for normalizing currency and trade relations.

Reich Minister Funk answered in the affirmative and expressed the hope that in 2 to 3 years the Jewish question would be liquidated.

Ashton-Gwatkin further asked whether the new German foreign currency would be a gold currency.

Reich Minister Funk replied that there were two possibilities here: a redistribution of gold or the introduction of a new standard, internationally recognized, on which the various currencies could be built up. If the latter course were taken, he had in mind a purchasing parity among the various currencies based on stable prices and wages. When asked whether this was synonymous with the proposal for an index currency, Reich Minister Funk answered in the affirmative. In this connection he had also spoken of the possibility of tying the new German commercial mark to the pound, on condition that the latter remained steady, after the normalization of the German currency situation.

In reply to Ashton-Gwatkin's question whether he meant stability as compared with gold, Reich Minister Funk answered that it was a question of the stability of purchasing power on the basis of fixed prices and wages.

In the further course of the conversation Ashton-Gwatkin pointed out that, after the departure of Dr. Schacht, Funk, as the new President of the Reichsbank, had been regarded by many as the man of inflation.

Reich Minister Funk answered that in an authoritarian state, which exercised absolute control over prices and wages and could therefore keep these stable, inflation was out of the question.

When Ashton-Gwatkin objected that the maintaining of stable prices by government decrees was not in itself sufficient to counter inflation but that above all the necessary quantity of consumer goods must be available, Reich Minister Funk replied that he was keeping this side of the problem well in mind and realized that the important thing now was to bring the production of consumer goods into line

with the extremely increased production of capital goods. This was a problem to which he was devoting his whole attention.

DR. SCHMIDT, *Minister*

No. 321

1585/388036

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 45 of February 24

LONDON, February 24, 1939—3:10 p.m.

Received February 24—6:25 p.m.

Pol. II 599.

1. Before my departure I had a thorough discussion with Lord Halifax on the general situation, about which I shall give you an oral report.<sup>1</sup> Halifax mentioned the various pending Anglo-German economic conferences and hoped that the visits of Ashton-Gwatkin and Stanley would facilitate them.

2. I referred to the nervous anxiety, exacerbated by propaganda, prevalent among the British public, which even the speech of the Führer had only temporarily dispelled.<sup>2</sup> This mood, hardened moreover by an inflammatory campaign in the United States, was harmful to our mutual relations.

Halifax admitted that there was nervousness during the month of January but did not consider that fresh currents of uneasiness had arisen subsequent to the Führer's speech.

3. I followed this up by indicating how greatly this general feeling affected the position of Germans living in Great Britain, who even experienced difficulty in holding social gatherings because suitable premises were refused to them.

4. The Foreign Secretary then gave full expression to his anxiety at the growing tension in Franco-Italian relations, aggravated by a press campaign on both sides. To my remark that Mussolini had given a clear and tranquilizing exposition of his policy during the visit of Chamberlain and Halifax<sup>3</sup> to Rome, Halifax retorted that since then, unfortunately, renewed bitterness had set in. He had to admit, however, that neither Mussolini nor any other prominent Italian in office had uttered anything of an alarming nature.

DIRKSEN

<sup>1</sup> At the end of February Dirksen paid a visit to Berlin to fulfill a personal engagement. While there he learned for the first time from Hewel, liaison officer between Hitler and the Foreign Ministry, that Hitler intended to invade Czechoslovakia. Ribbentrop refused to see him (see Dirksen's memoirs, *Moskau-Tokio-London*, pp. 240-241).

<sup>2</sup> Hitler's Reichstag speech of Jan. 30. See document 305, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> Jan. 11-14, 1939.

## No. 322

66/46724-25

*Note by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, February 25, 1939.

CONVERSATION ON FEBRUARY 24, 1939, BETWEEN FIELD MARSHAL GÖRING AND MR. ASHTON-GWATKIN. PRESENT: STATE SECRETARY NEUMANN<sup>1</sup> AND MINISTERIALDIREKTOR GRITZBACH<sup>2</sup>

Field Marshal Göring prefaced his remarks by referring to the thanks which Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin merited for his activities in the Sudeten territory, in that he had contributed to making the real state of affairs so clear to the British Government that, on the basis of this knowledge, it had acted accordingly during the September conferences.

As things are at the moment, efforts must be made to improve Anglo-German relations from the economic aspect. When business is flourishing between two countries, they will be less prone to resort to arms than when their economic relations are strained. Field Marshal Göring then advanced in general terms the same points of view that the Minister of Economics Funk, had already put forward on the previous day,<sup>3</sup> without however allowing himself to enter into technical details, such as loans and debt settlements.

Stressing particularly the opportunities for joint Anglo-German cooperation in foreign markets, Field Marshal Göring concluded by expressing his conviction that, in spite of all antitheses of character or otherwise between the two nations, an armed conflict must never again occur between them.

Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin on this occasion also maintained an entirely noncommittal attitude.

SCHMIDT

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<sup>1</sup> State Secretary to the Commissioner for the Four Year Plan, 1936-1942.

<sup>2</sup> Personal assistant to Göring from 1933.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 320.

## No. 323

2005/442829-30

*Minute by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, February 25, 1939.

In my last conversation today with Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin I asked him what had been the results of his visit here. He replied that

he was very grateful for the kindly welcome which he had met from everyone here. The purpose of his visit had been achieved, and he now knew which economic questions one could, by a further examination on both sides and, if necessary, by further discussions, attempt to clear up so that they could be put into practice as soon as the necessary political conditions were achieved. These questions, which he now wished to have examined further in London, he defined as the settlement of foreign debts and the eventual introduction of a commercial mark, which Reich Minister Funk had discussed with him, and the bringing about of an exchange of German purchases of raw materials from British possessions for German-investment deliveries, which I had specially brought to his notice.

Ashton-Gwatkin declared that no special technical preparations were necessary for the discussions during the forthcoming visit of the President of the Board of Trade, Stanley, in the middle of March. The preparations discussed with Ashton-Gwatkin for the Anglo-German industrial negotiations, also planned for the middle of March, are in progress.

Of the political feelers put out by Ashton-Gwatkin which have come to my notice, the two following are the most important:

1. The inquiry whether a visit by Sir Horace Wilson, the confidential adviser of the British Prime Minister, would be welcomed in Berlin. I was told by Prince Hohenlohe, with whom Ashton-Gwatkin had previously discussed his visit here and with whom he maintained close touch during his stay, that Ashton-Gwatkin had intended this suggestion as a special point in his program. In fact he mentioned it briefly at the end of his conversation with the Foreign Minister.<sup>1</sup>

2. To me personally, during coffee after a luncheon, Ashton-Gwatkin made a casual remark as to whether a *Treuga Dei* between the two countries was not possible, i.e. an agreement between the two Governments to undertake no alteration in the *status quo* during the next 3 to 4 years. When I asked whether by that he meant a political peace pact [*Burgfrieden*], he answered in the affirmative, and I told him that such a suggestion was completely outside my competence. As far as I know, he did not refer to the matter during his later conversations with Minister Funk and Field Marshal Göring. He had, however, discussed this proposal, too, with Prince Hohenlohe as one of the points on his program.

Submitted herewith to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister.

WIEHL

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 317.

## No. 324

1585/383038-39

*Ambassador Henderson to State Secretary Weizsäcker*<sup>1</sup>BERLIN, Feb. 25th, 1939.  
zu Pol. II 638.

MY DEAR STATE SECRETARY: In his speech at Blackburn on Feb. 22nd, Mr. Neville Chamberlain said "I agree with the words spoken by Herr Hitler last month when he said that cooperation between our peoples in full confidence with one another would be fortunate for the whole world."

It may interest you to know *confidentially* that the Prime Minister wrote to me personally to say that he had specially made this reference because the Duke of Coburg<sup>2</sup> had quoted these words in his speech at the Deutsch-Englische Gesellschaft and because he (the P.M.) believed that part of the Duke's speech was inspired from on high.

I do not know whether it was, but nevertheless it might be useful for you to know this and possibly even still more useful if you could confirm to me, confidentially also, whether it was in fact so inspired.

Yours very sincerely,  
NEVILLE HENDERSON

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<sup>1</sup> This letter was written by Henderson in English on stationery of the British Embassy in Berlin.

<sup>2</sup> Eduard Carl, Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, a grandson of Queen Victoria, and president of the German Red Cross Society.

## No. 325

258/169460-61

*The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

No. A 360

Moscow, February 27, 1939.

Subject: Anglo-Soviet relations.

The visit to Moscow of Hudson, Under Secretary of State and the head of the British Department for Overseas Trade, is doubtless due to British initiative, according to information established here as being correct. I hear that, when Sir William Seeds, the new British Ambassador,<sup>1</sup> handed his letters of credence to Kalinin,<sup>2</sup> he expressed

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<sup>1</sup> January 1939-June 1940.

<sup>2</sup> Mikhail Kalinin, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R., January 1937-March 1946.

among other things the desire and readiness on the part of the British Government to discuss all the Anglo-Soviet problems still remaining unsettled. According to a reliable source, Seeds made the proposal to Litvinov soon afterward for Hudson's visit.

The suggestions made by the British Ambassador agree entirely with the statements made by Lord Halifax during the debate on Munich in the House of Lords, when he expressed the view that the Soviet Union could hardly be left out. Just as it is also correct that, in defiance of traditional usage, Lord Halifax and Churchill appeared as guests at the Soviet Embassy in London, it can be conjectured that Lord Halifax intends to give more tangible form to his intimation.

The Soviet press has hitherto refrained from any comment of its own on Hudson's visit. At first it only published the Reuters report on the announcement made by Chamberlain in the House of Commons that Hudson would go to Moscow during the second half of March. The Soviet press then printed detailed comments from London and Paris newspapers on Hudson's journey. Care was taken to quote all the sentences which ascribed not only economic but also political significance to Hudson's visit on the lines of an intended *rapprochement* between Britain and the Soviet Union. Furthermore, all the statements were quoted which emphasized in general the importance and significance of this visit.

Hudson's talks in Moscow may well be limited at first to economic relations between Britain and the Soviet Union. Mutual trade is not regarded by the British side as satisfactory. Soviet exports to Britain were valued at 18.5 million pounds sterling in 1938 (as against 28.3 million pounds sterling in 1937); British exports to the Soviet Union amounted to 6.4 million pounds sterling in 1938 (as against 3.1 million in 1937); re-exports amounted to 11 million pounds sterling in 1938 (as against 16.4 million in 1937).

According to information from the British Commercial Attaché here, Britain is dissatisfied with the present volume of trade because Soviet purchases are too small and no portion of the wages of the British industrial workers is earned by the goods for re-export which Britain supplies to the Soviet Union.

Both questions have long played a part in Anglo-Soviet economic exchanges so that Under Secretary of State Hudson is scarcely likely to have an easy task in dealing with these subjects.

COUNT VON DER SCHULENBURG

## No. 326

2421/511327

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Henderson*

BERLIN, March 1, 1939.

e.o. Pol. II 638.

MY DEAR AMBASSADOR: I am very much obliged to you for your letter of February 25.<sup>1</sup> The information you gave interested me greatly.

As I can confirm to you—also confidentially—it is correct that, before his speech at the annual dinner of the Anglo-German Society, the attention of the Duke of Coburg had been specially drawn to the sentence you mention in the speech by the Führer and Chancellor on the value of collaboration and mutual trust between Germany and Britain.<sup>2</sup>

With my best regards,  
(State Secretary)

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 324.

<sup>2</sup> The original draft of this letter ended with the sentence: "This indication was given by the Foreign Ministry," but this sentence was deleted by the State Secretary before dispatch.

## No. 327

2447/514943-46

*Unsigned Minute*

W VI 853

MINUTES OF AN INTER-AGENCY MEETING AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ON  
MARCH 8, 1939, TO LAY DOWN THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE  
ANGLO-GERMAN ECONOMIC DISCUSSIONS

1. As a result of the great publicity which the negotiations have gradually acquired, the Reich Government attaches the utmost importance to the first discussions being carried out smoothly. On the German side, it must be particularly emphasized that Germany should in no way be blamed for the recession in world trade. On the contrary, Germany's need for imports and her consequent willingness to import is considerably greater than that of other countries. When it is pointed out again and again that Germany is striving by means of autarchic measures to remain aloof from world trade, cause is here being entirely confused with effect. It is only owing to the fact that other countries have excluded Germany from access to sources of raw materials and that other countries, by their trade policy of economic isolation introduced since 1931, have made it impossible

for Germany to obtain by her exports the necessary foreign exchange for the service of loans [*Kapitaldienst*] and to pay for raw materials, that Germany has been forced to introduce an increasingly strict control over her foreign exchange and to curtail the need for imports as far as possible by production in her own country. In particular, attention should be drawn to the fact that during the last year and in recent months Germany has also been attacked again and again by British politicians as a country which is restricting the opportunities for sales by other countries by forcing up her exports. How unjustified these attacks are is at once apparent from the fact that German exports too have not risen but fallen. The falsity of these arguments is further demonstrated by the fact that Germany is the only country which is prepared to expend the proceeds of increased exports directly on increased imports, with the result that world trade could receive the best fillip from an increase in German exports. This is particularly applicable to Anglo-German relations, for in the financial agreement Germany had even undertaken to use again nine-tenths of the foreign exchange received for her exports to cover purchases in Britain, while at the same time there can be no doubt that the remaining 10 percent would be used again for purchases in British countries. In this connection, figures published by the Board of Trade are of interest, which reveal that in the year 1938, out of every pound sterling which was expended on imports from the country concerned, the following sum was received again for exports:

Germany . . . . .	13s. 6d
U.S.A. . . . .	3s. 6d
U.S.S.R. . . . .	6s. 0d

No reference is made to this fact in public speeches, either by members of British industry and commerce or by members of the British Government. First and foremost, we must demand that Britain should give proof of her sincere desire to come to an understanding with Germany by bringing this fact to the notice of her public opinion and by ceasing to attack Germany's economic methods.

2. Germany has never been interested in selling her goods cheap in foreign markets. As in the case of any other salesman, Germany's efforts were formerly aimed first and foremost at securing as good a profit as possible from her sales; it is only anti-German propaganda, combined with sharp devaluation in other countries, that has forced Germany to take steps to adjust her prices so that German goods may still find a market abroad. The greater the reluctance abroad to buy German goods, the more attractive must the prices of these be. The better the conditions are for the sale of German goods, the easier it is

to adjust their prices to those of goods of a similar type which are produced in the same country.

3. The Reich Government is in favor of industries reaching agreement over prices. This agreement is, however, only practical if at the same time the enlightenment of the British public demanded in paragraph 1 is successful. In no circumstances should the agreements lead either to the German sales shrinking further or to German sales in certain price categories remaining possible only by the large-scale adoption of procedure to insure additional exports.

An agreement on the distribution of markets in third countries will be approved by the Reich Government only insofar as it involves countries in the British Empire. The countries of southeastern Europe, South America, and the Far East must be excluded on principle, but at the same time the Reich Government's attitude must not be disclosed to the British negotiators at once. On the contrary, the German spokesmen should state that they are ready in principle for any agreement and thereby endeavor to throw the onus of rejection on the British. Only as a result of such a rejection will it then be opportune for Germany to refuse to discuss the aforementioned territories. If it should not be possible for agreements on markets outside the British Empire (Scandinavian countries, France, Italy, the United States of America) to be excluded from the conversations, it will be necessary for these conversations to remain strictly secret, since third countries would immediately create opposition both to Britain and to Germany.

The following details have been settled: It is essential for an official of the Reich Federation of Industry to be present at all the negotiations by the separate groups and for the appropriate heads of sections of the Reich Ministry of Economics and of the Foreign Ministry to be kept informed continually of the progress of the negotiations. In particular, care should be taken to insure that the list of all the persons taking part in the negotiations should reach the departments in good time. Furthermore, a list must be compiled of the groups which are prepared to negotiate before the negotiations actually commence. Particular importance is attached to having some of the groups reach agreement by March 15-16. Therefore, in spite of Mr. Locock's request that the separate groups should not meet until March 16, efforts should also be made so that those groups which are willing to do so should commence the negotiations as early as March 15, so that either an agreement or the impossibility of a final agreement can be ascertained by March 16 at the latest. The Reich Government is exceedingly anxious, by the way, to have data already in its possession by March 17, the date of the British Ministers' arrival, on the basis of

which the British Ministers can be told quite plainly what steps the British Government must take in order to improve relations.

### No. 328

1665/393910-13

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 908

LONDON, March 10, 1939.

Pol. I M 1024 g.

With reference to my reports A 5210 of December 23, 1938,<sup>1</sup> and A 4570 of November 24, 1938,<sup>1</sup> and to the instruction A 452 (Pol. I M 360 g) of January 30, 1939.<sup>2</sup>

Subject: Advance notification of British naval tonnage.

In accordance with the above-mentioned instruction, no further action was taken at the time regarding the request addressed by the High Command of the Navy to the British Government to communicate the forecasts of naval strength periodically 5 years in advance. The Foreign Office has now addressed to me note No. A. 1699/G of the 4th, of which the original and a copy are enclosed, in which reference is made to the British *aide-mémoire* forwarded with the above-mentioned report of December 23, 1938, and in the annex to which notification is now given of the probable British battleship tonnage for the end of 1943.

Furthermore the annex (table H) replaces the list (table G) forwarded with the above-mentioned report of last November 24.

With reference to the tonnage figures for battleships, it is also observed in the British note that these represent the total tonnage of 21 battleships.

With reference to the category of aircraft carriers, it is observed that the British Government regards the aircraft repair ship *Unicorn* (cf. report A 568 of February 10 this year)<sup>3</sup> as an aircraft carrier under the terms of the Anglo-German naval treaty of July 17, 1937.

DIRKSEN

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 297.

<sup>3</sup> Not found; see *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Third Series, vol. III, Nos. 448-455.

[Enclosure] <sup>4</sup>

No. A.1699/G

SECRET

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W. 1.,  
4th March, 1939.

YOUR EXCELLENCY, I have the honour to refer to paragraph 4 of the Aide-Mémoire regarding the communication of forecasts of British naval strength to the German Government which was handed by Mr. Perowne to Herr Schlitter on the 23rd December last.<sup>5</sup>

2. In accordance with the suggestion contained in the above-mentioned paragraph, I now have the honour to transmit to Your Excellency herewith a tabular statement setting out the tonnage figures of British capital ship strength anticipated for the British Commonwealth of Nations at the end of 1943.

3. In this connexion His Majesty's Government desire to draw the German Government's attention to the following points which will serve to clarify the situation:

(a) The forecast communicated in my note to Your Excellency No. A.8124/G of the 7th November, 1938,<sup>5</sup> was based on a capital ship strength of 19 ships for the end of 1942 and assumed that the two ships of the 1938 programme would be completed by that date and that three ships of the Royal Sovereign Class would therefore be scrapped.

(b) It has, however, now become apparent that the above-mentioned two ships of the 1938 programme will only be completed in the course of the year 1943. Therefore in order to retain 19 ships, only one of the Royal Sovereign Class will be scrapped in 1942.

(c) His Majesty's Government are purely concerned to make this point plain in order to avoid any misunderstanding and do not wish to amend the capital ship tonnage as already forecast for the end of 1942, since it is appreciated that this might cause inconvenience to any plans for future construction which the German Government may have drawn up.

(d) The figure for aircraft carriers includes the Fleet Air Arm Supply and Repair Ship, H.M.S. "Unicorn" of 14,750 tons. As was explained when particulars of this vessel were notified recently in accordance with the provisions of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement, His Majesty's Government are prepared to regard the vessel as falling technically within the aircraft carrier category as defined in that Treaty. They are also prepared to treat her similarly for purposes of the 35% ratio. Nevertheless, in so doing, they wish to emphasise again that she is designed primarily for the repair of aircraft rather than for their carriage or operation.

<sup>4</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>5</sup> Not found.

I have the honour to be, with the highest consideration,  
Your Excellency's obedient Servant,

(For the Secretary of State)

J. V. PEROWNE

TABLE H

Capital Ships . . . . .	711,400 tons <sup>6</sup>	Forecast for end of 1943.
Aircraft Carriers . . . . .	253,050 "	Forecast for end of 1942.
Cruisers		
Sub-Category (a) . . . . .	146,800 "	-do-
Cruisers		
Sub-Category (b) and Destroyers.	645,600 "	-do-
Cruisers		
Sub-Category (b) and Destroyers (permanently overage).	105,000 "	-do-
Submarines . . . . .	70,000 "	-do-

The above table is communicated with the reservation that it is subject to variation, depending on circumstances in either an upward or a downward direction.

<sup>6</sup>Footnote in the original: "This represents a total of 21 capital ships."

### No. 329

1665/393905-06

*The High Command of the Navy to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

SK 145 geh.

BERLIN, March 13, 1939.

Pol. I M 950.

Attention of Counselor of Legation v. Kamphoeverer or deputy.

Subject: British note on advance notification of tonnage.<sup>1</sup>

Reference: Pol. I M 5060 geh. of December 30, 1938,<sup>2</sup> Pol. I M 5099 geh. of December 31, 1938,<sup>2</sup> SK 56 of January 24, 1939.<sup>3</sup>

As the British Admiralty has reminded us several times to reply to the British *aide-mémoire* of December 22, 1938,<sup>2</sup> and a new estimate of the strength of the British fleet already representing the practical realization of the British proposals was handed to the Naval Attaché in London on March 3, 1939, a formal reply to the British Government is regarded as being necessary. You are therefore requested to forward a note to the British Government, for which a draft is

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 328, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 297.

appended in the annex.<sup>4</sup> The draft has been approved by the Führer and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, to whom it was reported orally by the Commander in Chief of the Navy on March 10, 1939.

Signed in draft, SCHNIEWIND

[Enclosure]

DRAFT NOTE TO HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

The German Government has, on the basis of the proposals made by His Britannic Majesty's Government on December 22, 1938, and of the oral explanations made in connection with this at the talks in Berlin on December 30, 1938,<sup>5</sup> examined in detail the problem of advance notification of the strength of the British fleet, raised by it [the German Government] at the time. It thanks the British Government for its readiness shown in the aforementioned proposals to forward annually the probable strength in advance for 4¾ years for battleships and for 3¾ years for other classes of ships. It also expresses its thanks for the corrected estimate for 1942 or 1943 (table H) handed to the German Naval Attaché on March 3, 1939.<sup>6</sup> The German Government has certainly formed the opinion that the method provided for advance notification is not entirely appropriate for affording the German Navy the full utilization at any time of the quota of tonnage to which it is entitled. As was admitted at the time by the British representative during the oral discussions, the British tonnage allotted for scrapping continues to be an uncertain factor in the advance estimate.

Nevertheless, the German Government believes that the proposals of His Britannic Majesty's Government constitute an improvement on the method agreed upon hitherto and hopes that it will reveal its practical efficacy. If further questions should emerge in this matter, it would then approach His Britannic Majesty's Government anew.

<sup>4</sup> A dispatch dated Mar. 18 (1665/393907) initialed by the Under State Secretary gives instructions for a note in accordance with this draft to be forwarded to the German Embassy in London on Mar. 21 for communication to the British Government.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 288, enclosure.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 328, enclosure.

No. 330

1941/435218

*Ambassador Henderson to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, March 15, 1939.

Pol. IV 1728.

DEAR REICH MINISTER, I have just received telegraphic instructions from my Government to bring to your notice that, in view of the

<sup>1</sup> The letter is in German in the original, except for the salutation and closing.

present circumstances, it considers the visit of the President of the Board of Trade to Germany to be inopportune. It therefore feels compelled to postpone this visit.<sup>2</sup>

In view of this I regret that my dinner at the Embassy on the 18th must also be postponed, and I assume that your luncheon at the Kaiserhof will for the same reason not take place.

Yours sincerely,  
NEVILLE HENDERSON

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<sup>2</sup> A minute by the State Secretary (483/231354) records that, after giving him this information, the Ambassador added that it would be communicated to the press on the same day.

### No. 331

2005/442843

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, March 15, 1939.

Dr. Guth of the Reich Federation of Industry reports by telephone from Düsseldorf that the discussions between the two industrial delegations are being conducted in a very friendly atmosphere and will be continued tomorrow, March 16, according to plan.

By a friendly arrangement with the British guests it has been agreed to cancel the banquet in the Hotel Adlon in Berlin planned for Friday, March 17, since the British Ministers had excused themselves from attending.

The main British delegation will leave for London toward evening on the 16th.

The two delegations have agreed upon the German and English text of a joint statement, the German text of which has been passed to me by telephone and is appended here.<sup>1</sup> The text will be issued to the German press on Thursday, March 16, at about 6 p.m. unless any alterations desired by the Foreign Ministry are received before then.

RÜTER

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<sup>1</sup> This joint communiqué, issued by the Reich Federation of Industry and the Federation of British Industries (2005/442844-48), expressed at some length in general terms the mutual desire of the two delegations to foster Anglo-German trade relations and mentioned that nine industrial groups had already started to plan the details of future cooperation. A minute dated Apr. 3 (2005/442855) records that the German Commercial Attaché in London had telephoned that the Federation of British Industries was prepared to continue the negotiations.

CHAPTER III  
GERMANY AND FRANCE  
OCTOBER 4, 1938-MARCH 11, 1939

No. 332

2459/515642-44

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

A. 3959

PARIS, October 4, 1938.

Received October 6.

Pol. II 3057.

Subject: Reception of the Munich agreements in France, in particular the joint Anglo-German Declaration.

Now that the first jubilation over the success of the four statesmen assembled in Munich in maintaining peace has died down, public opinion, press, and official circles here are beginning to take stock of the conclusions which French foreign policy will have to draw from the Munich agreements. It is typical of the French mentality that, in this stock taking, criticism of what has or has not been attained comes increasingly to the fore. Moreover, the picture is by no means complete at this time. It still fluctuates greatly according to the home politics of the observer and to the course of foreign policy which he had previously favored. All the same, one can already recognize a number of points on which there is a certain measure of agreement.

This applies in particular to the criticism of the joint declaration of the Führer and the British Prime Minister.<sup>1</sup> It was a complete surprise for the whole of public opinion and probably for official circles as well. All that could be done at first, therefore, was to greet it with more or less genuinely meant enthusiasm as a decisive step toward the reshaping of European politics. An attempt was made, no doubt under official guidance, to counteract the distrust of British policy which is still latent in certain circles in France by saying that the French views were also in agreement with the initiative of the British Prime Minister. The conjecture was also put forward in many quarters that a similar Franco-German declaration was imminent or, at any rate, was to be expected in the near future. Here the wish may have been father to the thought in the first few moments.

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. II, document No. 676.

On the other hand, opinions on the Munich Declaration expressed in the semiofficial *Temps* soon became much more reserved. This paper said that it was certainly no new pact of friendship, nor a bilateral nonaggression pact, but merely a simple *déclaration d'intention*, the peaceful spirit of which could only be welcomed. It added that the Declaration affected neither the Anglo-French nor the Italian-German agreements and therefore could not alter in any way the obligations of England vis-à-vis France in the event of a Franco-German conflict or Germany's obligations to Italy in the event of an Anglo-Italian conflict. This very clearly expressed the fear that the problem of the Entente Cordiale, which had been considered solved, might again have to be faced. Using old French tactics, therefore, attempts were and still are being made to minimize the significance of the Munich declaration as far as possible and to water it down. The *Temps* wrote in a further leading article that this was not the right time for diplomatic improvisations and that it was premature to try to build up great political structures, however seductive they might appear at first sight. This presumably meant that, as opposed to the above-mentioned overoptimistic press comments, a Franco-German declaration on the lines of the Anglo-German one was considered here, at any rate for the present, as being difficult if not impossible to achieve.

How much anxiety and displeasure had actually been aroused by the Anglo-German Declaration, not only in Marxist circles but in the whole of France, was seen only when the subsequent exchange of letters between Chamberlain and Daladier<sup>2</sup> was published. If, on the one hand, attempts were made to minimize the value of the Anglo-German Declaration, efforts were now made in the reverse sense, reading into Chamberlain's letter things which were not there. Thus the *Petit Parisien*, closely connected with the Quai d'Orsay, gave the report the incorrect heading, "The letter strengthens the intimate relations between Britain and France," and emphasizes that the Munich Anglo-German Declaration in no way modifies the close cooperation between the two countries. This heading is incorrect in that, though Chamberlain's letter to Daladier honors Anglo-French intimacy in conventional terms, it contains no word about any effect of the Anglo-German Declaration on Anglo-French relations. The *Temps* also tried to find in Chamberlain's letter confirmation of its opinion that the Anglo-German Declaration in no way affects the spirit, nature, or practical significance of the Anglo-French accord. Other newspapers, and not only those of the Left, print criticisms of the Munich declaration. The *Journal des Débats*, in particular, speaks of the conspicuous hastiness and remarkably short memory of

<sup>2</sup> *Documents on International Affairs, 1938*, vol. II, p. 292.

the British Prime Minister and of a serious political blunder. Furthermore, the last paragraph of Daladier's reply to Chamberlain also clearly demonstrates the feeling of uneasiness aroused here by the Munich declaration.<sup>3</sup>

The Chamber has just approved the Munich agreements by a large majority. It can therefore be predicted that the whole of France will follow suit but that in view of the Anglo-German Declaration a certain bitterness [*ein gewisser Stachel*] against Britain will remain.

BRÄUER<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> This report amplifies and confirms a telegram (621/250637-38) and a dispatch (2369/495069-70) sent by Bräuer on Oct. 1, describing the relief expressed in the French press that peace had been achieved through the Munich Agreement, tempered by a certain suspicion that France had been left in an ambiguous position by the Chamberlain-Hitler declaration. In a further long dispatch dated Oct. 10 (664/257338-54), Bräuer concludes that France's successive diplomatic defeats over Austria and Czechoslovakia had so weakened her position as a Great Power that she was now ready to revise her policy toward Germany and adopt a more accommodating attitude. This would secure Germany in the west and leave her in a stronger position for action in other directions.

<sup>4</sup> Curt Bräuer, afterwards Minister to Norway, November 1939-April 1940.

### No. 333

2134/467041

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 6, 1938.

The French Ambassador mentioned to me today the demobilization of two Czechoslovak age groups already reported. M. François-Poncet is of the opinion that a gradual demobilization in the various countries could now be contemplated. He does not envisage an international public agreement on demobilization; his view is rather that each country might take steps of its own accord toward lessening the present extraordinary military precautions. He would therefore be extremely glad to have confidential information on any German measures or plans for reduction.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 334

2483/517741-42

#### *The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 519 of October 6

PARIS, October 6, 1938—1:30 a.m.

Received October 6—3:20 a.m.

Pol. II 3066.

1. The result of the foreign-policy debate in the Chamber and Senate means that Daladier's peace move has been approved and the

Munich Agreement ratified by an overwhelming majority of the representatives of the French people. With the exception of Communist speakers and the notorious Kérillis,<sup>1</sup> the only member of the French Right to vote against the Government, no strong attacks on Germany have yet been observed. Almost all the speakers showed a desire, after the painful liquidation of the Sudeten question, to achieve a new, active foreign policy, initially by a *rapprochement* with Italy (sending an Ambassador to Rome) and also to achieve solidarity in home politics as the prerequisite for a stronger foreign policy. The fact that the Communists voted against the Government can only increase the value of the vote of confidence in Daladier. The Communist war-mongering was sharply rebuffed by the remarkable speech of Deputy Bergery, who referred to the Communist demand for the right of self-determination for Alsace-Lorraine in 1933.

2. Employing clever tactics, Daladier immediately used the favorable mood in Parliament to solve, by means of a special-powers bill, the most urgent problem of the moment, namely, rehabilitation of the finances, a problem which had been acute for months and had become especially so owing to the latest crisis in foreign politics. Difficulties arose in the course of the debate because the Chamber felt great hesitation, as was also expressed by the result of the voting, in giving Daladier—for the second time during his present term as Premier—full authority and special financial powers and thus again bypassing Parliament at a critical time.

Only through Herriot's<sup>2</sup> personal intervention in the late hours of the night and through Daladier's promise not to tamper with the principle of the 40-hour week was it possible to induce the Socialist faction at least to abstain from voting so as not to endanger the Cabinet. As the Senate passed the Special Powers Bill almost unanimously and without amendment this afternoon, the final passage of the bill is assured, and thus the extraordinary session of Parliament will come to an end.

3. The result of the debate on foreign policy and finance is a further strengthening of Daladier's authority. In regard to domestic politics, the most important factor is that the Popular Front is to all intents and purposes finished, owing to the refusal of the Communists to vote with it; this may be the signal for stronger opposition and social agitation by the extreme Left in the near future and may thus also contribute to a further cooling of Franco-Soviet relations. The attitude of the Socialists as the second Marxist partners in the Popular Front is also vacillating and uncertain for the near future.

WELCZEK

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<sup>1</sup>Henri de Kérillis, Deputy, and director of the Centre de Propagande des Républicains Nationaux; editor of *Epoque*.

<sup>2</sup>Edouard Herriot, Radical-Socialist Deputy; former Premier and member of various Cabinets: President of the Chamber of Deputies, 1936-40.

## No. 335

2457/515632

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 269 of October 5

ROME, October 6, 1938—12:00 noon.

Received October 6—2:55 p.m.

Pol. II 3068.

I have received the following information from a source generally proved reliable, close to the Palazzo Chigi, on the events leading up to the surprising French decision to recognize the [Italian] Empire by sending an Ambassador:

The ostentatious ignoring of Mussolini's importance and role in the Munich negotiations by the French press and its attempt to represent Italy as a second-class power have caused Mussolini extreme irritation which found its expression in Monday's article in the *Giornale d'Italia*, based on direct instructions from the Duce. Moreover, Ciano had in a recent conversation informed Perth<sup>1</sup> of Mussolini's feelings about this, and Perth, in his turn, had informed Chamberlain. The latter had immediately caused heavy pressure to be exerted in Paris for a direct step by France on the road to a *rapprochement*, and this, together with the impression caused by the above-mentioned article, particularly its strongly worded last sentence, produced the decision of the French Council of Ministers to send an Ambassador. The French gesture leaves the Duce cold, as it comes 1 or 2 years too late and is now obviously intended only to give the appearance of a Paris-Rome *rapprochement* at the expense of the Axis. The Duce has therefore given instructions that the press should confine itself to reporting the facts without comment, though with prominent headlines.

I hope to see Ciano tomorrow.

MACKENSEN

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<sup>1</sup>The Earl of Perth, formerly Sir Eric Drummond, Secretary General of the League of Nations, 1919-33; British Ambassador in Italy, October 1933-May 1939.

## No. 336

1648/391460

*Note by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

NEUSTADT, UPPER SILESIA, October 7, 1938.

I have submitted to the Führer the minute of October 6<sup>1</sup> from State Secretary Baron von Weizsäcker regarding demobilization. The

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<sup>1</sup>Document No. 333.

Führer agreed that certain observations on this matter should be made to the French Ambassador and called in General Keitel. General Keitel told me that he already had received a telephone call this morning and, after consultation with the Führer, had issued a statement approximately as follows:

Certain minor measures for the reduction of the present strength had already been introduced. Decisive steps for demobilization would be made dependent on the development of the occupation between October 8 and 10.

HEWEL

### No. 337

100/64404

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, October 11, 1938.

DEAR FRIEND: As British stock is very low with us at present and the French on the other hand higher, a somewhat distorted picture has resulted for the outside world from the fact that Chamberlain has proposed the familiar peace declaration to the Führer, whereas nothing similar exists between France and ourselves. Hence there has been no lack of suggestions for settling this in some way and mention has even been made of visits by ministers. Since the Führer would under no circumstances do anything of the kind if it did not suit Rome, the Prince of Hesse (as you perhaps have already heard from him) has been sent to Rome by the Führer for the express purpose of taking soundings. I only want to tell you this for your information, should you need it. In my opinion, no more than a friendly meeting and a platonic declaration, if anything, will come off it in the immediate future.<sup>1</sup>

Cordial greetings and Heil Hitler!

Ever yours,

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> This letter, which was dispatched by diplomatic pouch, did not reach Rome until Oct. 17; Mackensen replied to it on the following day (100/64405-06). In his reply the Ambassador expressed his gratitude to the State Secretary for keeping him informed, as he had understood from Prince Philip of Hesse during his last visit that this matter was being handled in a particularly confidential manner through Göring and that the Foreign Ministry and Ribbentrop were not supposed to know about it.

### No. 338

2134/467043-44

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

BERLIN, October 13, 1938.

The French Ambassador spoke to me today about the plan pending for a visit by the Reich Foreign Minister to Paris. Regarding the

date, M. François-Poncet thought that the excitement over Czechoslovakia should be allowed a little more time to die down. As regards the practical results of the visit he indicated three points:

1. A nonaggression pact, as a better substitute for the Locarno-Rhine Pact, which had gone up in smoke. This nonaggression pact would mean nothing more than a formulation of the Führer's repeated public statements that he had no more territorial claims against France.

2. A consultative agreement. Such an agreement would fulfill an idea which he, Poncet, had already urged for a long time.

3. The currency question. Since it would be difficult to reach agreement on the currency question in a short time, especially as the British and the Americans would also have to be consulted, it need only be confirmed on the proposed occasion that the German and French Governments had agreed to enter into negotiations regarding the fixing of the rate of exchange. The Ambassador made one or two further remarks as to how the Bank for International Settlements at Basel should be brought in, but these observations were of no particular importance.

I merely took note of Poncet's statements, but, as regards heading 3 (currency question), I remarked that the mere public declaration that Germany and France had agreed to negotiate on the subject would insure far-reaching and successful preliminary work in this sphere.

To be submitted to the Foreign Minister (on the train to Munich).

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 339

621/250667

### *The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 536 of October 19

PARIS, October 19, 1938—10:30 p.m.

Received October 20—1:50 a.m.

Pol. II 3220.

Yesterday I saw Daladier, and today Bonnet, for the first time since [my] return. In contrast to the great disillusionment which has meanwhile pervaded public opinion, I found them in a cordial and confident mood. Both desire sincere continuation of the Munich atmosphere, the settlement of all outstanding questions by a direct exchange of opinions, and the finding of a basis for enduring friendly relations with Germany. Daladier was greatly impressed by his reception at Munich and by the Führer's personality, of which he spoke with the deepest appreciation. Bonnet asked me to report that

François-Poncet's transfer had already been decided on some time previously, as no other suitable candidate was available. He had decided on Coulondre as successor, since the latter had been his close friend for years and, as a former colleague, was in the best position to realize his avowed intentions. Bonnet repeated his wish, expressed in every conversation, that the settlement of the Czech question should constitute not the conclusion of but a new departure for Franco-German discussions. In this connection Bonnet asked me to tell the Foreign Minister that he could count on a most cordial reception when he came to Paris.

WELCZECK

No. 340

1570/379967-68

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

BERLIN, October 22, 1938.

The French Ambassador called on me today to inform me, in connection with his audience with the Führer, of his Government's attitude toward the Franco-German plans for negotiation.

Asking that the Führer should be informed as soon as possible, François-Poncet said that he had reported to Paris on his conversation with the Führer.<sup>1</sup> The French Government gave a completely favorable reception in principle to the ideas discussed there. The French Government would be pleased if in regard to the purely Franco-German problems, namely frontier recognition and joint consultation, a German draft treaty were to be formulated without delay and dispatched to Paris, so that the text of a treaty could be drawn up in the shortest possible time at a meeting of representatives of both countries.

With regard to a four- or five-power conference on Belgium, German suggestions for the text of a treaty would be equally welcome, though less urgent. Suggestions for a treaty to render war more humane, an idea already repeatedly expressed and publicly proclaimed by the Führer, would likewise fall on good soil in France. The French Government would also be prepared to attack the somewhat more

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<sup>1</sup>No record of this farewell interview with Hitler and Ribbentrop at the Obersalzberg has been found, other than the summary given by the State Secretary to Welczeck in a personal letter on Oct. 25; see document No. 343. See also document No. 345. According to the Ambassador's own account of the interview, Ribbentrop also was present but took little part in the conversation (*Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, French Yellow Book, Documents Diplomatiques, 1938-1939. Pièces relatives aux événements et aux négociations qui ont précédé l'ouverture des hostilités entre l'Allemagne, d'une part, la Pologne, la Grande-Bretagne et la France, d'autre part.* Paris 1939. Documents Nos. 17 and 18.)

complicated currency question. In this matter, however, some rather obsolete conceptions had to be overcome. (Poncet intimated that perhaps no uniform conception on this point existed among the German authorities either.)

Poncet added that at a given time they would naturally have to bring Britain, and later also Belgium, into the conversations, just as we should certainly keep Italy informed. It would, however, be a mistake not to strike while the iron was hot in the matter of purely Franco-German questions.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 341

2538/520678-80

#### *Memorandum by the Director of the Legal Department*

BERLIN, October 22, 1938.

Signor Attolico called on me this morning immediately on my return from Munich and said that, in view of the foreign press reports on Franco-German negotiations which were in progress, he had approached M. François-Poncet on the matter; the latter had told him in detail of his conversation with the Führer and the Foreign Minister.<sup>1</sup> He repeated the proposals of M. François-Poncet correctly for the most part. His statements, however, differed in the following points from what the French Ambassador recently said to me:

1. M. François-Poncet had said that a Franco-German agreement, not only as to the Belgian question but as to [Franco-German relations] in general, that is also with regard to the mutual recognition of frontiers and with regard to consultation, should be laid before the two other Western powers, Italy and Britain, for recognition and, so to speak, for guarantee, so as in this way to revive the idea of the four-power pact.

2. M. François-Poncet had mentioned as a further point in the agreement the humanizing of warfare (prohibition or limitation of bombing), while to me he had mentioned this point as a matter for negotiation, not in the first agreement but possibly later.

3. Signor Attolico did not mention the currency question.

The Italian Ambassador was under the impression that I had been urgently summoned to Munich by the Foreign Minister on account of this matter [a Franco-German agreement] and wanted to hear from me how we stood in regard to it.

I replied to him that I had first heard something of the matter shortly before my journey to Munich from M. François-Poncet, who

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 340, footnote 1. Attolico also referred to this interview in a conversation with the State Secretary on Oct. 24 and mentioned the interest of Italy in the idea of a four-power pact (1570/379969).

had told me of it on the occasion of the luncheon at the Italian Embassy. At Munich the Foreign Minister had spoken to me of the matter only quite generally and provisionally, without going deeply into it on any point. He had obviously not yet reached any precise or concrete decisions about it, as to whether and in what manner it should be dealt with further.

Signor Attolico then said, in a rather decided manner, that he was of the opinion that a Franco-German agreement of this kind, in which Italy and Britain would also participate in one form or another, would indeed be an excellent thing and that it would be well worth while to follow up the project as soon as possible. I adopted a noncommittal attitude toward this.

Gaus

### No. 342

2536/520547-48

*Note by an Official of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop*

PARIS, October 24, 1938.

For Ambassador Count Welzeck.

Of the talks I have had in the last few days I would like to report in particular a lunch with Paul Reynaud<sup>1</sup> on October 22 and a conversation with Georges Bonnet this morning.

Paul Reynaud defended himself against the charge of being an enemy of Franco-German understanding and outlined his contacts with German circles in the years before the National Socialists gained power. He hinted that France needed the specter of the German danger in order to remain strong internally, because otherwise the willingness of the people to defend themselves and make sacrifices would disappear completely. He held the view that an agreement could not be made with *mous* (by which he obviously meant Flandin<sup>2</sup>), but that it could be made with *durs* (with a plain hint at himself). He asserted that public opinion in France would soon disavow men like Bonnet and approve the opponents of the Munich Agreement. Finally he sent his regards to Herr von Ribbentrop, whom he had met at a party in London.

The talk with Georges Bonnet concerned the French article in answer to the German Foreign Minister's contribution to the Franco-German monthly reviews. Daladier does not want to contribute an original article and evidently wants to wait for the Marseilles congress<sup>3</sup> before finally deciding about it, and I am afraid this will mean

<sup>1</sup> Paul Reynaud, Left Republican Alliance Deputy; Minister of Justice, April-November 1938; Minister of Finance, November 1938-March 1940.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 353.

<sup>3</sup> The Congress of the Radical Socialist Party from Oct. 26 to Oct. 29.

that publication of Herr von Ribbentrop's article must also unfortunately be delayed. Bonnet promised to intervene personally with Daladier on the subject.

I also spoke to Bonnet about the possibilities of more extended cultural contacts between the two countries, especially for young people, and I said that Baldur von Schirach<sup>4</sup> would be prepared to give in December 1938, the lecture at the Sorbonne on "Goethe and France," which had been arranged for the spring of 1938. Bonnet expressed his sympathy with our country, and particularly mentioned Herriot's chairmanship<sup>5</sup> for which he had been designated. In this connection he again emphasized that if Herriot were offered, in addition to a lecture in Germany, a reception by the Head of the German State through the German Ambassador in Paris he would certainly be glad to accept such an invitation.

Bonnet also discussed in particular the problems of economic cooperation between Germany and France, which in his opinion might form the first subject of an official Franco-German discussion. He sent his best wishes to Herr von Ribbentrop.

ABETZ<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The Reich Youth Leader of the NSDAP, 1931-40.

<sup>5</sup> Presumably of the Franco-German Society.

<sup>6</sup> Otto Abetz represented the Dienststelle Ribbentrop in Paris from 1935 until his expulsion from France in July 1939.

## No. 343

121/119449-52

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Welzcek*

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, October 25, 1938.

DEAR WELZCECK: The ideas which emerged at and after Munich about a Franco-German discussion are now beginning to take shape. On your last visit to Berlin we informed you that, for a start, Mussolini had been asked through special channels whether he had any objections to such conversations with France from the point of view of Franco-Italian relations. He said he had not. Thereupon the matter was discussed in somewhat more explicit form at the farewell visit for which François-Poncet was invited to the Obersalzberg.<sup>1</sup>

I believe, however, that all parties concerned are agreed that it is a question less of agreements of a purely material nature, as there are actually no concrete problems to settle, than of confirming in visible form an improvement in Franco-German relations. Of the different suggestions made, for the time being two appear to have prospects of realization.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 340, footnote 1.

The first concerns some kind of commitment on the final recognition of the Franco-German frontier. The agreement on this should be framed so loosely that it would not be necessary to involve ourselves in the question of the French treaties of alliance or the French League of Nations commitments, as would probably be necessary in the case of a nonaggression pact.

The second suggestion concerns the conclusion of an agreement for joint consultation, in which the difficulty lies in defining the range of problems on which there would have to be consultation.

Finally, the following additional questions were discussed in the conversation between François-Poncet and the Führer, at which Herr von Ribbentrop was also present:

1. A joint Franco-German guarantee of Belgium, conceivably with the participation of Britain and Italy. Thereby the hitherto separate declarations of 1937, by France and Britain on the one hand and Germany on the other, would be combined in a joint undertaking. It seems to us to be very doubtful whether in this respect anything useful can result. Something similar could be evolved, if necessary, in the case of Luxembourg. According to another version, the French are also considering placing the Franco-German frontier agreement under an Anglo-French guarantee, and thus making a new Western pact out of the whole thing.

2. Some kind of action in the armaments sphere or for the humanizing of warfare, in which the old idea of limitation or prohibition of bombing would be discussed again.

3. Finally, during the discussion François-Poncet gave the cue once again for a currency agreement. So far this conveys nothing to us.

Obviously Attolico has already been informed about this conversation by François-Poncet. He has also heard Herr Gaus say something about it, though not in any great detail.<sup>2</sup>

The fact that such discussions are in progress has already been reported in both the British and French press, although the strictest secrecy had been expressly agreed upon by the Führer and François-Poncet. In spite of these leaks, which are moreover mostly inaccurate as to the facts, we must naturally observe the strictest secrecy. I would ask you, therefore, to inform no one, even in the Embassy, except Herr Bräuer. In the event of your being spoken to on the matter by the Foreign Minister or other officials, you will of course have to show that you have been informed. But it would naturally not be a good thing for you to embark without official instructions

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 341.

on the opening of a discussion of the substance of the matter, as Herr von Ribbentrop wishes to conduct any such conversation himself.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,  
WEIZSÄCKER

No. 344

1570/379970

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 551 of October 31

PARIS, October 31, 1938—11:10 p.m.

Received November 1—2:50 a.m.

According to instructions, I have today conveyed to Bonnet the Foreign Minister's sympathy on the catastrophic fire at Marseilles.<sup>1</sup> Bonnet was greatly touched by the attention and begged me to convey his warmest thanks. On the same occasion the Foreign Minister, having previously conferred at length with Poncet, once again turned the conversation to his old plan of paving the way for Franco-German understanding following the settlement of the Sudeten-German question. The fact that France had to yield to German demands in the Czechoslovak conflict and had to desert her Czech ally, so to speak, was not only felt here, particularly by the Leftist Opposition, to be a grave abdication of power but was even described as a humiliation and was being exploited in attacks on the Government. It is to be feared that these factors, if allowed to continue, might influence the generally favorable attitude toward an understanding and might sabotage the possibilities for that understanding. For this reason, something would have to be done soon. Daladier's speech at Marseilles and those of his supporters were delivered with the firm intention of building up a front against those elements hostile to an understanding and of smoothing the way for an arrangement. Before proceeding with far-reaching agreements, also affecting other powers, Franco-German relations should be stabilized by an official recognition of frontiers and an agreement for joint consultation signed here by the Reich Foreign Minister. Bonnet said he was willing to guarantee that such an agreement would be received with enthusiasm by 80 percent of the French people. A blow must be struck while the iron is still hot. He hoped to receive from us a formula for agreement in the course of the coming week. In view of the intensive counter-

<sup>1</sup> One hundred persons died Oct. 29, 1938, in a fire which destroyed the Nouvelles Galeries and the Hotel de Noailles; the latter was the headquarters of the Radical Socialist Party Congress then in session.

propaganda put out by British politicians close to the Opposition and by Russian agents here, haste certainly appears to be indicated. Any kind of agreement made with Germany would also strengthen Daladier's and Bonnet's positions and would be advantageous for their policy of suppressing and excluding the Communists.

WELOZECK

No. 345

1570/379971

*Ambassador Welozcek to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

PARIS, November 1, 1938.

DEAR WEIZSÄCKER: Many thanks for the information given in your letter of October 25.<sup>1</sup> Bonnet had already tried, during my visit on October 19, to talk to me about the points brought up for discussion by François-Poncet but did not enter into the matter more closely, as, according to instructions, I remained completely noncommittal, and he probably inferred from this that I was not informed about it. Then, yesterday, François-Poncet called on me and gave me, quite spontaneously, details of his conversation with the Führer.<sup>2</sup> According to his account, the initiative in the matter of continuing the Munich conversations with a view to a settlement of and improvement in Franco-German relations had come from him—François-Poncet. The Führer had received his suggestions sympathetically and had instructed Herr Gaus to formulate a statement which would deal initially only with Franco-German relations but would also open up the prospect for other longer-term objectives. I have reported in telegram No. 551<sup>3</sup> on Bonnet's wishes in this matter and would like to let the matter rest for the time being with this or a similarly limited declaration. I am prompted to make this request primarily by the fact that the German press has recently been particularly busy with the colonial problem. For I believe that the putting forward of our colonial demands at the present juncture would provoke a very unfavorable reaction here and would seriously compromise the understanding which it is quite possible to achieve in a limited field.

With kind regards,

Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

WELCZECK

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 343.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 340, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 344.

## No. 346

1586/383146-48

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in France*

Telegram

No. 528

BERLIN, November 5, 1938—9:35 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. II 3449.

With reference to your telegram No. 551 of October 31.<sup>1</sup>

For the Ambassador personally.

We are prepared to comply with Bonnet's wishes and to provide him with a formula for a Franco-German agreement, taking into account the suggestions made to you by Bonnet. In doing this we must however avoid giving the impression that it is a German offer to France. Preceding events in the matter seem rather to show that, at François-Poncet's final reception by the Führer and in the subsequent talks with the French Ambassador, the possibility of a Franco-German agreement on the lines sketched out by Bonnet to you was discussed and that François-Poncet then gave official notice to us of the readiness of the French Government to examine this idea more closely. Accordingly, the text which is now to be handed over by you represents merely the continuation of this discussion, and by it we, for our part, do not wish to take any formal initiative now toward the agreement. I request you, therefore, to hand the following text to M. Bonnet only as a rough outline of how the proposed agreement might possibly appear, according to our view. Further, I request you to inform M. Bonnet of our wish to observe complete discretion about your move. This appears all the more necessary since the French press has already been guilty of a succession of indiscretions in this matter.

The text reads as follows:

*Declaration.* The German Foreign Minister, Herr Joachim von Ribbentrop, and the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Georges Bonnet, acting in the name of and by order of their Governments, have, at their meeting in . . . . . on . . . . ., agreed as follows:

1. The German Government and the French Government fully share the conviction that peaceful and good neighborly relations between Germany and France constitute one of the most essential elements in the consolidation of the situation in Europe and in the preservation of general peace. Both Governments will consequently do all within their power to assure the development in this direction of the relations between their countries.

2. Both Governments state that between their countries no questions of a territorial nature are outstanding and solemnly recognize as final the frontier between their countries as it now exists.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 344.

3. Both Governments undertake, without prejudice to their special relations with third powers, to remain in contact with each other on all questions touching their common interests and to confer together should the future evolution of these questions lead to international difficulties.

In witness whereof, the representatives of the two Governments have signed the present Declaration, which comes into force immediately.

Executed in duplicate in the German and French languages at . . . . . on the . . . . .” End of text.

With reference to point 2 of the text, I should say further that the colonial question, in which mandated territories are included, will naturally not be prejudiced, to which fact attention could, if necessary, be drawn in the signature protocol to the “Declaration.” Please mention this briefly to M. Bonnet also.

Report by telegraph on reaction to your *démarche*.

R[IBBENTROP]

### No. 347

1586/383157-58

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 559 of November 7

PARIS, November 7, 1938—11:38 p.m.

Received November 8—2:45 a.m.

Pol. II 3498.

With reference to your telegram No. 528 of November 5.<sup>1</sup>

I have today handed Bonnet the draft of the Franco-German declaration, sent in the above-mentioned telegraphic instruction, and explained it according to the instructions given. Bonnet obviously agreed with our view that it is necessary to follow up the conversation with Poncet and promised discretion in handling it. He was visibly pleased at our present initiative and, after glancing through it, had at first sight no objections to our draft declaration. He said spontaneously and with some emotion that a Franco-German *rapprochement* would mean the fulfilment of his life's dream and would also give Daladier and the many friends of a Franco-German *rapprochement* in France the greatest satisfaction. To prove that the desire for an understanding also existed on the German side, I mentioned the *Deutscher Dienst*<sup>2</sup> article published by the DNB yesterday, which Bonnet had already seen and described as a valuable contribution to Franco-German understanding. In this connection,

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 346.

<sup>2</sup> *Deutscher Dienst* was a clandestine service of apparently independent feature articles, produced under the auspices of the Reich Ministry of Propaganda, for disseminating inspired comments on current affairs.

however, he mentioned in passing that, as well as recognizing Daladier's services, one must perhaps consider also other persons occasionally, such as, for instance, Herriot, President of the Chamber, who, though not yet fully brought over to the new line, would be susceptible to a gesture and could be won over to the idea of an understanding. In saying this Bonnet was resuming a line of thought about which he had spoken to me on the occasion of Herriot's invitation to the Reich Party rally.

Regarding further technical handling of the matter, Bonnet indicated that, without wishing to anticipate the Cabinet's decision, he envisaged the signing of the agreement during a visit of the Reich Foreign Minister to Paris. He asked to be allowed a few days before giving the views of the French Government on our initiative and the draft declaration. He said our proposal would be examined by a few selected persons [*in kleinstem Kreise*], and he would tell me the result in a few days.

WELCZECK

### No. 348

2134/467109-10

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

BERLIN, November 8, 1938.

The Italian Ambassador today gave me more precise information about his conversation yesterday with the Reich Foreign Minister concerning the proposed Franco-German "Declaration." According to a telegram from Rome, which he read to me, the Foreign Minister had received Mussolini's approval of such an agreement on somewhat the same lines as those of the Anglo-German one of September 30. Mussolini now asked, however, for the signing of the Franco-German declaration to be postponed until after Chamberlain's and Halifax's visit to Paris.<sup>1</sup> After this journey the orientation of French policy would be even more clearly discernible than at present.

The Foreign Minister yesterday evening promised him, Attolico, not to rush the declaration through and in any case not to sign it before the date mentioned by Mussolini.

Later in the day Attolico telephoned me from the Embassy to give me the following information: During his conversation with me, instructions had arrived for him by telephone from Ciano to let us know that Mussolini now regarded the proposed Franco-German declaration in a somewhat different light. While the Anglo-German

<sup>1</sup>This visit took place on Nov. 23-24. This postponement was also suggested by Ciano to Mackensen on Nov. 7 (1570/379972).

Declaration signed at Munich on September 30 was merely a loose agreement, a Franco-German agreement might have a wider scope, particularly if it contained the commitment to Franco-German joint consultation. The Anglo-German Declaration speaks in very general terms of any consultation.

So far as was possible on the telephone, I gave Attolico to understand that his information contained a new point for me and that the Quai d'Orsay was already in possession of a paper in which joint consultation is provided for. In addition I promised Attolico that I would transmit the contents of his *démarche*, which he wishes to repeat to me personally, to the Foreign Minister in Munich.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 349

2134/467111-12

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

BERLIN, November 8, 1938.

To supplement his communication by telephone today<sup>1</sup> concerning a Franco-German "Declaration," the Italian Ambassador this afternoon gave me the enclosed letter<sup>2</sup> to prevent, as he put it, any inaccuracies. I remarked that there was a certain discrepancy in the letter in that there was mention of points 1, 2, and 3 of a German draft of a pact, while later on it stated that Mussolini believed it was only a question of a declaration of a general and platonic nature. Attolico explained this by saying that although Rome was not acquainted with the so-called German draft, they understood that it contained three points, namely: (1) an affirmation of peace, (2) a recognition of frontiers, and (3) a joint consultation obligation.

I did not, for my part, show Attolico the draft of the declaration; I told him, however, that we were not bound by any precise formula. It was really a case of French proposals and ideas to which we had given a certain formulation. Attolico then said that we might perhaps employ a consultative formula toward the French similar to the one employed toward the British on September 30 of this year. I thereupon replied that this Anglo-German formula did after all contain an obligation for joint consultation. The importance of such

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 348, paragraph 3.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (2134/467113-14). It stated that Rome had no objections to the first two points of the proposed Franco-German declaration but conveyed a special request from Ciano that Ribbentrop should delete mention in the third paragraph of an *obligation* for mutual consultation, as the Duce had understood that the declaration would be of a general and "platonic" character like the Anglo-German one and in no sense a Franco-German "pact."

agreements manifestly lay not in their wording but in the intention of adhering to them and carrying them out energetically. The Anglo-German Declaration was now 6 weeks old, but I could not recall our having followed it up so far.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 350

1586/383160-61

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in France*

Telegram

MOST URGENT  
No. 538

BERLIN, November 8, 1938—4:25 p.m.  
zu Pol. II 3498.

With reference to your telegram No. 559.<sup>1</sup>

It appears from your telegraphic report of yesterday, in which mention is twice made of "our present initiative" and "our draft declaration," that the starting point of the Franco-German discussions now under way has again been shifted, which, as mentioned at the beginning of our telegraphic instruction 528,<sup>2</sup> we certainly do not wish. The Foreign Minister considers it necessary that you should at once correct this change of emphasis which Bonnet has obviously again introduced. It should be added that the draft of a declaration handed over by you is merely a repetition of already formulated French views, which was sent to you for your own guidance and not as a German draft for handing to the French Government. As stated in the last sentence of your telegraphic report, we took it for granted that the matter would initially be discussed only by the inner circle (Bonnet, Daladier) and that it would not yet be dealt with by the Cabinet.

For your personal information I would add that there can be no question of the declaration's being signed by the Foreign Minister before the visit of the British statesmen to Paris and that therefore the matter need not be regarded as urgent. It is also to be expected that we shall have to water down still further clause 3 of the draft, which refers to consultation, so that it will conform with the Anglo-German Declaration of September 30.

I request telegraphic report.<sup>3</sup>

W[EIZSÄCKER]

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 347.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 346.

<sup>3</sup> In a memorandum later the same day (2185/472219), Weizsäcker records that he had twice discussed this matter on the telephone with Welzeck, who had assured him that the instructions of Nov. 5 had been precisely carried out. He had been asked to call on Bonnet that same evening and would be guided by the latest instructions.

## No. 351

1570/379978-79

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 562 of November 8

PARIS, November 9, 1938—12: 03 a.m.

Received November 9—6: 30 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 538 of November 8.<sup>1</sup>

In a conversation to which Bonnet invited me this evening I ascertained without doubt, in accordance with the above instruction, that Bonnet claims for himself the initiative in an eventual Franco-German declaration. He told me on this subject that the initiative came not from François-Poncet, but from him alone, with the authorization of the Cabinet. He was the originator of the idea of bringing about a Franco-German declaration similar to the Anglo-German one, and he had instructed François-Poncet to go to the Führer and inform him of certain French proposals to that end. For this reason also, according to his promise, he discussed my statements of yesterday with Daladier only and did not submit them to the Cabinet, as this would have been unnecessary after the Cabinet had given him a general authorization on the subject.

Regarding the character of the text which I handed over according to instructions, Bonnet said, in reply to my statements made in accordance with the above-mentioned telegraphic instructions, that Poncet had reported that the Führer had received sympathetically his *démarche* on the making of a Franco-German declaration. Before leaving Berlin, Poncet had asked how the matter stood and had been told that the text of a possible declaration awaited examination and formulation in the Foreign Ministry. On October 31 he, Bonnet, (as reported in telegram No. 551 of October 31)<sup>2</sup> spoke to me again on the subject and expressed his desire for a Franco-German agreement to be concluded as soon as possible. He also expressed the hope that he would receive the formula for a declaration from us during the coming week. After I had told him yesterday that we were prepared to meet his wish and hand him a formula for a Franco-German agreement, which would take account of his remarks to me (see telegraphic instruction No. 528,<sup>3</sup> first sentence), he had to assume, in spite of what I told him regarding its origin which he well understood, that the text I handed him was a formula for an agreement taken from the French proposals and put into concrete form by us. The French Government, for which he and the Premier took the respon-

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 350.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 344.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 346.

sibility in this case, accepted the text I had handed over and made the suggestion that clause 3 of the draft, which referred to consultation, be replaced by a formula conforming with the Anglo-German Declaration of September 3, worded somewhat as follows:

“The two Governments undertake, subject to their special relations with third powers, to remain in touch with each other and to enter into consultation on all questions which concern their two countries when the future development of these questions might lead to international difficulties.”

We would naturally be free to alter the proposals in the sense of the Anglo-German Declaration.

When I said that there was no great hurry about the matter, Bonnet made the urgent request that we should not delay the conclusion of the agreement any longer and asked that the Foreign Minister should come to Paris to sign on a day fixed by him between November 11 and 21. Daladier and he attached great importance to the agreement's being completed before the British statesmen arrived, as otherwise some of the psychological effect would be lost, and the impression might be given that, according to the circumstances, the agreement had been made under British tutelage, or else had not been signed owing to British pressure.

Regarding indiscretions in this matter, he said he had today suppressed a Reuters report on the subject. In the long run, though, indiscretions and speculations could not be prevented, and for this reason also the early conclusion of a Franco-German declaration was desirable.

WELCZECK

## No. 352

121/119459

### *Memorandum by the Head of Political Division II*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, November 9, 1938.

Elaborating on his telegram No. 562<sup>2</sup> of yesterday concerning the conversation with Foreign Minister Bonnet, Ambassador Count Welczeck told me by telephone today that the question of the initiative is now quite clear and that the French had in no way tried to alter the facts of the case as to who was taking the initiative. The reason that he spoke of German initiative in his telegram No. 559<sup>3</sup> of Monday was that a mistake, which he had been able to discover only later, was

<sup>1</sup> This memorandum is initialed in the margin by Ribbentrop.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 351.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 347.

made in decoding the Foreign Minister's telegraphic instruction of Saturday (No. 528).<sup>4</sup> In the decisive phrase of this telegram, owing to a mutilation, instead of "not" [*nicht etwa*] a cipher group which was decoded in Paris as "now" [*nunmehr*] was received. (The sentence in question reads: "Accordingly, the text which is now to be handed over by you represents merely the continuation of this discussion, and by it we, for our part, do *not* wish to take any formal initiative now toward the agreement." If "now" is put instead of "not," the opposite sense is naturally given.) Count Welczeck emphasized that he reports this only as an explanation of how the affair developed and not because the matter itself still has any importance, as his talk with M. Bonnet yesterday made everything perfectly clear in this respect.

V. RINTELEN

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<sup>4</sup> Document No. 346.

### No. 353

5207/E307932-34

#### *Memorandum of the Embassy in France*<sup>1</sup>

PARIS, November 15, 1938.

Pierre Flandin, former Premier<sup>2</sup> and Foreign Minister in the Sarraut Cabinet<sup>3</sup> during the Rhineland occupation, is president of the *Alliance Démocratique* (full name: *Alliance des Républicains de Gauche et des Radicaux Indépendants*), at present the second strongest party of the Right in the French Chamber. This party, which has up to now included 40 deputies, has a long parliamentary tradition and is descended from the *Alliance Républicaine Démocratique* founded under Waldeck-Rousseau in 1901 and deriving its origins from Gambetta, Jules Ferry, and Carnot. To it have belonged famous French politicians such as Poincaré, Barthou, Tardieu, and also François-Poncet.

During the Czechoslovak crisis, Flandin, in a poster which was promptly torn down by Communists, challenged the right of the Government to declare a general mobilization without asking Parliament and also sent a congratulatory telegram to the Führer after the Munich Agreement. Both of these actions brought him heavy opposition, not only from the French Marxists but also from within his own party. In order to discredit him, the Communists coined the slogan "Flandin, the French Seyss-Inquart," and he was caricatured on these lines.

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<sup>1</sup> This document is initialed by Bräuer and contains numerous modifications in his handwriting; it is also initialed by Counselor of Legation Quiring.

<sup>2</sup> November 1934-May 1935.

<sup>3</sup> Albert Sarraut was Premier, January-June 1936.

Within his own group, starting with Paul Reynaud, the present Minister of Finance in the Daladier Cabinet, something of a flight from the *Alliance Démocratique* has developed, the extent of which, however, has been much exaggerated by Flandin's political opponents. Of the 40 deputies, these have resigned: Paul Reynaud, the Jewish Alsatian deputy Wallach, and the deputies Jacquinot and Leniel. Thus only four have left, in addition to a few members of the Senate, of whom only Senator Reibel is a rather well-known political personality.

At the Alliance Party rally in Paris on November 12 and 13, Flandin succeeded in regaining the confidence of the overwhelming majority of his group. Before the congress Flandin laid down his mandate as president, which actually had not yet expired, so that the Party could vote for or against him in a secret ballot, freely and without being influenced. This experiment was a complete success. Out of 1,650 votes given, Flandin received 1,626 and was thus reelected president of the Alliance almost unanimously.

This vote was preceded by a long and very able speech by Flandin in which he defended, obviously with great success, his policy of avoiding war under all circumstances. In this speech, to justify his policy of preventing war, he put the question among others whether his political opponents would perhaps have allowed M. Blum<sup>4</sup> the right to order a general mobilization, during a parliamentary recess, which might have benefited Red Spain. Mobilization without consulting Parliament was not acceptable in a constitutional state like France. In this speech Flandin went on to speak of the occult powers, a phrase aimed at the clique of warmongers who wanted to plunge France into a blood bath.

The attack on Flandin inside his own group was led by the above-mentioned Senator Reibel, former vice president of the Party, who, however, suffered a rather pitiable defeat and thereupon announced his resignation from the Alliance.

Although Flandin thus restored his authority within the Alliance, his position in the Chamber, as the highest political representative body in the country, has been much weakened, and it may be assumed that he will maintain a certain reserve during the immediate future. In all probability he will also have to maintain this reserve in questions of Franco-German relations. Should he, however, not do this—perhaps for tactical reasons—and continue his valiant intervention on our behalf, it must unfortunately be assumed that it would not be of service to him but would rather injure us and Franco-German understanding.

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<sup>4</sup>Léon Blum, leader of the Socialist Party and of the Popular Front, was Premier, June 1936–June 1937 and March–April 1938.

## No. 354

634/252940-41

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

A 4563

PARIS, November 18, 1938.

Received November 21.

Pol. IV 8569.

Subject: France and the entry into force of the Anglo-Italian Agreement.

The entry into force of the Anglo-Italian Agreement<sup>1</sup> has been followed here with understandable interest. Even during the negotiations leading up to its conclusion, it was hoped here that it would be possible to clear up Franco-Italian relations at the same time. When this hope proved illusory, it was thought that Britain would make the entry into force of the agreement dependent on an Italian gesture to France. For some time now official French circles have had to recognize that nothing would come of that either. Then the idea was obviously entertained of vindicating the London-Paris axis in Rome, outwardly anyhow, by the simultaneous recognition of the Empire<sup>2</sup> by the two powers. For this purpose it was intended to hand over the French credentials on the same day as the new British credentials.<sup>3</sup>

Now that this wish has also not been fulfilled, although on their side the French did everything possible by punctually nominating an Ambassador, François-Poncet, and by providing the appropriate press chorus for the nomination, it is understandable that disappointment and even a certain ill humor are expressed here. This is chiefly expressed by minimizing the value of the agreement which has just entered into force. It is said, among other things, that since it was concluded, conditions have altered very much, that the terms have been differently interpreted by the two partners to the agreement, and that the whole agreement will remain more or less a dead letter. Moreover, the opinions in the Italian press which are unfavorable to France are quoted with a certain pleasure. Also the forecasts regarding M. François-Poncet are not so optimistic as they were a few days ago when he left for Rome.

All this, however, does not alter the fact that it is still hoped here that Franco-Italian relations will benefit from the improvement in the Anglo-Italian situation and that the aim of effecting a similar early and comprehensive clearing up of Franco-Italian relations is not being lost sight of.

H. WELCZECK

<sup>1</sup> It was signed on Apr. 16, 1938, and came into force on Nov. 16. See document No. 247, footnote 2.

<sup>2</sup> i. e. the Italian Empire.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 404.

## No. 355

1570/379986-88

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 577 of November 19      PARIS, November 19 [*sic*], 1938—1:35 a.m.  
Received November 20—4:45 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 559.<sup>1</sup>

According to instructions I have expressed to Bonnet the thanks of the Reich Government for the magnanimous participation of the French Government in the funeral ceremony accorded the murdered Counselor of Legation vom Rath.<sup>2</sup>

Bonnet then of his own accord spoke of our talks on the announcement of a Franco-German declaration and asked when he could expect an answer to the invitation sent to the Reich Foreign Minister to come to Paris to sign such a declaration. When I replied that a decision on the date had not yet been made and could certainly not be expected in the immediate future, Bonnet expressed regret at the further postponement and again outlined the course of the talks on the subject so far. He reminded me that in every conversation during the last few months he had expressed the sincere wish of the French Government, by a settlement of the Sudeten-German question which would be satisfactory to us, to clear the way for a Franco-German understanding. It was in this spirit that the many *démarches* to the British and Czechoslovak Governments had been made by himself and Daladier to settle the September crisis. By so doing he and Daladier had made an important contribution toward the fulfillment of the German wishes and toward the maintenance of peace, which had exposed both of them to heavy attacks. If the Munich Agreement were not accompanied by a declaration insuring peace for France also, as was already the case for Britain, large sections of the French people would be left with only a bitter feeling of humiliation and of "resignation" [*Abdankung*]. In his last talk with Poncet,<sup>3</sup> the Führer had said that the atmosphere created in Munich must be maintained, and for this reason he had received sympathetically the Bonnet proposals, brought to him by Poncet, for a Franco-German declaration and held out prospects of a formulated reply. If this declaration, the formulation of which was surely relatively simple and straightforward, did not soon materialize, the favorable mood which still exists here and which he, Bonnet, was doing everything in his power to support in the Cabinet and the press could, under certain

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5208/E307938; dated Nov. 18).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 269, footnote 2. The files of the Paris Embassy contain no material on the vom Rath murder. After this volume was in page proof, a Legal Department file on this subject was found and filmed as Serial 6011.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 340, footnote 1.

circumstances, not be maintained and might possibly react against him as the originator and protagonist of the policy. Already there were attacks against him and the policy of *rapprochement*, which would have been avoided if the declaration had been issued without delay.

Although nothing tangible was known about the progress of our discussions, the French people had the feeling that France had come off second best after England, who had obtained such a declaration without difficulty at Munich, although the French press since Munich had in general taken an impartial, in fact sometimes a sympathetic, attitude toward Germany, which could certainly not be said of the British press. Regarding the procedure and the text of the declaration, Bonnet saw no particular difficulties; but, for the above reasons, he considered it very important that the matter should be settled without delay in order to avoid set-backs. He proposed that the declaration be initialed as soon as possible and signed with due solemnity during a visit to Paris of the Reich Foreign Minister, whom he again invited here in the name of the French Government and whom he asked to fix a date. He had learned with satisfaction from a report by Poncet on his first talk with Count Ciano that the Italian Government was in agreement with a Franco-German declaration and fully approved the draft formulated for this agreement.

From the fact that a special French courier leaves for Berlin today, I assume that Ambassador Coulondre will receive instructions on the same lines for his reception on Tuesday.

WELCZEK

## No. 356

F17/390-91

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 259

BERLIN, November 20, 1938.

At 12 o'clock today I received the newly appointed French Ambassador, M. Coulondre, who was paying his initial visit to me.<sup>1</sup>

M. Coulondre told me that, on taking up his appointment, he intended to do all that he could to improve Franco-German relations by putting them on as good a basis as possible. He personally was not biased in any particular direction and was open to all suggestions.

<sup>1</sup> The French Ambassador presented his letters of credence to Hitler at Berchtesgaden on Nov. 22 (see French Yellow Book, *Documents Diplomatiques, 1938-1939*, No. 23; also Coulondre's memoirs, *De Staline à Hitler*, Paris, 1950, pp. 208-213), but no German record of the conversation has been found.

I replied to M. Coulondre that unfortunately many opportunities of radically improving Franco-German relations had been missed, and I referred in this connection to the visit to Germany of M. Daladier, the French Premier, already envisaged in 1933 but which unfortunately never took place. On many occasions I had explained to his predecessor in office, M. François-Poncet, that, if only a certain amount of spiritual ballast could be cast out, agreement between Germany and France would be much easier. What mattered was that the European states should confine themselves to their own actual interests—France to her great colonial territories, Britain to her Empire, and Germany to her particular sphere of interest, namely, southeast Europe. If this were once sorted out clearly, Franco-German relations would also develop more favorably and lastingly, for the German people harbored as little ill will of any kind against France as the French people did against Germany, and this was only natural, since no vital differences existed between the two peoples.

M. Coulondre agreed with my observations and said that he regarded the question in precisely the same light.

M. Coulondre then mentioned the colonial question, to which I replied, referring to my conversation with Mr. Pirow, the South African War Minister,<sup>2</sup> that clearly this question had not yet fully matured and that it would be well not to broach it for a few years. Our legal position was however quite clear.

On the question of the Franco-German declaration, I told M. Coulondre that M. François-Poncet's idea had been provisionally examined by our Legal Department and that the result of this initial examination had been communicated to M. Bonnet by our Ambassador, Count Welzeck.<sup>3</sup> In this, there was no question of a proposal but only of a preliminary exchange of views. M. Coulondre stated that Bonnet agreed in principle and merely wanted a small alteration with regard to point 3 of the declaration, which would certainly be acceptable to Germany.

I told M. Coulondre in reply that we also would have to give some further consideration to this point. Final agreement could not in any case be envisaged before the visit of the British Ministers, but after this final agreement I would turn the whole range of the problem over in my mind once again and, if no disturbance of Franco-German relations occurred in the meantime, progress could then be made. I would then request M. Coulondre to call on me again and would hand him a final proposal for the precise wording of the declaration.

R[IBBENTROP]

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<sup>2</sup> On Nov. 18; see document No. 270.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 347.

## No. 357

2538/520677

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 578 of November 20

PARIS, November 20, 1938—12: 40 p.m.

Received November 20—3: 35 p.m.

When I was at the station this morning to meet Guariglia,<sup>1</sup> the new Italian Ambassador, who is a friend of mine, the Italian Chargé d'Affaires, Prunas, asked me why we had not yet made the declaration so anxiously awaited by Daladier and Bonnet and to all points of which Rome had agreed, particularly as the Reich Foreign Minister had been invited to come here before the English visit. I replied that delays had occurred owing to the funeral ceremonies for Counselor of Legation vom Rath and other engagements, so that the date could not yet be fixed.

I took this opportunity to ask Prunas whether one might infer from the unfriendly tone of certain Italian newspaper articles that a new wave of anti-French feeling had arisen in Rome recently. Prunas denied this and explained the unfriendly tone of the Italian press by saying that, in the course of the measures adopted by the French Ministry of the Interior against undesirable aliens, a large number of Italians had also been expelled, and their expulsion had been described in the press in an exaggerated and somewhat distorted manner.

WELCZECK

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<sup>1</sup> Raffaele Guariglia was Ambassador in France, November 1938-June 1940.

## No. 358

1586/383179-80

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in France*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE  
No. 564

BERLIN, November 21, 1938—11: 45 p.m.

zu Pol. II 2702 g.

zu Pol. II 2709 g.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 577<sup>1</sup> and 578<sup>2</sup> of November 19 and 20.

Please tell Foreign Minister Bonnet that I accept with thanks the invitation of the French Government to come to Paris to sign the

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 355.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 357.

Franco-German declaration. I would be prepared to sign there during the week between November 28 and December 3. Further details can be agreed later.

Because of the early date of the signing, previous initialing should, in my opinion, be dispensed with.

Regarding the text of the declaration, I agree with M. Bonnet's proposed alteration to clause 3 as in your telegram No. 562 of November 8.\* In order to bring this clause 3 still further into line with the Führer-Chamberlain declaration of September 30, I think it advisable to alter also the introductory words accordingly. Thus clause 3 would be worded as follows:

"Both Governments are resolved, without prejudice to their special relations with third powers, to remain in contact with each other on all questions concerning both their countries and to confer together should the future evolution of these questions lead to international difficulties."

Please send telegraphic report.

R[IBBENTROP]

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\* Document No. 351.

## No. 359

1570/379993

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, November 21, 1938.

The Foreign Minister today informed the Italian Ambassador that Count Welzeck is instructed to accept the invitation of the French Government [for him] to come to Paris to sign the Franco-German declaration, and that signature will probably take place at the beginning of December. He has also informed him that, in accordance with Italian wishes, clause 3 concerning consultation is being altered and made more in keeping with the Führer-Chamberlain Munich declaration.

The Foreign Minister took this opportunity to inform the Italian Ambassador that Prunas, until now the Italian Chargé d'Affaires in Paris, had represented the matter as if we were delaying the conclusion of the Franco-German declaration, whereas in fact Rome was entirely in agreement with it. Signor Attolico asked that no use be made of this statement vis-à-vis the Italian Government.

WOERMANN

## No. 360

1586/383190-91

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

No. 318 of November 22

ROME, November 22, 1938—11:30 p.m.

Received November 23—4:10 a.m.

Pol. II 2722 g.

François-Poncet, who called on me today officially upon taking up his office, turned the conversation right at the beginning to the fate of the Franco-German declaration, concerning which unfortunately his Government had left him without any information, although after all he had fathered this idea and was particularly interested in the fate of his child, because he had promised himself much from the carrying out of the idea just at the present moment. Ciano had touched on the subject and said in effect that there was no objection here to the idea. However he, François-Poncet, had the impression that Ciano was not particularly enthusiastic about it. In his first talk he had been altogether very *hautain* and coolly reserved and had also let it be seen from the manner of the reception that France was regarded here as a factor which was growing weaker and for which it was unnecessary to make any special effort. This cool reserve was also made manifest in certain instructions to the press, which, among other things, had been forbidden to publish his photograph.

He thus began his work, he continued, under not very happy auspices, but on the other hand the task before him was certainly a worthwhile one. Moreover, he personally was not averse to taking up a task in which he would have to build from the ground up, so to speak.

For Italy at present, according to what Ciano said, the Spanish question seemed to be in the foreground of Franco-Italian relations. In any case it was the only aspect of Franco-Italian relations on which the Foreign Minister spoke at length. Poncet remarked to me in this connection that Bonnet had made a serious mistake in not sending a representative to Burgos, too, simultaneously with filling the Rome post again. During the first 48 hours after Munich that would have been quite possible and would have passed more or less unnoticed. But his Government had let this psychological moment slip and had not now the courage to take steps against this "last stronghold of the Popular Front."

On the events leading up to his appointment, Poncet said he himself wanted to leave Berlin after another year, as after all he could not have finished his career there without running the risk that they would one day get tired of him, and he also believed that "you should stop while it tastes best." So when Bonnet had first asked him about

Rome, he had suggested that a politician be sent here first and that he himself should follow after 6 months. However, Mussolini categorically rejected such a plan. As, apart from London, which would be filled by Corbin for an indefinite number of years, Rome was the only possible post for him after Berlin, he accepted the call.

Poncet described the aim of his work as preparing the ground for that cooperation between the four Great Powers which Mussolini himself had proposed, though he did not know what his attitude toward it was now. Only such cooperation, he said, although the prospects of it were for well-known reasons at present extremely unfavorable, could put a stop to the impoverishment of the four Great Powers which was increasing as a result of rearmament and which would finally threaten the existence of these Powers.

MACKENSEN

No. 361

1586/383193-94

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division II*

BERLIN, November 23, 1938.  
e.o. Pol. II 2724 g.

Ambassador Count Welzeck informed me by telephone today at 5:45 p.m. as follows:

1. He had just come from M. Bonnet, who had informed him that the French Council of Ministers had this morning approved the proposed Franco-German declaration.

2. The text of the Franco-German declaration was now established in the form which had been proposed by us, with clause 3 in the wording of the Reich Foreign Minister's telegram of November 21.<sup>1</sup>

As regards the colonial question, M. Bonnet had again expressly confirmed to him that it was naturally not prejudiced in any way by the declaration.

3. The French Government proposed Tuesday, November 29, as the date for signing. Ambassador Count Welzeck added that a proposal had been made to hold an official luncheon and dinner on that day. The signing could be done in the afternoon. Naturally, however, in drawing up the program everything depended on the wishes of the Reich Foreign Minister.

The French Government asked to be given our views as soon as possible on the proposal to select November 29 for the signing.

4. Regarding the indiscretions published in the Paris press today, M. Bonnet observed that no information had been given to the press by him. After the discussion in the Council of Ministers, however, it was with difficulty that the press was prevented from getting to know

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 358.

various details. In order to prevent further press fantasies, M. Bonnet suggested that a communiqué immediately be published in Berlin and Paris simultaneously, to be worded something like this:

“The German and French Governments have agreed to issue a joint declaration, which is to be signed in Paris on November 29 by Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop and French Foreign Minister Bonnet. The text of the declaration will be published after it has been signed.”

If the date must still remain open, it could be replaced by the words “next week.”

Count Welczeck asked to be instructed as soon as possible regarding this proposal.

V. RINTELEN

## No. 362

121/119468-69

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, November 25, 1938.

### THE VISIT OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER TO PARIS

During the conversations with the French Ministers it could be pointed out that since Versailles, perhaps to an even greater degree since 1933, France has always opposed Germany in Germany's struggle for her right to live, without being successful in the end. Also relevant in this connection is the fact that France is still a partner to alliances which are directed against Germany. It will probably depend on the course of the discussions whether we can link up with the question of alliances the announcement that we regard as meaningless the Franco-Czech treaty of 1925, which arose from the Locarno situation, and whether the expectation should be expressed that France will not renew the Franco-Soviet treaty when it expires.

It will not be advisable in this short visit to discuss current Franco-German affairs, which can be dealt with through diplomatic channels. On the other hand it would be desirable to mention two questions:

1. Germany is still intolerably discriminated against in Morocco, including the Tangier Zone. Details are given in the accompanying memorandum.<sup>1</sup>

2. Count Ciano has already pointed out, during Ambassador François-Poncet's visit upon taking up his post, that in the Spanish question the French are again on the wrong side. The French should

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (121/119470-72).

be urged, if they do not yet wish to recognize Franco formally, at least to grant him belligerent rights independently of the London plan.<sup>2</sup>

Herewith submitted to the Foreign Minister.

WOERMANN

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<sup>2</sup> See British White Paper, Cmd. 5521, *International Commission for the Application of the Agreement Regarding Non-intervention in Spain*. The London proposals of July 14, 1937, appear in document No. 393, vol. III of this series.

### No. 363

1570/379999

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, November 25, 1938.

I handed to the Italian Ambassador today a copy of the German text of the Franco-German declaration, with the request that he treat it as confidential for the time being.

Signor Attolico asked about the date of the Foreign Minister's visit and the full story regarding the publication in Paris and Berlin.

I gave him the information briefly and told him that the French Government had issued the invitation for November 29. The Foreign Minister had not yet replied about the date, but I thought it was most likely at present that the visit would not take place until the 30th.

WOERMANN

### No. 364

313/190015-16

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 595 of November 25

PARIS, November 25, 1938.

Received November 25—10:15 p.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 583.<sup>1</sup>

Yesterday's Anglo-French conversations<sup>2</sup> were concluded with the issuing of communiqués and with radio broadcasts by both Prime Ministers. In these it was stated that the exchange of views was carried out in full unanimity and that a general adjustment of the policies of both countries, especially regarding national defense and diplomatic action, was aimed at and achieved. The comparatively

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1580/382108-09).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 275.

noncommittal tone of these announcements should not obscure the fact that important results have been obtained. As far as can be seen up to now, in the press in particular, these results can be summarized as follows:

As was anticipated, the main subject of the talks was the question of defense, in which the necessity for the closest coordination and cooperation formed the basis. The French demanded in particular an assurance of a strong British expeditionary force; the British demanded a considerable strengthening of the French Air Force; and both sides demanded the security of lines of communication of the two colonial empires. Agreement on these points is said to have been reached on broad lines, while technical consultations by experts have already been announced for the settling of details. Further points discussed were Spain and Franco-Italian relations. The French wish, based partly on factors of home politics, to refuse recognition of belligerent rights to Franco until all foreigners have been removed, seems to have prevailed. Regarding the Far East it is said that, at the request of the British, a more active attitude by the London-Paris axis, if possible together with the United States, was envisaged. The Jewish question and economic matters were also discussed and, according to some reports, the Carpatho-Ukraine and Ukrainian questions also.

The German declaration was one of the main points of the discussion. It seems to have been received very favorably by the British, who, as now stated, were kept informed about the negotiations. Chamberlain also said this explicitly in his radio broadcast.

The visit and the result of the consultations are being given a very friendly reception by that section of the press which is in touch with the Government. It calls attention to the great significance of the new demonstration of the Entente Cordiale, which has never been closer than now. It also underlines the peaceful intentions of the two powers, but emphasizes the necessity of remaining, or of becoming, strong.

On the other hand, in the press and in political circles, opposition to the Daladier-Bonnet policy is growing. It is seen very strongly in its clear cooperation with the British opposition to Chamberlain and Halifax and is especially directed also against the British guests, who are severely criticized by all papers of the Left and also by papers of the Right, such as *Epoque*. Moreover, in these papers the treatment of the British visit takes second place to that of the Franco-German declaration, against which they direct their main opposition.

## No. 365

121/119474

*The Director of the Protocol Department to the Embassy in France*

Telegram

No. 584

BERLIN, November 29, 1938.

For the Ambassador personally.

According to instructions, it should be stated at the next meeting with Bonnet that we consider it important that the visit should not take place until the strike movement has completely died down, in a changed and peaceful atmosphere. The Foreign Minister is still at the disposal of the French Government during December but would also be willing to postpone his visit until January. He therefore requests you to maintain a noncommittal attitude with regard to proposals about the visit next week and just to say that you will forward the proposals of the French Foreign Minister.

For your personal information. It is not in our interests to make a Franco-German declaration at a moment when the Government is being severely tested. Also, the first visit of the German Foreign Minister since 1933 must not be clouded by anti-German demonstrations. We therefore prefer that such a visit be postponed for a little until complete calm prevails and until it has been clearly proved that the Daladier Government has survived its domestic political difficulties.

In further telephone conversations please note that sentences beginning with "in my personal opinion" contain instructions from the Foreign Minister, which for obvious reasons must be concealed.

DÖRNBERG

## No. 366

1586/383208-10

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

PARIS, November 30, 1938.

No. 605 of November 30

Received November 30—9:10 p.m.

The Foreign Minister sent for me late yesterday evening in order to discuss without interruption details of the visit, which he plans to make as dignified and impressive as possible. The general strike can now be regarded as a failure; certainly not more than 30 percent would obey the call to strike. He definitely hoped the Government would win through and that the visit would take place as soon as

possible. The longer it was postponed, the more ominous might be the effect of the intrigues of all opponents of a Franco-German *rapprochement*. He wished to tell me, moreover, that the communication made by his Ambassador in Washington to the American Government, that the impending Franco-German declaration should be regarded as the first step toward world peace, had been received very coolly. Even the agitation about our measures against the Jews and the sharp personal attacks by certain international circles on him, Bonnet, would not deter him from continuing a policy of understanding with us, which was supported by more than 90 percent of the French nation and against which only the Jews and Communists were crying out. I should certainly also be interested in the strictly confidential information that the Socialists had returned a two-thirds majority in favor of his foreign policy when it was put to a secret party vote. It was now important that no time should be lost but that the signing and formal publication of the declaration should take place as soon as possible. On Wednesday or Thursday of next week he would have to defend his foreign policy before parliamentary committees of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate and, of course, would have to read the text of our declaration then; it was of the utmost importance for the Government that the signing should have taken place beforehand. If there was no alternative, he could postpone the sessions of the parliamentary committees for one day, but no longer. Daladier leaves at the end of this week. He would therefore be particularly grateful to the Reich Foreign Minister if he could arrive here for the signing next Monday or early Tuesday at the latest. He, Bonnet, had discussed thoroughly with Langeron, Chief of Police, all details of the program. Langeron had guaranteed the safe and smooth course of the visit but would have preferred that the Reich Foreign Minister stay in the German Embassy, which has a particularly sheltered position, since the great Place de la Concorde could naturally not be completely cordoned off and any demonstrator could, as at the time of the last Chamberlain-Halifax visit, make his shouts heard at a distance. But this might happen in Paris at all times and on all occasions and was generally directed not at the guest, but at the host. If the Reich Foreign Minister preferred the Hotel Crillon, however, then necessary security measures would also be taken there.

He then asked me to convey his request to Herr von Ribbentrop with his kind regards and to ask him to forward his reply as soon as possible.

Yesterday's telegraphic instruction No. 584<sup>1</sup> was received today.

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 365.

Conscious of his responsibilities, the French Foreign Minister would not have invited the Reich Foreign Minister to Paris at the beginning of next week if he had reason to suppose that the visit would not pass off quietly and in a dignified manner. Bonnet's view that intrigues would only make the atmosphere worse if the visit were postponed is also held by us [*hier*]. Postponement of the signing, for which, after settling of the situation, cogent plausible reason is no longer evident on the French side, would be bound to create the impression here that we wished to withdraw. This would be a most difficult test case for the Cabinet and might lead to its fall. In any case the Left Wing would herald it as a victory and would also boast that the threatening letters received daily from *émigrés* had intimidated us.

I should be grateful for immediate instructions.

WELCZECK

### No. 367

631/252309-11

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

A 4764

PARIS, November 30, 1938.

Pol. II 3817.

Subject: Franco-Russian pact; Russo-Polish relations.

#### I

The events of these last weeks have had the effect of reviving once again French public discussion of the Franco-Russian mutual-assistance pact, which had never completely died down. In this connection the arguments against the pact are coming more and more to the fore. The most important are: the doubtful attitude of the Soviet Union during the September crisis, mainly attributed to her internal weakness; the reorientation of French foreign policy now in progress in the direction of turning away from eastern and central Europe, as had been especially indicated at the Marseilles congress of the Radical Socialist Party;<sup>1</sup> the *rapprochement* with Germany which is hoped for from the imminent Franco-German declaration and which would render superfluous a reinsurance pact in the east; finally, the Communist campaign against the domestic and foreign policy of the Daladier Government, leading to the present strike movement. From these arguments, the large majority of the French people draws the con-

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 344.

clusion that the value for France of the Russian pact, if indeed there ever was any, has become more than doubtful.

In this connection, attention should be drawn to the definitely belligerent attitude toward Communism adopted particularly by M. Daladier since the September crisis. At Marseilles, as reported at the time,<sup>2</sup> he had duly pilloried the inciting and warmongering activities of Communism with merciless clarity. With the same clarity he recently branded Communism as the prime mover behind the present wave of strikes and correctly stated that this was not so much directed against *décrets-lois* as against the Munich peace policy and particularly the Franco-German declaration. It indubitably does not contribute to an improvement in Franco-Russian relations when the French Premier thus takes up the gauntlet thrown down by the Communists.

An authoritative declaration on the part of the French Government, which would indicate its intention of taking the consequences of this and breaking away from the Russian pact, has not materialized, at least so far. On the other hand, M. Daladier felt himself constrained to point out at Marseilles that the pact remained unaffected by developments in eastern Europe or by the domestic policy of the French Communists. A similar declaration was also made at that time by M. Bonnet. This was repeated several times, both by Bonnet himself to the Russian Ambassador in particular, and now by other authoritative quarters in connection with reports on the Franco-German declaration.

This does not alter the fact that matters connected with the Russian pact are in a state of flux and that, provided no new factors emerge, if not a formal denunciation, then at least far-reaching relaxation and undermining of it can be counted on, which must make its practical significance very questionable. Characteristic in this respect is a leading article in the *Temps* of November 29, on a different but equally controversial subject, which plainly states that, with the new order in central Europe, the interest of the Western powers in eastern European conflicts must of necessity be considerably more limited than it was formerly.

## II

A new factor likely to arrest this development, perhaps even to reverse it, would be a sudden change in Russo-Polish relations, as appeared to be indicated in the Russo-Polish communiqué of November 27.<sup>3</sup> This and the Polish Telegraph Agency commentary accompany-

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<sup>2</sup> Welczeck reported on the Radical Socialist Party Congress, Nov. 1 (2483/517757-61) and Nov. 2 (2483/517752-56).

<sup>3</sup> See vol. v of this series. The agreement between Russia and Poland was signed Nov. 26, 1938.

ing it have caused a sensation of the first order here. Obviously, it would be welcomed by the Left Wing press with enthusiastic approval; but also in the Right Wing papers and those of the Center it can clearly be seen that a Russo-Polish *rapprochement*, with its necessarily anti-German character, would arouse once more in France hopes that had only just been buried.

In official circles, the matter is certainly still treated with reserve for the present. From what I hear, the Quai d'Orsay has requested those sections of the press amenable to its instructions not to arouse any exaggerated hopes of an imminent Russo-Polish *rapprochement*, to stress the unstable nature of relations in eastern Europe and Polish responsibility for this, and at the same time to point out that the Ukrainian question has now been raised. These ideas recur in the above-mentioned leading article of the *Temps*. They were also reproduced by and large in the other organs of the press where, so far as can be ascertained until now, the emphasis was laid on the Ukrainian problem. I hear that this is attributable at least in part to representations made by financial circles here, formerly connected with South Russia, to the French Government and to the French press. These circles are convinced that sooner or later Germany will tackle the solution of the Ukrainian problem, and they consider it essential to demonstrate French interest in the matter now.

VON WELCZECK

## No. 368

120/119475

### *Circular of the Director of the Political Department*

Telegram

BERLIN, December 5, 1938.

e.o. Pol. II 3805.

The visit of the Reich Foreign Minister to Paris is being made for the purpose of signing the Franco-German declaration, which arises from French initiative. The declaration is divided into three points:

1. A mutual assurance to pursue peaceful and good neighborly relations with each other.

2. The solemn recognition of existing Franco-German frontiers.

It should be observed here that our Ambassador pointed out to Bonnet orally that the declaration did not mean a renunciation of the German legal claim to the former colonies which are now under French mandate.

3. Agreement for joint consultation on political difficulties arising out of questions which concern both countries, without prejudicing the special relations of each country with third powers.

As can be seen from the contents, the declaration represents the logical outcome of the policy which has for so long ruled our relations with France, as announced in repeated statements by the Führer. The reservation regarding relations with third powers in clause 3 means for us that the Rome-Berlin axis continues to be of first importance.

WOERMANN

### No. 369

2451/515331-32

#### *Franco-German Declaration of December 6, 1938*<sup>1</sup>

The German Foreign Minister, Herr Joachim von Ribbentrop, and the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Georges Bonnet, acting in the name of and by order of their Governments, have at their meeting in Paris on December 6, 1938, agreed as follows:

1. The German Government and the French Government fully share the conviction that peaceful and good neighborly relations between Germany and France constitute one of the most essential elements in the consolidation of the situation in Europe and in the preservation of general peace. Both Governments will consequently do all within their power to assure the development in this direction of the relations between their countries.

2. Both Governments state that between their countries no questions of a territorial nature are outstanding and solemnly recognize as final the frontier between their countries as it now exists.

3. Both Governments are resolved, without prejudice to their special relations with third powers, to remain in contact with each other on all questions concerning both their countries, and to confer together should the future evolution of these questions lead to international difficulties.

In witness whereof, the representatives of the two Governments have signed the present Declaration, which comes into force immediately.

Executed in duplicate in the German and French languages at Paris, on December 6, 1938.

[SEAL] JOACHIM VON RIBBENTROP

[SEAL] GEORGES BONNET

<sup>1</sup>For the French text see French Yellow Book, *Documents Diplomatiques, 1938-1939*, No. 28.

## No. 370

F14/278-96

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

RM 265

CONVERSATION BETWEEN REICH FOREIGN MINISTER VON RIBBENTROP AND FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER BONNET ON DECEMBER 6, 1938, IN PARIS, IN THE PRESENCE OF AMBASSADOR COUNT WELCZECK, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE QUAI D'ORSAY LÉGER, AND THE UNDERSIGNED <sup>1</sup>

M. Bonnet first of all expressed his pleasure at the Reich Foreign Minister's visit. He hoped that later there would be still more opportunities to conduct similar conversations.

Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop replied that he also was glad to have this opportunity for an exchange of views with the French Foreign Minister and that he hoped to be able to welcome his French colleague in Berlin on some future occasion.

M. Bonnet then stressed the advantages of a Franco-German *rapprochement*, with particular reference to cultural and economic cooperation between the two countries. In this connection he mentioned an increase in the exchange of goods and the conclusion of a travel agreement as being desirable.

Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop said that for his part he had high hopes of cooperation in the economic sphere, particularly if France increased her purchases in the German market (perhaps by placing of government contracts and strengthening of economic relations with the French colonies), and could thereby clear the deficit now existing in the exchange balance of the two countries.

Both Ministers agreed that they would do everything possible to facilitate mutual trade. M. Bonnet said that he would study particularly the question of government contracts.

After the Reich Foreign Minister had told M. Bonnet that he was quite ready to discuss further problems with him if M. Bonnet so wished, M. Bonnet immediately proceeded to speak of Franco-Italian relations. After a lengthy survey of the well-known development of the relations between the two countries, he discussed the incidents

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<sup>1</sup> The copy is not signed; the author was Dr. Paul Schmidt, Ribbentrop's chief interpreter, who was present at this conversation. In his memoirs (*Statist auf Diplomatischer Bühne, 1923-45*, p. 423) Schmidt states that Ribbentrop spoke partly in French and partly in German, which he translated into French. Schmidt attributes to this alternation of languages a misunderstanding which subsequently arose regarding a statement made by Bonnet that France had shown at Munich that she was not interested in the east. This referred only to Czechoslovakia, but Ribbentrop understood that it also included France's attitude toward Poland. See document No. 383.

in the Italian Chamber<sup>2</sup> during the last speech of Count Ciano and said that, although the Italian Government had stated in reply to the French protest that it was not responsible for these incidents, the Italian answer had, however, been framed in such a very obscure way that France was considerably disturbed by matters arising from the incidents.

In this and in further discussions during the Reich Foreign Minister's stay in Paris, great anxiety was expressed repeatedly about future developments in the Mediterranean. Indeed, one may say that this is really the principal matter engrossing members of the French Government these days.

In reply to M. Bonnet's question as to what attitude Germany adopted toward this problem and particularly toward the Tunis question, the Reich Foreign Minister said that Germany was not directly interested in this problem. As for the Tunis question he, the Reich Foreign Minister, was not sufficiently informed about the details, but he had gathered from Italians at different times that the Italian population in Tunis was not very satisfied with their treatment there. It must of course be borne in mind today that we are living in an age of national consciousness, which has quite a different significance today from what was formerly the case. Thus it was quite possible that the youth of the powerful and proud Italian nation were particularly impatient when they heard of the ill-treatment of their fellow Italians [*Stammesgenossen*] in other lands and that youthful hotheads then organized demonstrations such as those in the Italian Chamber. It seemed to the Reich Foreign Minister that the primary condition for an improvement in the situation there was generous treatment of the Italian minority in Tunis. The German attitude toward this Mediterranean problem was as follows:

Although Germany was not directly concerned, she was indirectly concerned insofar as her basic attitude in foreign policy was always ultimately dictated by her friendship with Italy. The unchangeable basis of German foreign policy was the Berlin-Rome Axis, or the friendship between Germany and Italy and between the Führer and Mussolini, respectively.

The Reich Foreign Minister then gave a lengthy account of the genesis of this friendship in a common ideological struggle against disintegration in their own lands and also against the Communist International and remarked that this friendship could really be understood only by one who had himself experienced such an ideological struggle as had taken place throughout the years in these two countries. Both the friendship between Germany and Japan and the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Triangle, which was to be regarded as a stabiliz-

<sup>2</sup> This demonstration occurred on Nov. 30, when a number of deputies noisily demanded the cession by France of Corsica, Nice, and Tunis.

ing factor in the world today, rested on this foundation. But all this naturally did not prevent a bridge of agreement and understanding from being built, nevertheless, between the authoritarian states and the democracies, and it was for the purpose of making such a move in conjunction with France that he, the Reich Foreign Minister, had come to France.

Taking up once again the question of national consciousness, the Reich Foreign Minister described with what significance and dynamic power this national consciousness had, for example, shown itself in the case of Czechoslovakia. The Führer had resolved to effect a solution based on ethnographic principles in this region within a specified period. Germany, moreover, regarded this part of Europe as being definitely within her sphere of influence. The Foreign Minister then explained in detail how favorable it would be for the future reconciliation of differences between the authoritarian states and the democracies, and particularly between Germany and France and Britain, if this German sphere of influence were respected in principle. Germany did not interfere in the sphere of influence of Britain, for example.

The Foreign Minister stated in this connection that he had never understood the sending of Lord Runciman to Prague. He had expressed this opinion to Mr. Chamberlain at Godesberg at the time and had asked Chamberlain whether Britain would agree, for example, if, in the event of a dispute between London and Dublin, the Führer, let us say, had sent the former Reich Minister of Economics, Herr Schmitt,<sup>3</sup> to Dublin to settle the affair between Ireland and Britain, without asking Britain. The Minister continued by saying that Chamberlain had protested against this comparison, but he, the Reich Foreign Minister, thereupon said that it would be a good thing if the British completely abandoned this way of thinking, just revealed once again by Mr. Chamberlain. To Germany, however, the above-mentioned comparison between Lord Runciman and Schmitt was a classic example. It would be a good thing if Britain and the whole world were to realize this once and for all.

As far as France was concerned, the military alliances in the east were, as he, the Reich Foreign Minister, had often said this year to François-Poncet, the French Ambassador, clearly an atavistic remnant of the Versailles Treaty and of the Versailles mentality. A strong Germany would never have tolerated such military alliances, but a weak Germany was obliged to acquiesce in them. But at the moment of the revival of her power it was clear that this kind of policy of encirclement must sooner or later be shaken off as an intolerable state of affairs, whether by means of negotiations or by some other means. If

<sup>3</sup> Kurt Schmitt, director of numerous insurance companies, held this post during 1933-34; he resigned after a disagreement with Schacht.

France would respect this German sphere of influence once and for all, then he, the Reich Foreign Minister, believed in the possibility of a fundamental and final agreement between Germany and France.

Bonnet replied that relations since Munich had fundamentally altered in this respect, and at once remarked that the questions (Tunis and Corsica) raised by the recent Italian incidents were on a completely different basis from the Sudeten-German question. France could not for one moment consider a cession of territory under any circumstances. To raise a territorial issue over Tunis meant war.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, France was quite prepared to discuss the position of the Italian minority in Tunis, which constituted a comparatively small section of the total population; but Italy had so far not raised any kind of concrete questions at all in this connection.

Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop replied that he had not wished to draw an analogy between Czechoslovakia and Tunis. He could only say that he was not conversant with the details of the Tunis question and therefore was not in a position for this reason to form an opinion. He could, however, express the hope that sooner or later agreement would be reached on this question between Italy and France.

The discussion then turned to the four-power guarantee of Czechoslovakia's new frontiers. In reply to Bonnet's question as to our fundamental attitude toward this problem, the Reich Foreign Minister said that Germany intended only to await developments, since any German guarantee would, when the time came, be subject to the condition that the other minority problems were solved. Furthermore, everything was dependent on whether German-Czech relations were placed on an entirely new basis. There was one thing, however, he wanted to emphasize now: Germany would in any case not allow Czechoslovakia to fall back into the Beneš rut once again. In his opinion a four-power guarantee would mean a certain temptation for that country to follow once more in the old paths of the Beneš policy. The best and most effective guarantee of Czechoslovakia would, in his view, consist solely in the establishing of friendly relations between that country and Germany.

While Léger, in a short account of the "neutralization" of Czechoslovakia on the basis of an international guarantee, appeared to lay great stress on the four-power guarantee, Bonnet confined himself to saying that it was actually more by force of circumstances that France had come to envisage undertaking a guarantee herself. In London on September 19,<sup>5</sup> it had been a question of prevailing upon Czechoslovakia, as she was then, to cede the Sudeten-German territory to the Reich.

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<sup>4</sup> This sentence was amended by Ribbentrop. It originally read, "She could be forced to give up this territory only by war."

<sup>5</sup> See vol. II, document No. 523.

In view of her extremely strong obligations toward Czechoslovakia, France had been obliged to procure Czechoslovak agreement to the cession of territory by holding out prospects of a new guarantee.

Bonnet did not explore this matter further but went on to discuss the Spanish question and asked the Reich Foreign Minister for his opinion on it.

Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop emphasized that Germany wished for Franco's victory. This was explained by the fundamental attitude of the Reich toward Bolshevism. In its domestic policy, as well as to a great extent in its foreign policy, the struggle against Bolshevism was the leitmotiv of German action. For this reason alone the Führer supported the Nationalist Government in Spain. While he and Mussolini had thus prevented Bolshevism from establishing itself in Spain, they had after all also rendered France a service, for with a Spanish Bolshevist neighbor many things in France, particularly in recent times, would probably have been considerably more difficult. In this connection he could moreover say that the efforts of the Daladier Government to stabilize the situation in France had been followed in Germany with great interest and complete sympathy and that the success achieved so far in this matter had been a source of satisfaction.

Bonnet assured him that the French Government was also totally opposed to Bolshevism, that she would not have the slightest objection to victory for Franco if the foreign volunteers were completely withdrawn first, so that no one could say that Franco had won only with foreign assistance. Moreover, he referred in this connection to the comparatively small number of German volunteers (2,500-3,000 men).

The Reich Foreign Minister then pointed out once more that Germany had no territorial claims to make in Spain and mentioned that Mussolini had also made declarations to this effect.

Bonnet then referred once again to his having already made a significant move toward shortening the Civil War by closing the Pyrenees to war matériel. Moreover, he had received information that the Barcelona Government under Señor Negrín<sup>6</sup> was dissociating itself from Moscow more and more, and he hoped that a settlement might be reached between the Barcelona Government and Franco.

The Reich Foreign Minister pointed out that this would nevertheless be very difficult, since thousands of dead lay between the two camps, and said further that most of the war matériel still continued to reach Barcelona by sea.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop mentioned again in the course of conversation France's former policy of alliances and encirclement

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<sup>6</sup> Juan Negrín, Minister President of the Republican Government, 1937-39.

and in particular the Russian pact as an obstacle in the way of a Franco-German *rapprochement*.

Bonnet stressed the fact that the Russian pact was completely conditioned by definite circumstances and was entirely within the framework of the League of Nations and had, moreover, been concluded by such avowed Right Wing politicians as Flandin and Laval<sup>7</sup> and not by representatives of the present Government.

Léger amplified this by saying that the bilateral nature of the Franco-Russian pact had not been designed by the French partner. Originally, indeed, they had intended this pact to be a multilateral agreement, with other powers such as Poland and the Baltic States as signatories, and it was only through the development of circumstances that the pact had become a purely bilateral affair.

The Reich Foreign Minister then pointed out that, on the contrary, this Franco-Russian pact was well known to be exclusively directed against Germany and that, as had been obvious, the idea of a general collective pact to which Germany would also be a party would perforce remain only a vague theory.

In the course of further conversation, the Reich Foreign Minister came to speak of the Morocco question once again and stressed the urgency of finally settling this question. The discrimination against Germany in this question must now be terminated once and for all. He believed that if a new era in Franco-German relations was to dawn a remedy must be found for this.

Bonnet agreed that a study of this matter in a constructive sense was essential. Finally, the conversation turned briefly to the colonial question once more, when the Reich Foreign Minister asked the French Foreign Minister as a matter of principle to tell him the views of the French Government on this problem. He referred to the fundamental legal standpoint of the German Government, which was unchangeable even if the question itself was perhaps not of vital importance at the present time.

Bonnet stated that France could not do anything for Germany about the colonial question at present. She had had to make very considerable sacrifices at Munich, and when therefore, following the Munich Agreement, the impression was created in France by German press utterances and other announcements that the Reich intended to come forward immediately after Munich with new demands in the colonial sphere, the traditional attitude of obstinate opposition on the colonial question was roused in French circles, so that at the moment nothing could be done.

Later in the evening, the Reich Foreign Minister drew Bonnet's attention once again to the fact that Germany would have to regard

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<sup>7</sup> Pierre Laval was Foreign Minister in the Flandin Cabinet, November 1934-May 1935.

a French guarantee of Czechoslovakia as a form of interference in our sphere of influence, and he left him in no doubt that the idea of such a guarantee would not be favorable to the course of understanding on which we had just embarked.

Submitted herewith to the Reich Foreign Minister in accordance with instructions.

### No. 371

121/119499-508

*Memorandum by an Official of the German Delegation Visiting Paris*

PARIS, December 7, 1938.

W II 6718.

#### THE FRANCO-GERMAN ECONOMIC DISCUSSIONS IN PARIS ON DECEMBER 7, 1938

In the conversations between the Reich Foreign Minister and the French Minister for Foreign Affairs on December 6, 1938, economic matters were also discussed. It was originally intended to include in the official announcement on these discussions the following paragraph concerning economic questions:

"The conversations extended also to the economic field. The two Ministers agreed that it was necessary and possible to make considerable increases in the mutual exchange of commodities, especially between Germany and the French colonies, within the framework of already proved economic agreements. These activities could be made even more effective by concluding new agreements between the various economic groups.

"The question of economic cooperation extending beyond the direct exchange of commodities between Germany and France was also discussed. It was agreed that the possibilities for this should be further examined and intensively followed up, in the spirit of today's declaration.

"Convinced of the advantages which more frequent meetings between nationals of their two countries would have for a better mutual understanding, the two Ministers also consider it desirable to take suitable measures to promote tourist traffic and to organize study tours, with special emphasis on youth."

This paragraph was finally struck out from the announcement so as not to make it too long. It was, however, agreed that it represented the views of the two Governments and that the intentions expressed therein should be followed up. A conversation was then held at the Quai d'Orsay on December 7, in which Germany was represented by Ministerialdirektor Wiehl and Counselor of Legation von Campe and France by Director Count de la Baume and Head of Department Delenda.<sup>1</sup>

At the beginning, the German delegation emphasized that the task of the government representatives was to put into effect, by means of practical measures in the most varied spheres of activity, the intention announced by the two Foreign Ministers of developing the economic relations between Germany and France.

<sup>1</sup> Head of the Commercial Relations Department at the Quai d'Orsay.

It was proposed to split up today's discussions into the following main subjects:<sup>2</sup>

1. Methods of increasing imports of German goods to France.
2. Methods of increasing imports of French goods to Germany.
3. Promotion of German trade with the French colonies.
4. Promotion of agreements between individual economic groups in the two countries.
5. Promotion of travel between the two countries for various groups of people.
6. Economic cooperation between Germany and France in other countries.

It was proposed for the time being only to go briefly through these spheres of activity, so as to gain a rough idea of the mutual wishes and proposals which existed. Then, in continuation of these discussions, each Government should by a certain date, say sometime in the middle of January, draw up a detailed written statement of its wishes and proposals with regard to the various headings and hand it to the other Government. When these statements shall have been received, agreement would have to be reached on further procedure for dealing with these points in order to introduce practical measures for the various activities.

The French delegation declared itself to be in full agreement with this and suggested that the exchange of statements and further discussions should take place through diplomatic channels<sup>3</sup> and that the matter should not at first be dealt with by the government committees on each side in order to maintain the character of a special action. Count de la Baume said he intended personally to obtain the support of Gentin, the Minister of Commerce,<sup>4</sup> and hoped to be able to hand over the French statement in Berlin by the middle of January through Ambassador Coulondre, who had special knowledge and great experience in the matters under review.

In the discussion which ensued, the following brief views were expressed by both sides on the various main subjects, without prejudicing their later inclusion in the written statement:

1. *Methods of increasing imports of German goods to France*

There was general agreement that the most important condition for a revival and extension of Franco-German trade was the consolidation of France's domestic economy. If the steps taken in this direction by the French Government achieved the anticipated success, thus raising French production in general, France's capacity for importing German goods would also be fundamentally improved thereby.

The following wishes were brought forward on the German side on the various subjects:

(a) There were evidently various confidential circulars in the offices of the French authorities forbidding or making difficult the purchase of German goods. These circulars would obviously have to be withdrawn in view of the new position. The French representatives said that they knew nothing of any such circulars and that perhaps they were circulars which had been issued before the Czechoslovak crisis and were now superseded. They said they would certainly take steps to have them definitely withdrawn. They were promised that a copy

<sup>2</sup> A more detailed memorandum on these conversations has been filmed as 2468/517370-91. The remarks of the Reich Ministry of Economics on the possibility of taking action on these points were forwarded to the Foreign Ministry on Jan. 5, 1939 (2468/517404-20).

<sup>3</sup> An exchange of notes on the subject of economic collaboration took place in January 1939. The French note, dated Jan. 14, was delivered in Berlin Jan. 15 (2468/517392-402). The German note has not been found.

<sup>4</sup> Fernand Gentin, a Radical Socialist, held this post in the Daladier Cabinet, April 1938-March 1940.

of such a circular which was in the possession of the Embassy would be sent them confidentially.

(b) Greater consideration for German firms in the placing of government orders in France and her colonies and mandated areas. The French referred to difficulties arising from general principles but promised to examine the question and thought that with the anticipated improvement in France's general economic position such consideration would be possible from time to time.

(c) A more generous treatment of the prohibition of the use of foreign materials in bids for public contracts, e.g. German road-construction machinery. The French promised to examine this matter and also to assist if it were at all possible.

(d) Speedy ratification of the Franco-German double-taxation agreement, which had been concluded 4 years ago. The French representatives had no information regarding this. In a later talk with former Minister Mistler<sup>5</sup> (the chairman of the Chamber Foreign Affairs Committee, to which the draft of the bill has been submitted for ratification), it was learned that that Committee considers that the bill needs extending, especially as it dates back to the time before the reincorporation of the Saar, and therefore does not take sufficient account of certain companies whose plants, since this reincorporation, are partly on German and partly on French soil.

(e) Better adjustment of the French import quotas to the changed economic conditions. Many quotas could now no longer be utilized owing to the shifting of French demand and the alteration of the whole economic situation. On the other hand, numerous other quotas were completely inadequate to meet even to a small degree the demand for German goods, e.g. agricultural and textile machinery, for which there are orders dating years back, over and above the permitted quotas.

(f) Easier conditions of entry and residence for German commercial representatives in France. The stricter application of French police regulations regarding aliens, dating from the precrisis time, was no longer appropriate. Also the stricter measures, based on the still existing need for preventing the entry of undesirable persons, must in all cases be so applied that representatives of official German firms, who were vouched for by the Embassy or the German Chamber of Commerce in Paris, were not refused entry or hindered in their work. The French promised to examine the matter and to find remedies where possible. They emphasized that there were many complaints on the same subject respecting the treatment of French nationals in Germany. They were asked to produce concrete written evidence of this.

As the delegates had not been able to prepare for the discussion, no French proposals were made, apart from the general observation that the German goods on the French market were much too expensive to be able to compete with those of France or other similarly placed countries.

## 2. *Methods of increasing imports of French goods to Germany*

The Germans emphasized, and the French agreed, that owing to the form of the economic agreements an increase in the market for French goods in Germany was always in the long run dependent on France's readiness to buy more German goods. Only when this condition was fulfilled and the clearing balance restored by increased purchases by France in Germany would an increase in German purchases in France be possible.

The French asked in which commodity groups an increase in French imports to Germany was possible and in particular whether Germany might be in a

<sup>5</sup> Jean Mistler, Radical Socialist Minister of Posts, Telegraph, and Telephones in the Sarraut and Chautemps Cabinets, October 1933-January 1934.

position to take France's surplus agricultural produce in larger quantities than hitherto. The French delegates pointed out that this question was of great significance to the French Government in domestic politics and that here it was really possible to increase greatly the exchange of goods and thus build the surest foundation for a lasting political *rapprochement*. They also said they thought that in view of her need to import food it would be easy for Germany to buy French agricultural produce, while France would be making a heavy sacrifice in taking more German industrial products. The Germans replied that this question would also be studied, first and foremost by the Reich Ministry of Food. Past experience, however, had shown that the purchase of many products which France had special interest in selling, such as wine and vegetables, was particularly difficult for Germany in view of her own production of similar commodities. This position had not been altered even by the growth of Germany.

### 3. *Promotion of German trade with the French colonies*

The French expressed surprise that Germany had made little or no use of the facilities for barter transactions with the French colonies and in particular of the credit facilities for such transactions as laid down in the Franco-German agreement of 1937. In reply it was stated that so far all large transactions involving delivery of German finished articles to French colonies had always been thwarted, in spite of the good will of the French Colonial Ministry, by the resistance of French industry and of the authorities protecting it. The French representatives promised to give this matter their special attention and in particular to consider whether orders could be given to Germany in respect of large public undertakings in the French colonies. The Germans said they would submit, as soon as possible through the Embassy, a list of all the transactions which had been planned but had so far been thwarted by the above-mentioned resistance.

### 4. *Promotion of agreements between individual economic groups*

The French declared that it was the full intention of the French Government to promote agreements between separate economic groups. They said experience in the agreements made so far, e.g. for the potash and chemical industries, had been favorable and that they were prepared to promote and assist more agreements fixing sales in other countries and price agreements.

### 5. *Promotion of travel for various groups of people between the two countries*

The French delegates stated that the French Foreign Minister attached particular importance to making possible closer personal contact between various groups of French and Germans. The French Government was therefore prepared in principle to help to bring about a tourist agreement, even on a small scale, and it was aware that it was its duty to provide out of the Franco-German trade the necessary means for the visits of Germans to France. It was difficult, however, to find suitable facilities for this without placing a burden on normal trade. Unfortunately, experiences with the tourist agreement during the past year had not been encouraging. Perhaps assistance would have to be given in the form of additional public orders. It was also the wish of the French Government to make possible, in one form or another, French visits to Germany for purposes of study. It was particularly important to bring together the youth of the two countries to a greater extent.

### 6. *Economic cooperation between Germany and France in other countries*

The French stressed that the countries envisaged here were especially those whose economy had so far been only slightly developed and where large-scale

development would therefore be profitable, such as in South America and in southeastern Europe. The French colonial territories were also mentioned in this connection, without being excluded in principle, but on condition that France must naturally reserve for herself prior rights there. Large-scale road construction in the Balkans and the development of ports in South America were given as examples of cooperation. In general it would be a question not of agreements between the governments but of the promotion by the governments of cooperation between the industrial and financial groups concerned.

At the conclusion of the discussion the chief French negotiator emphasized again that the French Government was wholly sincere in its intention to bring about a widening and strengthening of Franco-German economic cooperation and that it meant to press forward with the execution of this task as an especially important separate activity, outside the regular routine work. With the authority of the Foreign Minister and the Minister of Commerce, whom he hoped to win over to the project, he was quite sure that it would be possible to overcome the resistance which still perhaps existed in some domestic quarters in France.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> This meeting was followed up by a series of discussions between von Campe, Commercial Counselor at the Paris Embassy, and Count de la Baume and M. Delenda of the Economic Department at the Quai d'Orsay (2468/517421-28). See also document No. 388.

## No. 372

F14/297-300

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*<sup>1</sup>

RM 266

PARIS, December 9, 1938.

In the course of a second conversation on the following day, December 7, 1938, Bonnet mentioned the following further points:

1. The Jewish question. After I had told M. Bonnet that I could not discuss this question officially with him, he said that he only wanted to tell me privately how great an interest was being taken in France in a solution of the Jewish problem. To my question as to what France's interest might be, M. Bonnet said that in the first place they did not want to receive any more Jews from Germany and [asked] whether we could not take some sort of measures to keep them from coming to France any more, and in the second place France had to ship 10,000 Jews somewhere else. They were actually thinking of Madagascar for this.

I replied to M. Bonnet that we all wished to get rid of our Jews but that the difficulties lay in the fact that no country wished to receive them and, further, in the shortage of foreign exchange. While I had always avoided handling this matter with any kind of international committee and even now did not wish in any way to discuss it, I had, as I wished to inform him confidentially, declared myself to

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<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Ribbentrop's handwriting: "[For the] Führer."

be in agreement that a German well versed in the Jewish problem should sometime confer in a private capacity with a deputy of an international committee, in order to examine the question of the Jewish emigration from Germany in its practical aspects. This conference was, I believe, taking place right now in Switzerland.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, I told the French Foreign Minister that the resettlement of the Jews was particularly difficult, since the Jews were not willing to undertake any work on the land and, even if the finest resettlement project were carried out today, I was afraid that within only a short space of time everything would be sold again by the Jews, who would once more make their appearance in commerce in the capital of the country concerned.

2. M. Bonnet then referred once more to the Spanish question and asked me whether we would not use our influence with Franco in urging him to accept the London plan for combing out volunteers.<sup>3</sup> France would then be prepared, without more ado, to accord him belligerent rights.

I told him that Franco had objections to this plan because his volunteers could be located without difficulty, while this would hardly be possible with the Communists, since they all had forged passports, etc. This appeared to me to be Franco's objection. I wanted, however, to examine this question again myself and also to discuss it sometime with the Italians. The crux of the matter certainly always seemed to me to be that nobody, including France, wished to see Bolshevism in Spain and that the quickest way to a solution satisfactory all around was therefore to stop completely reinforcements coming through France. No decision of any sort was taken on Spain.

R[IBBENTROP]

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<sup>2</sup> A subcommittee of the Intergovernmental Committee on the Problem of German Refugees met in London on Dec. 2; Ribbentrop was probably thinking of the Intergovernmental Meeting on Political Refugees held at Evian in July 1938. See Dirksen's memoirs, *Moskau-Tokio-London* (Stuttgart, 1949), p. 237.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 362, footnote 2.

## No. 373

121/119509-10

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, December 21, 1938.

The new French Ambassador called on me for the first time today.<sup>1</sup> He said that on all sides here it is urged on him that France should

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<sup>1</sup> For Coulondre's version of this interview see French Yellow Book, *Documents Diplomatiques, 1938-1939*, No. 35; also Coulondre's memoirs, *De Staline à Hitler* (Paris, 1950), pp. 231-232. In the latter account, the date is given erroneously as Dec. 22.

finally turn away from eastern Europe and direct her attention toward the French colonial empire. At the same time, he said, he heard opinions that France should of course also give consideration to the Italian interests in Africa. When M. Coulondre was on the point of explaining the incongruity of such opinions, I referred him for our Mediterranean policy to the Foreign Minister's statements to M. Bonnet in Paris.<sup>2</sup> I told him that these statements were authoritative and indeed that nothing concerning our foreign policy has any authority except what reaches the French Embassy from the mouth of either the Führer or the Reich Foreign Minister, through the Foreign Ministry.

The Ambassador then touched on the Czechoslovak problem and the question of the guarantee by the Munich Powers. He several times used the term *garantie conjointe*. I replied to Coulondre that Czechoslovakia belonged definitely to those territories which, as already mentioned, must be regarded as German domain. The destiny of Czechoslovakia, I said, lay in the hands of Germany. Consequently, nothing other than a German guarantee had any significance for Prague. But Coulondre clung to the subject and referred to the existing French, and also the English, promise of a guarantee, although in fact the political situation was a new one and Czechoslovakia was quite dependent on Germany. It now transpired also that, when sounded by Paris and London, the Czechs described the guarantee question as one which the Great Powers must settle among themselves. My rejection of the idea of a French guarantee upset M. Coulondre, who obviously had instructions in the matter. He abandoned the subject, however, when he learned from me that we had not fixed a meeting with Minister Chvalkovsky.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>2</sup> Document No. 370.

<sup>3</sup> The meeting between Hitler and Chvalkovsky did not take place until Jan. 21, 1939. See document No. 158.

## No. 374

634/252979-81

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

A 5135

PARIS, December 28, 1938.

Received December 29.

Pol. II 4061.

Subject: French reception of the Italian note regarding denunciation of the Mussolini-Laval agreement of 1935.

The note received by Ambassador François-Poncet from the Italian Foreign Ministry, declaring that Italy regards the Mussolini-Laval

agreement of 1935<sup>1</sup> as defunct, has since last Friday dominated public interest here as regards foreign policy.

From what has been published in the newspapers close to the Government and confirmed to me by a confidential agent who is usually well-informed on the views of the Quai d'Orsay, the attitude of the French Government may be summed up as follows:

The Mussolini-Laval agreement of 1935 had resolved the points of difference between France and Italy with justice and fairness. In the agreement, important concessions had been made to the Italians. Mussolini himself had announced in a speech in 1936 that the African account had been settled to the last centime. Italy's successful execution of the Abyssinian undertaking was due to the French Government of that time, which did everything in its power to withdraw the whole dangerous sting from sanctions. France meanwhile had also sent an Ambassador to Rome and, without demanding anything in return, had recognized Italian imperial rule over Ethiopia. The Italian argument, then, that France's behavior during the Abyssinian crisis had created a new situation, certainly did not hold water. France continued to adhere to the settlement laid down in the Mussolini-Laval agreement and had no occasion herself to make fresh proposals. But this did not preclude *a priori* a loyal and frank discussion of the Franco-Italian relationship. The Italians, however, must realize quite clearly that no new territorial concessions whatever could be considered. Certain supplementary economic agreements concerning the Djibouti railway and the safeguarding of Italian interests in the harbor of Djibouti could be discussed if occasion arose, as could financial questions regarding the Suez Canal. But France would submit to no blackmail whatever, neither would she allow herself to be intimidated. It was only by a *négociation honnête* that a reasonable solution could be found. Such a solution should be sought between France and Italy bilaterally. On questions regarding French imperial rule, France alone would decide and did not require the intermediary of other European powers.

The emphasis on this last point indicates the fear, certainly entertained in official circles also, that in his forthcoming visit to Rome Chamberlain might be induced by the Italians to take over the role of intermediary, in which he might not perhaps pay sufficient attention to French interests. Therefore several evening papers yesterday declared it necessary that Chamberlain and Halifax should visit Paris on their way to Rome so that the French Government could again explain to them in all clarity the unalterable views of the French before their conversations with Mussolini. Bernus, in the *Journal des Débats*, goes so far as to say that the visit of the British to Rome at the present moment is inopportune. In the meantime, however, the

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<sup>1</sup> Concluded in Rome on Jan. 7, 1935.

French Government has published a denial through Havas that it suggested to the British that Chamberlain should visit Paris. But it states also that the Foreign Office has been given the fullest information on the French views through the French Ambassador.

While the French Government is patently anxious not to shut the door against negotiations with Italy, the opposition of the "warmongers," that is, the Marxist Left and those elements of the Right who also carry on an offensive against the Munich Agreement, use the action of the Italians to demand from the Government that it should answer the Italian step by abolishing the special statute in Tunis. Only a firm attitude, allowing no compromise, would impress the Italians. On the other hand, even the slightest readiness to make concessions would be interpreted as weakness by the Italians and also by the Germans, with whom the Italian hand has been preconcerted.

With regard to public feeling, it should be emphasized that bitterness against the Italians is very strong, particularly among elements of the Center and moderate Right, who strongly support the policy represented by the Munich Agreement of a French understanding with the totalitarian states and oppose the ideological and aggressive anti-Fascist policy of the Left. Reasons of domestic policy also play a not inconsiderable part in this. The above-mentioned elements believe that in presenting a comparison between the foreign policy which they put forward of defending the vital interests of the French Empire and, for the rest, of reaching an understanding [with the totalitarian states] and the warmongering foreign policy of the Marxist Left, they have found the right method of discrediting the latter before the country and so of placing firmly in the saddle again the anti-Communist parties of order, *partis de l'ordre*, as they like to style themselves. Under these circumstances the putting forward of the Italian claims just at this moment would be regarded by them as sabotaging their struggle against Marxist disintegration.

A few newspaper clippings are enclosed.<sup>2</sup>

H. WELCZECK

<sup>2</sup> Not reprinted.

No. 375

1580/382132-34

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram <sup>1</sup>

URGENT

PARIS, January 1, 1939.

Pol. II 5.

Foreign Minister Bonnet asked me to call on him yesterday evening, in order, as he said, not to let the old year pass without thanking me

<sup>1</sup> The copy used has neither serial number nor hour of receipt on it.

for my frank and reliable cooperation and to ask me to convey to my chief, the Reich Foreign Minister, his sincerest good wishes in the hope and expectation that, after the first step had been taken here in the past month on the path to understanding, further steps might follow. He had had a book prepared for the Führer with reproductions of the most beautiful French architecture and works of art and had arranged for this special printing to be handed to the Reich Foreign Minister by Coulondre. He hoped this would strike the fancy of the Führer, whose predilection for architecture and the plastic arts he knew.

He wanted, however, to tell me once more how pleased he had been by the political developments between our two countries in recent weeks, which might, without prejudice to commitments on either side, become the basis for the pacification of Europe. By doggedly pursuing this policy he had lost many friends in Britain and America, particularly in recent weeks; but this would not prevent his proceeding undeterred on the path of achieving complete understanding with Germany. In order to ascertain how the signing of the joint declaration had been received by the people of Paris, he had placed observers in all the cinemas even in Communist working-class sections, when the act of signature was shown; with the insignificant exception of a case where *émigrés* were concerned, quite exceptional approval had been registered. In his rural constituency he had received ovations the like of which he had never known before. Herr von Ribbentrop must have seen on his reception at the Embassy that not only a select pro-German company but *tout Paris* had appeared to express their satisfaction at the signing and to accord due honor and recognition to the German Foreign Minister. He asked that this demonstration should not be underestimated in any way, as the French, in contrast to the other Latin races, were of a reserved nature.

Following his observations on Franco-German relations, Bonnet begged me to spare him a few more minutes although New Year's Eve was advancing, as he would like to inform me, as was his wont, about current questions, in this case Franco-Italian relations, which unfortunately seemed to be developing unsatisfactorily. Last April he had instructed his Chargé d'Affaires to discuss with Mussolini the whole complex of questions which might lead to any differences between France and Italy and to hear Mussolini's wishes. The Duce had then told Blondel<sup>2</sup> that he was demanding nothing more than recognition of the Empire, all other differences being unimportant—Mussolini had called them *moustiques*. But these midges had meanwhile grown into elephants like Tunis and Corsica! Even in the first

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<sup>2</sup> Jules-François Blondel, Charge d'Affaires of the French Embassy in Rome, November 1936–November 1938.

conversations with the new French Ambassador, no mention was made of these wishes. How had the French Government acted toward Italy in the meantime? It had sent an Ambassador to Rome and recognized the King of Italy as Emperor of Ethiopia. Apparently the Italians believed, in view of the French yielding in the Czech crisis, that the French Government would now make territorial concessions to them. The facts were however quite different. During the Czech crisis, he, Bonnet, had from the beginning advocated the view that German claims to Sudeten territory were justified and must be acceded to; he had always uttered warnings only against their being carried out by force. In the event of war, France would have had to fight, not for her own territory, but for Czech interests. Now it was, however, not a matter of rescinding a nonsensical clause in the Treaty of Versailles, but a matter of French territory, which the Italians would have to obtain by their own efforts and which the French would defend to the last drop of their blood with a unity never before seen.

It was said abroad that France was seeking British mediation in the Italian question. The contrary was the case. The French Government rejected British mediation *a limine*. They were men enough to settle the Franco-Italian affair for good or ill alone and needed no help. They certainly knew in France that Italian utterances need not be taken too seriously, although the tone adopted there at present was at least unusual and had caused very strong reaction in France.

Finally, Bonnet read me a telegram that he had received from a Franco-German youth camp near Salzburg, which had particularly pleased him.

WELCZEK

No. 376

634/252991

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 3 of January 3      ROME (QUIRINAL), January 3, 1939—9:20 p.m.  
Received January 3—10:00 p.m.

With reference to telegraphic instruction W XII 1643 of December 24, 1938.<sup>1</sup>

Ciano confirmed to me in a conversation today the willingness of the Italian Government to act in agreement with us in the Suez question.<sup>2</sup> As the Italian wishes were addressed primarily to France, the

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5216/E308268).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 447.

subject could not be officially dealt with at all during Chamberlain's forthcoming visit, though it might be expected that in the general exchange of ideas regarding points of friction in Franco-Italian relations the Suez question would also be touched upon.

Ciano observed in this connection that Italy took a fully reserved attitude toward France. But if, as he neither expected nor appeared to want particularly, Chamberlain offered his good offices in this connection, they would not be rejected summarily.

To my question whether, after sending to this Embassy the text of his letter of December 17 to Poncet on the Tunis question,<sup>3</sup> he had also meanwhile sent the text of the French reply through the Italian Embassy to the [German] Foreign Ministry, Ciano answered that he was not sure. He would look into the matter and, if it had not been done, would send me the text for forwarding on to Berlin. The French reply, however, contained nothing more than a rejection of the Italian viewpoint on trifling grounds.

MACKENSEN

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<sup>3</sup> Not printed (5217/E308273-78).

### No. 377

54/36338

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 35

BERLIN, January 13, 1939.

The Foreign Minister has told me to instruct Count Welczeck to speak once more to M. Bonnet at the next opportunity about German equality of rights in Morocco and to go into the matter thoroughly. I have informed Count Welczeck accordingly.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 378

2399/500433-34

#### *The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 15 of January 14

PARIS, January 14, 1939.

Received January 15—12:40 a.m.

1. The outcome of the Anglo-Italian conversations in Rome<sup>1</sup> has had a universally pessimistic reception here. Although it was not expected that an agreement in any form would be concluded, there

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<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 430 and 435.

is disappointment at the complete lack of results from the Rome visit. It had apparently been secretly hoped that, in return for certain assurances, Italy would be prepared in some form or other to have direct discussions with France and to abate the anti-French press campaign, as a result of which, it was thought here, the Spanish question and Italy's demands could perhaps have been made the subjects of negotiation and divested of their dangerous character.

2. There is general satisfaction here on one thing only, that Chamberlain has loyally kept his promises and was not drawn into discussions but recommended that Rome undertake direct Franco-Italian negotiations. Thus the Entente Cordiale emerges stronger from the Rome conversations.

3. The continuation of the anti-French campaign in the Italian press (in connection with which the article in *Tevere* has made a painful impression and has been firmly but quietly rejected) is taken here as an indication of the continuance of the Franco-Italian tension and an increase in the danger of war. Bitterness against Italy is becoming even greater than hitherto.

4. It is the general opinion, with an undertone of pessimism, that before coming to a final judgment on the Rome talks one must await the Italian attitude during the coming weeks. The development of the Spanish question is regarded as especially decisive and, as I have several times reported, has become, as a result of Franco's successes and of the Italian demands, the object of very great anxiety here. The greatest skepticism is shown here, in spite of the peace assurances expressed in the final Rome communiqué and in spite of the fact, generally believed here, that the Duce gave renewed assurances in Rome that Italy wished for neither a politically nor an economically privileged position in Spain after Franco's victory.

5. Regarding Germany's attitude, the opinion predominates that Germany is prepared to give her full support to the Italian demands. In this connection the fear is expressed that the Rome conversations might be another Godesberg, followed, as a result of Anglo-German cooperation, by an Italian Munich with a solution at the expense of France. This possibility is strongly rejected, and it is pointed out that in the case of the Italian demands, unlike the position at Munich, vital French interests are at stake. Even the holding of a three-power or a four-power conference on Italian demands in Africa and Spain is generally rejected, though in several quarters the cooperation of the four European Great Powers in solving current problems is regarded as useful and necessary for the maintenance of peace.

6. The comparatively optimistic comments of the British delegation, published this morning in Rome, did not become known here until the afternoon and have not yet affected the attitude here, which,

it is considered, is expressed by the news published this evening of the cruise of the French Mediterranean Squadron and part of the Atlantic Fleet to the North African coast and the joint tour of inspection in Morocco by the Chiefs of the General Staff of Army and Navy.

BRÄUER

No. 379

483/231436-37

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 60

BERLIN, January 20, 1939.

In a general discussion of the situation, the French Ambassador today expressed the concern of his Government over developments in the Spanish war. I replied that certainly only French domestic policy and no weightier consideration could be behind that, if there was talk of wishing to prolong by means of French injections Spain's political sickness, which had already lasted long enough.

Coulondre thereupon observed that developments in Spain were also a source of anxiety to Daladier's supporters. It was true no one believed that Italian troops wished to establish themselves permanently on Spanish territory, but it might well be that Mussolini was prolonging the period before evacuation and was using it to exert political pressure on the new Spain.

I referred the Ambassador to the contents of Chamberlain's conversations in Rome, with which he was surely as well acquainted as we were.

In the further course of conversation, Coulondre seemed to wish to intimate that Italy could utilize her troops in Spain as a means of exerting pressure in the eventual negotiations with France about the well-known Italian claims, and intimated as follows: France's present correct attitude in the Spanish conflict was, among other things, dictated by consideration of Franco-German relations. Perhaps a similar calming influence might be exerted by Germany on Italy as regards her relations with France.

I said to the Ambassador in reply that German-Italian relations were indeed very intimate. Our friendship was based on the very extensively parallel nature of our interests, our political temperament, and our general outlook. We were continuously in contact with each other, but Germany did not act the part of adviser on Italian policy, as the Ambassador appeared to indicate.

In his account of the Franco-Italian differences, Coulondre remarked further—and in this he seemed to be speaking on instructions

from Paris—with emphasis and in words very similar to those already used by Bonnet, that France's political aims were governed by regard for her Empire and that she was not prepared to make the slightest territorial concessions there.

I thereupon asked Coulondre whether there was any foundation for the rumor that France wished to declare the neighboring territories of Algeria, namely Morocco and Tunis, to be integral parts of France like Algeria. The Ambassador strongly denied any such intention.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 380

621/250690-91

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 30 of January 24

PARIS, January 24, 1939.

Received January 25—12:05 a.m.

Pol. II 258.

We have utilized yesterday's lull in parliamentary debate on foreign affairs to call on Foreign Minister Bonnet and demand from him the cessation of discrimination against us in Morocco, early examination of which in a constructive light had been promised the Foreign Minister by Bonnet during their conversations in December.<sup>1</sup> After 20 years' peace the situation was incomprehensible and intolerable for us. Bonnet promised that immediately after the close of the foreign affairs debate, which had occupied all his time, he would deal with the matter personally and do everything possible to secure the desired solution in accordance with promise given. My action had been prepared for by Léger's having delivered a memorandum on January 17. (Cf. my report of that date, A. 150 Pol. II 236.<sup>2</sup>)

The Foreign Minister then went on to the Spanish question and declared that, despite commission of inquiry and wave of opposition, Daladier and he were irrevocably adhering to a policy of non-intervention, notwithstanding the many arguments Mussolini had furnished to the Opposition in the French Chamber for use against him (Bonnet) by incessantly proclaiming the successes of the Italian army formations. He had already expressed to the Reich Foreign Minister his favorable attitude toward Franco's victory and intended to resume diplomatic relations with Franco at the right moment.

He had very much at heart the furthering of good relations with Germany, since he by no means regarded the December agreement

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 370, p. 476. See also document No. 377.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5218/E308294-304).

as a single, meaningless diplomatic document but as a starting point for further discussions in the spirit of friendship toward permanent improvement of Franco-German relations. He also hoped at some future date convenient to us to be able to pay a reciprocal visit to Berlin. Ambassador Noël<sup>3</sup> in Warsaw had been instructed by him to pay his respects to the Reich Foreign Minister.

Bonnet expressed his views on Franco-Italian relations calmly. He had done everything possible to improve these and to comply with wishes expressed from time to time by Mussolini. He was also still prepared to resume negotiations based on the Laval agreement, but for that a different "climate" would certainly have to be created, since nothing could be achieved by loud and offensive demands.

Nothing was said about German-Italian relations.

Finally, Bonnet read me more extracts from his parliamentary speech to be made on Thursday and emphasized that many of these had been framed for domestic consumption. Here he mentioned the absolute determination to maintain the French policy in eastern Europe. In the section dealing with Franco-Italian relations the express recognition of the worth and valor of the Italian soldier is noteworthy.

The speech appears calm and determined in tone.

WELCZECK

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<sup>3</sup> Léon Noël, French Ambassador in Poland, May 1935–September 1939. For Ribbentrop's visit to Poland, see vol. v.

## No. 381

2134/467278

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 74

BERLIN, January 27, 1939.

The French Ambassador mentioned to me yesterday that he had succeeded, partly through the Quai d'Orsay and partly by direct contact with journalists and editors of his acquaintance, in keeping the French press and the Strasbourg broadcasting station in order.

M. Coulondre also remarked once more that Germany might exercise a conciliatory influence on Italy.

To this remark I replied, as I had already done recently, that we were not Italy's advisers and that, as far as I knew, the French Government also had refused the mediation of the British in any way in Franco-Italian relations.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 382

F19/082-84

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

RM No. 7

BERLIN, February 6, 1939.

Pol. II 411.

THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S CONVERSATION WITH THE FRENCH  
AMBASSADOR<sup>1</sup>

In the course of the conversation Coulondre dealt with two main points:

1. France fully understood that Germany would support Italy and was moreover prepared to make concessions to Italy in special cases, e.g. Djibouti and the Suez Canal; but she would never be prepared to make territorial concessions. Territorial demands would mean war. He, Coulondre, deemed it the duty of the French Ambassador in Berlin to state this frankly.

2. Coulondre asked whether the Führer had ever thought of mentioning the extension of trade with France in his statements on economic questions.

The Foreign Minister answered point 1 by saying that it was clearly to be understood from the Führer's speech that Germany and Italy were one and that Germany would always be found at Italy's side. He was, nevertheless, of the opinion that a generous French attitude toward Mussolini's demands would enable a settlement between Italy and France to be reached by the peaceful means of negotiation.

With regard to point 2, the Führer's statements on economic matters, the Foreign Minister said that these had principally been directed toward certain tendencies to exclude Germany from world commerce. The Führer had intended to make it clear to the world that Germany was in a position to be able to counter such methods more effectively than any other country.

Moreover he, the Foreign Minister, most cordially welcomed any extension of commercial relations with other countries and particularly with France and would gladly examine constructively any suggestion Coulondre might make on this subject. According to his information, Franco-German trade suffered from the inadequate import of goods by France. Germany was fully prepared to receive more from France, but the corresponding import of German goods into France was lacking. The first move in this matter would have to be made by giving French government contracts to Germany, as had been already proposed by Wiehl at the time of the Foreign Minister's visit to Paris.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See French Yellow Book, *Documents Diplomatiques, 1938-1939*, No. 46.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 371, p. 479.

Finally, the Foreign Minister gave a general survey of the international situation and expressed his conviction that, after a clarification of the situation in Spain, of the Franco-Italian state of tension, and of the situation in east Asia, the atmosphere might become less troubled. Germany had so far done her utmost toward clearing the atmosphere and would continue to work in that direction. The responsibility for the state of unrest lay with other powers. In this connection the Foreign Minister mentioned the usefulness of close cooperation in quelling the international agitators (who had now selected President Roosevelt as their spokesman). If this were done, then it would also be possible to achieve a settlement between the *status quo* countries and the authoritarian states.

Submitted herewith to Herr von Ribbentrop, Reich Foreign Minister, as instructed.<sup>3</sup>

SCHMIDT, *Minister*

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<sup>3</sup> This copy of the memorandum was initialed by Ribbentrop, as were the two following documents.

### No. 383

F19/081

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

zu RM No. 7

BERLIN, February 7, 1939.

#### SUPPLEMENT TO THE MEMORANDUM ON THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S CONVERSATION WITH THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR

The Foreign Minister further drew Coulondre's attention to Foreign Minister Bonnet's speech<sup>1</sup> during the German visit to Warsaw, in which he had spoken of a French "*présence* in the East." He, the Foreign Minister, had already told Ambassador Noël, who had called on him in Warsaw,<sup>2</sup> that that this kind of speech might easily lead to misunderstandings and seemed strange to him, the Foreign Minister. The Foreign Minister stressed the point that Germany, which respected the French spheres of interest, would regard a return to any form of the "Beneš policy" as quite intolerable for Franco-German relations. In conclusion, the Foreign Minister pointed out sharply that in Paris M. Bonnet had declared that he was no longer interested in questions concerning the east, and that therefore any deviation from this line would be inadvisable.<sup>3</sup>

Coulondre replied that it was difficult for France to forego her interests in the east and at the same time to make concessions in the

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<sup>1</sup> On Jan. 26 in the Chamber of Deputies.

<sup>2</sup> The conversation between Ribbentrop and Noël took place on Jan. 27 (see French Yellow Book, *Documents Diplomatiques, 1938-1939*, Nos. 38 and 39).

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 370, footnote 1.

Mediterranean. France would, however, naturally not pursue any policy in the east which would disturb Germany.

Submitted herewith to Herr von Ribbentrop, Reich Foreign Minister.

SCHMIDT, *Minister*

No. 384

F19/079-80

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

SECRET

BERLIN, February 7, 1939.

RM No. 8

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND COUNT DE BRINON  
ON FEBRUARY 6, 1939

In the course of the conversation Brinon broached the question of a threat of war in Europe. The Foreign Minister then gave a detailed account of his attempts over many years to reach an understanding with Paris and London. He touched here on his attempt as early as 1933 to bring Daladier to see the Führer and his two attempts to arrange a meeting between the Führer and Baldwin. The Munich declaration by the Führer and Chamberlain and the Franco-German Declaration recently signed by him in Paris tended in the same direction. There was much talk today of a general conference, but what could such a conference achieve? A clear definition of what was to be allowed to Germany, such as a demarcation of spheres of interest, above all the return of colonies and the like, could not be admitted openly by either the French or the British Government. Such a conference would therefore be doomed to failure from the outset, and public opinion, which placed high hopes on such a conference, would then be more likely to be disappointed. For this reason it was far better policy in his opinion to leave the present problems to mature and to allow time for their natural development.

Brinon thereupon expressed the grave concern felt in France as a result of Italian policy. All France was asking with one voice: What does Mussolini want? When the Foreign Minister interposed that France could certainly negotiate on that point with Italy, Brinon referred to the present poisoned atmosphere, which made it impossible for France to take the initiative in starting such negotiations. With this he indirectly and in a discreet manner suggested mediation between France and Italy to the Reich Foreign Minister. The Foreign Minister did not, however, follow this up.

BRÜCKLMEIER

## No. 385

2620/525646

*An Official of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop to the Press Department of the Foreign Ministry*

BERLIN, February 7, 1939.

Subject: Article by Baron von Freytag-Loringhoven in the February 1939 issue of *Europäische Revue*.

In the February 1939 issue of the *Europäische Revue*, page 110, paragraph 2, Baron von Freytag-Loringhoven, writing on the Franco-Italian tension, uses a simile which is certain to cause great offense in France and is in any case superfluous. He compares Italy's policy toward France with a cat playing with a mouse, Rome being the cat and Paris the mouse:

"The cat lies there purring happily, while the little mouse darts hither and thither in fear. No sooner does the mouse begin to hope that the danger is over than it receives a fresh blow from the velvet paw, with claws still hidden. Then the game starts all over again, until the mouse is completely exhausted and in the end actually wants to be swallowed, just so the cruel game will end."

As our press support of the Italian demands might certainly be carried on in a more tactful way and as the tone adopted by the *Europäische Revue* is only calculated to hurt French feelings most deeply and endanger our relationship with pro-German circles in Paris, I would ask the Foreign Ministry to instruct the editors of the *Europäische Revue* not to let the cat out of the bag in this way.

ABETZ

## No. 386

2459/515654

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 118

BERLIN, February 9, 1939.

Pol. II 447.

I informed the Italian Ambassador briefly today of the Reich Foreign Minister's talk with M. Coulondre. (See memo RAM No. 7.<sup>1</sup>) I omitted the second part of the conversation, relating to economic questions, as being of no importance to Attolico.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 382.

## No. 387

621/250703-04

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

A 658

PARIS, February 18, 1939.  
Pol. II 546.POLITICAL REPORT<sup>1</sup>

During the conversations I had last week with the Foreign Minister concerning the expulsion and arrest of Germans,<sup>2</sup> I also took the opportunity, acting on instructions from the Reich Foreign Minister, to express our astonishment that in the foreign affairs debate in the Chamber he had talked of fostering and, wherever possible, of extending French friendships in eastern and central Europe and had thereby given the impression, for instance to the Czechs and Poles, of a revival of the policy of encirclement aimed at Germany. This relapse into the so-called Beneš policy was intolerable to us.

Bonnet protested loudly and referred to the declarations he had made to me before his speech in the Chamber of Deputies. (See my telegram No. 30 of January 24.<sup>3</sup>) It was surely possible, he suggested, to cultivate old friendships and develop them in the economic and cultural spheres, without clashing in the east and southeast with the German Reich, already so favored by its geopolitical position. Germany would undoubtedly claim for herself the same valid right in Spain, as soon as law and order were restored there. He asked me to send to the Reich Foreign Minister the relevant passage from his speech in the Senate on foreign policy, to which one could scarcely take exception. Things were often said during a foreign affairs debate in the Chamber which were obviously designed for domestic consumption and had no significance beyond that. If a French Foreign Minister, against the storm and wave of opposition, substantiated our claims to the Sudeten-German territory, which were in his opinion justified, and then drew his own conclusions privately from the changed situation in central Europe, he could not very well be expected to withdraw also all along the line when facing the Chamber. If he did, then the warmongers would only gain the upper hand. They were now reproaching him with lack of firmness and with boosting the Franco-German agreement and were asserting that he was attributing greater significance to it than was done in Germany,

<sup>1</sup> This report is initialed by Ribbentrop and contains the marginal notation: "Has been brought to the Führer's attention. He[we]l Feb. 28." It has also been reproduced by the Soviet Government (*Documents and Materials Relating to the Eve of the Second World War*, vol. II, pp. 226-232).

<sup>2</sup> The last of these conversations took place on Feb. 16 (121/119515).

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 380.

where the agreement was not even mentioned in the Führer's speech on January 30.<sup>4</sup>

I told Bonnet in reply that we could only judge by the effect which his speech on international politics had had abroad, and this had been harmful to our interests in eastern and southeastern Europe.

I beg to enclose the part of Bonnet's speech in the Senate to which he referred.<sup>5</sup>

H. WELCZEK

<sup>4</sup> In the Reichstag.

<sup>5</sup> Not found.

### No. 388

2797/548093-97

*Counselor of Legation Campe to Ministerialdirektor Wiehl*

W 494

PARIS, February 22, 1939.

DEAR HERR WIEHL: I take the liberty of enclosing a memorandum on my last talk with Count de la Baume,<sup>1</sup> which is also being submitted with an official report to the Foreign Ministry;<sup>2</sup> also a copy of a report on the forthcoming founding of a *centre économique franco-allemand*.<sup>3</sup> As you will see from the two enclosures we can report very satisfactory progress.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours,  
CAMPE

[Enclosure]

PARIS, February 21, 1939.

I. On Count de la Baume's return, I continued the economic discussions with him according to instructions<sup>4</sup> and told him we considered it desirable to make a start as soon as possible both with the industrial discussions and with carrying out practical Franco-German joint undertakings, in order to achieve tangible results.

La Baume received our suggestion in a particularly eager and accommodating manner, which contrasted strongly with the sober way in which he usually negotiates. The reason for this manner soon

<sup>1</sup> In a memorandum for the Foreign Minister dated Feb. 27 (483/231438) Wiehl summarized Campe's memorandum of Feb. 21 and pointed out that it was interesting that the French were trying to associate themselves with the British plan to achieve a political *détente* by means of economic agreements.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5220/E308321-25).

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (2485/517830-31).

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 371, footnote 6.

became apparent. La Baume told me the Führer's great speech had aroused deep interest among the leading French statesmen.<sup>5</sup> Premier Daladier in particular had been very impressed by the open and direct way in which the Führer and Chancellor had spoken of Germany's economic difficulties. Daladier, in agreement with Foreign Minister Bonnet, felt it was France's duty to answer this appeal. He asked the Ministers concerned for practical proposals. When he was then told in reply that, following the visit of the Reich Foreign Minister, conversations between Ministerialdirektor Wiehl and him (La Baume) on all the possibilities of intensified economic cooperation between Germany and France had already been started, Daladier ordered that the program for the further negotiations be drawn up under his personal guidance. Accordingly there would be a meeting during the next few days at the office of the Premier himself of the appropriate Ministers with their experts, in which the program for the Franco-German economic negotiations was to be determined. Besides the Foreign Minister and the Minister of Commerce, the discussions would be attended by the Colonial Minister, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Agriculture, and if necessary also the Minister of Public Works. He himself (La Baume) and M. Alphand<sup>6</sup> had prepared a short memorandum for the Ministers' meeting, based chiefly on the proposals and decisions of the last conversation between him—or his deputy<sup>7</sup>—and me. (For details see III.)

II. Count de la Baume also gave me the following information. The extent to which economic and parliamentary circles were interested in an economic *rapprochement* and cooperation between the two countries could be realized from the fact that, with the encouragement of Foreign Minister Bonnet, a *centre économique franco-allemand* was soon to be set up, the leaders of which were to be well-known parliamentary figures and the presidents of the largest French chambers of commerce. The *centre* had set itself the task of promoting in a practical manner the economic relations between the two countries in every way and with all the means in its power.<sup>8</sup>

III. Regarding practical details, La Baume and I agreed on the following:

1. There is nothing to prevent discussions starting at once between the Reich Federation of Industry and the French Association of Industry. It would be a good plan to launch the discussions by a visit

<sup>5</sup> See document 305, footnote 1.

<sup>6</sup> Hervé, Alphand, Director of the Trade Agreement Division in the Ministry of Commerce, January 1937–August 1940.

<sup>7</sup> Delenda.

<sup>8</sup> On Feb. 28 Welzeck reported that this *centre* had been formed that day, in accordance with the proposals of the French lawyer Baudouin-Bugnet of the Independent Left Party, who would act as its president (2485/517830–32).

to Paris by Herr Koppen of the Reich Federation of Industry, the date of which would be about March 20. At the Paris conference would be determined the purpose, scope, and date of a meeting of a few leading personalities of German and French industry, who would be accompanied by the managing directors of the large associations.

2. For all other matters, La Baume asked us to await the meeting at the office of Premier Daladier, the result of which he would tell me in due course.

La Baume agreed with my suggestion that some projects involving practical joint work be drawn up and put into execution as soon as possible. He said the French would probably make practical proposals under three headings:

(a) The setting up of a kind of *association des intérêts*. He quoted as examples the well-known umbrella-tree project<sup>9</sup> in the Cameroons and the exploitation of the Conakry ore deposits.

(b) He would always take pains to propose that German industry participate in the various industrial projects in the French colonies by delivery of materials and machinery. He could say nothing definite yet, however.

(c) Regarding cooperation in other countries, he had already given instructions that practical schemes be explored. He would also like to give me as his personal opinion, which he had not yet, however, been able to put before his Minister, that the best field for such collaboration would be Spain, for whose recovery the cooperation of all the constructive resources in Europe is necessary.

To my question whether anything had been decided regarding the French reply to our proposals on the purchase of agricultural products, La Baume said he hoped a way would be found in this difficult, but very interesting, question. He had recently visited Gentin, Minister of Commerce, with Ambassador Coulondre, in order to overcome the great opposition which naturally came from that Ministry. Gentin himself had also fully recognized the significance of the matter, but the opposition of French industry remained strong.

CAMPE

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<sup>9</sup> For production of wood pulp.

## No. 389

2468/517429-31

*Counselor of Legation Campe to Ministerialdirektor Wiehl*

W 494 II

PARIS, February 28, 1939.  
(Not dispatched until March 6)

DEAR HERR WIEHL: With reference to my memorandum on a conversation with M. de la Baume (cf. the Ambassador's report W 494

of the 21st,<sup>1</sup> page 3, paragraph 2c of the enclosure<sup>2</sup>) concerning suggestions for cooperation in Spain, I beg to inform you further that the Ambassador has told me that he discussed the matter briefly with the Foreign Minister in Berlin. The Foreign Minister signified his agreement and asked that the matter should be passed to you for further action. As the Ambassador did not leave the memorandum with the Foreign Minister at the time, may I send you the original copy of the memorandum, a copy of which I have already forwarded to you with my letter (W 494 of February 22<sup>3</sup>).

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours sincerely,  
CAMPE

[Enclosure]

PARIS, February 1, 1939.

MEMORANDUM ON FRANCO-GERMAN COOPERATION IN THE  
RECONSTRUCTION OF SPAIN

In the two government memoranda on the development of economic relations between Germany and France, the practical cooperation of German and French economic groups in large-scale undertakings in third countries is envisaged in the final point. As examples of such cooperation, the following were mentioned in the talks with Director Count de la Baume:

Extension of South American harbors,  
Building of roads and bridges in the Balkans,  
Building of railways or harbors in Africa, etc.

The question now arises whether an attempt should be made to suggest at this point such cooperation in the reconstruction of Spain as well. Germany and France could well supplement each other's efforts in this undertaking. Germany has to offer her good relations with the Franco Government, her technicians already installed there, and the existing organizations; France, on the other hand, would have long-term credits in foreign exchange to place at its disposal and, if necessary, also labor.

We were interested in putting forward a suitable proposal to France for, since the fall of Barcelona, French economic circles had been pressing more and more for a speedy restoration of normal relations with Franco. The country's economic and financial elements are only waiting to play the part in building up Spain which, in their opinion,

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5220/E308321-25).

<sup>2</sup> The same as that of document No. 388.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 388, but there Campe did not mention this memorandum.

is of necessity bound to fall to them in view of the fluidity of the French capital market and their close personal and kindred connections across the frontier. In the meantime the Government hesitates to make another sudden *volte-face* but is only seeking as a last resort a good excuse to be able to resume relations with Franco without too great a loss of prestige. A German suggestion for French-German cooperation in the rebuilding of Spain and, following this, the practical interest in and connection of French economic and financial circles with Nationalist Spain, would therefore, apart from great economic advantages, also bring with it the political advantage of hastening recognition of Nationalist Spain by France.

Respectfully submitted to the Ambassador.

CAMPE

### No. 390

2485/517870-71

*Counselor of Legation Campe to the Director of Commercial Agreements in the French Ministry of Commerce and Industry*<sup>1</sup>

W 584

March 1, 1939.

MR. DIRECTOR: Referring to our telephone conversation, I have the honor to bring the following to your attention:

The conversations between German and French industry in our opinion will have to deal with all questions, without exception, which concern the two industries, especially the study of markets of the two countries, the conclusion of agreements with a view to avoiding the competition of markets of third countries, the carrying out jointly of enterprises and large-scale projects with a view to a better exploitation of underdeveloped regions, etc. It is obvious that a very detailed preparation for these conversations is necessary if they are to terminate successfully. We are considering therefore going about these conversations in three stages:

1. The preparatory stage, which would necessitate the coming to Paris of one or two directors of the Reich Federation of Industry, an organization including all German industry (we would suggest as delegates Herr Koppen,<sup>2</sup> director of the section on commercial policy in the aforementioned Reich Federation, and possibly Herr Brinkmann). These delegates will draw up the program for the second stage of the conversation in close collaboration with one or more persons designated to represent all of French industry.

<sup>1</sup> Hervé Alphanđ. The letter is in French in the original.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. C. W. Koppen. See documents Nos. 289 and 392.

2. The second stage will include detailed conversations between the qualified representatives of the two industries, who would possibly be assisted by experts from commercial, banking, and overseas (Hamburg, Bremen) circles.

3. Within the framework of these general conversations there would take place, as the third stage, individual conversations between the different industrial groups, called *Fachgruppen* in Germany, and the corresponding French organizations; hence, for example, the *Fachgruppe Elektrizität* would come to an understanding with the group representing the electrical industry in France, the *Fachgruppe Chemie* would enter into negotiations with the delegates of the French chemical industry, etc. Only these individual conversations can bring about a positive result; it is, however, desirable that they take place strictly within the framework contemplated, that is to say, on the initiative and under the supervision of the all-inclusive organizations of the two countries.

I am of course entirely at your disposal, Mr. Director, to give you any information desired and to receive any suggestion which you may formulate on your part. I beg you to accept the assurances of my most distinguished consideration.

CAMPE

No. 391

2485/517868-69

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, March 1, 1939.

W II 1316.

Herr von Campe telephoned from Paris today and informed me that certain colonial projects are ready for discussion. Director Weigelt<sup>1</sup> is at present in Paris, and Campe asked whether Weigelt could remain in Paris so as to give his opinion on these particular colonial projects. The French attach great importance to Herr Weigelt's presence there, and the French Ambassador in Berlin is said to have interested himself in the matter. Weigelt does not wish to remain in Paris without the consent of the Foreign Ministry.

After consultation with Herr Bielfeld (Pol. X)<sup>2</sup> I told Herr von Campe in reply that there could be no objection to Herr Weigelt's staying in Paris. Weigelt would, however, be able to express his opinion only as a private individual and not in any official capacity.

<sup>1</sup> Director of the Deutsche Bank.

<sup>2</sup> See appendix I, p. 718. He had previously been Commercial Counselor in London.

Herr von Campe replied that that was all that was involved and that Herr Weigelt was quite aware of it.

Herr Bielfeld has given as the opinion of Pol. X on this question that there are certain objections to Franco-German cooperation in the colonial sphere. France would be able to utilize this cooperation by referring to it in the event of German colonial demands being raised. Pol. X has particular objections to Franco-German cooperation in the mandated territories but fewer in the French colonial territories. As far as Herr Weigelt is concerned, he is in part pursuing private interests, among them his own.

Regarding Franco-German cooperation in the sphere of colonial economy, the following may be said on behalf of W II:<sup>3</sup>

A sudden tendency toward economic cooperation with Germany in the sphere of colonial economy has appeared in the last few days. The influence of Premier Daladier himself is said to be predominant. Franco-German syndicates in French colonial territories seem desirable in principle from a politico-economic point of view, since it is imperative for Germany to import colonial raw materials.

The French will certainly hope that Germany's hunger for colonial raw materials will thereby be satisfied to some extent and Germany's political requirements in the colonies be appeased. Perhaps the French also take into account their policy toward Italy in dealing with Germany's colonial syndicates. Since Germany is by no means abandoning her colonial claims because of these projects, however, and also declares herself in no way satisfied on colonial economic matters, the Franco-German colonial syndicates seem to be fundamentally in Germany's interests, now as before. Care must be taken that Pol. X's objection, particularly concerning the mandated territories, is taken into account and that Germany does not compromise herself as regards her colonial policy by cooperating. It might be necessary in a particular case to abandon a syndicate project in view of political considerations.

The Franco-German economic cooperation in Spain desired by the French might also be declined as a result of political considerations. There is no inducement to build up syndicates with the French in Spain, as Germany is economically and financially able to build up these enterprises alone. Germany would only do herself considerable harm politically if she helped to make the French case presentable in Spain once more.

KREUTZWALD

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<sup>3</sup> See appendix I, p. 718.

## No. 392

2485/517833-34

*Dr. Koppen of the Reich Federation of Industry to Counselor of  
Legation Campe*

BERLIN, March 2, 1939.  
zu W 495.

B 1994 III Dr. Ko./Rau

Reference your letter W 495 of February 22, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

DEAR HERR VON CAMPE: Because of my absence from Berlin I have unfortunately been unable to answer your letter of February 22<sup>1</sup> until today. I regret that, because of the prolongation of the British talks and a session of the Reich Chamber of Industry, I cannot come to Paris before the beginning of April at the earliest. I would like to suggest also that my visit be made as unofficial as possible and that at first I make contact only with the French Association of Industry. The Confédération Générale du Patronat Français, with Viscount de Lavergne and René Arnaud, has been the one to come forward at international conventions as being the leading association of French industry. I have known M. Arnaud personally for some years.

I must also tell you that, although we have made inquiries among the whole industrial organization, no requests worth mentioning for negotiations with French industry have yet reached us. Where Germany needed market agreements they have already been made and have in general proved satisfactory. We shall therefore not be able to contribute a great deal of material for Franco-German industrial discussions.

I look forward to hearing from you again when you have received word from French industrialists.

With best wishes,

Heil Hitler!

KOPPEN

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2485/517835). It suggested that Dr. Koppen should visit Paris about Mar. 20 to initiate the talks with the French authorities on industrial cooperation.

## No. 393

2468/517441-42

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 114 of March 3

PARIS, March 3, 1939.

Received March 3—9:45 p.m.

For Ministerialdirektor Wiehl.

1. Government and Association of Industry express approval of opening of preliminary industrial discussions by Koppen in Paris on March 22 and 23.

2. Discussion with Premier disclosed unanimous wish for closer cooperation on lines of government memoranda,<sup>1</sup> according to confidential information.

Without prejudice to further plans, the French will immediately bring forward some portion of their concrete proposals which are now ready for discussion on the Premier's express wish.

These refer to joint development of colonial projects about which we agreed in discussions with La Baume that initiative must rest with France alone. French will propose the following three projects for immediate execution:

- (1) Ore deposits at Conakry.<sup>2</sup>
- (2) Proposed umbrella-tree and cellulose factory project.
- (3) Project for joint exploitation of certain ores in Morocco.

Two further colonial schemes are in hand but are not yet ready for discussion.

Second group of concrete proposals concerns supplementary quotas for machine tools in exchange for sale of agricultural products to the value of 100 million francs to start with. Examination of our far-reaching proposal concerning this is said not to have been concluded; apparently very strong opposition is making itself felt in machine-tool industries concerned.

3. Proposals to be put forward are said to be framed in form of a written answer to German memorandum. This is likely to be handed over by Alphant himself in Berlin next week. Agreement lacking on Sudeten quotas is clearly the only obstacle still holding up his departure.

If at all possible, I recommend that some concrete proposals concerning Franco-German joint projects should also be made on our side to Alphant during his visit.

For information only: Alphant is clearly annoyed because, in his opinion, agreement in the Sudeten question was wrecked solely because of excessive obstinacy concerning unimportant matters by subordinate officials in the Reich Ministry of Economics. If this is correct, generous settlement of endless Sudeten negotiations is, in my opinion, advisable for psychological reasons in view of subsequent negotiations.

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 371, footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> A letter dated Mar. 2 to the Foreign Ministry (2468/517432-40) from Otto Wolff of Cologne reports confidentially that his firm had come to an agreement with the French Government regarding the exploitation of the iron-ore deposits of Conakry, in which American, British, and Belgian groups were also interested. Further details are contained in 2468/517445-50.

Certain sensitiveness is also noticeable here about the treatment of French proposals concerning the tourist agreement. After rejection by the Reich Ministry of Economics of the last proposal accepted by the Reichsbank, it is apparently to be feared that the French will withdraw all previous proposals based on appropriation of funds from sale profits and merely propose travelers' clearing arrangement for hotel associations, which would naturally have undesirable consequences for tourist traffic from France to Germany.

WELCZECK

No. 394

2490/517941

*Minute by the Head of Political Division IIIa*

BERLIN, March 7, 1939.

zu W II 1184.<sup>1</sup>

Reference III 2c on page 3 of the enclosure to report No. W 494 of February 21 from the German Embassy in Paris,<sup>2</sup> the following observations are made:

If the French are of the opinion "that Spain provides the best field for Franco-German cooperation, for whose recovery the cooperation of all the constructive resources in Europe is necessary," then this is completely understandable in view of the situation in which France finds herself as a result of her policy toward Nationalist Spain up to now. French policy has aroused very profound displeasure, often amounting to hatred, in the widest Spanish circles. The Spaniards know that French support for Red Spain has prolonged the war for a year and more and that the French are responsible for a large part of the losses of men and matériel which the Spaniards have had to suffer in this war. Our situation is just the opposite of that of the French. Nothing could be more acceptable to the French, therefore, than to appear in Spain arm-in-arm with us. We have not the slightest interest in easing the position of the French in Spain. Moreover, a joint appearance with them would discredit us and lead to difficulties. The Spaniards would find such a thing completely incomprehensible under present circumstances.

Resubmitted herewith to the Deputy Director of the Political Department for the Under State Secretary and W II.

SCHW[ENDEMANN]

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5220/E308321-25).

<sup>2</sup> The Embassy report is 5220/E308321-25, but the enclosure referred to is the same as that published in document No. 388.

## No. 395

487/517355

*Minute by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, March 8, 1939.

W II 1467.

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH COUNSELOR OF LEGATION VON CAMPE  
PARIS, MARCH 8, 1939, 12:30 P. M.

1. Alphand's visit has been given much publicity in the French press. At the same time Germany's plans for activities in the French colonies have also been discussed, and this has already stirred up the opponents of such action. He has tried to induce a little moderation, and I told him I had taken the same line here in Germany. Campe thinks, however, that Alphand, who wishes to appear as a sort of angel of peace in Berlin, should be allowed a certain amount of say in the following up of the December decision<sup>1</sup> and should be well treated.

2. Koppen had told him that he could not be in Paris on the 22nd and 23rd, but only at the beginning of April. In view of the Easter holidays, Campe thinks it necessary that Koppen should arrive in Paris not later than April 3 or 4, and asked to be informed by telegraph about this. Campe will not be in Paris from 11th to 22nd (Lyon).

SABATH

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 371.

## No. 396

2487/517354

*Minute by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, March 9, 1939.

## FRANCO-GERMAN COLONIAL PROJECTS

In view of yesterday's decision by the Economic Policy Committee, I informed Director Weigelt of the Deutsche Bank today that there were no objections to proceeding with the projects contained in his memorandum on the discussion in the Foreign Ministry on March 3. The railway project in the Cameroons remains an exception to this, as already discussed. Regarding project No. 4,<sup>1</sup> the prospecting for mineral deposits in Togo, Dahomey, the Cameroons, and French Equatorial Africa, there was the objection that great activity, research expeditions, etc., might attract undesirable attention. It is therefore

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<sup>1</sup> Weigelt's memorandum in its entirety has not been found, but project No. 4 is 5219/E308308-17.

advisable for us not to return to this project for the present but to wait and see whether the French resume discussions on the matter. In general terms I would point out that their character of purely private business enterprises should not be altered by the fact that these projects would be included in the report of the Government discussions on Franco-German economic cooperation. My statement that there are no objections to the continuation of discussions on these projects implies absolutely no participation in, guarantee of, or responsibility for, future financial obligations on the part of the Reich Government in these concerns. Herr Weigelt has taken note of this.

In answer to a recent inquiry by the Counselor of the French Embassy, Count de Montbas, I told him that I had ascertained that the German private individuals concerned also intended to continue discussions on the umbrella [tree] project.

WIEHL

### No. 397

2467/517351-53

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, March 10, 1939.

Today I resumed the French negotiations with M. Alphan and with him signed an agreement<sup>1</sup> on the inclusion of the Sudetenland in Franco-German economic agreements. Alphan will remain here for about another week in order to discuss further the conclusion of a tourist agreement, for which there have so far been few opportunities. He told me moreover that a memorandum with far-reaching proposals for the development of Franco-German economic cooperation would be handed over on Monday, as agreed on in Paris in December.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, the French deputy, Lucien Lamoureux, former Minister of Commerce (1934) and of Finance, and close collaborator with Bonnet and Daladier, visited me today. He came after visiting the Leipzig Fair and is returning to Paris this evening. According to his own account, he took a leading part in the recent vigorous activity of the French Government toward developing Franco-German economic cooperation. He is acquainted with the proposals which Alphan will hand over next week. The French Government shows thereby its urgent desire for far-reaching development of economic relations and hopes that, with a similar attitude on the part of the German Government, concrete results may soon be achieved. The

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 371.

proposals merely constitute a beginning. If this promises well, the French Government is also prepared to go considerably further. Joint projects to be carried out over a period of 3 or more years might also be contemplated, if only both Governments were convinced that it was not necessary to allow for unforeseen events which might hinder the carrying out of the projects during this period. In this connection he mentioned, for example, the Trans-Sahara Railway and the larger harbor works.

In the course of conversation he mentioned the following with particular emphasis, adding that he was authorized by M. Bonnet to communicate it:

The French Government, and particularly Daladier and Bonnet, regard the Franco-German Declaration of December 6<sup>3</sup> very seriously and not only as something to which lip-service was to be paid. It was their urgent desire to achieve not only a *détente* but friendly, even cordial, relations between the two countries.

In reply to M. Lamoureux I said that we also were definitely set on aiming at closer Franco-German economic cooperation and hoped similarly to achieve concrete results soon in the Franco-German exchange of goods and also in cooperation in definite schemes. Finally, I would report the gist of our conversation to the Foreign Minister.

Submitted herewith to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister.

WIEHL.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 369.

## No. 398

2490/517942-48

### *Note from the French Embassy*<sup>1</sup>

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, March 11, 1939.

W II 1594.

The French Government, desirous of assuring a better development of commercial relations between France and Germany and more effective economic collaboration between the two countries and prompted by the spirit of the joint declaration of December 6, 1938, has studied with the greatest attention the *aide-mémoire* presented by the German Government on January 15, 1939.<sup>2</sup>

Without further delay it desires to present to the Government of the Reich its first concrete proposals as follows:

I. The French Government is prepared to consider favorably an exchange of French products, principally agricultural, for German

<sup>1</sup> The note is in French in the original.

<sup>2</sup> Not found. See document No. 371, footnote 3.

products of equal value. This transaction would bear on the sale in Germany of French products such as: wines, seeds, casein, egg whites, horses, fruit, milk, essential oils, rice, vanilla, fats, tobacco, mine timbers, railroad ties, Gabon mahogany, and certain industrial products to be determined.

The corresponding deliveries contemplated at the present time could be the following:

	Approximate Value
(a) Purchase in Germany of synthetic nitrate . . . . .	50 million francs
<p>The Nitrate Syndicate, with the approval of the German Government, would pledge itself to furnish to the French Government, or to organizations designated by it, all of the imports of synthetic sodium nitrate, it being understood that this tonnage would amount to at least 50,000 tons.</p> <p>The French Government reserves the right either to maintain the <i>status quo</i> respecting equalization balances due, which are being paid at present by the importers, or to assure their collection by the governmental departments through the institution of a license tax of equivalent value. These provisions would be substituted for the agreement of December 27-28, 1931, between the Nitrate Syndicate and the French Nitrate Agency approved by both Governments.</p>	
(b) Supplementary orders of the French governmental departments, subject to satisfactory conditions of delivery and price. (Machine tools, various tools, scientific instruments, etc.) . . . . .	95 million francs
Total . . . . .	145 million francs

The receipts of foreign exchange resulting from these sales shall be carried in a special account. The available amounts shall be earmarked, over and above the maximum values fixed, for the purchase of French products. The two commissions shall draw up a procedure to this effect.

Since certain French orders, which may involve about 10 million francs, have an urgent character, the French Government would appreciate receiving a reply from the German Government as soon as possible so that the amounts involved in these orders may be earmarked for the contemplated operation.

II. The French Government, in reply to a suggestion of the German Embassy at Paris, declares itself to be in favor of opening conversations between the qualified representatives of the industries of the

two countries. These conversations will bear on all the questions of interest to these industries, namely:

(a) The study of the French and German markets and the possibility of increasing trade between the two countries.

(b) The adaptation to present circumstances of the existing industrial agreements and the extension of the agreements to new categories of products.

(c) The carrying out jointly of enterprises and large-scale projects in the French colonies and on the markets of third countries.

The first meeting between the representatives of the Reich Federation of Industry and persons to be designated by the French Government from among the heads of the General Federation of Employers and the Chamber of Commerce of Paris could take place in Paris during the second half of March. The program of future conversations between the two industries would be drawn up when these conversations are held.

These conversations must take place in the presence of the chairmen of the French and German governmental commissions.

In this connection, the French Government deems it desirable that exchange formulas or collaboration formulas be prepared for the carrying out of the following projects:

(a) Conakry iron mines: contract for participation with a German group with a view to operating the Conakry iron mine.

(b) Preparation of projects relating to the joint exploitation of umbrella trees for the production of pulp for paper making.

(c) Carrying out of a plan to obtain German supplies for operating the Imini manganese mine in Morocco.

(d) Conclusion of a contract for collaboration between the Société Française de Châtillon Commentry and the Vereinigte Stahlwerke for the supplying by Germany of 10 million francs' worth of machines and tools for equipping the Halouze (Orne) iron mine, in exchange for deliveries, spaced over 2½ years, of 300,000 tons of iron ore.

(e) Joint exploitation of patents and industrial processes.

III. The French Government is disposed to proceed as soon as possible, in agreement with the German Government, with the study of means suitable for assuring a better utilization of the quotas opened by France to Germany. It recalls in this connection that the value of the industrial quotas allotted in 1938 by France to Germany amounted to 825 million francs and that only 552 million francs' worth was used.

IV. Agreement respecting travel. The French Government deems it desirable that an agreement respecting travel, based on the compensation of the expenses of French tourists in Germany against those of German tourists in France, be concluded as soon as possible.

By virtue of the provisions of the standstill agreements, which will remain in force until May 31, the proceeds in francs of travel marks sold to French nationals wishing to sojourn in Germany are earmarked for the settlement of certain foreign bank balances. The French banks are no longer affected by these provisions.

Under these circumstances the French Government desires that, beginning May 31, the amounts paid in francs by French tourists to acquire marks no longer be used for the settlement of the foreign claims but that they be reserved for German tourists to meet their expenses in France, on the following bases :

The principle to be adopted would be that a German tourist coming to France should have at his disposal a sum in francs representing approximately the same buying power as the sum in marks which a French tourist has at his disposal when he goes to Germany.

To that end, German tourists who wish to go to France would pay to a travel agency to be designated a sum in marks for which they would be furnished hotel and service certificates giving them the right to services in France equivalent to those obtained in Germany for French tourists.

These marks would be placed at the disposition of French nationals desirous of going to Germany at a rate corresponding to the rate of the travel mark as it appears in the daily quotations on foreign markets.

The settlement between travel in Germany and in France would thus be effected at par.

The French tourist organizations would conclude a technical agreement with similar German agencies.

These different proposals constitute only the first stage in a series of more active exchanges between the two countries. But the carrying out of this initial program will be able to serve as an example in the future for the conclusion of new transactions.

The French Government hopes that the negotiations which will be opened, both between the official governmental agencies of the two countries and between industrialists under governmental supervision, will permit the establishment of a basis for an extensive collaboration favoring the economy of both countries.

CHAPTER IV  
GERMANY AND ITALY  
OCTOBER 1938-MARCH 1939

No. 399

2058/447836-38

*Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy  
Department*

BERLIN, October 26, 1938.

THE STATE OF GERMAN-ITALIAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS

1. German-Italian economic relations have developed along entirely satisfactory lines during recent years. Trade is constantly increasing. German exports to Italy have risen in a few years from 220 million reichsmarks to 310 million reichsmarks and will probably reach the figure of nearly 350 million in 1938.

It is, however, regrettable that the Italian Government is constantly endeavoring to obtain an increase in supplies of raw materials from Germany (coal) at the expense of German exports of manufactured articles.

2. The winding up of the agreements on the inclusion of Austria in German-Italian trading which were signed with Italy by the Reich Foreign Minister on May 28, 1938,<sup>1</sup> has progressed favorably in the main. It is only with regard to the settlement of certain transfers of Italian property from Austria that the Italians have made complaints in individual cases. In these cases we have endeavored to come to a suitable arrangement.

3. Negotiations are already taking place on the incorporation of the Sudeten-German territory in German-Italian trading. It may be assumed that an agreement to this effect will be concluded in a very short time.

4. Field Marshal Göring attaches special importance to acquiring Italian interests in the Styrian Electricity Company (Steveag) and in the Danube Steam Navigation Company because both undertakings have been allotted special tasks within the framework of the Four

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. I, document No. 773.

Year Plan, tasks which could hardly be carried out without foreign participation.

The Italians are putting great difficulties in the way of the sale of their interests by demanding what is undoubtedly an unjustifiably high price and the payment of this price in free exchange and not through clearing.

5. For a long time negotiations have been pending with the Italian Government on the settlement of the ownership and finances of the former Austrian Southern Railway Company,<sup>2</sup> now called the Danube-Sava-Adriatic Railway Company. The next negotiations on this question will be conducted by State Secretary Kleinmann<sup>3</sup> and me in Rome, November 16-20.

6. The secret German-Italian discussions on economic cooperation in the event of war are being continued regularly and have led to agreements concerning mutual assistance in the provision of important products and raw materials. The transport question is particularly difficult in this connection because the railways on both sides of the frontier are not in a position to cope with anything like the vital traffic if the sea route should be blockaded.<sup>4</sup>

7. The next meeting of the German-Italian Government commission to settle mutual economic relations begins on December 1 in Rome. The program for economic and financial transactions in 1938 [1939?] will be agreed on at this meeting. All other current questions will be discussed and in particular the above-mentioned points.

CLODIUS

<sup>2</sup> See vol. II, document No. 193 and footnote 58.

<sup>3</sup> Wilhelm Kleinmann, State Secretary in the Reich Ministry of Transport.

<sup>4</sup> On Oct. 24 a meeting took place at Munich between German and Italian railway-traffic experts to coordinate plans for this eventuality. See document No. 451, footnote 3.

## No. 400

F17/370-378

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

ROME, October 28, 1938.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER, HERR VON RIBBENTROP, AND THE ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, COUNT CIANO, IN ROME ON OCTOBER 28, 1938<sup>1</sup>

Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop stated that he had instructions from the Führer to discuss in Rome the conclusion of a purely

<sup>1</sup> Ribbentrop was in Rome Oct. 27-29, 1938. For the Italian account of this conversation, see Ciano's *L'Europa verso la catastrofe* (Milan, 1948), pp. 370-372. In the same volume, pp. 373-378, there appears an account of a conversation later the same day between Mussolini, Ciano, and Ribbentrop. No German record of the latter conversation has been found. Mario Toscano's *Le origini del Patto d'Acciaio* (Florence, 1948) contains much material from the Italian archives.

defensive alliance between Italy, Germany, and Japan. This defensive alliance against unprovoked aggression also harked back, among other things, to a Japanese suggestion and was moreover based on the Führer's view that an armed conflict with the Western democracies must be regarded as being within the bounds of possibility in 4 to 5 years' time. It was therefore the business of Italy and Germany to prepare for this conflict here and now. It was well known that Britain and France had concluded detailed military agreements with each other in the event of a conflict, and in order to counterbalance this Britain-France-Russia combination of power and the ties<sup>2</sup> prevailing between these countries, it was desirable also to establish a closer relationship between Germany, Italy, and Japan. This was possible by means of a skeleton treaty between the three countries, on the basis of which all technical, military, economic, and other agreements could then be reached in further separate negotiations. An initial version of this skeleton treaty had already been handed to Italy at Munich. He [Ribbentrop] was now able to submit a slightly altered version.

The intention of concluding a tripartite defensive treaty of this kind had already existed on the German side for some time. Until now however the Führer had wished to refrain from carrying this out for two reasons:

First, because of the possible repercussions that publication of the conclusion of such a treaty would have in Britain and France; Germany feared that the position of Chamberlain and Daladier might be jeopardized and that Britain and France would be driven to rearm at an increased rate.

Second, the plan for an alliance had so far been delayed on the German side for fear of repercussions in America.

Since the latest crisis with Czechoslovakia, the position was, however, seen in a different light. It had become apparent on one hand that the position of Britain, France, and above all of Russia was extremely weak. On the other hand, the position of Chamberlain and Daladier could be regarded as so strongly entrenched that these two statesmen had nothing to fear from the possible repercussions of the conclusion of a tripartite alliance between Italy, Japan, and Germany. Rearmament had been speeded up so much in the two countries, particularly since Munich, that even in the event of the tripartite alliance's being concluded, a further increase in armament production would scarcely be possible.

With reference to America the Reich Foreign Minister stated that the recent crisis had revealed clearly the strength of the isolationists there, so that in the future, too, there would be nothing to fear from America, who certainly had no direct points of difference with

<sup>2</sup> *Bedingungen*; probably should read *Bindungen*.

Germany and Italy; on the contrary, Japan's participation in the alliance would lead rather to a further strengthening of isolationist tendencies. Moreover, Jewish propaganda in America directed against Germany and Italy was strong only in the eastern part, while it was dwindling more and more in the western part of the United States. It was precisely this western part of the United States of America which exerted a dominating influence on foreign policy.

This disposed of the misgivings which had existed on the German side against the conclusion of a tripartite pact. On the other hand, in view of the powerful armaments of the Western democracies and the possibility of a conflict, the moment had now come when a tripartite pact might be concluded with advantage. Conditions in Japan itself would also have to be taken into consideration. There was a very strong party there advocating a peaceful settlement of all possible differences with Britain, because it was of the opinion that Japan would in the immediate future be satiated after the conquest of China and would need capital and a period of rest in order to develop the conquered territories. This party was quite influential and also had strong contacts with the Japanese Court. The opportunity should therefore be seized when Japan herself suggested a treaty, because it was possible that such an opportunity would not occur again very soon if the influence of the aforementioned party increased.

In reply to a further detailed exposition of the present European situation by the Reich Foreign Minister, demonstrating the necessity for concluding a tripartite treaty of this nature, Count Ciano said that it doubtless involved an important question which he would submit to the Duce, who would express an opinion that afternoon after examining the text proposed by Germany.

Moreover, he pointed out that some weeks ago the Prince of Hesse, on a personal mission from the Führer to the Duce, had proposed to the latter a four-power pact providing for a conference of the four Powers in case of danger,<sup>3</sup> such as recently occurred at Munich. The Duce had approved in principle but had added that Italy could not enter more closely into such a plan in practice until her relations with Britain were settled and had further suggested that Poland, too, might be invited to accede to this pact.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop replied that in his view there was some misunderstanding here. The plan for a four-power pact had emanated from French Ambassador François-Poncet in connection with a joint guarantee of the neutrality of Belgium, which had proved incidentally to be extremely difficult to arrange for technical and legal reasons and had therefore been dropped by the French. In this matter François-Poncet had stated that if the four Powers were to guarantee

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 337.

Belgian neutrality perhaps a four-power pact might develop from this at a later date.<sup>4</sup>

He, François-Poncet, had furthermore suggested a Franco-German declaration which would in some respects form a parallel to the Anglo-German Declaration proposed to the Führer by Chamberlain the day after the conclusion of the Munich Agreement. This was a point which he, the Reich Minister, would examine still more closely in the further course of the Rome discussions. The Reich Foreign Minister hereupon read the essential passages of the Franco-German draft declaration.<sup>5</sup>

With reference to Spain Count Ciano said in reply to a question from the Reich Foreign Minister that Italy did not intend to support Franco with troops any longer. Like Germany she had been asked by Franco for assistance with war matériel. Italy was willing to supply the armaments for several divisions. Franco, whom Ciano described as completely second rate, certainly had missed another opportunity recently to gain a great victory on the field of battle but would none the less win the war in the end. In any case the Reds could no longer accomplish anything against Franco. In these circumstances Italy had been able to decide on withdrawing 10,000 volunteers. She had maintained on the whole 40,000 volunteers in Spain, at certain times even as many as 56,000 men. The losses in dead and wounded had amounted to 12,000 so, after the withdrawal of the 10,000 volunteers recently brought back from Spain, about 30,000 remained there. Also, out of consideration for Britain, Italy could not think of resuming the dispatch of volunteers. Britain had perceived that her original fears that Italy would establish herself on Spanish territory had been groundless. Thus the British Government might now be prepared to allow the Anglo-Italian Agreement to come into force.

Here Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop interjected that he had received information that the British Cabinet had just reached a decision to this effect.

Count Ciano replied that the matter would naturally still have to be debated in the British Parliament but that in Rome they were counting on the Anglo-Italian Agreement's coming into force in the middle of November.<sup>6</sup>

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop asked whether Italy had been promised any tangible guarantees by Franco in the form of naval bases.

Ciano replied that any cession of territory was naturally impossible for the time being but that in the event of war Franco had promised

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<sup>4</sup> See documents Nos. 340 and 341.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 346.

<sup>6</sup> It was originally signed on Apr. 16 but did not come into force until Nov. 16. See documents Nos. 404 and 409.

them a certain freedom of action in several ports and furthermore had also promised to join the Italo-German system when peace was concluded.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop expressed misgivings as to whether Franco, whose personal position was already none too secure while hostilities were still continuing, would, when peace was concluded, be able to withstand the numerous influences in Spain whose aspirations ran counter to the interests of Germany and Italy.

It was typical of Spain's attitude that during the Czech conflict she immediately approached the Western powers with an offer of neutrality.

Ciano replied that in Spain conditions would after all, in keeping with the national character, always be somewhat confused but that Franco had given sufficient assurances of his intention of joining the Italo-German system. Furthermore, he expressed the opinion that the Spanish War had been won at Munich, for the defeat which Prague had suffered in Munich would prove to be a defeat for Barcelona and the Reds in general, especially if one took into account the fact that the Reds had given a sorry display in China.

The conversation then turned to the Hungarian-Slovak dispute. Count Ciano stated that the Duce attached great importance to effecting an arbitral award in the matter by Germany and Italy, on the basis of which, of the five towns demanded by Hungary, Pozsony<sup>7</sup> and Nyitra should be left to Slovakia, while the remaining three, Kaschau, Munkács, and Ungvár, were to be allotted to Hungary.<sup>8</sup> The Duce had for many years espoused the cause of revision for Hungary and would now be obliged to take some action in this matter. He, Ciano, drew attention to a note handed over by Lord Perth yesterday in which the British stated that they were in favor of German-Italian arbitration in the Slovak matter and only envisaged fresh action by the four Powers in the event of German-Italian efforts not meeting with success. The great advantage of German-Italian arbitration, Count Ciano went on to explain, would be its psychological effect on the other Balkan countries. It would thus be clearly demonstrated to them that Britain and France had finally vanished from the Balkan scene, and the wind would, to a considerable extent, be taken out of the sails of those circles in Yugoslavia and other countries who still looked to France and Britain.

To assist in understanding the German point of view the Reich Foreign Minister gave a detailed description of Hungary's attitude, especially in recent months. He referred above all to the fact that the conclusion of the Bled Agreement<sup>9</sup> at the very time of Horthy's visit

<sup>7</sup> Pressburg.

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 99, part iv.

<sup>9</sup> Aug. 23. See vol. II, document No. 383, footnote 44.

to Germany<sup>10</sup> was regarded as a stab in the back. In the further course of events, too, the Hungarians were in constant fear of possible intervention by the Western powers and had refrained from any kind of energetic measures. There were also discrepancies between the demands which were put forward by Darányi on the occasion of his visit to Munich,<sup>11</sup> and which were marked on a map, and those requests with which Hungary had approached Italy. For all these reasons the Führer had been very reserved regarding the idea of arbitration. Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop however recognized for his part the psychological advantage in the Balkan countries mentioned by Ciano and would discuss the matter with the Führer once again.

With the aid of the available map, several details of frontier demarcation were discussed with particular reference to the aforementioned towns; and it was suggested on the Italian side that the two Foreign Ministers should meet again during the next week, in Vienna or Venice, with a view to making a final arbitral award.

The Reich Foreign Minister still expressed his misgivings regarding the cession of the Slovak and Carpatho-Ukraine towns. During his visit Dr. Tiso had told him that if possible Slovakia would make herself completely independent.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, in the event of Slovakia's not accepting the arbitral award, Germany and Italy might be faced with the necessity of enforcing this arbitration by their armed forces, which would cause difficulties at this season of the year.

Count Ciano replied that he did not think it probable that Slovakia would make herself independent, since the Slovaks knew quite well that in this event the Poles would march in. Both parties, not only the Czechoslovaks but also the Hungarians, had already accepted the arbitration procedure by Italy and Germany and, therefore, only the award was needed to settle the matter.

Submitted herewith to the Foreign Minister in accordance with instructions.<sup>13</sup>

SCHMIDT, *Minister*

<sup>10</sup> Aug. 21-26.

<sup>11</sup> On Oct. 14; see document No. 62.

<sup>12</sup> See documents Nos. 72 and 73.

<sup>13</sup> Marginal note: "Not yet final and not yet submitted to RM. Draft. Schmidt"

## No. 401

100/64386-87

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen*<sup>1</sup>

PERSONAL

BERLIN, November 3, 1938.

DEAR FRIEND: As you have just been in Vienna, you are certainly well-informed as regards current problems. However, I feel obliged

<sup>1</sup> This letter is in Weizsäcker's handwriting.

to correct what was perhaps a not sufficiently accurate expression which, to the best of my knowledge, I used in correspondence with you. I believe I wrote to you saying that "Munich" was both the beginning and the end. This is certainly the case according to the prevailing mood. Nevertheless, I think it is conceivable that in the course of time certain financial and economic circumstances might lead to a reduction in the tempo of our rearmament. Consequently, in my opinion, the need might again arise to make a virtue of necessity vis-à-vis England.<sup>2</sup>

Yours sincerely,  
WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "Settled in oral exchange of views in Santa Marella on December 25, 1938. M[ackensen]"

No. 402

2129/464838-39

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

ROME, November 5, 1938.

No. 291 of November 5

For the State Secretary.

The Military Attaché, Colonel von Rintelen, informs me that, on instructions from his superiors, he is again to give a purely dilatory answer to General Pariani,<sup>1</sup> thus again in Pariani's view a negative one, on the question of German-Italian General Staff talks raised by Pariani. In view of the great importance which General Pariani attaches to the conversations (he described the failure to conduct them during the days of crisis as palpable omission and a voluntary curtailment of the prospects of success), such a reply would, I am convinced, be interpreted by him as proof of German mistrust of Italy, which he and the circles close to him definitely suppose to exist. I therefore feel bound to suggest that the question whether the intended reply is expedient should at once be reconsidered by the Reich Foreign Minister. Judging from my impressions of his conversations here and in Vienna, I do not believe that the reply proposed now is in accordance with the course which he plans to have pursued in the further development of German-Italian relations.

I request telegraphic instructions, since General Pariani will receive the Military Attaché at the beginning of next week for the first time since his return from Berlin and will doubtless broach the subject.

MACKENSEN

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. Alberto Pariani, Under Secretary of State for War, 1936-39; Commander in Chief 1939.

## No. 403

2529/520225

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, November 7, 1938.

I informed Captain Bürkner of OKW today by telephone of our intention to call Herr von Mackensen and request him to persuade Colonel von Rintelen to avoid an interview with Pariani today on the subject of the German-Italian military agreements.

Herr Bürkner then told me that, in the meantime, Admiral Canaris<sup>1</sup> had arrived in Rome, where Colonel von Rintelen had spoken to him yesterday and this morning along the lines of Rome Embassy telegram No. 291.<sup>2</sup> Admiral Canaris asked that he should be informed by telephone.

During this conversation, Admiral Canaris gave an account of his talks with Colonel von Rintelen and Ambassador von Mackensen on this affair and offered on his part to instruct Colonel von Rintelen by telephone to reply to Pariani that we accepted the Italian proposals in principle but reserved our decision as to the time and place for negotiations. An answer such as this was favorable in substance yet left the door open for all eventualities. I reserved this for the decision of the Foreign Minister.

At my request Herr Kordt subsequently laid the matter before the Foreign Minister, who expressed his agreement with the formula of Admiral Canaris.

I informed Admiral Canaris of this at 6 p.m.

WOERMANN

<sup>1</sup> Admiral Wilhelm Canaris joined the Secret Intelligence Branch of the Reichswehr in 1934 and later became head of the intelligence Service of the OKW

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 402.

## No. 404

109/115059

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

ROME (QUIRINAL), November 7, 1938—8:45 p.m.

No. 295 of November 7

Received November 8—12:40 a.m.

On the occasion of my visit today in connection with another matter, Ciano told me that he had agreed with the British Ambassador, who had left him just before my visit, to put the April agreement into force on November 16. On the morning of that day Lord Perth will present the recognition of the Empire by delivering a new letter of credence made out in appropriate terms; according to the protocol

prevailing here, he will, however, not do this in a solemn audience of the King but by delivery of the letter in the Foreign Ministry without any formalities.

MACKENSEN

No. 405

2529/520224

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

TELEPHONE MESSAGE FROM NUREMBERG AT 10:25 A.M.  
ON NOVEMBER 8, 1938

Following my oral report of November 6, the Führer has agreed that the cultural agreement with Italy should be signed at the earliest possible moment.<sup>1</sup> Since, as Ambassador von Mackensen informed the Foreign Minister, there is danger that the wrong assumption spread abroad regarding Minister Rust's<sup>2</sup> refusal to make the journey (namely, the non-Aryan origin of Bottai, Italian Minister of Education) has become known in Italy, the Führer has agreed that the signing of the agreement should be given considerable prominence. The cooperation between Ambassador von Mackensen and Minister Bottai is to be emphasized.

HEWEL

<sup>1</sup> A Foreign Ministry minute of Nov. 10 (2529/520244-50) gives a summary of this agreement, which was mainly concerned with educational matters, such as the teaching of Italian in German schools and *vice versa*.

<sup>2</sup> Bernhard Rust, Reich Minister of Education, 1934-45.

No. 406

2129/464840-41

*Memorandum by the Ambassador in Italy*

ROME, November 8, 1938.

Yesterday evening during my telephone conversation with Prince Bismarck on other matters I asked him whether any decision had yet been reached on the question about which I had called State Secretary von Weizsäcker that morning.<sup>1</sup> Prince Bismarck replied that, as far as he was aware, Under State Secretary Woermann had received instructions to telephone me. I replied that no such call had yet been received and asked whether Prince Bismarck himself had any knowledge of what Herr Woermann was to have communicated to me. Prince Bismarck explained that he was not authorized to give me any official information. As far as he knew, Herr Woermann was

<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 402 and 403.

to have informed me that "Colonel von Rintelen was not to carry out the instructions." I replied that this information was incomprehensible to me since the instructions requested by us simply had not arrived. Thereupon Prince Bismarck expressed the opinion that, as he conceived the matter, the tendency was toward dilatory treatment of the matter despite our representations. In conclusion, I told Prince Bismarck that the decision lay solely with Berlin but that I attached decisive importance to note being taken in Berlin of the fact that both the Military Attaché and I had drawn attention to the inevitable consequences which in our view would result from further dilatory—thus negative in the eyes of the Italians—treatment of the question. Moreover, the matter was now pointless as Colonel von Rintelen was already on the way to the conversation with the other party.

Somewhat later Colonel von Rintelen informed me that he had meanwhile received instructions through Admiral Canaris to give a favorable answer but to reserve the decision as to the place and time, and he added that he had been told at the same time that this communication to him was also to be regarded as a communication from Herr Woermann to me in answer to my question to Herr von Weizsäcker.

MACKENSEN

### No. 407

F17/388-387

#### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM No. 258

BERLIN, November 18, 1938.

Ambassador Attolico called on me today at 6 p.m. He began by informing me that François-Poncet had had a cool reception in Rome. It was true that Ciano wanted to arrive at a compromise with France in principle, but this was impossible as long as the Spanish question remained acute. The entry into force of the Anglo-Italian Agreement of April 16, 1938, had also been received in Italy with cool reserve. This agreement was only a liquidation of past events. Whatever else happened, the Anglo-Italian Agreement would in no way affect the policy of the Axis or the policy of the Anti-Communist Triangle.

Mussolini has just instructed his son to refuse an invitation from Lord Hardwicke<sup>1</sup> to visit him in England, because Hardwicke had criticized the German treatment of the Jews in a letter to a British newspaper.

Ambassador Attolico then brought up the case of Prince Frasso,<sup>2</sup> whose estate on the German-Czech frontier was divided by the new

<sup>1</sup> Philip Yorke, Earl of Hardwicke.

<sup>2</sup> Luigi, Count Dentice, Prince di Frasso, who owned the estate of Kravska in Moravia.

frontier delimitation and whose earnest wish it was to be included, together with all his property, within the German Reich.

I promised Ambassador Attolico to give the question favorable consideration and have instructed Counselor of Legation Altenburg to speak to the Czech delegation in that sense.

Ambassador Attolico mentioned further that, according to information which he had received, the writings of Marshal Balbo<sup>3</sup> had been suppressed in Germany, as he was considered to be half Jewish. He had already spoken about this matter to Rust, Reich Minister of Education.

I promised the Italian Ambassador to look into the matter.

Finally the Italian Ambassador handed me a short memorandum, attached in the annex, relating to an observation allegedly uttered on Tuesday evening in Cologne by Gauleiter Streicher<sup>4</sup> who, quoting an Italian official source, maintained that the Pope was half Jewish. He did not think that such information could originate from an Italian source. He would be grateful if such utterances, which placed the Italian Government in a difficult position, could be avoided.

I stated to Ambassador Attolico that I knew nothing of any such utterance by the Gauleiter but that I would set inquiries on foot.

R[IBBENTROP]

[Enclosure]

F17/389

BERLIN, November 18, 1938.

According to reports received from Cologne, the Gauleiter of Franconia, Julius Streicher, delivered a lecture Tuesday evening on Semitism, in which he stated that he had received information from an official Italian source concerning the ancestry of the Pope.

According to this information the Pope is stated, on the basis of research carried out, to be half Jewish. The Gauleiter added that he would in the near future give documentary evidence of this and closed his lecture by saying that such a fact explained the sympathy which the Pope showed for the Jews and showed that the Duce's task was more difficult than that of Hitler in view of the Catholic sentiments of the Italian people, who must decide whether they will espouse the cause of a Pope who is half Jewish or of the Duce of Fascism.

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<sup>3</sup> Italo Balbo, Air Marshal and member of the Fascist Grand Council; Governor of Libya, 1933-41.

<sup>4</sup> Julius Streicher, editor of *Der Stürmer*, 1923-45; Gauleiter of Franconia, 1925-40.

## No. 408

F14/271-72

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 263

BERLIN, November 28, 1938.

1. The Italian Ambassador called on me today and mentioned in the course of the conversation that Hungary had approached his Government in Rome regarding the question of the guarantee of the Czech frontier, in accordance with the Munich Agreement. Signor Attolico asked me what our attitude was in this matter. I replied that, as matters stood, from all appearances Britain wished to steer clear of this affair as far as possible; France too was striving . . . [three lines of text accidentally obliterated]. I would discuss this with the Czech Foreign Minister, who intended to call on me shortly. The announcement of a German guarantee declaration naturally depended entirely on whether the Czech Government would radically change its whole policy.

To this Attolico answered that he would inform Rome of the trend of our conversation today and would advise his Government to deal with the question at present in a dilatory manner.

2. I informed Attolico, insofar as this seemed to me opportune, in broad outline concerning the trend of the conversation between the Führer and King Carol in Berchtesgaden.<sup>1</sup>

3. I went on to mention to Attolico that Hungary had approached us with the suggestion that she should accede to the Anti-Comintern Pact. To this I had instructed that a reply be sent to the Hungarians that I personally was in favor of this idea in principle but at the same time also put the question to the Hungarians whether they now intended to leave the League of Nations. I asked Signor Attolico to inform Ciano accordingly and to add that I thought that Germany and Italy should, if possible, give the Hungarians an affirmative answer on the same day. Furthermore, I would previously inform the Japanese Government also of the Hungarian move and my attitude toward it. On receiving an answer from Tokyo I would inform him of the result.

R[IBBENTROP]

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<sup>1</sup> King Carol paid a private visit to Hitler at Berchtesgaden on Nov. 24, 1938. He was accompanied by his son, Crown Prince Michael. Ribbentrop took part in the conversations. See vol. v of this series.

## No. 409

2441/514637-39

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

7432

ROME, November 28, 1938.

Received December 1.

Pol. IV 8925.

## POLITICAL REPORT

With reference to my report 1808 of April 18.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Entry into force of the Anglo-Italian Agreement of April 16, 1938.

On the 16th the British Ambassador, Lord Perth, called on the Foreign Minister, Count Ciano, and informed him officially that the British Government had decided to recognize Italian sovereignty over Ethiopia. At the same time the Ambassador handed him a new letter of credence bearing the style "To the King of Italy, Emperor of Abyssinia." On the afternoon of the same day Count Ciano and Lord Perth signed a joint declaration, by virtue of which the treaty instrument of April 16 entered into force.<sup>2</sup> The Egyptian Chargé d'Affaires was informed by identic notes that the declarations affecting Lake Tsana and the Suez Canal had entered into force. On the occasion of the entry into force of the agreement an exchange of cordial telegrams took place between Mussolini and Chamberlain.<sup>3</sup> The Foreign Ministry has learned from the press of the Anglo-Italian Agreement, as well as of the exchange of telegrams. I enclose for your records clippings from the *Messaggero* of the 17th and 18th, giving the Italian text.<sup>4</sup>

The declaration of the 16th has put an end to a situation which for more than half a year has impaired the relations between Britain and Italy. At the time when the Anglo-Italian Agreement was signed, people in Italy, and no doubt in Britain too, expected much of it. At that juncture it brought to an end a period which, in the opinion of many during the past 2 years, threatened at times to disturb the peace of Europe. But the hoped-for psychological effect was conditional upon the agreement's entering into force soon. The moment was to be fixed jointly by both Governments; yet months passed without this taking place. Italy reduced the number of her troops in

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (3235/700735-41).

<sup>2</sup> The declaration and annexed agreements and declarations were published as Cmd. No. 5923 (Treaty Series, No. 6) of 1939.

<sup>3</sup> See *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Third Series, vol. III, No. 456.

<sup>4</sup> Not reprinted.

Libya, stopped her Arab propaganda which had caused displeasure to Britain, and accepted the British proposal in the Non-Intervention Committee for the withdrawal of the volunteers in Spain. In spite of this conciliatory attitude on the part of Italy, Britain did not find herself in a position to recognize the Italian Empire, because the Spanish question was not yet satisfactorily "settled." The entry into force of the agreement depended, however, upon these two conditions, recognition of the Empire and "settlement" of the Spanish question. What followed was a very clear answer given by the Italian Government to British proposals for a solution, all of which were rejected by Italy. In the course of a conversation with me at the beginning of July, Count Ciano expressed a most pessimistic opinion about the prospects of the agreement and described the situation as grave. Again further weeks passed without any progress being made. Then at the beginning of October Mussolini decided to withdraw 10,000 men from Spain. Their transport home was carried out. And, even if the Duce expressly rejected the idea of any connection between these measures and the question of the entry into force of the April agreement, this gesture none the less supplied the British Government with the basis for justifying to British public opinion the present implementation of the agreement.

If during the period of uncertainty there existed on the Italian side a tendency to maintain outwardly an attitude of indifference toward the fate of the agreement, it is probable that in the first instance tactical considerations determined the adoption of this attitude. In point of fact, Italy attached very great importance to the entry into force of the agreement. This is already clear from the general satisfaction aroused here by what is now an accomplished fact. People are glad that an unhappy chapter in the relations between Italy and Britain is closed and that relations with Britain have now been restored to their presanctions position on the basis of complete recognition of Italy's status as a world power.

From a material point of view, the immediate effects will not be of great importance, and—apart from Italy's accession to the naval treaty of 1936—will probably not for the present go beyond the settlement of frontier questions in East Africa. In the light of public opinion, however, the importance of November 16 to the relations between Italy and Britain cannot be denied. Britain's stock stands high at the moment, whereas relations between Rome and Paris vacillate around the freezing point. In our relations with London and Paris, so far as can be judged here, the opposite is the case. This disparity deserves attention, even if Mussolini—I myself have no doubt about it—still considers the Rome-Berlin Axis as the immutable foundation of Italy's foreign policy.

## No. 410

109/115080

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 312 of November 28

ROME, November 28, 1938—10:35 p.m.

Received November 29—1:50 a.m.

Ciano requested me to visit him this evening and, with reference to the indiscretion in the British newspapers,<sup>1</sup> gave me the following information for my Government on the forthcoming visit of Chamberlain to Italy:

The Duce had spoken to Chamberlain at Munich about the possibility of a visit to Rome. (Ciano used the expression *accenno*.) Perth, after the entry into force of the Anglo-Italian Agreement, had now on Chamberlain's instructions returned to the idea and the following had been arranged. The Duce, without saying anything about it to the British, had had February or March [1939] in mind. Chamberlain had now proposed the first half of January and Mussolini had expressed his agreement. Ciano gave January 10 as the date. Chamberlain would pay the visit to Rome in person and would be accompanied by Halifax.

MACKENSEN

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<sup>1</sup> See *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Third Series, vol. III,

## No. 411

F19/342-46

*General Keitel to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop*

BERLIN, November 30, 1938.

MY DEAR MINISTER: I enclose a memorandum, "Notes for Wehrmacht Discussions with Italy," which was drawn up by the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht by order of the Führer and in accordance with his detailed instructions.

If you will please look through the memorandum, I shall gladly hold myself in readiness for a consultation. At the same time we should also have to decide on the arrangements to be made for the first contact with the Italians in this connection.

Heil Hitler!

Yours sincerely,  
 KEITEL

[Enclosure]

CHEFSACHE

BERLIN, November 26, 1938.

WRITTEN BY OFFICER

W. F. A. (L)

No. 239/38 g Kdos.

## NOTES FOR WEHRMACHT DISCUSSIONS WITH ITALY

1. *Nature of Negotiations*

Negotiations will be initiated by the Reich Foreign Minister in conjunction with the Chief of Staff of OKW. The further negotiations to be conducted by the Wehrmacht departments except in the case of questions which are being dealt with by the OKW [text illegible] in OKW (cf. paragraph 5).

2. *Basic Principle of the Negotiations*

No local joint warfare under unified command but allocation of special tasks and theaters of war for each state, within which areas it will act independently.

3. *Military-Political Basis for the Negotiations*

War by Germany and Italy against France and Britain, with the object first of knocking out France. That would also hit Britain, as she would lose her bases for carrying on the war on the Continent and would then find the whole power of Germany and Italy directed against herself alone.

Combined with:

Strict neutrality of Switzerland, Belgium, and Holland.

Benevolent neutrality toward Germany and Italy: Hungary and Spain.

Doubtful attitude: Balkans and Poland.

Hostile attitude toward Germany and Italy: Russia.

The non-European powers can be left out of the picture at the beginning.

4. *Outline of Allocation of Tasks*

## (a) GERMANY

General. Concentrate all land, sea, and air forces on the western front.

By strict observance of Belgian and Dutch neutrality the extension of this front would be prevented and the enemy probably also compelled to observe the neutrality of those countries.

War on Land. Concentrated German attack against France between the Moselle and the Rhine in a southwesterly direction, the eastern flank on the western escarpment of the Vosges.

(Break-through of Maginot Line perfectly possible. Proved by experimental bombardment of the Czech fortifications, which are modeled on the Maginot Line. We have available the most modern means of attack and long-range artillery with armored protection within our own fortifications. Reasons for this opinion will be given orally in greater detail.)

War at Sea. Action against the British and French sea communications in the North Sea and the Atlantic. Details as to the definition of the limits of naval theaters of war and questions of mutual assistance (supplementing of fuel and equipment, dockyards, etc.) will be matters for decision in the discussions between the two navies.

War in the Air. Simultaneous offensive air warfare against Britain and northern France. Cutting off of British sea communications in collaboration with the Navy.

(b) ITALY

General. Maintenance of Balkan neutrality (common supply base), increase of pressure on Spain, occupation of Balearic Islands (no passage for troops or aircraft by France). Threaten British and French spheres of influence in North Africa, Egypt, Palestine, and the East. Active encouragement of the insurgent movement in Morocco. By a concentration of all these means, to disperse the British naval and air war effort.

War on Land. Tying down of largest possible French forces on the Italian Alpine front.

Prevention of threat to Germany on her eastern and southeastern frontier by sending Italian forces (in conjunction with Hungarian forces) against Poland, if the latter adopts a threatening attitude.

Attack against French North Africa and capture of Corsica.

War at Sea. Operations against the British and French sea communications in the Mediterranean, especially against France's communications with North Africa. Elimination of Gibraltar. Regarding delimitation of naval theaters of war, see 4 (a).

War in the Air. Air war against France south of the line from Lake Geneva to La Rochelle, against the North African colonies, and the French sea communications in the Mediterranean.

5. *Wehrmacht Questions in General*

(a) Participation by Italy in all active and passive defense measures by Germany.

(b) Exchange of intelligence between departments of the armed forces.

(c) Participation by Italy in war censorship as regards foreign countries.

(d) Collaboration in propaganda warfare and economic warfare.

(e) Collaboration in the sphere of raw materials and armament production.

(f) Collaboration in the sphere of communications.

No. 412

1486/368629-31

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

7487

ROME, December 1, 1938.

Received December 3.

Pol. IV 8986.

Subject: Speech in the Chamber by Foreign Minister Count Ciano on November 30, 1938.

The Italian Foreign Minister, Count Ciano, made a much heralded speech on foreign politics in yesterday's parliamentary session. The Foreign Ministry will be aware of it from the press. For your records I enclose the Italian text in a clipping from today's *Messaggero*.<sup>1</sup>

The speech consists almost exclusively of a historical survey of the events of last autumn, which are depicted arrestingly and with great clarity, in full detail, and completely along the lines of Axis policy. Construction, style, and delivery were excellent. The main purpose of the speech was the glorification of Mussolini, whose services toward the maintenance of peace were extolled in the most glowing terms, but perhaps too blatantly. The speech brings no new facts to light, except the information at the beginning regarding a conversation in December 1937, not previously known to me, with the Czechoslovak Minister then assigned here.<sup>2</sup>

The forecast for the future was not mentioned until nearly the end and contained two points which are of special interest. First, the Munich conference not only had solved a fortuitous crisis but had a far wider political significance on which it was perhaps too early yet to form a judgment. Second, as regards the entry into force of the Anglo-Italian Agreement of April 16, Count Ciano stressed Italy's firm intention of doing everything to maintain peace but not without exercising "that caution (*circospezione*)" which is indispensable when it is a question of "protecting with unshakeable firmness the interests and natural aspirations of the Italian people."

As regards the feeling in the Chamber, the applause of the members was, as always, chiefly for Mussolini and then, to a striking de-

<sup>1</sup> Not reprinted.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. František Chvalkovsky.

gree, for the Hungarian Minister<sup>3</sup> and the British Ambassador. Both were given ovations in which, as I was able to observe, even the Duce joined. While clear expression was thus given to the joy felt at the restoration of friendly relations with Britain, demonstrations of outright hostility to France were even more conspicuous. Ciano's observations about Italy's natural aspirations brought demonstrations which lasted for minutes and consisted of continuous interruptions of "Tunis, Djibouti, Corsica, Nice." These cries could be stopped neither by discouraging gestures from the Duce nor by the President's bell. As regards Germany, although there was no lack of warm applause when Count Ciano stressed Italy's readiness last autumn to fight at Germany's side, this demonstration was probably more for Italy's military spirit than for her Axis partner. The sympathy for the Axis policy felt by the large majority of the Italian people does not yet fully equal the sincerity and conviction with which Mussolini undoubtedly pursues it.

The French Ambassador, François-Poncet, to whom I spoke after the Chamber meeting, passed over in silence the unpleasant fact, for him, that Count Ciano had not made a single reference to France and expressed a certain appreciation of the speech as such, though, as he said, everything had of course been represented from the Italian point of view. Concerning the above-mentioned interruptions, M. Poncet thought the members had perhaps forgotten that the road to Tunis, etc., would be over the dead bodies of 45 million Frenchmen!

V. MACKENSEN

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<sup>3</sup> Baron Frigyes Villani.

## No. 413

109/115062

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

No. 323 of December 7

ROME, December 7, 1938—11:00 p.m.

Received December 8—1:30 a.m.

Ciano, to whom I today mentioned press reports on Chamberlain's visit and on the subjects which were presumably going to be discussed during it, replied, "The Italian program is to have no program."<sup>1</sup>

MACKENSEN

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<sup>1</sup> In a telegram dated Dec. 16 (109/115063) Mackensen reported that Ciano had confirmed this statement in a longer conversation and had added that Italy would gladly do anything to assist Anglo-German relations during the forthcoming talks with Chamberlain.

## No. 414

2058/447865-89

*Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy  
Department*

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, December 13, 1938.

W 1317 g Rs.

I. Pursuant to the German-Italian financial settlement of September 26, 1934, Italy pays for 7½ percent of the German exports to Italy in free foreign exchange (the so-called foreign-exchange clearing balance [*Devisenspitze*]). For years past the Italian Government has sought afresh at every German-Italian economic conference to do away with this foreign-exchange clearing balance. The Italians base their demand on the fact that in 1934, when the agreement was made, the position of Italy with regard to foreign exchange was better than that of Germany. In the interval conditions had radically altered, and Italy was now suffering from a much greater shortage of foreign exchange than Germany. Moreover, in view of the intervening developments in the political relations between Germany and Italy, it was beyond comprehension that Germany, when dealing with Italy, should insist on such a system of payment in foreign exchange.

As against this, the German Government has always pointed out that the clearing balance represents solely the cover of amounts in foreign exchange paid by Germany herself for raw materials from abroad, forming part of the German exports to Italy. It is in no sense a political matter but simply one of restitution, indispensable on economic grounds to Germany, of foreign exchange which she herself has spent.

During the negotiations which took place in Rome in December 1937,<sup>1</sup> Mussolini approached the Führer direct to obtain removal of the foreign-exchange clearing balance. The Führer at the time refused to do this. It was, however, agreed to limit the foreign-exchange clearing balance to 7½ percent of the 1934 export figures, taken as the norm; i.e. a total of 15,000,000 RM.

On the reunion of Austria with the German Reich, Italy pointed out that the Banca Nazionale Italiana now had to expend foreign exchange in order to obtain registered marks [*Registermark*<sup>2</sup>] for the journeys of Italian nationals to Austria, which currency it had not previously needed to make available for this purpose. In order not to stop tourist traffic from Italy to Austria, which would be unde-

<sup>1</sup> Presumably in connection with the signing of the Second Secret Protocol between Germany and Italy, Dec. 18; see footnote 5. See also vol. I, document No. 84. A previous secret economic protocol had been signed May 14, 1937.

<sup>2</sup> Marks belonging to foreigners deposited with a trustee organization, set up by the Reichsbank under the standstill agreement which came into force on Sept. 17, 1931; they were not freely negotiable but were blocked for a period of 5 years; the principal had to be invested within the Reich and only the interest could be transferred abroad.

sirable on political grounds, the foreign-exchange clearing balance would be reduced from 15,000,000 RM to a lump sum of 12,000,000 RM as compensation for the foreign exchange which Italy had to spend on tourist traffic to Austria. On this occasion, the Italian Government again announced that it must insist at the next negotiations on the complete abolition of the foreign-exchange clearing balance.

II. In fact, the Italian delegation has set down as the first item on the agenda for fresh German-Italian negotiations starting tomorrow, a demand for the abolition of the foreign-exchange clearing balance. The delegation has likewise stated to the experts of the German delegation, who are already in Rome, that this question must be cleared up first of all before any other point for discussion during the negotiations can be considered.

As leader of a German delegation to an *economic* conference, I can adopt in Rome no other attitude but that Germany cannot possibly renounce the foreign-exchange clearing balance, which represents the repayment of the foreign exchange expended by herself on raw materials from abroad. Reich Minister Funk, to whom I referred the matter today, is likewise of the opinion that, in Germany's increasingly acute situation as regards foreign exchange, it would not be possible from the economic point of view to justify a renunciation of the foreign-exchange clearing balance.

There is the further consideration that we have similarly always insisted on a foreign-exchange clearing balance vis-à-vis numerous other European countries and that a renunciation of it in the case of Italy, which could not fail to become known, would also encourage these other countries to renew their attacks against the foreign-exchange clearing balance.

If, in spite of this situation, it should be held unavoidable on political grounds that Germany renounce the foreign-exchange clearing balance wholly or in part, then in this case I request that I be the one to inform the Italian Government of this possible renunciation. This is to avoid lessening of my prestige as chief negotiator by insuring that the Italians, when they—as must certainly be expected—make representations through their Ambassador or by utilizing other channels, should not achieve more by circumventing the head of the delegation than the delegation itself is prepared to concede to them.

III. There is a danger that the Italians will attempt at least to reduce the foreign-exchange clearing balance in the following way:

For military reasons the High Command of the Navy considers it of decisive importance that 300 aerial torpedoes and a manufacturing license<sup>2</sup> to a value of 12,000,000 RM should be bought from Italy at

<sup>2</sup>This was for the manufacture of an aerial torpedo designed by the Fiume Whitehead Torpedo Factory, in which the German Navy was keenly interested. The negotiations regarding payment for the license were finally concluded at Rome on Feb. 13, 1939. See documents Nos. 448 and 451, footnote 1.

the earliest possible moment. I have discussed this question recently on several occasions with Ambassador Giannini,<sup>4</sup> head of the Italian delegation. He refused to supply the aerial torpedoes through the clearing pool and insisted on payment in free foreign exchange. Bearing in mind the important naval reasons mentioned by the High Command of the Navy, I shall have no alternative but to demand at the forthcoming conference that these torpedoes be supplied through the clearing pool and that any payment for them in foreign exchange be rejected. It is a practical certainty that the Italians will then relate the question of the delivery of these torpedoes to that of the foreign-exchange clearing balance.

Reich Minister Funk, with whom I talked this matter over as well, was of the opinion that, in view of the important naval interests at stake, it would be justifiable as a last resort to charge part of the cost of the aerial torpedoes in foreign exchange to the foreign-exchange clearing balance for next year. In so doing, our basic claim to the foreign-exchange clearing balance would not be prejudiced.

IV. In the absence of contrary instructions, I intend to insist in Rome on the retention *in toto* of the foreign-exchange clearing balance at the present level and, furthermore, on delivery of the aerial torpedoes through the clearing pool. I shall particularly emphasize that, as German-Italian relations stand today, it would scarcely be justifiable, from the Italian point of view as well, if Italy wrecked an armaments deal essential to German rearmament by the demand for payment in foreign exchange. So as not to carry our own attitude in the matter of the foreign-exchange clearing balance to the point of absurdity, payment for the aerial torpedoes might be made in foreign exchange at the most to the extent that these aerial torpedoes contain foreign raw materials, likewise paid for by Italy in free foreign exchange.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Amedeo Giannini, head of the Commercial Department of the Italian Foreign Ministry.

<sup>5</sup> A minute by Wiehl (2058/447870) attached to the file copy reads:

"The attitude which Minister Clodius proposes seems to me to be right. It will be advisable to maintain it in any case for the time being and to wait until the Italians once more press forward at a higher level with their desire to abolish the foreign-exchange clearing balance. Last year while the negotiations in Rome were still pending, Atolico, the Italian Ambassador, tried, first through all official channels and finally by a personal message from Mussolini to the Führer and Chancellor, to get the foreign-exchange clearing balance abolished, but this was consistently refused on the grounds of our foreign-exchange situation. Our foreign-exchange situation has since become worse, but, on the other hand, Italy's political support was of great value to us during the last year. If, for political reasons, the possibility should be considered of giving way this time to the Italian pressure, which will certainly be renewed in view of the events of last year, the Führer's decision would have to be sought once more in order to demonstrate to the Italians the great importance of any such concession. The most that could be considered by way of such a concession would probably be that, while formally retaining the foreign-exchange clearing balance at its full amount (this is essential to avoid claims from other countries), we would promise the Italians to pay for the torpedoes required by our Navy in part or, if necessary, entirely out of the foreign-exchange clearing balance."

To the Reich Foreign Minister, through the Director of the Economic Policy Department and the State Secretary, with the request for a decision.

CLODIUS

No. 415

2058/447849-50

*The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 331 of December 15  
(Delegation No. 1)<sup>1</sup>

ROME, December 16, 1938—1:45 a.m.

Received December 16—3:15 a.m.

1. The Italians, as was to be expected, have designated the question of the foreign-exchange clearing balance as the most important problem and a proper subject for a general agreement. The delegation stuck to our previous arguments for its maintenance. It can be taken as a certainty that the Italians will now take other steps.

2. I hope to persuade Giannini to postpone discussion of the Southern European Sugar Company and to deal separately with the Danube Steam Navigation Company and the Styrian Electricity Company. I shall negotiate further on these lines.

3. The timber question is one of peculiar difficulty, particularly as the Italians base their demand for a renunciation of the foreign-exchange clearing balance especially on the disturbance of the equilibrium in currency transactions (balance to credit of Italy at the present time about 25,000,000 RM) and impute this disturbance primarily to the lack of deliveries of timber, amounting to 25,000,000 RM a year. The price of timber on the German market amounts to 41,000,000 RM for a year's supply. The temporary accommodation required is therefore 15,000,000 RM.

4. The Italians would like to discuss the following traffic problems:

(a) Regulation of traffic between Czechoslovakia and Adriatic ports.

(b) Reviewing the working of the Berlin agreement of May 28 regarding Austria.

(c) Administration by Italy of freight charges on the Adriatic.

(d) Agreement on competition with other routes in the traffic between Hungary and seaports.

We stated that little material had yet been prepared and, moreover, it was inexpedient to burden negotiations on a government level with technical questions of that kind, which for many years had always been satisfactorily settled at tariff conferences between the admin-

<sup>1</sup>The following series of telegrams (documents Nos. 415-420) was exchanged between the Foreign Ministry and the German economic delegation visiting Rome to draw up a new commercial agreement. The negotiations lasted from Dec. 14 to Dec. 21. See document No. 399.

istrations concerned. Giannini nevertheless made an urgent request for German railway experts to be summoned to Rome, so that at least an attempt might be made at clearing up questions in dispute. It is scarcely very polite, particularly to the Italians, to decline every suggestion from the start. On the other hand, conversations between experts are pointless when the German experts are certainly not in a position to adopt a definite attitude toward individual questions. A decision by telegram is requested.

5. According to information from the Italians, the German authorities have recently been demanding payment in foreign exchange for port charges and bunker costs in North Sea ports. The Italians request that payments should continue as formerly to be made through the clearing pool.

I request information by telegram on the facts of the case.

CLIDIUS  
MACKENSEN

No. 416

2058/447852-53

*The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 339 of December 17  
(Delegation No. 4)

ROME, December 17, 1938—10:00 p.m.  
Received December 18—1:50 a.m.

With reference to Delegation [telegram] No. 1.<sup>1</sup>

1. Magistrati received instructions today to protest to the German Foreign Ministry against the foreign-exchange clearing balance and to request that the delegation be instructed to renounce it. I must point out that Magistrati's *démarche* in Berlin was suggested by me, since I thought that it would ease the deadlock in the negotiations if Magistrati received direct confirmation in Berlin that the instructions to the delegation on this subject were unalterable. In this way, moreover, Ciano personally, because of Magistrati's communication, will again have to deal directly with the question. This is also desirable, among other reasons, because Giannini declares the Duce's assent to the accord of December 18, 1937, was conditioned by the express stipulation on his part that this agreement should be valid only for 1 year.

2. The delegation is endeavoring to effect the repayment of a part of the debit balance of 25 million reichsmarks in favor of Italy and the raising of the funds necessary for other additional payments (for your personal information: a further 10 million reichsmarks for workmen's

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 415.

wages) primarily by an increase in the present export of manufactured goods. There is no doubt, however, that this will not be possible in full. The Italians insist emphatically on increased deliveries of goods which particularly interest them, that is to say, especially coal, machinery, steel, timber, and fertilizers. The Italians set the most value on steel, pointing out the essential importance from the military angle of the steel deliveries, which we are actually under obligation to deliver to them for political reasons.

I request instructions by telegram whether and how far, in the case of the above-mentioned goods, the previously agreed quotas can be exceeded both in quantity and value. As to steel, I request an examination of this question, taking also into consideration further reported proposals from Venturi for the Danube Steam Navigation Company.

There is of course no question of increasing deliveries of timber. Discussions as to the method of reconciling the difference in price and to what extent are not yet concluded.

3. Please inform me by telegram whether any larger amounts, which might be included to cover the debit balance, are due for coal deliveries and are still outstanding.

CLODIUS  
PLESSEN

### No. 417

2058/447854-56

*The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Embassy  
in Italy*

Telegram

No. 451

BERLIN, December 19, 1938.  
zu W III 9606.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 331,<sup>1</sup> 337,<sup>2</sup> and 339<sup>3</sup> (Delegation Nos. 1, 3, and 4).

For Clodius.

I. Magistrati called on Under State Secretary Woermann on Saturday. In accordance with his request, the matter will be put before the Foreign Minister. Meanwhile please insist firmly on the foreign-exchange clearing balance. For your personal information, linking it up with aerial torpedoes is out of the question. The Ministry of

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 415.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (2058/447851).

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 416.

Economics would prefer to concede separate payment for torpedoes in foreign exchange. Agreement has not yet been reached. If, nevertheless, in the course of further negotiations you cannot avoid discussion of the aerial-torpedo project, please send telegraphic report. If necessary we will request that the appropriate authority send a special expert (Captain [*Kapitän zur See*] von Gerlach) to Rome for your personal information and assistance.<sup>4</sup>

II. Present Italian clearing balance amounts to 15 million reichsmarks and not 25 million reichsmarks. It would quickly disappear if Italy were more accommodating in granting import licenses for manufactured goods. According to information from competent authorities, this year's quotas are to a large extent not used up. Please also continue to lay stress on manufactured goods when fixing new quotas. Increase of the quotas given you for steel and fertilizers is not possible. Decision on increase of machinery quota could not be made until Italian wishes are known in more detail, not possible for machine tools in any case. Coal on the other hand can be increased by 1 million tons. For timber the Ministry of Economics is willing, on condition that the foreign-exchange clearing balance is kept at the previous figure, to make available from development resources up to 6 million reichsmarks for reconciling the price difference, provided the Forestry Department simultaneously makes 4 million reichsmarks available. Wrabec must decide what quantities of timber can be delivered as a result of this.

III. It still remains to be ascertained whether any large sums for deliveries of coal are due and not yet paid.

IV. Questions regarding traffic (points 4 and 5 in Delegation telegram No. 1) must in our opinion be discussed by experts in subcommittee. Our experts will not be available for that until after the New Year.

V. In our opinion, negotiations on Southern European Sugar Company, Danube Steam Navigation Company, and Styrian Electricity Company had at first better be conducted separately from negotiations on clearing quotas. But please remember when fixing quotas that payments for these three special transactions can, if necessary, be included under the clearing scheme without endangering the foreign-exchange clearing balance.

VI. For Danube Steam Navigation Company conversion of 10 million schillings into 6.6 million reichsmarks is out of the question. It must remain at ratio of 10:4.6. For the rest we await further information from you after getting in touch with Stauss.

VII. In the matter of Styrian Electricity Company, the position remains that steel delivery is not possible. It is just conceivable that

<sup>4</sup>The last two sentences of this paragraph were deleted, apparently before transmission.

Alpine Montan is ready and able to deliver, but the only decisive factor is that in steel exports we are bound as regards quantity by the cartel agreements, unless the Italians assume the penalty for breach of contract (payment of foreign exchange!).

WIEHL

No. 418

2476/517645

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, December 20, 1938.  
zu W III 9606 II.

Subject: The Italian foreign-exchange clearing balance.

The representatives of the Four Year Plan and of the Ministry of Economics declared at yesterday's meeting of the Economic Policy Committee that it was impossible, in view of our foreign-exchange situation, to release Italy's foreign-exchange clearing balance. It was unanimously resolved to adhere firmly to our refusal to release it. Minister Clodius was instructed accordingly yesterday evening, subject to confirmation by the Foreign Minister.

Minister Clodius, with the agreement of the head of the Italian delegation, proposes to interrupt the negotiations from December 22 until January 10, subject to the provisional prolongation of the quota agreements, which expire at the end of this year. From January 3 to 9, Herr Clodius has to conduct negotiations on the Turkish loan in Berlin with Numan, the Turkish State Secretary.<sup>1</sup>

Because of these circumstances, Minister Clodius has requested leave for the period from December 22 to January 2. I have no objections to his going on leave, since the further course of the Italian negotiations can be adequately planned during his presence here for the Turkish negotiations. The Personnel Department is likewise in agreement.

The matter of the foreign-exchange clearing balance would thus be adjourned until the beginning of January, with the possibility of further *démarches* by the Italians.

Submitted to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister, with the request that approval may be granted to dispatch the attached telegram <sup>2</sup> to Clodius.

WIEHL

<sup>1</sup> Numan Menemencioglu, Secretary General of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, with the rank and title of Ambassador, 1933-42.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 419.

## No. 419

2058/447857

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 452

BERLIN, December 21, 1938.  
W III 9606 II.

For Clodius.

With reference to our telegraphic instruction No. 451 of December 19.<sup>1</sup>

The Reich Government approves your attitude with regard to the foreign-exchange clearing balance. Magistrati will be informed accordingly. Please continue to refuse to release it.

Agreement is given to the proposed interruption of the negotiations until January 10, subject to the necessary prolongation of the existing agreements, and also to your leave up to January 2.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 417.

## No. 420

2058/447858-60

*The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. [340]

ROME, December 21, 1938.

(Delegation No. 5)

1. Exchange of letters signed today on temporary extension of a few provisions of old agreements due to run until December 31, and negotiations adjourned until January 10. Transfer agreement due to expire December 31 and Dawes and Young settlements not extended, because of Italian demand for alteration in Dawes and Young settlements. Short press communiqué and information for German press arranged for here.

2. Most important points for negotiation still outstanding: guarantee for German export of manufactured goods, foreign-exchange clearing balance, increased imports of artificial silk owing to inclusion of Sudetenland, increase in specified German deliveries to Italy (e.g. steel, fertilizers), certain questions relating to Italian capital interests in Austria [*Ostmark*] and Sudetenland.

3. State of discussions on separate transactions:

(a) Danube Steam Navigation. Latest Italian demand: 6 million reichsmarks of which 1 million clearing, 600,000 reichsmarks

Aquila shares, 4.4 million reichsmarks steel and propeller shafts at export prices.

(b) Styrian Electricity: Change-over of familiar distribution to clearing; steel and machinery again refused by Italians.

(c) Torpedoes: Italians still describe 50 percent clearing and 50 percent foreign exchange as their final offer. If we refuse they will not complete the deal.

4. Italians intend to discuss a number of questions with Reich Minister Funk, in particular foreign-exchange clearing and Danube Steam, and hope to be able to reach agreement with him on a basis more favorable to themselves. Reich Minister Funk, with whom I discussed the state of negotiations while he was on his way through here on December 19, intends to refer the Italians on all questions to negotiations with the delegation on January 10.

5. Delegation is unanimously of the following opinion: Question of foreign-exchange clearing balance must be settled with the Italians through diplomatic channels at the beginning of January before the resumption of negotiations, in order to avoid a waste of time. Certain German deliveries to Italy, particularly of steel, must be increased because otherwise it will not be possible to effect a settlement of the financial transactions. Italians point out again and again that loss of considerable possibilities for deliveries from Austria is making it impossible to draw up satisfactory agreement for financial transactions, unless we are also prepared to make a certain compromise in matters in which the Italians are particularly interested.

CLODIUS  
VON PLESSEN

### No. 421

F20/106-09

*Foreign Minister Ciano to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop*<sup>1</sup>

ROME, January 2, 1939.

MY DEAR RIBBENTROP: In the conversation in the Palazzo Venezia on October 28,<sup>2</sup> the Duce, while approving in principle the project suggested by you of converting the three-power Anti-Comintern Pact<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The original letter was in French. This translation is from the German translation and certain ambiguities have necessarily crept in. A marginal manuscript note states that the original is in the files of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat, but it has not been found. An entry in Ciano's diary for Jan. 2, 1939, states that it had been approved by the Duce and that he would send it to Attolico the next day to deliver to Ribbentrop. See *The Ciano Diaries, 1939-1943*, edited by Hugh Gibson (New York, 1946), p. 3. For the Italian version of the letter, see Ciano, *L'Europa verso la catastrofe* (Milan, 1948), pp. 392-394.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 400, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> Concluded in Rome on Nov. 6, 1937. See vol. I, document No. 17.

into a pact for mutual military aid, made one reservation with regard to the moment at which such fundamental political action could in fact be taken. He has recently expressed the same view to the Japanese Ambassador in Berlin, General Oshima, to whom he also said he would come to a final decision during January. I understand that General Oshima has informed you of the conversation.

The Duce now withdraws his reservation and feels that the pact can be signed and suggests the last 10 days of January as the period for signing. He is leaving it to you to decide the place where the solemn ceremony shall be held and to organize the appropriate procedure and also, as before, to make all arrangements with General Oshima.

It is certainly not the case that the Duce's decision to accept now the pact which you suggested has been in any way influenced by our political relations with France.

The Italian demands on France are of two kinds. The first are of a contingent nature and comprise the questions which were at least in part the subject of the 1935 agreement, which we have now repudiated.\*

These are

1. the statute for the Italians residing in the protectorate of Tunis;
2. the establishment of a free port at Djibouti and use of the railway line Djibouti-Addis Ababa;
3. participation of Italy in the administration of the Suez Canal.

We believe that these questions can be dealt with by means of normal diplomatic negotiation, but we do not intend to take any initiative in the matter.

The other demands are of a historical nature and refer to territory which belongs to Italy from a geographic, ethnographic, and strategic point of view and which we have no intention of renouncing finally.

This, however, is a problem of a different caliber requiring quite other methods for its solution, and we do not wish to bring it up (*mettre sur le tapis*) at the moment.

It is, however, already possible to confirm the following fact with certainty: the Franco-Italian tension has done a great deal to popularize in Italy the idea of an alliance with Germany, and this alone is a positive and concrete step toward the achievement of our aims (*à nos fins*).

The real reasons which have led the Duce to adopt your suggestion now are

1. the existence, which has now been established, of a military alliance between France and England;
2. the growing prevalence of warlike tendencies in responsible French circles;

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\* On Dec. 17, 1938, the Italian Government denounced the Franco-Italian Agreement of January 1935.

3. military preparations in the United States of America with the object of supplying the Western democracies with men and, above all, with equipment in case of need.

Under these circumstances, the Duce considers it necessary that from now on the Anti-Communist Triangle should be welded into a system. He believes that the Axis can hold the fort against any coalition, if those countries which can supply it with raw materials, primarily Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Rumania, remain within its sphere of influence and are bound up with its fate.

As you yourself suggested, the treaty should be presented to the world as a peace pact, enabling Germany and Italy to work completely undisturbed for a fairly long period of time.

I beg you, my dear Ribbentrop, to treat this decision of the Duce as completely confidential; and it is likewise essential that the secret of the pact should be safeguarded at the time of its signature.

You led me to believe in conversation that you wished the signature to take place in Berlin, and I beg to inform you that, if you so desire, I can travel to your capital any time from January 23—the day I return from Belgrade—until the end of the month.

However, we shall be able at a later date to agree on the details of this question.

Please accept, my dear Ribbentrop, with my very best wishes, the expression of my sincere regards.

CIANO

No. 422

100/64408

*Memorandum by the Ambassador in Italy*

Rome, January 3, 1939.

Count Ciano informed me in the strictest confidence during the course of our conversation today that the Duce had now decided that, as far as he was concerned, the Tripartite Pact between Germany, Italy, and Japan could be signed immediately. He, Ciano, subsequent to informing him briefly yesterday evening by telephone, had written a private letter to the Reich Foreign Minister on the subject, which Attolico, who was returning to Berlin this evening, would take with him. In view of other obligations already awaiting him during January (Chamberlain's visit, the trip to Belgrade, and the necessity of devoting 2 or 3 days afterward to current business here in Rome), a date toward the end of the month suggested itself for the signature. The Reich Foreign Minister too considered this expedient, since the technical preparations of the Japanese for the ceremony of signing would take some 3 weeks. Oshima would sign on behalf of Japan. He, Ciano, had gladly met Herr von Ribbentrop's wishes

and agreed that the signing take place in Berlin. Count Ciano then took a look at his calendar and said that for him the 30th, or better still the 28th, seemed the suitable day for signing. As he knew through Attolico, an important speech by the Führer was planned for the 31st.<sup>1</sup>

MACKENSEN

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<sup>1</sup> Presumably Hitler's speech in the Reichstag on Jan. 30, 1939.

No. 423

2058/447862-64

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. [2]

BERLIN, January 4, 1939.  
e.o. W III.

I. Before resuming economic discussions on January 10, it is necessary, in order to avoid losing time, to clear up two principal questions. Please, therefore, as soon as possible communicate the following to Count Ciano:

1. The steadily continuing decrease in the current export of German manufactured goods to Italy is filling the German Government with great concern. Not only the maintenance but also the increase of such exports, which are the mainstay of an exchange of goods, constitute the essential condition for the continued favorable development of trade. Difficulties that have recently arisen in currency exchange, such as the creation of balances, etc., are in the final analysis attributable to the strangulation of the import of manufactured articles. The final consequence must of necessity be restriction of Italian imports into Germany. Our demand for the increase of the export of manufactured goods is thus in Italy's, as well as in Germany's, interests. If the Italians continue their ever clearer procedure, aimed at rendering it more and more difficult for Germany to export manufactured goods, by means of administrative measures and above all by manipulating import regulations through the medium of corporations when granting import licenses, this must lead to the gravest consequences for the reciprocal exchange of goods. Please, therefore, demand in urgent terms that Italian officials receive binding instructions from the authorities to introduce radical changes into the procedure hitherto employed toward Germany. In carrying on her efforts to attain autarchy, Italy must accord Germany a special position and see to it that autarchy is directed against third parties but not against Germany.

Substituting the export of certain capital goods, and above all of machine tools, for the export of manufactured articles cannot in the long run bring about a balance of trade, as these exports will on the

contrary finally lead to a further diminution of the export of German manufactured articles.

2. Further in continuation of the last communication which Clodius made to Giannini on the evening of December 21 on the attitude of the Reich Government toward the question of the foreign-exchange clearing balance, kindly explain to Count Ciano again the reasons, well known to you (cf. telegraphed instruction No. 752<sup>1</sup> of December 21), why the Reich Government must strictly adhere to the present level of the foreign-exchange clearing balance. This does not involve any political question but Germany's imperative need in the sphere of foreign exchange.

II. We would also request Reich Minister Funk on his part during his conversation with the appropriate Ministers, and above all with Guarneri,<sup>2</sup> to give prominence to the vital importance of increasing the export of German manufactured goods. On the question of the foreign-exchange clearing balance Herr Funk will no doubt be approached by the Italians. We share Reich Minister Funk's view that it is expedient for him to refer all further points for negotiation raised by the Italians to the continuation of the negotiations planned for the 10th. For the rest, all details regarding the state of the negotiations will be clear from the exchange of telegrams between the Foreign Ministry and the delegation, which I request you to show Reich Minister Funk on his arrival.

Report by wire.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> An error for "452" (document No. 419).

<sup>2</sup> Felice Guarneri, Minister of Foreign Exchange and Currency, 1937-39.

## No. 424

B21/005018-20

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 4 of January 4

ROME, January 4, 1939.

Received January 5—6:00 p.m.

Count Ciano invited me to call on him this evening to acquaint me with the substance of yesterday's audience granted by the Duce to American Ambassador Phillips,<sup>1</sup> so that I might inform my Government.

The Ambassador handed the Duce, who received him in Ciano's presence, a private letter from Roosevelt dated December 7. That it has only now been delivered may be explained by the fact that the Duce

<sup>1</sup> William Phillips, Ambassador to Italy, August 1936-December 1941.

was absent from Rome and anyhow was not unwilling to let the American Ambassador wait some 10 days before arranging an appointment.

Roosevelt's letter, which Ciano gave me to read in the original, appealed to Mussolini's attitude during the September crisis for the preservation of world peace, and the letter linked with this the request that he should support the President in his efforts to find a solution for the Jewish problem, the development of which was threatening world peace, in the interests alike of those states which wished to be rid of the Jews as of those which felt obliged on moral grounds to stand by them in their hour of need. The Ambassador was instructed to put certain ideas before the Duce which Roosevelt regarded as a suitable basis for a solution. The President hoped that the Duce would not refuse his cooperation.

Then, referring to a paper which Ciano also gave me to read, the Ambassador expounded the President's line of thought. This tended in two directions: first, a suggestion that Italy should make available a plateau in the south or southwest of Ethiopia deemed by Roosevelt suitable for settling Jews; second, a suggestion to the Duce that he should use his influence with the Reich Government to permit the Jews to take with them some financial assets necessary for their re-settlement, in a form which would mean a practical solution of this question. In making this suggestion the President referred expressly to the London conversations of the President of the Reichsbank,<sup>2</sup> about which he had been informed and which, as he had heard, were shortly to be continued in Berlin.

Mussolini at once answered the Ambassador somewhat as follows:

Italian racial legislation,<sup>3</sup> which had its origin in certain needs, was a *noli me tangere* (in this connection Ciano added in conversation with me that here they wanted shortly to give the screw an even sharper turn). He had no intention of making as much as a square centimeter of Ethiopian territory available for Jewish settlement. Nor did he intend to interfere in our internal affairs in any way at all, all the less since he entirely approved of our Jewish legislation, which he found explicable if for no other reason than what the Jews had done to our people in the postwar years.

As things stood today, the complete separation (Ciano used the expression "divorce")<sup>4</sup> of the Aryan from the non-Aryan world was fully under way and was making progress every day in other countries such as Hungary and Rumania as well. The moment had come when the whole of Europe was closing its doors to the Jews. Per-

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 280 for Schacht's visit to London in the middle of December.

<sup>3</sup> This refers to the anti-Semitic measures decided upon by the Fascist Grand Council on Oct. 6, 1938, and by the Council of Ministers on Nov. 10, 1938.

<sup>4</sup> In English in the original.

sonally, he was by no means unsympathetic toward the idea of creating a separate Jewish state. It was not in Africa, however, that such a state would be established, but in his opinion there were three countries which would be quite able to absorb Jewish emigrants. In the first place there was Russia, but as far as he knew, the Jews showed no inclination to take up residence there. Then there was Brazil, where there also existed certain difficulties, but finally there was the United States which, after all, entertained such lively sympathy for the Jews. At the moment they had 120 million inhabitants but, compared for instance with the population density of Italy, they could in his opinion accommodate 1,400 millions. Surely territory suitable in every respect could be found there.

Mussolini had, as Ciano told me, clothed his somewhat humorously tinged statement in friendly terms out of regard for the Ambassador, whom he finds not unlikable, but he now regarded the whole matter as closed. He considered it new proof of the Americans' characteristic lack of political sagacity and, after the Ambassador had taken his leave, made some very entertaining observations to Ciano about this strange conversation.

VON MACKENSEN

## No. 425

2058/447875

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 7 of January 5

ROME, January 5, 1939—10:30 p.m.

Received January 6—1:30 a.m.

W III 130.

With reference to your telegram No. 2.<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with instructions, I visited Count Ciano this evening. He interrupted my account of the purpose of my visit by observing that Attolico was, according to instructions, presumably visiting the Reich Foreign Minister this very day in order to appeal to his authority so that the rigid attitude of the German "technical" ministries might be relaxed, since negotiations would otherwise be deadlocked. I replied that we feared the same but that, as he could see by my visit, we thought that the reasons were to be found on the Italian side. Then, conforming as closely as possible to the above-mentioned telegraphic instruction, I explained our point of view both on the question of the import of manufactured goods and on that of the foreign-exchange clearing balance and requested that suitable action be taken. The Foreign Minister, who had listened attentively to my observations, de-

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 423.

clared that he was unable on his own initiative to make a decision, since it was a technical matter rather unfamiliar to him, and asked me for a short memorandum. He would then examine the matter and submit it to the Duce.

I forwarded the memorandum to Count Ciano this evening.

MACKENSEN

### No. 426

F20/104-105

*Foreign Minister Ribbentrop to Foreign Minister Ciano*

BERLIN, January 9, 1939.

MY DEAR CIANO: I acknowledge with many thanks the receipt of your letter of January 2<sup>1</sup> handed to me by Ambassador Attolico. I took note of the contents with the greatest interest and with particular pleasure. The Führer also is extremely glad that the Duce has now decided to sign the pact in the near future. Everything you write to me as to the reasons for this decision is accepted here with full comprehension and with full agreement.

A few days ago I had an exact draft of the pact and of an additional secret protocol handed to Ambassador Attolico as well as to Ambassador Oshima. I assume that this draft has meanwhile reached you and I hope that agreement on the final version will quickly be reached between us as well as with Ambassador Oshima. On this assumption, I would like to propose to you that we choose January 28 for signing the pact, and I extend to you the most cordial invitation to come to Berlin on that date as the guest of the Reich Government for as long a stay as your other engagements will allow. You would then also have the opportunity of celebrating with us the sixth anniversary of our assumption of power.

With my most cordial greetings, I am, my dear Ciano,

YOURS,  
RIBBENTROP

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 421.

### No. 427

F3/0069-73

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 3

BERLIN, January 10, 1939.

I. I handed Attolico the letter of invitation to Count Ciano<sup>1</sup> and asked him to request Rome to treat the invitation as confidential in

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 426.

every respect, since it was not yet certain whether we should have reached agreement with the Japanese by the 28th.

II. Attolico handed me the enclosed note from Count Ciano which was intended for the Ambassador's personal information. To this I replied as follows:

(a) Foreign-exchange clearing balance. At his request I had mentioned this question briefly to the Führer. The Führer stated that our exchange position was difficult, so that we could not oblige even our best friends in these matters at present. I thereupon told the Führer that I would discuss the question further with Göring and the Ministry of Economics. At present I could not hold out any hopes to him, Attolico. We could not renounce the foreign-exchange clearing balance in principle, especially as this foreign exchange was only a fraction of the foreign exchange which we were obliged to expend in payment for the portion of those raw materials used in the goods exported by Germany to Italy, which Germany herself had to obtain with foreign exchange. I had, however, instructed State Secretary von Weizsäcker to discuss the whole situation again with the Reich Ministry of Economics and in particular with Funk, the Minister of Economics, who was returning from Italy that same day, and to ascertain whether any possibility for a compromise might emerge. I certainly could not, however, hold out any hopes to him, since our position simply did not permit us to be generous in this matter at present. I requested Attolico to get in touch with the State Secretary again in a few days' time, which he promised to do.

In connection with this, Attolico also mentioned that Italy's foreign-exchange position too was very difficult, for a part of the gold which we had accepted from Italy in return for foreign exchange was the gold from Italian wedding rings. This was typical of the Italian situation.

(b) The Tyrol question. I confirmed to Attolico once more what I had already told him in Munich, namely, that on January 30<sup>2</sup> the Führer did not want to say anything about the Tyrol question, i.e. the question of conferring Reich citizenship on the Tyrolese, because this would only cause unrest and the impression that an acute German-Italian problem was involved. The Führer had again told me that the Tyrol question was no longer in dispute between Germany and Italy. The question of any transfer of the German Tyrolese to the Reich was one which could only be settled in the course of decades or at some future date when the Reich could more easily settle them in Germany. But this depended on further developments in Europe. We would, however, always keep the question in mind. In connection with this, I added that we were very willing even now to admit to

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<sup>2</sup> In his annual speech before the Reichstag on the anniversary of the National Socialist regime.

Germany a fairly large number of Tyrolese who did not wish to remain in Tyrol. This could of course only be done quietly and in successive stages, not publicly and accompanied by propaganda, because a new hotbed of unrest could easily be created in this way. I added that I had sent for our Consul General in Milan, Herr Bene, in order to discuss with him the possible transfer of such Tyrolese during this year.

Attolico showed complete understanding for the treatment of the matter on the above lines.

After this I informed Attolico in broad outline of the Führer's and my own conversations with Beck, the Polish Foreign Minister.<sup>3</sup>

RIBBENTROP

[Enclosure]

BERLIN, January 9, 1939/XVII.

COPY OF THE NOTE BY COUNT CIANO FOR AMBASSADOR ATTOLICO, WHICH THE LATTER HANDED TO THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER ON JANUARY 10, 1939

For the sake of the two matters which were mentioned during the conversation in Munich, it seems appropriate, as a result of more precise data received from Rome, to set down the position as follows:

1. The economic question of placing relations between Germany and Italy on the basis of absolute equality of treatment, without preferential transfers in free currency, is obviously a reflection of the actual political situation today. The Italian people's feelings of friendship for Germany are continually growing. The task must therefore be completed, especially vis-à-vis certain economic circles, while precluding any impression that there is any differentiation in treatment, as mentioned above. Economic negotiations are actually being resumed in Rome at present, and it therefore seems that the opportunity has come for the practical application of the theory of equality.

2. As far as the second question is concerned, namely, the problem of the indigenous German population in the South Tyrol region, this can obviously be settled smoothly and in stages without previous official declarations, in accordance with the friendship existing between our two countries. If geographic conditions and human beings are incompatible, then it seems necessary to transfer the human beings. This transfer would naturally have to be made in the best possible manner. It is of first and foremost importance that the Reich should begin to prepare a scheme which is designed to discover how and when the indigenous South Tyrolese elements, who absolutely do not wish to remain within the frontiers of the Kingdom and who, in the

<sup>3</sup> Colonel Beck visited Hitler at Berchtesgaden on Jan. 5 with Ribbentrop in attendance, and Ribbentrop had a further conversation with him at Munich on the following day. See vol. v of this series.

Italian view, must be accepted by the Reich, shall be systematically received by the Reich.

These two matters are naturally not bound up with the principal topic which is being considered at present. But a favorable solution of them would obviously make the atmosphere of complete confidence and of great friendship existing between our two countries even more complete.

## No. 428

1882/440163

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 27

BERLIN, January 11, 1939.

The Italian Ambassador brought up again today the subject of the foreign-exchange clearing balance and made the suggestion that a compromise might possibly be found by means of the aerial-torpedo deliveries for which a contract has already been signed. If Germany renounces the foreign-exchange clearing balance, then Italy—the Ambassador hinted this cautiously—might, if need be, content herself this time with the payment of 6 million marks in foreign exchange for the torpedoes to be delivered.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 429

1848/421047-50

*Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department*

No. W III 258

BERLIN, January 11, 1939.

Minister Funk today gave me the following information on the result of his discussions in Rome on economic questions:

He had held detailed conversations in Rome with Mussolini, Count Ciano, Guarneri, the Minister for the Control of Foreign Exchange, and Lantini, the Minister of Corporations. At these talks he had, for his part, singled out for special emphasis that it was absolutely necessary to provide for the maintenance and increase of German exports and primarily the export of manufactured goods to Italy.

In the economic field the question of the foreign-exchange clearing balance was singled out for special emphasis on the Italian side, and indeed by all the abovementioned persons. Signor Guarneri had above all strongly emphasized that it was quite impossible for Italy to continue making payments to Germany in foreign exchange. The Duce had told him that for political reasons he considered it especially im-

portant that the economic negotiations, which were to recommence in the next few days, should end quickly and smoothly with mutually satisfactory results.

Herr Funk told me that he had gained the impression from all his conversations that Italy could not be induced by any means to continue to maintain the foreign-exchange clearing balance. For his part he had not renounced the foreign-exchange clearing balance but declared that the attempt would have to be made to weld German-Italian economic relations so closely that the economic Berlin-Rome Axis would be on a par with the political Axis. In this event there would naturally be no further room for a foreign-exchange clearing balance between our countries. A prerequisite for this would be that production, and above all the provision of raw materials for each of the two countries, should be thoroughly coordinated. This required primarily that Italy should both desist from applying autarchy against Germany and deliver vital raw materials to us in place of the foreign-exchange payments made hitherto.

Herr Funk said the Italian Ministers had taken up his suggestions with keen approval. He had therefore held out the prospect of having these matters examined in detail in the Reich Ministry of Economics as soon as possible and of inviting Signor Guarneri to Berlin shortly to continue and, if possible, conclude these discussions.

I told Herr Funk that it seemed very risky to me to renounce the foreign-exchange clearing balance now before a general plan had actually been discussed in detail and clarified. In this event we should lose the foreign-exchange clearing balance without any equivalent in return, especially since the question of very close economic cooperation examined in detail by us already would probably encounter so many difficulties from our side as well that it would be extremely doubtful whether and when it could actually be realized. The prerequisite for this would be that Italy should renounce the application of autarchy at the expense of Germany, but that on the other hand Germany, too, in carrying out the Four Year Plan, should be prepared to renounce the development of various branches of production in favor of Italy. I told Herr Funk that it seemed the right thing for me to endeavor in Rome to retain the foreign-exchange clearing balance for a year at least. In this way we could make a payment of 6 millions in foreign exchange to be debited to the foreign-exchange clearing balance for torpedoes delivered by Italy, which we should not be prepared to do otherwise. Furthermore, it would have to be set down in a special statement that Germany and Italy were in agreement in maintaining the foreign-exchange clearing balance only until the plans described above were realized.

Whether we shall succeed in reaching agreement with the Italians on this basis is indeed doubtful, judging from the impression gained by Herr Funk that the Italians will not yield in any way on the question of the foreign-exchange clearing balance; in this event I should be obliged to report from Rome again.

Herr Funk also intends to report to the Foreign Minister direct on this question at the conversation arranged for Friday, January 13.<sup>1</sup>

Submitted herewith through the Director and the State Secretary to the Foreign Minister for his conversation with Herr Funk.

CLODIUS

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 431.

### No. 430

109/115065

*Memorandum by an Official of the State Secretary's Secretariat*

BERLIN, January 12, 1939.

Ambassador von Mackensen telephoned from Rome at 12:40 p.m. that Count Ciano had received him at 11 o'clock this morning immediately after his conversation with Lord Halifax and had informed him fully on the Anglo-Italian talks to date.<sup>1</sup> Lord Halifax had met him in the reception room and had thus obtained direct evidence of the close cooperation between Germany and Italy. The Ambassador wished to inform the Foreign Ministry by telephone that Ciano was keeping him acquainted with the course of the conversations and that he would telegraph the substance. For technical reasons, i.e. to speed up ciphering and deciphering work, he would send his telegraphic report in several successive sections.

The Ambassador added that, with reference to the telegraphic instructions about the Suez Canal question, he had only today been able to mention this to Ciano. As this subject had not yet been referred to in the Anglo-Italian talks, there had been no delay. Besides, it was still uncertain whether the matter would be raised.

SIEGFRIED

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<sup>1</sup> Chamberlain and Halifax paid a visit to Rome Jan. 11-14. The subject of their talks with the Duce and Ciano was not directly connected with German-Italian relations, although Chamberlain recognized that Italian policy was mainly based on the Berlin-Rome Axis, and Mussolini pointed out the purely defensive object of German rearmament, instancing the construction of the Siegfried Line.

Ciano kept Mackensen fully informed of the Anglo-Italian talks and the latter reported these continuously to Berlin (33/25312-20) during the 12th and 13th. On Jan. 17 Attolico handed over to Weizsäcker the complete record of the conversations prepared by Ciano (2441/514643-55). The subject matter of the talks may be found in *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, Third Series, vol. III, document No. 600.

## No. 431

1848/421051-52

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, January 13, 1939.

## CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND FUNK, MINISTER OF ECONOMICS

1. The Foreign Minister informed Herr Funk that a reduction in the foreign-exchange estimates of the Foreign Ministry by 20 percent was completely out of the question. Herr Funk, who had not yet seen the Foreign Minister's letter of yesterday,<sup>1</sup> appreciated the explanations of the Foreign Minister.

2. The following agreement was reached on the question of Italy's foreign-exchange clearing balance:

(a) The foreign-exchange clearing balance is in principle not to be relinquished.

(b) When redistribution and assimilation of the two economies have been completed in a satisfactory manner, this question will, it is hoped, solve itself.

(c) The following instructions are to be given to Minister Clodius:

Germany is unable in principle to renounce the foreign-exchange clearing balance but would be prepared to meet Italian wishes by accepting that 6 million reichsmarks will be charged to the account of the aerial-torpedo deliveries and that only the remaining 6 millions will be payable in liquid foreign exchange.

3. The Foreign Minister had promised 275,000 RM to Ambassador von Mackensen for the rebuilding of the Embassy (Quirinal).

Herr Funk, in agreement with Guarneri, has stated that this sum will be included in the clearing procedure. The Foreign Minister desires that, if difficulties are likely to arise on settling this amount by the clearing method, it should be charged to the foreign-exchange clearing balance. This was likewise discussed with Herr Funk.

4. Herr Funk will now at once draft a plan for future close cooperation in the economic field within the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Triangle. The ultimate object of such cooperation is the building up of auxiliary industries of mutual benefit. Herr Funk will draw up a memorandum on the possibility of economic cooperation, which is also to include the other potential members of the alliance and neutrals. It is proposed to arrange for fresh discussions to be held in a few weeks' time in connection with the preparations to be made meanwhile by

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

Herr Funk. In conjunction with these, conferences should then be started with the representatives of the countries concerned.

Submitted for information to the State Secretary and to the Directors of the Economic Policy and Personnel Departments.

BRÜCKLMEIER

No. 432

2058/447880-81

*The Foreign Ministry to the Ministry of Transport*

W III 340

BERLIN, January 15, 1939.

With reference to the conversation with Ministerialdirektor Prang<sup>1</sup> on the 14th, two telegraphic reports of the 12th and 13th<sup>2</sup> from the Embassy in Rome and also a copy of a memorandum submitted by the Italian Embassy<sup>3</sup> are respectfully enclosed herewith.

In the opinion of the Foreign Ministry the maintenance of German deliveries of coal to Italy involves a question of decisive political and economic significance. As is well known, the German Government has done its utmost in recent years to increase German coal exports to Italy and to reduce imports of British coal into Italy. This has been completely successful. It would be extremely regrettable, not only because of the limitation of German exports but also because of the advantages Britain would gain in Italy from any such limitation, if the transport difficulties that have arisen should prolong the holding up of German coal exports.

In addition to this, as I should like to mention in strict confidence, authoritative Italian military and political departments have already made it perfectly clear that in special instances their confidence in Germany's ability to make deliveries has been shaken by their having ascertained that Germany is even now not in a position to maintain regular traffic arrangements.

I urgently request, therefore, that arrangements be made to rectify as soon as possible the unfortunate defects described above.

I have had a copy of this letter and its enclosures forwarded to the Ministry of Economics and to the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht.

I should be particularly grateful for information soon on what has been arranged at your end.

By order:  
CLODIUS

<sup>1</sup> Alfred Prang, Director of the Financial Department in the Reich Ministry of Transport.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5209/E307965-66).

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (5209/E307979).

## No. 433

1848/421054-55

*The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

## Telegram

No. 30 of January 17 ROME (QUIRINAL), January 18, 1939—2:15 a.m.  
(Delegation No. 1) Received January 18—5:00 a.m.

I. Giannini reports regarding his conversation with the Duce that the latter on January 14 repeated his decision that Italy could no longer pay the foreign-exchange clearing balance. I stated that we could in no circumstances go beyond our latest offer, which I had just made on the strength of instructions given to me in Berlin. No other course therefore remained open for Giannini but to apply once again for a decision from his Government. I observed, moreover, that Attolico had not yet reported on his conversation with the Reich Foreign Minister, in which the latter had declined to abandon the foreign-exchange clearing balance.<sup>1</sup>

II. Seeing that Italians can no longer provide foreign exchange in order to buy registered marks for journeys to Germany and that the purchase of marks at the full rate would make journeys impossible because of the cost, the Italians have proposed to sell travel lire to Germans plus a surcharge of some 10 percent and to apply the difference toward cheapening the travel mark<sup>2</sup> for Italians. Since the number of Italian travelers to Germany is considerably less than the other way about, the amount would be sufficient to buy the travel mark at much the same rate as the registered mark previously was purchased, that is to say for 4.30 lire instead of 7.60. We might perhaps shut our eyes to our rooted objections to a deviation from the official mark rate, as long as the total remaining traffic stays on a par level. Moreover, the increase in the rate of the travel lire might be effected in the form of a tax. The arrangement, however, goes against National Socialist principles, since there is no possibility of exempting persons with low incomes and "Strength through Joy" tourists from the price increase.

In view of the special political importance of maintaining tourist traffic from Italy to Germany also, the delegation considers that the arrangement can nevertheless be discussed, particularly as a similar convention has already been agreed with Yugoslavia. Besides, a heavy adverse balance of payments will be reduced for us to the extent of some 12 million reichsmarks by including travel revenue in the clearing pool. An attempt would also be made, if occasion arises, to

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 427.

<sup>2</sup> Marks available to foreign tourists and businessmen to be spent solely within the Reich; they were obtainable at an especially favorable rate of exchange.

use this arrangement as a *quid pro quo* in the question of the foreign-exchange clearing balance.

III. The Italian delegation declared that its Government must uncompromisingly insist on compensation being paid to the Italian insurance companies, until lately active in Czechoslovakia in connection with their participation in Sudeten-German firms, for the decline in value of Czechoslovak Government bonds held by them as collateral security. Before Christmas I had already rejected this demand in view of the resolutions adopted by the Ministries concerned in Berlin during the recess in the negotiations. The Italians base their claim chiefly on the fact that, because of German legislation, the insurance companies were compelled to issue insurance policies in the Sudeten area at the higher exchange rate of the Czechoslovak crown. In the opinion of the delegation this excess expenditure is already covered by the exchange rate adjustment.

Telegraphic instructions are requested regarding paragraph II.

CLODIUS  
MACKENSEN

### No. 434

1895/426928

#### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 32 of January 17 ROME (QUIRINAL), January 18, 1939—2: 10 a.m.

Received January 18—5: 00 a.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 31 of today.<sup>1</sup>

In a conversation today Ciano said that he anticipated that his visit to Stoyadinović<sup>2</sup> would help to bind Yugoslavia, which in any case could not now separate itself from the Axis Powers, still more closely to them. Friendly relations with Yugoslavia were the key to the policy of the Axis Powers in the Danube area. Ciano reminded me that he had already put forward this idea during his visit to Berchtesgaden. At the beginning this policy was by no means generally accepted here, where hatred for Yugoslavia had been preached for 20 years. The September crisis had shown the great value of this policy, and it had contributed in high measure to the peaceful solution. Stoyadinović's attitude had been clear and unambiguous throughout every minute of the crisis, for the Yugoslav Minister<sup>3</sup> had visited

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5211/E308203).

<sup>2</sup> Milan Stoyadinović, Yugoslav Minister President and Foreign Minister, June 1935—February 1939. Ciano left for Belgrade on Jan. 18 and returned to Rome on the 23rd.

<sup>3</sup> Boshko Christić, November 1937—April 1941.

him—Ciano—every evening “to receive his instructions.” He knew himself to be in complete accord with us in this policy. His object, to disintegrate the Little Entente by this policy, had been achieved. Yugoslav-Hungarian relations, to which in his present visit he seems to wish to pay special attention, were considerably eased by the change in the post of Hungarian Foreign Minister. With Kánya’s “Ballhausplatz”<sup>4</sup> mentality it had been just impossible to get anywhere. Though hitherto a very close collaborator of Kánya’s, Csáky would adopt a different course here, if only to prove himself to be an independent political personality.

MACKENSEN

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<sup>4</sup>The seat of the former Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry was in the Ballhausplatz in Vienna.

### No. 435

1585/383014-15

#### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 330

ROME, January 18, 1939.

Pol. II 280.

#### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Visit of British Prime Minister Chamberlain and Foreign Minister Lord Halifax to Rome.

Chamberlain and Halifax left Rome on the 14th. I am sending a separate report about the general course of the visit. As regards the substance of the political conversations, I refer to my telegraphic reports dealing with them.<sup>1</sup> I would like to supplement these briefly with the following observations:

A section of the world press has attempted to depict the result of the visit as negative because nothing concrete emerged from it and because the previous situation remains practically unaltered. The latter is true. It is, however, going too far to describe the results as purely negative on that account. Only those who had indulged in unjustifiable expectations could feel disappointed. To what extent this has occurred with the British I cannot judge, but from what I have heard on the subject from British people here, I cannot suppose it to be so. The leading figures in Italy, in particular Count Ciano, have certainly not entertained any illusions regarding the importance and effect of the visit.

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 430, footnote 1.

The Italian public gave an emphatically friendly reception to the British guests and plainly showed their personal sympathy for Chamberlain and Halifax. Their simple and unaffected bearing increased this sympathy, as much indeed with those who came into contact with them officially as with the public in general.

The only function in honor of the British guests, to which the Diplomatic Corps including myself was invited, was the reception at the British Embassy on the 13th attended by about 1,500 persons, including the Government, the principal officials, leading civil servants, high-ranking officers, members of the Party, and representatives of society. They all seemed to attach importance to showing their friendly feelings toward the British Ministers by appearing in person, and one could see that they evinced a certain pleasure in again being able to associate with the British on the same footing as before. As I learned, the Party Secretary, Starace,<sup>2</sup> danced at the Embassy in the highest spirits until the early hours of the morning. On their part, the Duce and Count Ciano also were not lacking in any attention toward their guests, but—and this I deduce from Ciano's observations in conversation with me—while unreservedly recognizing Chamberlain's honorable intentions, they ascribed the underlying motive for the pronouncedly friendly feelings shown by the British toward Italy, not to any sympathy for the Fascist regime, but to their "boundless apprehension at the ever growing strength of the Axis Powers, behind which lies very great anxiety about the future of the world-wide British Empire. [""]

It is, however, certainly not without importance for future developments that the visit has helped both sides to get to know each other personally and has promoted mutual understanding, while the political discussion has thrown light upon the points of view of both parties in some of the great questions outstanding, even if deliberately no attempt was made to reconcile these in part very divergent views. For the present only measures which appear as the natural outcome of the Anglo-Italian Agreement of April last have been proposed or initiated.

As regards ourselves, we can probably be satisfied with the result of the visit. For our point of view could not have been stated more effectively to the British than was done by Mussolini. Likewise the Rome-Berlin Axis could not have been represented more clearly in political discussions and before the public as the unshakable foundation of Italian policy.

VON MACKENSEN

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<sup>2</sup> Achille Starace, Secretary of the Fascist Party and member of the Fascist Grand Council.

## No. 436

1848/421056

*The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT ROME (QUIRINAL), January 19, 1939—11:30 a.m.  
 No. 37 of January 19 Received January 19—1:30 p.m.  
 (Delegation No. 2)

Italy now agrees to supply the torpedoes against clearing payment, if we abandon the foreign-exchange clearing balance. There is still a gap of 6 million reichsmarks between the German and Italian proposals. A further important difference is that we insist on the principle of the foreign-exchange clearing balance and wish to pay up to 50 percent in foreign exchange for the torpedoes, whereas Italy demands that the foreign-exchange clearing balance be given up as a *quid pro quo* for her willingness not to require foreign exchange for the torpedoes.

I have declared that the delegation is unable to improve upon the latest German offer, which represented the utmost concession we could make. I would, however, of course report the Italian proposal to Berlin. The delegation intends, should no other instructions have been received by tomorrow evening, January 20, to issue a statement that the German Government has declined the Italian proposal.

CLODIUS  
 MACKENSEN

## No. 437

2058/447888

*The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

URGENT BERLIN, January 20, 1939.  
 URGENT zu W III 492.  
 No. 30

With reference to your No. 37 (Delegation telegram No. 2).<sup>1</sup>  
 Rejection of Italian proposal agreed.<sup>2</sup>

WIEHL

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 436.

<sup>2</sup> Typed marginal note: "The authorities with whom the affair was discussed this afternoon were unanimous that it is impossible for us to forward once again to a higher level, even for discussion only, the question of renouncing the foreign-exchange clearing balance, as long as Giannini has not once more obtained the decision of his Government—a course which he must inevitably take if we stick to the foreign-exchange clearing balance (paragraph 1 of Delegation telegram No. 1) but for which he has evidently no liking."

The text of the telegram originally began with this sentence, which was deleted before transmission: "Clearing payment for torpedoes would be insufficient compensation for long-term abandonment of foreign-exchange clearing balance."

## No. 438

2058/447894-95

*The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 43 of January 23

(Delegation No. 6)

ROME (QUIRINAL), January 24, 1939—2: 10 a.m.

Received January 24—4: 45 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 30<sup>1</sup> and to Delegation telegram No. 4.<sup>2</sup>

I. Guarneri communicated the following new Italian proposal: Foreign-exchange clearing balance to be maintained for 1939. The total payment of 6 million reichsmarks in foreign exchange for the aerial torpedoes will be charged to the clearing balance, so that the actual foreign-exchange payment will be 6 million reichsmarks. The foreign-exchange clearing balance to be abolished as from 1940. Another stipulation is agreement *in toto* and the removal of the necessity for Italy to spend foreign exchange on travel to Germany.

I answered that the last German proposal represented the utmost concession we could make.

II. Our policy. We can, on the one hand, categorically refuse the counterproposals and mark time to see whether the Italians, faced by the political impossibility of breaking off the negotiations, will in the end bow to the German pressure.

Should we, on the other hand, attempt to reach an agreement based on the Italian proposals, then it is pointless to stage a discussion on the abolition of the clearing balance as from 1940, since this in the Italian view would be tantamount to a refusal. By demanding that, as from 1940, deliveries of raw materials shall be on account of the clearing balance, little effect is achieved in the building up of reciprocal trade, as in any case, apart from this, mutual deliveries of raw materials will already be increased to the utmost possible limit, in accordance with the secret agreement<sup>3</sup> of which you are aware. Besides, such an arrangement would in any case be void, if the further negotiations envisaged between Reich Minister Funk and Guarneri, on a closer correlation of the two economies, yield results. The following possibilities thus remain:

1. To insist on the demand that the Italians should pay the foreign-exchange clearing balance of 12 million reichsmarks while we in return would pay 50 percent of the cost of the torpedoes in foreign exchange on the maturity dates. This would be more advantageous to us, in view of future maturity dates.

2. To demand that the sum of approximately 1,600,000 RM repre-

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 437.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (2058/447892).

<sup>3</sup> Presumably the Second Secret Protocol of Dec. 18, 1937.

senting accrued interest on the Dawes and Young loans and hitherto comprised in the 12 millions, should not be included in the 6 millions. This would have the effect of maintaining the foreign-exchange clearing balance for 1939 at a figure of 7,600,000 RM.

3. To demand that Italy should subsidize tourist traffic to Germany as formerly. This would debit the Italian foreign-exchange clearing balance with, in round figures, 5,000,000 RM and would mean for us a continuation of foreign-exchange receipts from registered-mark participation amounting to approximately 1,200,000 RM.

To the demand which I at once made that the arrangement suggested by us concerning the torpedoes should be accepted, the Italians replied that Guarneri had received a definite order from the Duce to demand the complete abolition of the clearing balance, and he could under no circumstances now propose to the Duce a settlement which implied, outwardly at least, the 100 percent retention of the clearing balance without altering the original wording of the treaty. The continued circulation of the registered mark will likewise meet with determined opposition, for the Italians have already in all the recent negotiations emphatically demanded its abolition and, moreover, Guarneri has made a satisfactory agreement on this question an express condition of the offer. An attempt to make payment now of the Dawes and Young loans through the clearing pool offers perhaps the best prospects, and this would have to be provided for, in any case, for the period from 1940 onward.

I request instructions by telegram, whether to adhere to a refusal or to make an effort at agreement along the lines of the proposal. In the latter case, I request authorization for the delegation to strike a bargain on the best possible terms to be obtained under headings 1 and 2. I further request telegraphic instructions whether proposals can be made by us on the question of tourist traffic.

CLODIUS  
MACKENSEN

No. 439

2410/511055-56

*The Propaganda Ministry to the Foreign Ministry*

URGENT

No. VIII 8205/20.1.39-VIII 1/12

BERLIN, January 24, 1939.

Received January 24.

Pol. IV 505.

Subject: Report on the German element in South Tyrol.

At the present moment German publishers and authors are in the greatest uncertainty as to how to handle questions dealing with South

Tyrol. The effect of this is that maps and atlases are published only at rare intervals and under great difficulties. German publishing houses and bookshops have suffered heavy material losses through the cutting-off or nonappearance of certain kinds of literature (atlases, etc., *volksdeutsch* literature).

Authors of works on popular history find themselves in a quandary as to whether reference may be made to the German element in South Tyrol (and its achievements) in the past. The same holds true for publishers of maps (globes and atlases) on the question whether the existence of Germans in South Tyrol in former centuries should be emphasized.

I request you to inform me of your attitude toward the individual questions on the following list.<sup>1</sup>

1. *Representation of cultural monuments*

(a) May the Castle of Tyrol [*Schloss Tirol*] be represented in a specialized book of photographs?

(b) May the costumes of southern Tyrolese valleys (Sarn Valley, Eisack Valley, etc.) be portrayed in a German book on costumes?

(c) May street scenes of Bozen, Meran, etc., be used as examples of German culture in town architecture?

2. *Treatment of nationality situation*

(a) Should the number of Germans in South Tyrol, as shown in the latest official Italian census, be cited in a survey of the distribution of the German language?

(b) Should reports of the VDA or of other *volksdeutsch* associations on South Tyrol be quoted?

(c) Is it possible to describe the Germans of South Tyrol as members of the German people in the same way as the ethnic group in Hungary [*ungarländische Volksgruppe*] or the Germans in Poland, or

(d) Should the Germans of South Tyrol be treated in the same way as the people of Luxembourg, Alsace, and Switzerland?

3. *Rendering of German names of towns, rivers, and mountains*

(a) Are the German names of towns (Bozen, Meran) to be used only?

(b) Shall the Italian name be given in addition to the German?

(c) Is the Italian name to appear first, with the German after?

(d) Is the Italian nomenclature alone to be used?

(e) May only the German names be used for rivers and mountains?

4. *Maps featuring South Tyrol*

(a) Can South Tyrol be represented as part of the German language area?

(b) May South Tyrol be described as part of the compact territory of the German *people* and of their settlements?

<sup>1</sup> For the reply by the Foreign Ministry to this questionnaire, see document No. 453.

5. *Use of the expression of South Tyrol in cartography and in literature.*

An order of the Führer's Deputy forbids the use of the expression South Tyrol in German literature. In my opinion, this prohibition must be retained.

6. *Inclusion of the old frontiers of the Reich (Austrian State frontiers).*

It is desirable that an exception be made in the case of historical atlases, since for a thousand years South Tyrol has formed part of the German Reich according to constitutional law and this fact is well-known.

By order:  
BERNDT<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Alfred Berndt was Ministerialrat in the Ministry of Propaganda.

## No. 440

1546/375966-67

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 46 of January 25

ROME, January 25, 1939—11: 55 p.m.

Received January 26—3: 20 a.m.

Pol. IV 524.

Ciano asked me to visit him this evening so as to inform me, according to his promise, about his journey to Belgrade<sup>1</sup> and to supplement the account which he had already given to our Minister there. It stood to reason that at every instant the conversation touched on the Axis, but he had inserted a mention to this effect in the closing communiqué. A brief summary of the substance of the conversation gives more or less the following picture:

1. After certain difficulties immediately following the elections, the position of Stoyadinović in internal politics is today perfectly secure, both in Parliament, where he can count on a solid majority, and with the Prince Regent,<sup>2</sup> who has described him in conversation as miles ahead of all other Yugoslav politicians. The still-existing differences between the three racial components can be explained historically and can be overcome in the same way as both Italy and we had gradually to overcome earlier historical antipathies between North and South.

<sup>1</sup> Ciano visited Belgrade Jan. 18-23 and received a warm welcome from Stoyadinović. His principal objective was to obtain Yugoslav acquiescence in the intended annexation of Albania, although he did not disclose this to Mackensen.

<sup>2</sup> Prince Paul was Regent of Yugoslavia from Oct. 9, 1934, until Mar. 27, 1941, when King Peter II assumed full sovereign powers.

2. In foreign affairs, Stoyadinović is entirely bent on ever closer contact with the Axis Powers, even approaching the external forms of their governmental systems more and more closely, while at the same time progressively loosening ties with France and England.

3. Relationship between Yugoslavia and Italy. No fresh agreements of any kind were reached, but the firm intention of both parties was emphasized to tighten the existing links more and more.

4. Yugoslavia-Hungary. Stoyadinović is very anxious to improve relations and is also prepared to make a public declaration, if Hungary on her part gives proof of a sincere readiness for an understanding. Because of Rumania, there is no question today of the conclusion of a pact of friendship, since, even though the Little Entente is moribund, Yugoslavia has no wish, at a moment when Rumania is weak both at home and abroad, to add to the latter's difficulties by lending support to Hungary. Stoyadinović set great store by an improvement in Hungarian-Rumanian relations but did not ignore the difficulties, especially if Hungary would not restrict herself to securing protection for the minorities and would not plainly renounce territorial claims which, in view of the intermingling of the ethnic groups in those areas, could not actually be realized. (See my telegram No. 48 of today.<sup>3</sup>)

5. Yugoslavia and the League of Nations. Stoyadinović, who, as is well known, has never visited Geneva and in reality objects to the League of Nations, does not intend to withdraw immediately but plans, when Hungary retires formally from the League in May, to withdraw his own delegation without any formalities.

6. Anti-Comintern Pact. Both Stoyadinović and the Prince Regent are in favor of this in principle, the latter however with reservations. Stoyadinović feels only that the right moment has not yet arrived. The preparation of public opinion, etc., must come first. Stoyadinović observed in addition that he had not yet received any invitation to adhere to the pact and, specifically, had heard nothing from Germany. Ciano replied that he was now conveying the invitation—a step which immediately prior to his departure from Rome he had been especially urged to take by me, under instructions from the Reich Foreign Minister. Stoyadinović seems, however, as Ciano hinted, to attach great value to being directly encouraged by us in this matter, and Ciano recommends that we do this. He told me in addition that Stoyadinović might perhaps consider the right moment for joining to be in May after Hungary resigned from the League of Nations.

7. Ciano, summing up, declared himself extremely satisfied with the attitude of Stoyadinović toward foreign affairs and in particular toward the Axis. He repeatedly stressed the great emphasis which Stoyadinović, and still more the Prince Regent, had laid on their close friendship with Field Marshal Göring.

MACKENSEN

<sup>3</sup> Should read "No. 47" (document No. 441).

## No. 441

1213/332483

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 47 of January 25

ROME, January 25, 1939—11:00 p.m.

Received January 26—2:25 a.m.

Pol. IV 525.

With reference to paragraph 4 of my telegram No. 46 of today.<sup>1</sup> Ciano, as he told me, encountered the view in Belgrade that Csáky had brought back the idea from Berlin that, while no doubt we most keenly desired an agreement between Hungary and Yugoslavia, on the other hand the normalization of Hungary's relations with Rumania was more or less a matter of indifference to us.<sup>2</sup> He, Ciano, had not for a long time had any exchange of views on this subject with the Reich Foreign Minister. He recalled, however, that in previous conversations the Foreign Minister had shared his opinion that Rumania for various reasons represented a most important factor to the Axis Powers and that, therefore, we were very anxious for an arrangement between Budapest and Bucharest. On my remarking that I had no knowledge of any change in the Reich Foreign Minister's views on the matter, Ciano suggested to me that I should make perfectly sure of this, so that the policies of the Axis Powers on this question might conform in every respect and so that he might instruct his representatives accordingly. He added that, even though we might strongly dislike some recent events in Rumania, yet we still had a considerable interest in drawing her gradually closer to the Axis Powers.

Please send me instructions.

MACKENSEN

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 440.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. v for Csáky's Berlin conversations of Jan. 16, 1939.

## No. 442

2058/447896

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

No. 42

BERLIN, January 28, 1939.

zu W III 601.<sup>2</sup>

For Minister Clodius. With reference to your Delegation telegram No. 6.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Copy dispatched to the Consulate General in Milan.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 438.

The Minister of Economics and President of the Reichsbank<sup>3</sup> is of the opinion, as a result of the statements which the Duce made to him in December for transmission to the Führer, that a foreign-exchange clearing balance cannot be maintained after the year 1939. We have, therefore, in spite of serious doubts, been obliged to change our basic attitude and to authorize you to aim at a settlement on this basis: foreign-exchange clearing balance for 1939, torpedo transactions (independent of the foreign-exchange clearing balance) at the most to the extent of 50 percent in foreign exchange, the Dawes and Young loans to be serviced as hitherto during 1939 through the clearing pool. However, please allow no possible doubt to exist that this settlement is only considered as part of a general agreement, that is to say that we can envisage it only if the Italians give absolutely satisfactory declarations, particularly regarding the import of manufactured goods, and also if tourist traffic between Italy and Germany remains in its present form.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>3</sup> Walther Funk.

## No. 443

1975/438310

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

No. 46

BERLIN, January 28, 1939—9:30 p.m.  
zu Pol. IV 525.

With reference to your telegram No. 47 of January 25.<sup>2</sup>

When continuing your conversation with Ciano, please make the following points:

The relationship between Hungary and Rumania was treated on the occasion of Csáky's visit<sup>3</sup> as being uncertain. The possible form of agreement envisaged by Hungary was not brought clearly enough to our attention for us on our part to take any active steps.

Furthermore, we also are interested in gradually drawing Rumania closer to the Axis Powers. We think it advisable, however, to wait and see first of all how the uncertain internal situation in Rumania will develop.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Initialed in the margin by Ribbentrop.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 441.

<sup>3</sup> Count Csáky visited Berlin Jan. 15-18 and was received by Hitler and Ribbentrop on the 16th. See vol. v of this series.

## No. 444

2130/465232-36

*The Foreign Ministry to the Consulate General at Milan*

SECRET

BERLIN, January 31, 1939.

Pol. IV 143 g.

With reference to the report of the 17th on resettlement submitted by Consul General Bene to the Foreign Ministry.<sup>1</sup>

The Foreign Ministry agrees in principle with the views expressed in the report mentioned above. The Consulate General is therefore requested to proceed on these lines. The Foreign Ministry has established contact with the proper authorities with regard to both the work to be carried out in Germany and financing of the resettlement.

A copy of the memorandum on the meeting of January 14 is enclosed.

The Embassy in Rome will receive a copy<sup>2</sup> of this instruction as well as of the enclosure, together with a copy of your report of the 17th.

By order:  
WOERMANN

[Enclosure]

SECRET

BERLIN, January 14, 1939.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JANUARY 14, 1939, PRESIDED OVER BY  
UNDER STATE SECRETARY WOERMANN, TO CONSIDER SOUTH TYROL  
QUESTIONS

List of those present attached.

Under State Secretary Woermann opened the proceedings with the statement that the question of the resettlement of Germans from South Tyrol in the Reich had been raised by the Italian Embassy with the Foreign Ministry here. The Foreign Minister had decided that the absorption of South Tyrolese who did not wish to remain in South Tyrol was not to be effected by any large-scale action but very quietly and gradually. The question now was to consider by what means such a limited resettlement could be carried out.

Consul General Bene then described the situation in South Tyrol.<sup>3</sup> He made it clear that since the reunion of Austria with the Reich the position had been very trying. At the moment the mood was more peaceful, but beneath the surface the conflict was going on. The Duce's de-Germanization edict [*Entgermanisierungsbefehl*] was still

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2130/465237-41).

<sup>2</sup> The copy printed here is the one received in Rome.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. I, documents Nos. 729, 741, 744, 748, 749, 767, 768, 771, 775, 780, and 785.

in force. This manifested itself above all in the ruthless expropriation of German property against only trifling compensation. The South Tyrolese, however, did not want to give up their German character [*Deutschtum*] and hoped one day indeed to belong to the German Reich. This hope had been strengthened above all by the incorporation of the Sudetenland.

Consul General Bene then explained that the resettlement of *Volksdeutsche* from South Tyrol in the Reich was not possible on a large scale, as the South Tyrolese had grown up so intimately with the soil that they did not want to leave the country, in spite of all the oppression on the part of the Italian authorities. In his opinion, it was a question of resettling at the most one or two thousand *Volksdeutsche* (out of 230,000). On the other hand, the taking over of Reich Germans in South Tyrol, whom he estimated at about 10,000 and whose position was still worse than that of the *Volksdeutsche*, could and must be proceeded with on a larger scale. The Foreign Minister had also stated to him that the operation was only to be carried out gradually in a quiet way.

After these arguments had been heard, the question was considered in what way the resettlement could take place. Consul General Bene stated that it was an important question whether the *Volksdeutsche* who would be considered for resettlement could at once be granted citizenship rights so that they should be in a position to leave Italy with a Reich-German passport. This question was answered in the affirmative by Counselor of Legation Siedler. Consul General Bene wishes to clear up with the proper Italian authorities the further question whether they are prepared, at a later date, to give those who have become German citizens permission to visit Italy in certain cases, and also the question of their release from compulsory military service.

For the carrying out of the resettlement, the repatriation office at the headquarters of the AO of the NSDAP was proposed, particularly as a reception center in Germany. The head of the repatriation office, Herr Andersen, signified his agreement. Herr Schmitt of the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* (Immigration Advisory Board, Berlin, Wilhelmstrasse, 42B) also expressed his approval but asked that the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* should be called in to assist in cases involving the taking over of *Volksdeutsche* to whom it had not yet been possible to grant citizenship. Consul General Bene will find a person well acquainted with conditions in South Tyrol, who should first be employed by the repatriation office of the Auslandsorganisation in order to acquaint himself thoroughly with the work and should then be assigned to the Consulate General to put it into effect. The expenses entailed by this as well as by the appointment of an additional clerical

assistant are to be met by the Foreign Ministry. As regards the other expenses arising out of the resettlement, transport, fares, etc., according to information given by the representative of the Immigration Advisory Board and in the opinion of Consul General Bene, will be borne by the Reich Institution for the Provision of Employment and for Unemployment Insurance and by the appropriate welfare authorities. Foreign exchange would not be necessary for this.

MOHRMANN

Meeting of January 14, 1938, in the Foreign Ministry to deal with questions about South Tyrol.

Present:

<i>Chairman:</i> Under State Secretary Woermann	} Foreign Ministry
Counselor of Legation Siedler	
Counselor of Legation Heinburg	
Counselor of Legation Mohrmann	
Attaché von Keller	
Consul General Bene	} Consulate General, Milan
Amtsleiter Andersen	} Headquarters of the AO of the NSDAP
Amtsleiter Berg	
Schmitt	
	} Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle

### No. 445

2058/447897-98

#### *The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 55 of January 31  
(Delegation No. 8)

ROME, February 1, 1939—12: 45 a.m.  
Received February 1—3: 15 a.m.

With reference to your No. 42.<sup>1</sup>

1. Today the Italians described as their utmost concession the previous offer, contingent on the elimination of the foreign-exchange clearing balance as from 1940, to pay 6 million reichsmarks in foreign exchange during the current year and to charge the entire remainder against the torpedo account. In reply the delegation insisted that the clearing balance should be maintained in full and that half the purchase price of the torpedoes should be paid in foreign exchange on the date due.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 442.

2. The Italians are prepared to maintain the import of manufactured goods at the previous level during 1939 but emphatically reject any increase. They demand that the deficit, which they reckon at 60 and we at 80 million reichsmarks, should be covered by deliveries of steel and machinery, in equal proportions. They are ready to enter later into conversations on a new basis of trade, but practical results from this are hardly to be expected. The delegation declined and made the counterproposal that the whole deficit should be covered either by an equal percentage increase in all categories of German exports or, if need be, by a partial reduction of Italian imports into Germany, of tourist traffic, and of capital transfers. The object of the counterproposal was to reach agreement by taking a middle course. The Italians are very stubborn, basing their demand primarily on political grounds. In this year of crisis, Germany must assist with all her power in the industrial and military rearming of Italy. The Italians point out moreover that during and after the war in Abyssinia we had likewise demanded that our clearing balance should be met by deliveries of raw materials.

As regards (1) and (2): the delegation, so long as no other instructions are received, will adhere to the policy hitherto followed; admittedly this will lead to further serious arguments. In view of the rigid attitude of the Italians, I indicated today that it might become necessary under certain circumstances in the case of non-agreement to break off the negotiations temporarily.

3. If a general arrangement is actually achieved, the repurchase of Italian-held shares in the Danube Steam Navigation Company would probably be feasible through the clearing pool, with the corresponding deliveries of steel accounted for in like manner. The difference in price is between 4,600,000 and 5,000,000 RM. Telegraph your highest offer.

4. New Italian proposal for the Styrian Electricity Company. Payment through the clearing of the purchase price agreed with Olscher. To effect an adjustment in the movement of currency, repayment of the proceeds will be made as follows:

A rolling mill for Fiat, costing 90 million lire, of which the buyer is prepared to pay 50 million immediately; 24,000 tons of steel for Fiat from Alpine Montan at the price of 24,000,000 lire; the equivalent of the entire German Aquila property, including the share of the Southern Sugar Company, 31 million lire. The balance of 32,600,000 lire will be handled through the clearing for the time being, without any special counter delivery, since an adjustment will be made later only by means of the outstanding 35 millions for the rolling mill. The Italians assert that the Alpine Company has offered to the Fiat Works 24,000 tons of pig iron, sheet metal, and wrought

iron, in addition to the supplementary delivery of steel just offered by the delegation.

I request telegraphic instructions as to how the question is to be handled further and, especially, information concerning the Alpine offer. Also, whether deliveries of machinery may be made to cover the deficit, if no arrangement is made in the case of the Styrian Electricity Company.

CLODIUS  
MACKENSEN

No. 446

5210/ES08194-96

*The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

ROME, February 3, 1939—12:00 midnight.

No. 61

(Delegation No. 9)

Agreement reached on the following basis:

1. Foreign-exchange clearing balance remains unchanged for 1939; eliminated for 1940.
2. The 3,500,000 RM for Aquila petroleum deliveries hitherto paid in foreign exchange to be paid under clearing pool from 1940.
3. Dawes and Young plans extended for one year. From 1940 will come under clearing pool. Transfer settlement also for one year.
4. Danube Steam and Styrian Electricity entirely under clearing pool.
5. Torpedo transaction 50 percent foreign exchange, 50 percent clearing pool. Payments in 1939 amounting to approximately 2,400,000 RM to be made entirely in foreign exchange and the corresponding last payments entirely by clearing pool.
6. Total German exports to Italy for 1939 to be 465,000,000 RM as against 350,000,000 RM in 1938.
7. Deficit amount of 83,000,000 RM to be met by additional deliveries as follows: coal 10,000,000; machinery, technical equipment and instruments, and electrical equipment 33,000,000; other goods 10,700,000, of which 5,000,000 are on a special list; remainder covered by 3 percent increase in total exports. Additional exports to colonies 1,250,000; steel—including half-finished products—15,000,000. Further, sale of Aquila shares, 4,100,000. Italian tourist traffic to Germany 9,000,000.
8. Thirty-seven thousand immigrant agricultural workers with a transfer limit of 400 RM and 8,500 industrial workers with a transfer limit of 800 RM.
9. For tourist traffic from Germany to Italy 60,000,000 is deposited, and 15,000,000 from Italy to Germany, 6,000,000 of which is a supplement additional to the above 60,000,000.

10. Definite promise by Italians to insure that the maintenance at past level of imports of finished goods and the acceptance according to paragraph 5 above of the agreed additional imports of finished goods will not be endangered by application of import conditions.

11. Text regarding insurance companies follows by telephone.

Our agreement to Italian proposals for defining the scope of Italian tourist traffic to Germany formed the turning-point in the negotiations and considerably eases their conclusion. In considering the composition of the additional imports, it should be borne in mind that the Italians still suffer from unemployment in their finished-goods industries, and therefore concessions are very hard to obtain. After all a large range of finished goods which we need are also included in the 33,000,000 RM's worth of machinery, etc.

Signature on Monday or Tuesday.

Request approval by telephone of insurance letter and of increase in supplementary steel deliveries.

I point out that the delegation expressly made the reservation that a guarantee of utilization [of this increase] cannot be given, especially as the Italians will probably not buy piping. They think, however, that they will be able to find semifinished goods on the German market which will interest them.

CLODIUS  
MACKENSEN

No. 447

FI9/448-51

*Ambassador Mackensen to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop*

TOP SECRET

ROME, February 4, 1939.

MY DEAR MINISTER: Count Ciano requested me to visit him this morning for the purpose of imparting to me in the strictest confidence the following information for transmission to you, Mr. Minister:

M. Baudouin, president of the Banque de l'Indo-Chine, known to the Italians through his cooperation with Italian officials on questions concerning the exploitation of Red Sea salt, had recently asked him for an interview as the bearer of special secret instructions from Daladier and Bonnet. This took place the day before yesterday.

M. Baudouin stated to him that both Daladier and Bonnet were prepared to discuss with the Italians certain disputed matters concerning Franco-Italian relations with the object of reaching a peaceful settlement on them. An obvious condition for such conversations was that Italian claims for territorial concessions, publicly recognizable as such, should be entirely excluded.

M. Baudouin made the following statements on the various points:

1. Djibouti

(a) Port: To allow an extensive free zone (half the port area?). Count Ciano thought of this as modeled somewhat after the arrangement Yugoslavia has in Salonika.

The utmost possible cooperation in the administration of the port.

(b) Djibouti-Addis Ababa Railway: that part of the line in French Somaliland (between 80 and 90 kilometers) to remain French property, while the Abyssinian section is handed over to Italy, with the French prepared to arrange a clearing for the necessary transfer of capital.

The closest cooperation between the two railway administrations to be guaranteed in the interests of efficient management, as likewise a railway connection to the free port, which will make possible railway traffic between the free port and Abyssinia, free of customs barriers.

2. Suez Canal

Since, in fact, the British and Egyptian Governments, but not the French Government, are shareholders, the latter is unable to exercise direct influence. It is, however, fully prepared to intervene in favor of a settlement which would pay due regard to the legitimate interests of the countries most concerned with shipping traffic through the Canal and, therefore, to a corresponding alteration in the composition of the Board of Directors. France would, moreover, gladly cooperate in bringing about a reduction of dues.

Count Ciano observed at this point that he had immediately drawn Baudouin's attention to the necessity of finding a solution which would take into account likewise our—the German—desires in this quarter.

3. Tunis

The rights of Italians living in Tunis to be guaranteed. Baudouin was not more definite than this about French intentions. Count Ciano, however, made it clear to him that Italian wishes were aimed at the unimpaired retention by Italians living in Tunis of their nationality, with all rights appertaining thereto.

Count Ciano took note of the statements by Baudouin, who did not go into details on the settlement which the French had in mind. He then brought them to the knowledge of the Duce and on his instructions informed Baudouin in a second and, as Ciano added, final interview yesterday that Rome was prepared to engage in talks of this nature, provided:

(a) the French approach the Italian Government entirely through official channels.

(b) the conversations are treated with the utmost possible discretion.

He had, moreover, agreed with Baudouin himself that, in the event of any kind of indiscretion, the conversations hitherto held would

at any time be officially denied. Count Ciano told me in addition that the Italians had no more intention than previously of seizing the initiative in any way but would rather await a possible move on the part of François-Poncet.<sup>1</sup> The views of the Duce concerning the present tentative approach coincided furthermore, as Count Ciano added to me, entirely with those on the two stages in Italian-French relations, expressed by him about a month ago to the Reich Foreign Minister in a letter on another subject<sup>2</sup> (at this point Count Ciano read the letter to me). Mussolini had no objection, in view of the present military position, if peaceful solutions could be found for these three questions of the first stage; the further, second, "historical" stage would not be affected in the slightest degree.

With repeated references to the fact that to date only Daladier, Bonnet, and Baudouin in France, only he and the Duce in Italy, and no one else, not even Ambassadors Attolico and Guariglia, had knowledge of this tentative French approach, Count Ciano begged me most urgently to treat the matter with the utmost secrecy. He entirely agreed that, in order to preserve this secrecy, I should transmit my report to you, Mr. Minister, not by telegram but in a letter typed by my own hand.<sup>3</sup>

Heil Hitler!

MACKENSEN

<sup>1</sup> An entry of Feb. 3 in *The Ciano Diaries, 1939-1943*, p. 21, records that the Duce preferred that the negotiations should be carried on through the Ambassador, adding: "If we reach port through the mediation of a banker, suspicions of a moral character will be aroused against us."

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 421.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "Telephoned to the Obersalzberg. Completed, 4:30 p.m., Feb. 7, 1939. H[ewel]"

## No. 448

5210/308197-98

*The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 58 of February 8

BERLIN, February 8, 1939—9:10 p.m.

Received February 8—9:43 p.m.

For Clodius.

With reference to Delegation telegram No. 9 of February 3.<sup>1</sup>

1. Ministry of Economics states that increased deliveries of coal are out of the question in view of our own coal situation. Steel increase from 11,500,000 as envisaged to 15,000,000 by deliveries of ship-building materials also impossible in view of our own requirements

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 446.

and because total production cannot be increased. On the other hand, deliveries of hoop iron, wrought iron, cast iron, and rolled wire would be possible.

2. Ministry of Economics directs attention to necessary expenditure of 10,000,000 RM a year on the 12,000 Italian workers already working in Germany, which has perhaps been overlooked in your calculations.

3. As according to (1) and (2) the cover for the deficit would fall short by 20 to 25 million, the amount can, if necessary, be equalized by omitting the Styrian Electricity settlement.

4. All other points agreed. Approval of Reich Minister of Economics not yet obtained. If any alterations are to be made these will be conveyed by telephone early tomorrow morning. But please continue negotiations on the above basis immediately.

WIEHL

No. 449

116/66201-02

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

No. 69 of February 10

ROME, February 10, 1939—9:10 p.m.

Received February 11—12:05 a.m.

Today Ciano urgently asked me to come to see him about what he hesitatingly described as a "serious affair." He had before him a telegraphic report from Attolico regarding a statement, details of which are not known to me, made yesterday by the State Secretary concerning German intentions toward Albanian petroleum. In the summer he had already spoken to me about Italy's great sensitivity regarding everything touching Albania. (Cf. my exchange of correspondence at the time with the State Secretary, Pol. IV 3833 of June 8, and Pol. IV 4368 of June 29.<sup>1</sup>) Italy already regarded Albania as her own province, although this was not yet legally the case. Everything which concerned Albania was a purely Italian family affair. He certainly did not need to explain any further to me his—Ciano's—attitude

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (Pol. IV 3833: 2184/472016-17. Pol. IV 4368: 2129/464445-46). These are Weizsäcker's replies to a personal letter from Mackensen dated May 23, 1938 (2184/472013-15). The latter described a conversation he had just had with Ciano in which Ciano complained that the German Consul General in Tirana, Pannwitz, was indulging in anti-Italian intrigues, in spite of the fact that Albania was indispensable to Italy for strategic reasons and that she had spent milliards in developing the oil fields and other natural resources of the country. In his replies Weizsäcker stated that Ciano's complaints were without foundation. See also vol. I, document No. 778.

toward us and his complete devotion to the Axis policy as the basis of Italian policy. Though the Duce and he had certainly had great success already in their unceasing efforts to spread and deepen the principle of Axis policy more and more among the masses, there were still certain circles who did not fully pull their weight and who only awaited their opportunity to throw doubt on the expediency of this policy and to arouse feeling against it. Italy had sunk such huge sums of money in Albania that the people would be unable to understand the situation if Italy allowed the profits, which are only now gradually beginning to appear, to diminish in any way. Moreover, Italy had a vested right to all minerals mined throughout Albania. He could not and would not believe that we wanted by any action of ours to make difficulties for Mussolini and his efforts to popularize the Axis. Mussolini was giving the matter very deep consideration and had instructed him to ask me to call on him—Ciano—immediately.

Ciano conducted the conversation in the most friendly tone but made it clear that Albania was a *noli me tangere* for the Duce.

I promised him I would report the conversation to Berlin immediately.

MACKENSEN

## No. 450

483/231488-89

### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy*

#### Telegram

No. 64

BERLIN, February 11, 1939.

For the Ambassador personally.

As agreed, I asked the Italian Ambassador to call on me today and explained to him that, regarding the suggestion by Albanian circles, of which the Italian Government had been informed, that we should participate in the production of petroleum there, we had expected appreciation at most, and not admonishment, from Italy.<sup>1</sup> State Secretary Keppler, who was present during part of the conversation, informed Attolico of the origin of the affair as follows: Party Member Werlin was approached several times at Tirana, on the occasion of the delivery of a Daimler car as a gift from the Führer to the King of Albania, to ascertain whether Germany would not also like to share in the exploitation of petroleum in Albania. Professor Benz,

<sup>1</sup> In a minute of the same date to the Foreign Minister (483/231485) Weizsäcker records that he told Attolico that the Italians should be grateful to the Germans for not undertaking enterprises in Albania without informing Rome about them.

the petroleum specialist of the Provincial Institute of Geology, referred the matter to Keppler and from Keppler it came to me a few days ago. Germany, from our knowledge of the facts of the case, has done nothing whatever to which Rome could object.

Attolico undertook to telegraph at once to Rome and put the matter in its true light.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 451

2031/444685-89

*German-Italian Commercial Agreement Signed in  
Rome, February 13, 1939*<sup>1</sup>

TOP SECRET

W 230/39. g. Rs.

#### THIRD SECRET PROTOCOL<sup>2</sup>

In accordance with the instructions given to them by their Governments, the chairman of the German Government Committee and the chairman of the Italian Government Committee for regulating economic relations between Germany and Italy have, by coopting several members of the Government Committees and experts, continued the discussion of the question raised at Munich and at Rome in 1937, as to the manner in which Germany and Italy can furnish each other with special assistance in the economic field, over and above the extent prevailing hitherto in normal and abnormal times, and what can be done in normal times to make provision for this assistance for special contingencies.

<sup>1</sup> An entry of Feb. 13 in *The Ciano Diaries, 1939-1943*, p. 28, says: "The commercial agreement between Italy and Germany has been signed. It embraces many points and, as the technicians say, is very satisfactory."

The Third Secret Protocol was accompanied by an exchange of letters between the German and Italian delegations (2031/444676-84), settling the various points at issue. The agreements reached on the foreign-exchange clearing balance and on the aerial torpedo transaction are summarized in Clodius' telegram of Feb. 3 (document No. 446). In the question of tourist traffic, it was agreed to establish a special reichsmark account in order to encourage travel from Italy to Germany; this fund would be created by charging German tourists an additional 10 percent fee for their purchases of lire, and adding from the general clearing pool a sum one and a half times as large as the total proceeds from the new 10 percent fee. Further, Italians would buy reichsmarks at 60 percent of the usual exchange rate. See document No. 433.

Germany agreed to compensate Italian insurance companies for losses resulting from the devaluation of Czech Government bonds (see document No. 433) and to make restitution for the liquidation of Italian-held shares of Austrian loans.

<sup>2</sup> For the Second Secret Protocol signed Dec. 18, 1937, see vol. I, document No. 84. The original Secret Protocol was signed May 14, 1937.

These discussions led to the following result :

1. With reference to paragraph 1 of the Secret Protocol of May 14, 1937, the chairman of the German Government Committee handed to the chairman of the Italian Government Committee the lists of goods which Germany wishes to purchase from Italy. The chairman of the Italian Government Committee stated that lists B and D, which he had submitted on the occasion of the last meeting (Rome 1937), ought, with the exception of coal, also to remain valid for the year 1939.

It was thereupon agreed to execute the deliveries resulting from lists A and B in 1939, while reserving the possibility of certain modifications. Furthermore, those deliveries which are provided for in both directions in abnormal times are to be found in the two appended lists C and D.

2. The chairmen of the two Government Committees then took note of the result of the discussions which the railway experts on both sides held in Munich on October 24, 1938, on the operation of German-Italian traffic and which had the result shown in the enclosure.<sup>3</sup>

The discussions revealed that in normal times 4.65 million tons net can be carried over the Brenner, San Candido, Tarvisio, and Piedicolle and 1.92 million tons net over the St. Gotthard; in all 6.57 million tons net, and that this figure can be increased to 7.77 million tons net at the utmost in abnormal times, not counting transport through Switzerland and Yugoslavia.

Consequently, even though an increase of about 50 percent in transport facilities appears possible in view of the statistics for the previous years, the two chairmen are agreed that even the figures thus obtained will in no way be sufficient to insure regular traffic in abnormal times.

The two chairmen are agreed that, in view of this state of affairs, an improvement in the conditions of transport between Germany and Italy is of particular importance. They will report to their Governments accordingly and recommend that the two Governments should at once take steps to increase the capacity of the traffic lines in question.

Signed in Rome on February 13, 1939, in the German and Italian languages, with two original copies of each.<sup>4</sup>

The Chairman of the German  
Government Committee :

The Chairman of the Italian  
Government Committee :

<sup>3</sup>The record of these technical discussions (2031/444690-93) is not printed. It explains in detail how the traffic statistics given in the following paragraph were arrived at. Normally 15 trains a day could be run through Brenner Pass and 14 via Tauern Railway (6 via San Candido and 8 via Tarvisio), 14 via Semmering Pass and 16 through Switzerland via St. Gotthard, requiring in all 11,200 cars. In emergency this traffic rate could be increased to 43 trains daily over Brenner, 30 via Tarvisio, and 20 via San Candido, requiring in all 17,000 cars. Both railway administrations were suffering from a shortage of open cars. In case electricity failed, all trains could be hauled by steam.

<sup>4</sup>The file copy is not signed.

*List A*

Rice . . . Pursuant to the agreements between the *Ente-Risi* [Rice Company] and the *Deutsche Reiskonsortium* [German Rice Syndicate]

Hemp, hemp-tow, hackled hemp . . . . .	Tons 35, 000
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RM

Tobacco . . . . .	2, 000, 000
Cork, raw . . . . .	1, 500
Tannin . . . . .	2, 000
Cheese . . . . .	1, 300, 000
Hides and skins (cattle, lamb, sheep, etc.) . . . .	1, 200
Sponges . . . . .	53
Bauxite . . . . .	120, 000
Zinc ore . . . . .	20, 000
Mercury . . . . .	1, 000
Bitartrate of potash, raw .	2, 500
Citrus-fruit oils . . . . .	90
Chestnut-wood extract . .	7, 500
Sumac, selected . . . . .	150
Raw silk . . . . .	900
Spun silk, not dyed; ordi- nary or twisted . . . . .	250

*List B*

Coal . . . . .	9, 200, 000
Magnesium . . . . .	1, 500

*List B—Continued*

Toluol, pure . . . . .	3, 000
Acetone . . . . .	900

*List C*

Hemp, hemp-tow, hackled hemp . . . . .	30, 000
Cork, raw . . . . .	500
Hides and skins (cattle, lamb, sheep, etc.) . . . .	1, 200
Sponges . . . . .	53
Bauxite . . . . .	120, 000
Zinc ore . . . . .	20, 000
Iron pyrites . . . . .	100, 000
Mercury . . . . .	1, 000
Sulphur . . . . .	50, 000
Bitartrate of potash, raw .	3, 000
Citrus-fruit oils . . . . .	115
Tannin extracts . . . . .	7, 600
Raw silk . . . . .	900
Spun silk, not dyed; ordi- nary or twisted . . . . .	250

*List D*

Coal . . . . .	8, 000, 000
Thomas steel in rolling-mill products . . . . .	1, 000, 000

Note: Thomas steel may be delivered half in rolling-mill products and half in pig iron.

## No. 452

634/253054

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

1367

ROME, February 21, 1939.

Pol. II 631.

Subject: Alleged proposals for Franco-Italian conversations.

A trustworthy confidential agent has given me the following report:

"The French approached Terruzzi, Under Secretary of State in the Ministry for Africa, during his recent visit to Addis Ababa, and proposed conversations on the following basis:

"1. *Djibouti*: Italy to participate in the share capital to the extent of about half (under 50 percent therefore, as the Italians add); a free-harbor zone and a clearing pool for dock charges, which can accordingly be paid in lire, instead of francs.

"2. *Suez*: Participation in the share capital (no percentage mentioned). France undertakes, as compensation for payments by Italy

to the Suez Canal Company, to purchase goods in Italy to an amount equivalent in value to the portion received by French shareholders of the profits from Italian dues.

"3. *Tunis*: Reexamination of the statute affecting Italian nationals in Tunis and ultimate revision of the frontiers of South Libya (Tibesti or Borku).

"Terruzzi forwarded these proposals to Mussolini. The Duce has not given an answer and will presumably not do so until the Spanish question has been settled."

MACKENSEN

No. 453

2410/511058-60

*The Foreign Ministry to the Propaganda Ministry*

BERLIN, February 24, 1939.

Sent February 25.

zu Pol. IV 962.

With reference to your letters of January 24—VIII 8205/20.1.39—VIII 1/12<sup>1</sup>—and of February 14—VIII 8205/20.1.39—VIII 1/12.<sup>2</sup>

The information was given by means of the Foreign Ministry's circular letter of May 14 of last year—Kult. A 1920/38<sup>3</sup>—that, since the Führer and Chancellor has recognized the German-Italian frontier as final, the subject of South Tyrol is closed for us, and any attempt to raise it in any form is to be avoided. This order is still in force today. Consequently, the questions raised under No. 1 (representation of cultural monuments) and No. 2 (treatment of racial relations) are to be answered in the negative. Furthermore the term "South Tyrol" is not to be used either in cartographic works or in books (No. 5). As regards the nomenclature of places, rivers, and mountains, insofar as a traditional German name is customary, this is to be used in principle; however, insofar as it involves maps or printed matter which are to be used abroad, particularly in Italy, the Italian nomenclature is to be used and the German added in brackets. Further, regarding this question, attention is drawn to the Foreign Ministry's letter of February 7 of last year—Pol. IV 588.<sup>4</sup>

There are no objections to representing the South Tyrol as a part of the German-language area in cartographic works, but on no account must the term "South Tyrol" be used. On the other hand it is requested that any representation of South Tyrol as a part of the compact German racial and settlement area should be avoided. Furthermore, there

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 439.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (2410/511057).

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (3153/665925-30).

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (6054/E446644).

are no objections to indicating the frontiers of the old Empire (Austrian State frontiers) in school historical atlases.<sup>5</sup>

By order:  
[Unsigned]

<sup>5</sup> Typed note: "German linguistic maps include all areas to which the German language has spread, e.g. also Luxembourg and Switzerland. Consequently, political conclusions cannot be drawn from linguistic maps which show only the spread of the German language. Ambassador Attolico, who broached the subject of the well-known linguistic map by Lange in the Foreign Ministry some time ago, did not object to the linguistic map as such but only pointed out that the representation of the distribution of the German language in Italy seemed somewhat exaggerated to him.

"A linguistic map has recently been published by the Italians in which by far the greatest part of the South Tyrol appears as belonging to the German-language area (see the enclosed periodical *L'Universo*, p. 608 [the July 1938 number of *L'Universo*, published by the Institute of Military Geography, Florence]). Furthermore, the old Reich frontiers are marked on the map. According to the view held by Pol. IV, with which the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle has also associated itself, there are thus no objections to the South Tyrol being represented as a part of the German-language area or to the old Reich frontiers being marked in scholastic historical atlases."

#### No. 454

483/231496

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

BERLIN, February 27, 1939.

St. S. No. 179

The Italian Ambassador told me today that he had a message from the Duce for the Foreign Minister personally which, because of the latter's illness, he had not yet been able to deliver and asked me to inform the Foreign Minister. The suggestion is that, in anticipation of the intended strengthening of the association between Berlin, Rome, and Tokyo, the German-Italian General Staff conversations might now be begun. These conversations are of importance and will require a good deal of time.

Submitted to the Foreign Minister for information. With regard to the answer to be returned, I propose to apply orally for instructions.

WEIZSÄCKER

#### No. 455

F19/049

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 14

BERLIN, February 28, 1939.

INTERVIEW BETWEEN THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE ITALIAN  
AMBASSADOR ON FEBRUARY 28, 1939

Attolico informed me of Mussolini's request that conversations should be started between the General Staffs, even before negotiations

with Japan have progressed further.<sup>1</sup> Reserving my reply, I answered that I would give a decision soon.

Furthermore, I gave Attolico an account in broad outline of my conversation with Ashton-Gwatkin.<sup>2</sup>

R[IBBENTROP]

<sup>1</sup> See also the telephone conversation between Ribbentrop and Ciano on Mar. 4 (vol. III, document No. 752, final paragraph).

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 317.

No. 456

100/65641-42

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, March 5, 1939.

DEAR FRIEND: Your question regarding the journey of Field Marshal Göring will be answered by the Protocol Department. Dörnberg<sup>2</sup> had not failed to bring to Herr von Ribbentrop's notice that it was necessary that you should be informed. However, as the Field Marshal had not asked the Foreign Minister about the journey, the latter seems to have decided that it should be treated as a purely private one, etc.

Yesterday Ciano telephoned to us once more, of course to press the question of the Triangle. At the same time, certain information was received to the effect that the Japanese are not after all so completely enthusiastic about the matter and need some encouragement. However, as Attolico recently pressed the matter of the discussions regarding the German-Italian General Staff talks on behalf of the Duce,<sup>3</sup> we get the impression here that the Italians have set themselves certain time limits and aims, which they are on the point of attaining. Attolico has, for a long time, made no inquiries about our attitude toward Czechoslovakia. He seems actually to avoid the subject.

Heil Hitler!

Yours sincerely,

WEIZÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> This letter is written in Weizsäcker's own hand. Mackensen received it on Mar. 10 and replied the same day (document No. 458).

<sup>2</sup> Director of the Protocol Department.

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 454 and 455.

No. 457

2058/447907

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 201

BERLIN, March 8, 1939.

The Italian Ambassador telephoned me today to draw my attention to the fact that we have fallen very considerably short in our con-

tractual deliveries of coal to Italy. This, he said, was an extremely serious problem, for the Italian war industry holds only 2 or 3 days' coal stocks. The matter, therefore, is absolutely vital.

Attolico observed that he had reported the matter in greater detail to Herr Clodius by letter.<sup>1</sup>

Submitted to the Foreign Minister.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "Copy to Director of Economic Policy Department (requesting him to forward to me Attolico's letter to Herr Clodius)."

On the following day Clodius forwarded two letters from Attolico on the subject, together with a minute (2058/447908-10), in which he explained that the delay had been caused partly by Germany's own pressing coal requirements and partly by the preference of the Ministry of Economics to export coal to free-currency countries.

### No. 458

100/65643-46

*Ambassador Mackensen to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

ROME, March 10, 1939.

DEAR FRIEND: The courier is returning by air tomorrow, and I would like to send by him a short reply to your handwritten letter of the 5th,<sup>1</sup> which reached me today, and for which many thanks.

I have not hitherto had any contact with the tourist party from San Remo<sup>2</sup> but in a day or two I shall write a private letter to Lieutenant Colonel Conrad, who, as I have been told, is responsible for the program, to welcome him and ask him various questions. These arise in connection with the prospective visit to Rome, already arranged for the end of the month, and the Protocol here, as I have learned *sub rosa*, will shortly approach me about it. Consul General Mayr at Genoa and Consul Geibel at San Remo, in view of the excitement attending the affair among the Italian officials (State and Party), went to the station for the party's arrival. Neither, however, received any personal greeting, the former because of the early hour, the latter on account of the confusion which arose at the station. They informed the entourage, however, that they could be called upon for anything required.

Ciano has told me about his telephone conversation on the 4th and particularly concerning the state of the discussion on the procedure for the accession of Spain to the Anti-Comintern Pact. He touched only shortly on the Triangle question, and rather on the lines that he was indeed thinking of certain psychological needs of the third party, but, nevertheless, expected the goal to be reached in a relatively short period of time.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 456.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Göring, who was in Italy and who visited Rome Mar. 16-17.

If Attolico continues his pestering on the subject of the conversations we know of, and refers to a message from the Duce,<sup>3</sup> it does not quite fit in with the picture as we see it here. I enclose a copy of a memorandum from my confidential agent on what he has heard regarding this matter in the Palazzo Chigi. One thing is certain, that General P[ariani] would be overjoyed if the conversations were to begin in the near future, even were the agenda to be limited at the beginning.

I am unable to subscribe fully to the impression that the Italians have set themselves certain time limits and aims, which they are on the point of attaining. I am of the opinion on the contrary, in view of the reorganization of the Army, still a matter of very many months, and the reequipping of the Artillery, which will be completed next year at the earliest, that the Duce is particularly anxious to allow certain questions to mature in peace and quiet. This also fits in with what I heard *sub rosa* about his statements a few weeks ago in the Fascist Grand Council.

In none of our recent conversations has C[iano] mentioned one word to me regarding the question of Czechoslovakia.

With kindest regards and Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,  
V. MACKENSEN

588/242087

[Enclosure]

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL  
FROM A CONFIDENTIAL AGENT IN ROME

March 8, 1939.

As is noted with particular satisfaction in the General Staff here, relations between the Italian and the German General Staffs have recently become substantially closer. The Italian Service Attachés in Berlin have for some time past been supplied with information more readily and on a more generous scale. Willingness to open General Staff talks has now been expressed openly on the German side. Pariani and Badoglio,<sup>4</sup> who had for months been pressing for these talks to be opened, have raised this subject afresh in their conversations with Mussolini and asked for his assent. Mussolini is in agreement with General Staff talks in principle but still wishes to wait and see: "*Si! ma aspettate!*" Faced with this attitude, Badoglio and Pariani drew the attention of the Head of the Italian Government to the fact that no further time should be lost. In view of the scope of the technical and strategic discussions, this will in any case take up

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 454.

<sup>4</sup> Marshal Pietro Badoglio, Duke of Addis Ababa, Chief of the General Staff, June 1936–December 1940.

a great deal of time. Any further delay might, in the case of a sudden rush of events, prejudice the fruitful results of the General Staff talks. The joint plans for action should be agreed upon and prepared in good time. In spite of the urgency of this point of view Mussolini has adhered to his reply, without, it is true, giving any reasons for it. Two reasons are conjectured in General Staff circles: first, Mussolini's intention first of all to clear up the Spanish question completely and, second, the fear that if the German-Italian General Staff talks should be noised abroad, France with increasing pressure might even take the offensive and decide to attack Italy immediately.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Marginal notes: "(Does not correspond entirely with Attolico's version.) W[eizsäcker]"  
 "Agrees in part verbatim with Military Attaché's report from Rome. H[eyden-Rynsch]"

## No. 459

100/65613

### *The State Secretary to the Ambassador in Italy*

TOP SECRET  
 PERSONAL

BERLIN, March 10, 1939.

It is well known that the question of initiating talks between the General Staffs of the individual Armed Forces in Germany and Italy has been on the cards for a fairly long time.<sup>1</sup> Since the early opening of such talks has recently been represented to us as being urgently desirable, not only through military but also through diplomatic channels and indeed on instructions from the Duce, the Foreign Minister has, after obtaining instructions from the Führer, informed Colonel General Keitel that such talks should now begin. Colonel General Keitel advocates the point of view, also shared by the Foreign Minister, that the talks ought to be divided into two parts, the first of which might take up a fairly long time, i.e. probably several months, while the second might expediently be initiated after the complete clarification of the negotiations now in progress for the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Triangle. The first part would comprise, so to speak, a reciprocal stock taking, the second the discussion of operational questions. The Military Attaché in Rome will keep you informed of the details, for which instructions will reach him from the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht. Here I will confine myself to saying that in the second part of the discussions there is no intention of giving the other side a full insight into our operational intentions.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 402, 403, and 411.

## No. 460

100/65637-38

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen*

BERLIN, March 11, 1939.

DEAR FRIEND: I am today supplementing the final sentence of my last letter<sup>1</sup> to let you know that Herr von Ribbentrop is making himself inaccessible today and tomorrow, and I am also trying, on orders from above, to avoid contact with diplomats here. Information to our Axis friend at this stage is probably to be given in the same way as a year ago. Of course, we have also established a fuller schedule of stand-by duty.

Unfortunately, this will not go off until Monday.<sup>2</sup> Your own instinct will, however, give you the right guidance.

Heil Hitler!

Yours,  
WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 459.

<sup>2</sup> This letter is written throughout in Weizsäcker's hand; it apparently did catch the same pouch as No. 459, as both are initialed by Mackensen as having been received on Monday, Mar. 13.

## No. 461

F19/341

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

March 11, 1939.

Subject: General Staff conversations with Italy. Telephone message from Attolico to Hewel in the Reich Chancellery at 12:30 p.m. on March 11, 1939.

Ambassador Attolico informed me that he was instructed by the Duce to make the following statements:

1. The Duce agrees that the conversations between the General Staffs should begin.
2. He is very anxious for the conversations to start as soon as possible.
3. He considers Innsbruck to be the most suitable place.
4. He requests that the [fact that the] conversations are starting between the General Staffs be published.

I submitted this information immediately to the Foreign Minister, who expressed his agreement with the four points stated above.

I then communicated this decision to Ambassador Attolico, who thereupon asked me to fix a date. I told him that I would do this later, after consultation with the Foreign Ministry.

HEWEL

## No. 462

583/242038

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*TOP SECRET  
No. 213

BERLIN, March 14, 1939.

The Italian Ambassador mentioned to me today how anxious Rome was to start the conversations between the General Staffs. He pointed out that we had already accepted the four points which he, Attolico, had presented to Herr Hewel.<sup>1</sup> Attolico now desired the rest of the matter to be expedited, also with the object of spurring the Japanese.

v. WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 461.

## No. 463

1613/387218

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

ROME (QUIRINAL), March 15, 1939—7: 55 p.m.

No. 94 of March 15

Received March 15—9: 30 p.m.

Pol. IV 645.

For the Foreign Minister personally.

Prince Philip of Hesse called on me just now and requested me to report that the Duce had received him in the presence of Ciano at 3 p.m. Mussolini received the Führer's special message with thanks,<sup>1</sup> remarking that in this way the logical and obvious solution to the question had been found as, incidentally, he had already set forth in his letter to Runciman last year.<sup>2</sup>

The Duce had requested Prince Philip to remain here 1 or 2 days longer in case any complications should arise.

Prince Philip requests instructions as to the return date of special aircraft.

MACKENSEN

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<sup>1</sup> An entry of this date in *The Ciano Diaries, 1939-1943*, p. 43, records: "This time it is a verbal message, and not very satisfactory. The Führer sends word that he acted because the Czechs would not demobilize their military forces because they were continuing to keep their contacts with Russia, and because they mistreated Germans. Such pretexts may be good for Goebbels' propaganda but they should not use them when talking with us. . . ."

<sup>2</sup> Mussolini's open letter to Lord Runciman was published in the *Popolo d'Italia* during the Czech crisis of September 1938. See vol. II, document No. 488

CHAPTER V  
GERMANY AND THE HOLY SEE  
OCTOBER 1938-MARCH 1939

No. 464

583/238964

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, October 11, 1938.

The Nuncio<sup>1</sup> called on me today and, after first discussing a few current matters of secondary importance, he went on in a calm and almost detached manner to mention the incidents in Vienna.<sup>2</sup> He handed over the sealed letter from Cardinal Innitzer to the Führer and Chancellor, appended here for Pol. III only,<sup>3</sup> asking that it should be forwarded.

Before the conversation I had made inquiries of the Gestapo about the circumstances. They confirmed in the main the statements of the foreign press. Furthermore, in reply to an inquiry, Dr. Bömer of the Propaganda Ministry had informed me that all departments concerned disclaimed any responsibility for the incidents and that Gauleiter Bürckel<sup>4</sup> would do this publicly on Thursday. Accordingly, I told the Nuncio that we dissociated ourselves from the incidents and deeply deplored them. The cause of the incidents had, however, been a sermon by the Cardinal to the young people of Vienna, the subject of which I did not yet know.

The Nuncio mentioned that he had gone to Vienna to express his regrets to Cardinal Innitzer. He had also seen part of the completely demolished rooms. Other rooms had been closed by the police. He had not insisted on their being shown to him. The Nuncio made no official requests in the matter and only hinted that suitable

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<sup>1</sup> Monsignor Cesare Orsenigo, 1930-45.

<sup>2</sup> On the evening of Oct. 8 a Nazi mob stormed the Archbishop's palace, wrecking a number of rooms and making a bonfire of their contents; the police made no attempt to intervene. In a sermon in the Cathedral on the previous evening Theodor Cardinal Innitzer, Archbishop of Vienna since 1932, had criticized the Nazi regime.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> Josef Bürckel, appointed Apr. 25 as Reich Commissioner for the Reunion of Austria with the Reich. He had previously been Gauleiter of the Saar-Palatinate.

measures should be taken to prevent a recurrence of incidents of the kind mentioned.<sup>5</sup>

WOERMANN

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<sup>5</sup> Woermann directed that the original of Cardinal Innitzer's letter be sent to Pol. III, with the request that it be passed on to the Reich Chancellery and that the Embassy to the Holy See be informed.

### No. 465

533/238965

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, October 19, 1938.

Minister Kerrl's<sup>1</sup> assumption that Ambassador von Bergen's transfer to the retired list has been postponed for only a year is incorrect. His appointment is on the contrary extended indefinitely.

The appointment of a new Ambassador to the post would scarcely be in keeping with the present state of relations with the Vatican. On the other hand, however, it would not be expedient to leave the post vacant. Although of course nothing definite can be said about how long the present Pope is likely to live, it is not generally expected that he will live long.<sup>2</sup> After his death the new Pope might possibly pursue a different policy which would make it appear desirable to have an Ambassador at the Vatican. In the case of a vacancy it would, however, be considerably more difficult and would have a much greater demonstrative significance if the post were again filled. In these circumstances it would probably be best to leave Ambassador von Bergen at his post until further notice.

Resubmitted herewith to the Director of the Personnel Department and the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister's Secretariat.

WOERMANN

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<sup>1</sup> Hanns Kerrl, Reich Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs.

<sup>2</sup> Pope Pius XI died Feb. 10, 1939.

### No. 466

533/238968-69

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, October 27, 1938.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR AT THE VATICAN

1. In view of present relations the German Ambassador at the Vatican is given instructions only on rare occasions. A recent example: representing the German point of view in the case of Bishop

Sproll.<sup>1</sup> In the near future: perhaps the question of the reform of diocesan boundaries in the Sudetenland.

2. In whatever way relations toward the Catholic Church develop, there still remains the probability of important responsibilities.

It has not yet been decided how to end the untenable situation resulting from the continued existence of the Reich Concordat<sup>2</sup> and the state concordats, with their arrangements which are in many cases completely unsuitable for National Socialist Germany. Sooner or later this question must be solved. This will involve important responsibilities for the German Ambassador at the Vatican, even if the concordats are canceled and replaced by an autonomous German solution. If the Ambassador had taken part in Herr von Papen's<sup>3</sup> negotiations on the Concordat, fewer concessions would certainly have been made.

3. The Vatican Embassy is an important observation post and a useful source of information. A survey of the countries which are represented at the Vatican is appended.<sup>4</sup>

Recent example: We received reports through Ambassador von Bergen about the negotiations between Gauleiter Bürckel<sup>5</sup> and the Catholic Church which would have made intervention possible had not the negotiations broken down immediately afterwards.

4. These arguments favor maintaining an ambassador at the Vatican but do not weigh so heavily as the difficulty of finding plausible reasons for refilling the post once a vacancy occurred.

Submitted herewith according to instructions to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister.

WOERMANN

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Johannes Baptista Sproll, Roman Catholic Bishop of Rottenburg, Württemberg, 1927-49. See vol. I, documents Nos. 707 and 719 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup>The Reich Concordat with the Holy See of July 20, 1933. See vol. I, document No. 632, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup>Franz von Papen was Vice Chancellor in the Hitler Cabinet, January 1933-July 1934.

<sup>4</sup>Not printed (533/238970-71).

<sup>5</sup>See vol. I, documents Nos. 722 and 723.

## No. 467

2657/527450

*SS Obergruppenführer Heydrich to Foreign Minister  
Ribbentrop*

II. 1131-17  
D 222-26

BERLIN, October 27, 1938.  
Pol. III 3981.

DEAR PARTY COMRADE VON RIBBENTROP: On the occasion of your recent visit to the Sicherheitshauptamt we discussed the necessity of examining political relations with the Vatican also now and then from

the standpoint of information which is brought to light by surveillance of the subversive activities of the political Church inside Germany.

I should therefore be glad if constant contact could be maintained between your Vatican specialist and my specialists on these matters.<sup>1</sup>

Heil Hitler!

HEYDRICH<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "On Nov. 25 a conference took place in the Foreign Ministry with Sturmbannführer Ehrlinger and Martel. Further conferences and exchanges of information are envisaged. H[aidien], Nov. 26."

<sup>2</sup> Reinhard Heydrich, head of the Security Police and Sicherheitsdienst, 1935-42.

### No. 468

533/238973

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

CONFIDENTIAL

VIENNA, November 3, 1938.

The Foreign Minister told me on the train between Munich and Vienna on November 1<sup>1</sup> that Mussolini had asked him whether he could do something to improve relations with the Catholic Church. As a result of Italy's racial legislation, the Italian Government's relations with the Vatican had become strained. Mussolini was anxious that the relationship of the Axis Powers to the Catholic Church might again improve.

The Foreign Minister asked for a report on what could be done in the immediate future to improve relations with the Vatican.

In this connection the Foreign Minister said that he would leave Ambassador von Bergen in Rome for the time being.

WOERMANN

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<sup>1</sup> Ribbentrop was on his way to Vienna to sign the German-Italian award regarding the frontier between Hungary and Czechoslovakia. See document No. 99.

### No. 469

533/238975-77

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, November 29, 1938.

During my conversation today with the Nuncio I discussed the following matters:

1. The Reich Government was of the opinion that vacant bishoprics must again be filled by a bishop, and indeed by a bishop who was politically unobjectionable. In Aachen on the other hand, the Suffragan Bishop Straeter had been appointed as administrator of

the bishopric. This statement was made at the suggestion of the Ecclesiastical Ministry.

The Nuncio made the expected objection that a new appointment could not take place until the reasons for the objections to the election of Father Holtmann as a bishop were made known. The Curia only presented bishops who it assumed would not give rise to objections. But if the reasons were not given, one bishop after another might be rejected.

I replied that this fundamental point of view had already been discussed repeatedly and that we adhered to our contention that the reasons need not be given in detail. (Previous document: Pol. III 2813<sup>1</sup>)

2. On instructions from the Ecclesiastical Ministry and the Gestapo, I informed the Nuncio that the Jesuit Father Leenen had given as a reason for his refusal to sign the written promulgation of the ban on speaking in public, which was imposed upon him, the fact that his superiors had told him that Nuncio Orsenigo had said that signature should be refused. I added that if this statement were correct he had in our view overstepped the powers conferred on him as Nuncio.

The Nuncio answered in a very involved manner. He first wanted to discuss all other possible questions in which there were conflicts between the State and the Roman Catholic Church. He then said that he must first examine the matter. In any case he never interfered in principle in matters which came within the competence of the police. He wished to be told the contents of the document which Leenen had been expected to sign.

I shall return to the question a little later unless the Nuncio again broaches the subject of his own accord. (Previous document: Pol. III 3516<sup>2</sup>)

3. I told the Nuncio that at present we did not intend to pursue further the question of the establishment of a bishopric in Innsbruck, which he had previously mentioned to me.<sup>3</sup> The Nuncio said that for his part too he had not again returned to this subject. (Previous document: Pol. III 2985<sup>4</sup>)

In addition to the matter of the "Canisianum" at Innsbruck dealt with in another memorandum,<sup>5</sup> the Nuncio for his part brought up the following points:

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5221/E308338-39).

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> On Jan. 13 and 31 (533/238986-88). The Nuncio made a further representation on Feb. 28 (533/238997-98).

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (5221/E308340-43).

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (533/238974). The Nuncio had protested against the requisitioning by the Tyrol Gauleitung of the Canisianum, a house in Innsbruck belonging to the Jesuits, which contained the Apostolic Vicar's administrative offices and a diocesan seminary and hostel, attended by more than 100 foreign students, who would otherwise have no place to live.

1. He asked when Bishop Sproll would receive permission to return to his bishopric.

I told him that I did not think that he would ever again receive permission to do so.

2. The Nuncio complained that in a circular from the National Socialist Teachers' Association, which he himself had not seen, all members of the association had, according to reports reaching him, been enjoined not to teach the Catechism any more. The reason for this seemed to be that the Catechism was based on the Jewish Old Testament. It appeared that these circulars had not been acted upon everywhere. This involved a great question of fundamental significance. He could not approve of the procedure and referred in this connection to the provisions of the Concordat.

The Nuncio asked that this matter should be brought to the attention of the Reich Minister of Education, so that the latter might provide for redress.

WOERMANN

No. 470

588/238996

*The Ambassador to the Holy See to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 19 of February 18

ROME, February 18, 1939—7:30 p.m.

Received February 18—10:30 p.m.

The Italian Ambassador to the Holy See,<sup>1</sup> whom I visited today for a lengthy conversation, congratulated me on my address to the Cardinals and remarked that he had also noted the greatest satisfaction over this among authoritative persons in the State Secretariat. A significant, even decisive, role had been assigned to the attitude of the German Cardinals in the Conclave. The attitude of the German press on the occasion of Pope Pius XI's death and of the forthcoming Conclave was being followed with the greatest interest. He had called the attention of the Papal State Secretariat to the article in the *Schwarze Korps* of the 16th, which in spite of all its harshness recognized in objective form the hopeful potentialities of the Church and hinted at a certain readiness for peace. In the Vatican the contents of this article had been received with great interest, and it has been said that they were grateful for every sign of willingness for understanding. The Italian Ambassador hinted that Italy would also welcome it if, in view of the outcome of the Conclave which was so

<sup>1</sup> Pignatti Morano di Custoza, Count Bonifacio, October 1935–December 1939.

important for both our countries, our press could be enjoined to restraint, as had already been done in the Italian press, and if it could avoid attacks on the person of the late Pope and also against other personages of the Curia who would now come into prominence.

Certainly the description of Pius XI as a "political adventurer," as appears in the *Angriff* of the 10th, which was repeated in a report of *Deutscher Dienst*,<sup>2</sup> should as far as possible be avoided.

BERGEN

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 347, footnote 2.

## No. 471

533/239001-02

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Protocol Department*

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, March 2, 1939.

#### STEPS TO BE TAKEN ON THE OCCASION OF THE ELECTION OF THE NEW POPE, PIUS XII

I. Immediately after the election of the late Pope Pius XI in 1922, the German Ambassador to the Holy See offered the newly appointed Pope the congratulations of the President of the Reich and of the Chancellor in office at that time, first in writing and then orally at the reception for the Diplomatic Corps which took place on February 18, 1922. Pope Pius further announced his election to President Ebert in a letter of February 6, 1922. President Ebert replied to this letter on March 18, 1922, and conveyed his "most cordial congratulations" to the newly elected Pope.

II. The Protocol Department proposes that the German Ambassador to the Holy See be instructed by telegram to convey the congratulations of the Führer and of the Reich Government orally to the newly elected Pope, Pius XII. These congratulations are in order, but, in view of the well-known attitude of the former Cardinal Pacelli<sup>1</sup> toward Germany and the National Socialist movement, they are not to be conveyed in a particularly warm manner.

The Führer's consent to Ambassador von Bergen's offering congratulations in his name is first to be obtained through the Presidential Chancellery.

Submitted herewith to the Foreign Minister with the request for instructions.

V. HALEM

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<sup>1</sup> The newly elected Pope, as Monsignor Eugenio Pacelli, had been Apostolic Nuncio in Munich from 1917 to 1920, and in Berlin from 1920 to 1930.

## No. 472

533/239005

*The Ambassador to the Holy See to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 26 of March 5

ROME, March 5, 1939—4: 15 p.m.

Received March 5—6: 40 p.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 24 of March 4.<sup>1</sup>

The Pope, to whom the Deputy Secretary of State<sup>2</sup> had at my request conveyed the congratulations of the Führer and Chancellor and of the Reich Government, sent a message last night that he wished to receive me this morning.

At the audience, in which I repeated the congratulations, the Pope emphasized that I was the first Ambassador whom he had received; he was anxious to entrust me personally with his heartfelt thanks to the Führer and Chancellor; he added to this his most sincere wishes for the prosperity of the German people, whom he had learned to esteem and love from long acquaintance during his appointments in Munich and Berlin. The Pope added his "*burning* desire for peace between Church and State"; as Secretary of State he had often expressed this to me but today as Pope he wished to confirm it expressly.

As symbolic of his attitude toward different forms of government, he recalled in the course of the conversation his speech delivered in German last year at the Eucharistic Congress in Budapest, in which as is known he expressed himself as follows:

"It is not the business of the Church to take sides in purely temporal affairs and in the accommodations between the different systems and methods which may arise for overcoming the urgent problems of the present."

Turning the conversation to personal matters, the Pope welcomed me most heartily, emphasizing that our friendly relations, which had lasted for nearly 30 years, should remain unchanged.

BERGEN

<sup>1</sup> Not found.<sup>2</sup> Monsignor Domenico Tardini.

## No. 473

533/239007

*The Ambassador to the Holy See to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 28 of March 8

ROME, March 8, 1939—2: 00 p.m.

Received March 8—4: 55 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 2 of March 2.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5222/E308347).

The attitude of our press toward the new Pope has been observed very closely, not only in Vatican but also in Italian circles, and has been received with satisfaction. It makes possible our first definite attack on the attitude to date of the *Osservatore Romano*. I have had a few suitable articles from the *Essener National-Zeitung*, *Völkischer Beobachter*, *Angriff*, *D[eutsche] A[llgemeine] Z[eitung]*, and *Frankfurter Zeitung* submitted to the Pope.

The unmistakable relaxation of tension which has set in here since the death of the Pope has aroused very strong hopes in some quarters for the early removal of differences between Germany and the Vatican. In order to prevent over optimistic expectations, I am pointing out in conversation that I support, as is well known, a normalization of relations because in principle we desire peace with the Church. But in order to overcome the considerable difficulties, patience and time are required, besides good will; any precipitance would be out of place.

BERGEN

#### No. 474

533/239008-09

#### *Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IIIa*

BERLIN, March 8, 1939.

The Nuncio today called on the State Secretary and, while handing over the attached memorandum of March 8, No. 26605,<sup>1</sup> mentioned the forthcoming confiscation of the lands of the Klosterneuburg Monastery near Vienna.

The Prior of the Klosterneuburg Monastery had been called upon by the Reich Commissioner to cede about 1,640 hectares of land to the Reich Government. After fruitless negotiations lasting 8 days, the Reich Commissioner had fixed a time limit for 6 p.m. on March 8, after which the lands in question were to be confiscated. According to canonical law the Prior himself could not give his consent to the surrender if a value exceeding 24,000 RM was involved. The property in question, however, represented a value of nearly 17 million RM. The monastery was offered 50,000 RM as compensation.

The Nuncio's request was:

1. Postponement, in order to give the proper ecclesiastical authorities the chance to state their agreement.
2. The obtaining of a decision of the court in the event of any charge of activity hostile to the State's being made.

The State Secretary promised to have the matter cleared up at once.

I telephoned Security Police Headquarters (Dr. Batz), as I was told that this was the proper authority. Nothing was known of the matter

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

there. The expert in this matter, however, at once communicated with the Gestapo in Vienna. He established that the latter had no part in the affair and asked for a report at once. Dr. Batz advised me—as did also the expert in the Ecclesiastical Ministry—to telephone Herr Kleemann in the office of the Reich Commissioner in Vienna.

Herr Kleemann first informed me that the occupation of the monastery on behalf of the Commissioner was in fact fixed for 6 p.m. on March 8. As a reason he gave the high rents demanded from the tenants. Furthermore, the police had information against the monastery.

When I observed that the Gestapo seemed to know nothing about this, he replied that the chief reason lay in the intolerable conditions of the rents, which had caused great dissatisfaction among the population.

I explained to him the Nuncio's request and said that the State Secretary would greatly welcome a formal concession to the Nuncio in the question of postponement. After consulting the Reich Commissioner, Herr Kleemann stated categorically that the Reich Commissioner could not discuss any concessions.

The Under State Secretary, who thereupon telephoned the Reich Commissioner personally, was told by him that he was not prepared to rescind the measure ordered. The occupation on behalf of the Commissioner would take place at 6 p.m. and the confiscation at 10 a. m. on March 9, unless the Prior agreed to his proposals.

At 4:15, as instructed, I informed Monsignor Colli, the Counselor of the Nunciature, of the result. He remarked that he regretted this deeply. In view of the existing regulations, agreement by the Prior was impossible. That could only be given by the proper ecclesiastical authorities in Rome. For this, however, written evidence was required and this was completely lacking.

Herewith to be submitted to the Deputy Director of the Political Department, the Under State Secretary, and the State Secretary.

COUNT DU MOULIN

### No. 475

533/239011

*The Ambassador to the Holy See to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 31 of March 13

ROME (VATICAN), March 13, 1939—5:30 p.m.

Received March 13—7:30 p.m.

The general tone of Pope Pius XII's letter to the "Führer and Chancellor of the German Reich" announcing his election as Pope, sent without formalities today by Secretary of Legation Picot because of

lack of time, is considerably more friendly than that of the letter of Pope Pius XI to the President in office (Directive I. E. 1476 of March 23, 1922). Particularly worthy of note is the desire for understanding expressed on this occasion also.

The composition of the German text reveals the hand of the Pope as, according to reliable reports, he has expressly reserved the treatment of German questions for himself.

Pope Pius XII's letter awakens memories of the letter which Leo XIII addressed to the Emperor William I after his election as successor to the fanatic Pius IX in February 1878, and in which, while announcing his accession to the papal throne, he expressed his regret at not finding the good relations which had once existed between Prussia and the Holy See. The letters sent in the course of the subsequent correspondence to Leo XIII by the Emperor William and by the Crown Prince on behalf of his father, who had been wounded in an assassination attempt, and countersigned by Bismarck, energetically emphasized the independence and the interests of the State but opened in conciliatory terms the slow and frequently interrupted course toward the termination of the *Kulturkampf*.

CHAPTER VI  
GERMANY AND THE SOVIET UNION  
OCTOBER 1938—MARCH 1939

No. 476

393/212253-55

*Counselor of Embassy Tippelskirch to Counselor of Legation Schliep*

Moscow, October 3, 1938.

Pol. V 7785.

DEAR SCHLIEP: Many thanks for your kind letter of September 28,<sup>1</sup> which I have read with great interest.

At the Embassy there prevails great jubilation at the enormous, unimaginable success which the Führer has won for Germany. Among the Russians, however, a somewhat depressed mood seems to prevail, as is revealed by the attitude of the Soviet press. In harmony with the Soviet attitude, as you know, people here are anxious to avoid any appearance of direct or indirect participation in the Munich Agreement. That is clear from the attached Tass report.<sup>2</sup>

Nothing special was observed by us here during the critical days. Whereas other governments adopted preliminary measures of mobilization, the Soviet Government does not seem to have done anything of the sort. So far as this has any military interest, General Köstring<sup>3</sup> has reported his observations; I refer you to that report. As regards the political effects of the Munich Agreement, the Embassy will report as soon as we have the necessary data. That the policy of Litvinov has suffered a complete fiasco, that the war, from which chaos and weakening of Germany were expected, has not broken out, that the policy of pacts and alliances has failed, that the collective idea has collapsed, and that the League of Nations has disappointed the hopes reposed in it, can in my opinion not remain without consequences for Soviet policy. Faced with this wreckage, the Kremlin is apparently directing its hopes more toward the international proletariat [*Volksmassen*]. The Soviet press builds up an antithesis between the good proletariat which wants to prevent war and bad governments which support the

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5226/E310520).

<sup>3</sup> Lt. Gen. E. Köstring, the Military Attaché.

aggressor; it seeks to maintain that the proletariat alone has any understanding for the curious thesis of Soviet policy that war is the only means of preserving peace. With this attitude on the part of the Soviet rulers, it is understandable that the return to the revolutionary Comintern line is now proclaimed here and that the intensification of the work of the Party, and also of the ideological struggle throughout the whole world, is being recommended. They cling to the possibility of influencing foreign governments, above all probably the Government of France, under the motto, "Proletarians of all countries unite in defense of the Soviet Union."

In the light of our experiences it seems to me probable that Stalin will draw conclusions about personalities from the failure of Soviet policy. In that connection I naturally think in the first place of Litvinov, who has made fruitless efforts in Geneva throughout the crisis. We have certain information to the effect that during the crisis the Soviet rulers held constant and lengthy conferences. Anxiety and uncertainty are said to have prevailed. There has probably been a truce to the disputes and intrigues, which are often asserted to prevail among the great ones of the Soviet world, but after the crisis they probably would set in again on a larger scale. Stalin will now again have recourse to the established method of finding scapegoats for failures.

I think personally that the Soviet Union will, in the light of the experiences she has acquired, be even more intent than hitherto on increasing her military strength. As Soviet industry is already keyed up to its maximum capacity, this could be achieved only at the cost of the already inadequate provision for the needs of the population. One result of this would be a further forced extension of industry and the construction of new factories and works. If this should not be possible from her own resources, the Soviet Union will again import more means of production.

Turning to the sphere of political speculation, there is no escaping the idea that the Soviet Union will have to reconsider her foreign policy. In that connection the first to come under consideration would be the relations with Germany, France, and Japan. As regards ourselves, a more positive attitude on the part of the Soviet Union toward Germany might be possible, arising, it is true, out of the consideration that France has lost much of her value as an ally and that a more aggressive attitude on the part of Japan may be expected. That the Soviet Government will secede from the League of Nations I consider for the moment to be hardly probable, as Geneva will retain its value in Soviet eyes as a propaganda platform even under the altered circumstances. All the same, I would not regard it as a misleading hypothesis that the present circumstances offer favorable op-

portunities for a new and wider German economic agreement with the Soviet Union.

With cordial greetings, Heil Hitler!

Yours sincerely,  
VON TIPPELSKIRCH

No. 477

351/202440-44

*Counselor of Embassy Tippelskirch to Counselor of Legation Schliep*

Moscow, October 10, 1938.  
Pol. V 8024.

DEAR SCHLIEP: Many thanks for your kind letter of October 5,<sup>1</sup> together with the enclosures, which we have read with interest.

The British Embassy here has secured reasonably soon the release of the two British fishing boats detained by the Soviets. Evidently the reason for this is that we had already smoothed the way by our representations in the Bahrenfeld case.<sup>2</sup>

As regards Marshal Blücher,<sup>3</sup> his fate is in fact uncertain. We had already heard some time ago that he was no longer in the Far East, but we thought that in consideration of the events in western Europe Stalin might intend to employ him on the western frontier. Now, however, the recently created "Far Eastern Front" has been abolished and divided into two independent armies which are to be placed directly under the Supreme Command in Moscow, that is, Voroshilov.<sup>4</sup> It now looks as if the "Far Eastern Front" was created at the time only in order to unseat Blücher. It does *not* seem to be true that Voroshilov himself has gone to the Far East.

A new purge appears to be taking place in the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. The director of one of the Western departments has already been axed and also some heads of sections [*Referenten*] of the Western departments have disappeared. The head of the Press Department, Gnedin, has not yet returned from leave. There are also rumors about the head of the Protocol Department, Barkov. According to our observations the same mood of depression prevails

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> Probably the German trawler *Bahrenfels*, which had previously been detained by the Soviet authorities in the Bering Sea. See vol. II, document No. 397, footnote 70.

<sup>3</sup> Marshal Vasily Konstantinovich Blyukher, Commander in Chief of the Far Eastern Red Army, missing since the end of September 1938, presumed purged and executed.

<sup>4</sup> Marshal Kliment Voroshilov, People's Commissar for Defense, 1934-40.

in the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs at the present moment as was noticeable on the occasion of previous purges.

There are no observations available so far regarding the position of Litvinov, nor can any tendencies so far be observed pointing to any alteration in Soviet policy. I am, therefore, not yet in a position to be able to send in the report of which I had held out hopes in my letter to you of October 3.<sup>5</sup> It is assumed here that, after his return from Geneva, Litvinov reported to the Soviet Government on the political situation in connection with the Munich Agreement; that it now depends on what decisions, if any, Stalin will make in the light of this; and that in the meantime Soviet policy will follow the same course as hitherto. Litvinov will certainly try to convince the Soviet Government that the policy hitherto pursued by him was the only right one and that it must be continued in the future as well. In this he will certainly start with the assumption that France and Britain will learn a lesson from the course taken by the Czechoslovak question and will take measures to avoid seeing themselves again compelled to give way before the claims of German power. Litvinov will undoubtedly also use the argument that the Führer's assurance that he has no further territorial demands in Europe deserves no credence. It is significant that the Soviets are obviously of the opinion that the Führer's assurance is not valid for the Ukraine, as according to National Socialist opinion the Soviet Union does not belong to Europe. If I judge Litvinov correctly, he will continue to defend his policy of collective action in the conviction that Germany's growth of power, and in particular the smashing of Czechoslovakia, will lead to a change in the European balance of power in which sooner or later a definite role must quite automatically fall to the Soviet Union. In consequence Litvinov will not think of embarking on any alteration of his policy of his own accord. He will neither withdraw from the League of Nations, nor terminate the treaty of alliance with France, nor abstain from his attempts to get a foothold in European politics. In other words he will continue to recommend measures against the aggressors in the hope of having more success next time.

If, significantly enough, the value of the Franco-Soviet Pact of Alliance has only once been called in question here, and that only in the *Journal de Moscou*, all that was aimed at was simply to exert pressure upon certain circles in France. The appeal to the masses has, in addition to the motives mentioned in my letter of October 3, its origin in the hope that the masses in France and Britain would

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<sup>5</sup> Document No. 476.

adopt an attitude which would lead to the abandonment of the policy of Chamberlain and Daladier.

The various attempts of Soviet policy to reenter the concert of Europe show that the isolation of the Soviet Union is fully appreciated here. On one hand, this isolation is a source of anxiety; on the other, however, it causes satisfaction because there is freedom from any responsibility for political developments, which is an advantage vis-à-vis international Communism, and because they can indulge unhindered in outbursts at the policy of Chamberlain and Daladier, which is to the advantage of Soviet propaganda.

Should it be thought here that war is only postponed and that the Soviet Union will play an important role in the future, the conclusion emerges that Stalin will try to strengthen further the *potentiel de guerre* of the Soviet Union. How this can be done I would not for the moment care to examine more closely. It is particularly difficult to imagine how this aim is to be reached side by side with a continuation of Stalin's "personnel policy." Again, to draw more heavily upon industry for armaments purposes, and thus further to reduce the provision for the needs of the population, will not be conducive to any improvement in public feeling. How little confidence the rulers placed in the reliability of the population during the Czechoslovak crisis can be seen from the fact that the newspapers printed the most important events in comparatively small and unobtrusive type, mainly under the heading "Latest News," and without further comment. To the same category belongs the fact that the Soviet Union also neglected to take such preliminary measures of mobilization as was considered necessary, for instance, in Holland, Belgium, and Switzerland. Considering that the Soviet Union was under an obligation to render assistance to Czechoslovakia, this attitude must seem particularly striking. The Soviets subsequently maintained that, in view of the policy of yielding followed by France and Britain toward the aggressors, they had never seriously believed in the outbreak of a war. It is, however, impossible to avoid drawing certain conclusions from the conduct of the Soviet Government during the Polish-Lithuanian conflict and during the Czechoslovak crisis. It should also be observed that the Soviet Government remained completely quiet on the occasion of Poland's action against Czechoslovakia and on the occupation of Teschen by Polish troops and contented itself with the meaningless action of issuing a warning of a possible denunciation of the Polish-Soviet nonaggression treaty.

The visit of Funk, the Minister of Economics, to Ankara and the granting of a credit of 150 millions to Turkey strengthen me in my opinion that the present moment is favorable for concluding with the Soviet Government a new economic agreement, which Herr Schnurre

has for a long time been preparing. I would, therefore, again propose that this question should at once be subjected to appropriate examination. I might add that the Ambassador shares my views and has expressly authorized me to make this suggestion.

Hoping that you are well, with warm regards,  
Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

VON TIPPELSKIRCH

No. 478

315/191568-69

*Memorandum by the Ambassador in the Soviet Union*

SECRET

Moscow, October 26, 1938.

No. A 1601

It is my intention in the immediate future to approach Molotov, the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, in an attempt to reach a settlement of the questions disturbing German-Soviet relations. The most favorable opportunity for this step would be the beginning of the negotiations on the 1939 German-Soviet agreement on trade and payments and the granting of a larger credit on goods to the Soviet Union. On this basis the program might be somewhat as follows:

A

1. As the last German-Soviet agreement on trade and payments expires at the end of this year, negotiations will have to be begun immediately with the Soviet Union for a new agreement for the year 1939.
2. Conditions for the conclusion of a credit appear favorable. This time the amount of the credit might possibly be increased to 300 million reichsmarks. The obstacles in the previous agreements (e.g. 100 percent letter of indemnity) appear to be removed.
3. Any Soviet requests regarding the treatment of special accounts or of transfer within a limited range should be linked up with similar demands from us on the Soviet Union (see C2, 3, and 4).

B

1. Settlement of the disputes which arose in the transport of German goods through the Soviet Union to Iran.
2. Settlement of actions brought by German firms in the court of arbitration but delayed by the Soviet Union, as well as agreement on the adjudicators for the court of arbitration.
3. Favorable treatment of applications for entry permits for German businessmen.

## C

1. Clearing up of some 400 cases of arrest of German citizens in the Soviet Union.

2. Compensation by settlement through a lump sum for house property left behind in the Soviet Union by German citizens who have left or been expelled (about 60 houses).

3. Permission to transfer the savings left in Soviet banks by German citizens who have left or been expelled (about 600,000 rubles).

4. Permission to transfer the deposits of rubles left with the German Embassy in Moscow by German citizens who have left or been expelled (about 1 million rubles).

5. Promise of accelerated release from Soviet citizenship of wives of German citizens who have left or been expelled.

6. Agreement on safeguarding the supply of food and other necessities to the staff of the German Embassy in Moscow.

COUNT VON DER SCHULENBURG

## No. 479

2092/452573-74

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, November 4, 1938.

e.o. W IV 3762.

Drafting Officer: Counselor of Legation Schnurre.

At the beginning of this year negotiations took place with the U.S.S.R. for a new credit agreement with a credit margin of 200 million reichsmarks, in order thereby to increase German imports of raw materials from Russia. The preliminary condition was to be that Russia, independently of the settling of deliveries on credit, should bind herself to immediate increased deliveries of raw materials to Germany. At that time the negotiations reached a deadlock on account of essential differences of opinion and were not resumed in consequence of the political events of the last few months. Germany's raw materials situation, however, is such that the emphatic demand has been raised by Field Marshal Göring's office and other interested agencies at least to try to reactivate our Russian trade, especially insofar as imports of Russian raw materials are concerned. The German Embassy in Moscow has also advocated this on several occasions and has indicated the present moment as suitable.

As in any case negotiations must shortly take place with the Russian trade delegation in Berlin for the extension of the German-Russian economic agreements which expire on December 31, 1938, and are

only valid for a year at a time, a natural opportunity would present itself to sound out the Russians as to whether they are interested in continuing the credit negotiations on the basis discussed in the spring. Such a sounding out about a credit agreement does not promise much success as the Russians will hardly commit themselves to delivering larger quantities of raw materials to Germany, especially as, in view of the inordinate delay in delivery by German industry, they would have considerable difficulty in disposing of the proceeds of these deliveries by imports.

Submitted herewith to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister, with the request for instructions whether discussions can take place on this basis with the trade delegation of the U.S.S.R. in Berlin.

WIEHL

No. 480

351/202446-52

*The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

No. A 1749

Moscow, November 18, 1938.

Received November 23.

Pol. V 8721.

#### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Soviet policy after the Czechoslovak crisis.

With reference to the reports of November 11, No. A 1717,<sup>1</sup> and of November 19 [*sic*], No. A 1586.<sup>2</sup>

The speeches, articles in the press, and other pronouncements delivered or published on the occasion of the November celebrations of the Bolshevik Revolution offer an opportunity for reviewing Soviet internal and foreign policy. The general impression is that no alteration in the views of the Kremlin has taken place since the Czechoslovak crisis.

An examination of the slogans employed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, of the speeches of Molotov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, of Voroshilov, the People's Commissar for National Defense, and of others, gives in detail the following picture:

The supreme principle of Soviet policy is the combating of Fascism and the increase of the instruments of power of the Soviet State. In depicting the international situation emphasis is laid on the advance of the aggressor states, which threatens France, Britain, and America and creates the basis for unleashing a war between the imperialistic

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2405/500734-43).

<sup>2</sup> Not found; presumably Oct. 19 was intended.

powers. According to Stalin the second imperialist war has in fact already begun. The democratic powers could not form any united front against the Fascist powers; they were shrinking backward from fear of the labor movement in Europe and of the liberation movement in Asia. In contrast with this, the Soviet State defends its frontiers and the interests of its people. It will reply to any onslaught by the aggressive powers, whether in the west or in the east, with a three-fold counterblow. Only the strong Soviet State, strong in virtue of the rightness of its foreign policy and of its readiness for any possible tests coming from without, is in a position to do so. In support of this the conduct of Soviet Russia in the fighting around Lake Hassan<sup>3</sup> and during the Czechoslovak crisis is cited. The fighting around Lake Hassan is transformed into a great victory over the Japanese and by claiming that the Japanese onslaught, undertaken to let loose war upon the Far East, was decided upon less in Tokyo than in Berlin, a victory over Germany is also fabricated, probably to give proof of the courage of the Soviets in the face of this most dangerous enemy. The course of the Czechoslovak crisis is represented in the first place as a defeat for France and Britain. The Soviet Union did not allow itself to be intimidated by the threats of the Fascist states, but displayed before all countries its loyalty to treaties and international engagements entered into and its readiness to do battle with the aggressors. From this it may be concluded that the Soviet Government does not think of giving up of its own accord the assistance pacts with France and Czechoslovakia.

The intensification of armaments in Europe, further plans by the aggressive countries to transform the map, and the demand for a redistribution of colonies give ground for expecting the emergence of new powder kegs [*Kriegsherde*] of war and the continuation of imperialist warfare. While the Soviets extol their foreign policy as the only one proper to the maintenance of peace, and at the same time disclose the danger of new complications from the aggressors, they try to influence the small states and again obtain a footing in the concert of Europe. Moscow obviously counts upon the failure of the Governments and peoples to perceive that the realization of the guiding principles of Soviet policy and the following of the counsels of Soviet diplomacy will lead straight to war and so to the chaos desired by world revolution. Far from admitting any "isolation of the Soviet Union," the Soviets assert a further strengthening of their international authority from which the other countries have isolated themselves to their detriment.

This balance-sheet of the international situation and the awareness of a capitalist encirclement of the Soviet Union lead the Kremlin

<sup>3</sup> See vol. II, document No. 380, footnote 36.

once more to the conclusion favoring the creation of a strong Red Army. The demand for the strengthening of the instruments of power of the State, Stalin's insistence that the whole population should be kept in a state of preparedness for mobilization, and in particular the constantly recurring demand to work still more unremittingly toward strengthening the Armed Forces are expressive of the Kremlin's realization that everything depends upon the Soviet Union's own strength but at the same time also are indicative of the anxiety that the arming of the Soviet State is still incomplete. The orators and editorial writers try in vain to conceal this fact by big words and fantastic exaggeration and distortions. One cannot help noticing that the aim of all their exertions is to frighten the enemy and at the same time to imbue their own people with courage and confidence.

The absence of confidence in her own strength in comparison with that of other countries, particularly the hostile powers, impels the Soviet Union to turn her attention toward the working classes of the bourgeois countries. At least as important, therefore, in the unaltered opinion of the Soviet rulers, as the strengthening of the instruments of power of the State is the consolidation of the international proletarian ties between the working classes of the Soviet Union and the working classes of the bourgeois countries, as well as the organization of political assistance from the working classes of the bourgeois countries for the Soviet State in the event of an onslaught upon the Soviet Union. Accordingly, the workers and toilers of the whole world must be mobilized for battle for the complete victory of Communism.

To these well-known trends of thought of the Kremlin must be added the other weapons of Soviet policy which—as far as can be seen—remain equally little changed. Thus Dimitrov<sup>4</sup> in his article expresses the view that the Fascist aggressors might have been held in check by common action on the part of the states belonging to the League of Nations which are interested in preserving peace. In accordance with article 16 of the League Covenant, collective action and economic sanctions should have been applied against the violators of the peace. If the other states had adopted the suggestions of the Soviet Government for collective defense against the aggressor, peace would have been preserved. All peoples would have enthusiastically supported such action in favor of the maintenance of peace. The powerful movement of the peoples would have been the most effective weapon against the warmongers. In the Popular Front tradition, Dimitrov considers that governments are needed which will draw their support from the masses and which are ready to fight the Fascist

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<sup>4</sup> Georgi Dimitrov, Bulgarian Communist, acquitted at the Reichstag fire trial in 1933; Secretary General of the Comintern 1935-43.

enemy. Collective action and the ideology of the League of Nations and the Popular Front thus belong now as before to the guiding principles of the foreign policy of the Soviets, who await their hour and do not give up the hope that yesterday's methods may once more be put to use.

The measures adopted in recent years in home politics (shooting of generals, purges, and the like), which were in reality directed toward securing Stalin's personal authority, have resulted, as is well known, in considerable damage to the political prestige of the Soviet Union. Notwithstanding that, all the orators on November 7 asserted that the struggle must be continued against the surviving enemies of the people, foreign agents, and spies. The purge activities are therefore being continued with the result that men like Marshal Blücher suddenly disappear without leaving any trace, and that, of the People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. appointed since the beginning of the year, there are at present only about one-half still in office. The results of this personnel policy are mistrust, fear of responsibility, and general insecurity, which show themselves in imperfect work in every sphere.

In every direction in industry there are signs of lagging behind the figures of the plan and of falling off in quality. Molotov, on the other hand, speaks of a general increase in the turn-over of goods and merely confines himself to the remark that in several industries there is a not unimportant shortage of goods. Actually, however, the shortage of industrial goods and foodstuffs is so great that it amounts to a state of general economic distress. With a view to increasing production, the speed-up method of the Stakhanovite system continues to be propagated.

To create an incentive toward increased achievement, isolated record achievements, like the flight of three women to the Far East, are celebrated as heroic deeds. An overbountiful shower of decorations has descended upon the [men] fighting around Lake Hassan.

In order to concentrate all the active energies of the people, the Soviet Government is again falling back upon classes of the population which it has hitherto neglected and which it is now attempting to attract to itself under the designation of "Soviet intelligentsia." According to current Soviet terminology the professor belongs to this category together with the retailer behind the counter. Their Bolshevik training in the spirit of party ideology is insisted upon with the obvious aim of filling the gaps caused by the campaign of annihilation carried on within the country. The order to the youth leagues to labor unceasingly on the education of new cadres serves the purpose of creating a reliable new generation.

Particularly prominent are the efforts directed toward conveying to the population of the Soviet Union the knowledge of certain glo-

rious episodes of past history, nourishing a pride in the achievements of the Russian people, and thereby arousing patriotic emotions. A preference is shown for incidents in which the Russian people appeared as victors against Germanism (battle on the ice of Lake Peipus and the Ukraine in 1918).

Naturally, in all the pronouncements of November 7 the importance of the new book on the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, produced with the authoritative personal cooperation of Stalin, is given great emphasis. Having removed the old party theorists and invalidated their doctrines, Stalin held it necessary to create a new instrument for the ideological orientation of the people. The study of this party history becomes obligatory for every Soviet citizen.

No speaker or article in the press has neglected to glorify the Red Army and its achievements and to demand the strengthening of the country's Armed Forces. And, in fact, the extension of the armaments industry and the strengthening of the Army is making extraordinary claims upon the economic resources of the Soviet Union. The inadequate provisioning of the population is essentially connected with this no less intimately than with an intensively conducted accumulation of supplies to meet an emergency. All these efforts will without question attain a certain success in time. It must not be overlooked, however, that the removal of most of the higher command, their replacement by insufficiently trained younger men, and the reintroduction of political commissars have brought about a not inconsiderable weakening of the striking power of the Red Army. With the armament competition of the Great Powers strained to the maximum intensity it therefore seems questionable whether the Red Army will recover in measurable time the requisite capacity for operations.

SCHULENBURG

## No. 481

2092/452577-80

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, December 1, 1938.  
e.o. W IV 4160.

The German attitude toward the forthcoming negotiations with the Russians has been established in several interministry discussions, the last of which took place today. The list of those present at today's interministry discussion is enclosed.<sup>1</sup> The result is as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2092/452583).

1. As soon as Davydov, the Russian trade representative, returns from Moscow, the talks with the trade delegation on the extension of the German-Soviet economic agreement for the year 1939 will be opened. We shall propose an extension *tel quel*. Difficulties will probably arise over the question of the payments of the Potash Syndicate to the amount of 7 million reichsmarks, to be paid in foreign exchange, the inclusion of which in the clearing pool we shall, however, again demand. Furthermore we shall demand the inclusion in the clearing pool of the Syndicate's payments for caustic soda and sulphide of sodium amounting to about £100,000.

2. It is agreed that on the occasion of these talks on the extension of the economic agreement we should sound out the Russians about a new credit on goods. The German proposal provides for the following:

Total amount of the credit, 200 million reichsmarks.

Term of the credit 6 years.

Interest 5 percent.

Invoicing in reichsmarks with cover of exchange risk in pounds sterling.

Reich guarantee 100 percent (75 percent Deutsche Golddiskontbank, 25 percent Reichsbank).

3. Condition for the granting of this credit would be that the deal with the Russians assumes an increased present value for us in that the Russians undertake definite obligations to deliver Russian raw materials in the current course of trading for the next 2 years, 1939 and 1940. We contemplate an obligation on the part of the Russians to deliver an *additional* 100 million reichsmarks for each of the calendar years 1939 and 1940. If we base our calculations on a present value of current trade of 50 million reichsmarks of Russian imports a year, Russia would be obligated for each of the years 1939 and 1940 to deliver 150 million reichsmarks, 300 million reichsmarks in all. Government agencies have communicated their desires for the allocation of a yearly import of Russian raw materials amounting to 150 million reichsmarks as in the enclosed table.<sup>2</sup> Since it is doubtful whether Russia's exporting capacity is at present equal to the delivery of such considerable quantities of raw materials, we would agree even if Russian obligations were fixed at only 100 million reichsmarks for each of the two calendar years.

4. If agreement is reached on this basis, Russia will have to place orders in Germany to a total of 500 million reichsmarks in the next 2 or 3 years, in order to dispose of the credit of 200 million reichsmarks and of the gain of 200 million reichsmarks from exports. The Reich Ministry of Economics has stated that care would be taken to insure a corresponding German export capacity and that the question

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (2092/452531-82).

of delivery dates would be arranged with industry in such a way as to render possible the carrying out of these big transactions. In the interministry discussions it was especially pointed out that such a target for German industry would correspond to Field Marshal Göring's directives, first and foremost to promote German exports to countries important for raw materials.

5. The ZAV<sup>3</sup> would also be granted for German exports, insofar as they are based on credit. The counterobligation on the part of the Russians would be to sell us their goods at world market prices.

6. At today's interministry discussion only two points of more technical significance remained open:

The formal consent of the Reichsbank to participate to the extent of 25 percent in the Reich guarantee in the case of Russia also is still lacking.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the question is being examined whether the credit scheme is to be linked up with the old Russian credits by the introduction of a bank syndicate, or, as in the case of the last Polish credit, be carried out by the Deutsche Golddiskontbank. Both questions will be cleared up in the next few days.

7. The prospects of success for the German proposal must not be overestimated. Apart from the difficulties in the political sphere, it is doubtful whether the Russians are capable of exporting to this extent. Insofar as Russian orders are in the field of armaments, these orders will have to be submitted to a special scrutiny from the military angle.

SCHNURRE

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 490, footnote 2.

<sup>4</sup> On Dec. 6, 1938 (2092/452584-87), this question was discussed by representatives of the Economic, Foreign, and Finance Ministries, the Reichsbank, and the Deutsche Golddiskontbank without any final decision; this was to depend on the assurance that German industry could in fact produce the goods required by the Russians.

## No. 482

2092/452588-92

*Memorandum by an Official of the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

BERLIN, December 23, 1938.

zu W IV 4528.<sup>1</sup>

On December 22, 1938, a conference was held at the Foreign Ministry with the head of the U.S.S.R. trade delegation in Berlin at that time and with Counselor of Legation Schnurre in the chair. For Germany, Counselor of Legation Hilger of the German Embassy in Moscow, Oberregierungsrat Ter-Nedden, Regierungsrat Erdmann of the Reich Ministry of Economics, and Attaché Schmid of the Foreign Ministry

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

were present; for the U.S.S.R., Skossyrev, deputy trade representative of the Soviet Union, with a secretary.

1. Counselor of Legation Schnurre began by stating that in the German view the settlement of the special accounts in accordance with the agreements reached between Germany and the U.S.S.R. should now also apply to the Sudeten-German regions. He asked the trade delegation to take note of this. As special agreements in the matter were not necessary, the German Government would issue without delay appropriate instructions to the exchange authorities.

M. Skossyrev stated on this point that in his personal opinion such a settlement would encounter no opposition on the part of the Soviets, particularly as he, Skossyrev, had already some time before proposed of his own accord to the Reich Ministry of Economics that the Soviet payments to Sudeten-German firms should in the future be paid in reichsmarks into the special accounts. For an official expression of opinion on his part, however, he must address a question to Moscow, to which the answer might be received in 3 or 4 days.

Herr Ter-Nedden remarked in conclusion that he would hold back the issue of instructions to the exchange authorities until that date for the sake of correctness.

2. Referring to the conversations carried on last March about the granting of a new German credit on goods to the Soviet Union, Counselor of Legation Schnurre informed M. Skossyrev that Germany was ready to resume the discussions carried on then with a view to promoting the broadening of German-Soviet commercial transactions. He then explained to Skossyrev the German proposal for granting a credit of 200 million reichsmarks, without, however, giving more precise details regarding the concessions contemplated on the part of Germany in the payment of interest or of the granting of a guarantee by the Reich to cover deficits. Herr Schnurre emphasized that the increase of Soviet deliveries of raw materials to Germany to the total of 150 million reichsmarks a year in the next 2 years constituted the condition for granting the credit and handed Skossyrev the corresponding list of commodities drawn up by Germany.

As regards German deliveries to the Soviet Union, Counselor of Legation Schnurre held out the prospect of a shortening of the delivery date and urged Skossyrev to transmit to us speedily a list of the orders under consideration, so that it might be possible to survey the output capacity of the branches of German industry involved.

M. Skossyrev answered that he regarded the German suggestion as a continuation of the discussions that had come to a standstill in March. The Soviets, too, desired a revival and extension of commercial relations with Germany and welcomed every method appropriate to that end. He would report upon the German proposal to Moscow

and ask for instructions. The fact that the trade representative, Davydov, was detained in Moscow by ill health proved opportune insofar as Davydov could now assist at the drawing up of the instructions in Moscow and bring them to Berlin in person. By that time the list with the orders desired by the Soviets would also be ready.

As regards the German list of commodities, he would send it with his report to Moscow, as he fully understood that it constituted an integral part of the German offer of credit.

3. Counselor of Legation Schnurre then stated that there was a desire on the part of Germany to clear up in conjunction with the credit agreement a series of questions which had hitherto proved a handicap to mutual relations. After Herr Schnurre had acquainted M. Skossyrev with the points enumerated below, the latter stated that the German proposal to undertake a general clearing up and, as it were, to start with a "clean slate" gave him the greatest satisfaction, and he was ready and willing to cooperate to this end.

(a) *Balances of Repatriates.* M. Skossyrev was reminded that during earlier negotiations the demand had been put forward on the part of Germany for the transfer to Germany of the assets of German repatriated persons. At the time these amounted to more than 2 million rubles, comprising blocked credits of German repatriated persons amounting to a round sum of 600,000 rubles in Soviet banks and savings banks, and about 1,500,000 rubles deposited with the German Embassy. To this amount must be added proceeds from the sale of German house property. In this connection it might perhaps be possible to meet the Soviet desire for the transfer of the proceeds from the sale of certain balances and estates. If necessary any surplus thus accruing might be cleared by the delivery of German goods to the U.S.S.R.

M. Skossyrev replied that he was familiar only with the general outlines of this question. He would, however, acquaint himself with it and if necessary ask for further elucidation. In connection with the question which we raised regarding balances, he for his part would like to ask that 100,000 RM, which was deposited in the Wiener Kreditanstalt and had come from proceeds of Soviet Union exports, should be freed at once, or at least the amount of 68,000 RM, which had accrued since the *Anschluss*.

Oberregierungsrat Ter-Nedden then said that he would make further inquiries in Vienna and would then discuss the matter direct with M. Skossyrev.

(b) *Payments by German Syndicates for Caustic Potash and Sulphide of Sodium.* The wish was expressed on the German side that these payments be included in the clearing transactions and settled by payment into the special accounts in the same way as the Potash Syndicate payments, instead of by payments in foreign exchange as had so far been effected on the German side. A round sum of 11,000 pounds sterling was involved, and it was difficult to see why a method should be used for these payments different from that employed in the other Syndicate payments.

M. Skossyrev declared his readiness to examine the matter.

(c) *Auctions of Furs in Leningrad.* The German side again demanded that German firms be enabled to buy furs for reichsmarks (clearing through the special accounts) at the fur auctions in Leningrad. The same request applied to the purchase of certain lubricating oils for which in some cases the Soviets had demanded payment in foreign exchange.

M. Skosyrev replied that the Soviet Union demanded foreign exchange only for such goods as were reexported.

Oberregierungsrat Ter-Nedden pointed out that the lubricating oils were goods which were processed in Germany before being exported, so that the argument used by Skosyrev could not be applied to lubricating oils.

(d) *Arbitration Procedure.* It was urgently brought to the notice of M. Skosyrev that in the carrying out of the arbitration regulations, agreed in 1935 between the Russia Committee of German Industry and Trades and the U.S.S.R. trade delegation, considerable difficulties had in practice arisen. The arbitration proceedings had in most cases been delayed by the Russians. Agreement had not even been reached yet on the list of arbiters.

M. Skosyrev replied that the fault did not lie with the Russians alone, whereupon Counselor of Legation Schnurre requested that the Russia Committee and the trade delegation attempt to clear up the existing difficulties.

(e) *German Mechanics in the U.S.S.R.* On a complaint's being made by M. Skosyrev that German firms refused to send mechanics to the U.S.S.R. until the latter had been given guarantees for their personal safety, the undersigned stated that experience had shown that German mechanics in the U.S.S.R. were subjected to very severe restrictions and that they justly complained of intolerable living conditions. It was absolutely necessary that an improvement be made in this matter.

M. Skosyrev promised to interest himself in this question also.

HILGER

### No. 483

2092/452593-96

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, January 11, 1939.

On January 10 Merekalov,<sup>1</sup> the Ambassador of the U.S.S.R., requested an interview at the Foreign Ministry about the German credit offer, as he had been instructed by his Government to make an official statement on this. I received M. Merekalov on November 1 in the presence of Baron von Behr, Counselor of Legation in the Foreign Ministry, and Counselor of Legation Hilger of the German Embassy in Moscow. The Ambassador was accompanied by Skosyrev, deputy trade representative of the U.S.S.R. in Berlin.

<sup>1</sup> Alexey Merekalov, Soviet Ambassador in Germany, July 1938-September 1939.

The Ambassador stated that the Soviet Government was prepared to resume the credit negotiations broken off in March of last year, on the basis of the proposal made by Germany on December 22, 1938, on the supposition that the concessions and reliefs envisaged by Germany with regard to the interest on the credit, the Reich deficit guarantee, the prices, and dates of delivery would be put into effect. The Soviet Government further desired that the negotiations should be resumed immediately and in Moscow, because it thus expected a speedier and more successful course of the negotiations. In Moscow the German delegation would have the opportunity to become acquainted on the spot with the possibilities of the German-Soviet exchange of goods and the requirements of the Soviet economy. Such business contact could only be advantageous for the negotiations. The Soviet Government was awaiting our reply to its proposals as soon as possible.

I answered M. Merekalov that I noted with satisfaction the agreement in principle of the Soviet Government to resume the credit negotiations broken off in March. As for the concessions and reliefs mentioned by him, they would be a matter for the negotiations. On the other hand, Germany had also brought forward a number of requests, the Soviet Government's fulfillment of which formed a condition for the granting of the credit; this applied above all to the list handed over by us of raw materials to be delivered by the Soviet Union. As for the desire of the Soviet Government to conduct the negotiations in Moscow, it would not be easy for us to comply with this. Apart from the fact that hitherto such negotiations had as a rule taken place in Berlin, the Economic Department of the Foreign Ministry was at present extremely hard pressed as it was conducting economic negotiations with numerous other countries. It could therefore scarcely afford to send delegations abroad. Moreover, Counselor of Legation Schnurre, the leader of the German delegation for the negotiations with the Soviet Union, was occupied with pending negotiations with Poland in January and therefore would hardly be able to leave Berlin. Nevertheless, I reserved the right to examine the proposal of the Soviet Government regarding the place for the negotiations and to come to a decision about it in the near future.

In answer to my remarks, M. Merekalov stated that the detailed wishes of both sides must be raised at the forthcoming negotiations. As for the place for the talks, however, the Soviet Government attached particular importance to the fulfillment of its desire, because the proposal resulted from the Soviet Union's intention to show consideration for Germany. As the suggestion to resume the credit negotiations at the earliest possible date had come from Germany, the Soviet Government felt that it was meeting German wishes in the most effective way by proposing negotiations in a place where their success would

most quickly be assured. Over and above that, the Soviet Government felt that the holding of the talks in Moscow must be symbolic of the desire of both sides to arrive at an improvement and a reactivation of German-Soviet economic relations. He could not accept my objection that the previous economic talks between Germany and the Soviet Union had been conducted in Berlin; this was rather an argument in favor of holding the negotiations in Moscow this time. He asked that the fact that he as Ambassador was personally concerned with the matter should be regarded as the expression of the Soviet Union's desire thereby to begin a new era in German-Soviet economic relations.

I closed the conversation by stating that I noted with satisfaction the desire of the Soviet Government for a reactivation of German-Soviet exchange of goods and reserved my answer regarding the place of the negotiations.

WIEHL

#### No. 484

2092/452597-98

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, January 12, 1939.

On December 22, with the sanction of the Foreign Minister and with the agreement of the agencies concerned, a new credit agreement was proposed to the Russian trade representative, according to which 200 million reichsmarks' worth of German exports is to go to Russia in the next 2 years, which exports will be covered by Russian deliveries of raw materials from 1944 [*sic*]. The intention is to receive, in the normal course of trade in the next 2 years, raw materials from the Russians to the value of 100 million reichsmarks each year, materials which are very important to us but in the export of which the Russians would otherwise have no interest.

The Russian Ambassador informed me yesterday of the Soviet Government's agreement in principle but at the same time of its desire that a German delegation should be sent to Moscow for negotiation of details. I tried to dissuade him from this by referring to the fact that our delegation could not leave Berlin because of other negotiations, but he insisted with such emphasis that it was clear that a refusal of this request would at the very least render the negotiations much more difficult. I therefore promised to look into the matter and to give an answer quickly.

The Russians could, as in previous cases, have the negotiations conducted by their trade delegation here, all the more so as the Soviet Ambassador himself is versed in economic questions. The strong

desire to have a German delegation come to Moscow can therefore only be interpreted in the sense that the Soviet Government would like to demonstrate to the outside world the value placed also by the Third Reich on the continuation of economic relations. On the other hand, because of the raw materials, our interest in the achievement of a favorable credit agreement is so great that it does not appear expedient to frustrate the negotiations in any way, or even to delay them or render them essentially more difficult by a refusal of the Russian request. I would therefore propose to send to Moscow, not of course the whole German delegation, but the chairman, Counselor of Legation Schnurre, and, if necessary, perhaps also a representative of other agencies; they would certainly be sufficient to conduct the negotiations in Moscow in collaboration with Counselor of Legation Hilger, the head of the economic section of the Embassy.

Herewith submitted to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister.

WIEHL

No. 485

2727/532823-25

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, January 20, 1939.

W IV 235.

On January 20, 1939, I asked Merekalov, the U.S.S.R. Ambassador, to come to see me in order to inform him of the Foreign Minister's decision on the Soviet Government's proposal to conduct the credit negotiations in Moscow. I received M. Merekalov in the presence of Counselor of Legation Schnurre and Counselor of Legation Hilger.

I explained to M. Merekalov that the dispatch of a German delegation to Moscow was not possible for the reasons already stated to him on January 11.<sup>1</sup> The German Government took the view that it was out of the question to transfer the place of negotiation to Moscow and that the credit talks must be continued and concluded in Berlin. However, to meet the wishes of the Soviet Government and so assure a speedy progress of the talks, the German Government agreed that the chairman of the German delegation, Counselor of Legation Schnurre, should go to Moscow alone in order to establish contact with the proper Soviet economic agencies and discuss with them the basis for the credit agreement. For this purpose Herr Schnurre would go to Moscow on January 30 from Warsaw, where he had business to transact at the end of this month, and would in fact accompany Ambassador Count von der Schulenburg, who was

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 484.

at present in Germany. The German Government presumed that in the meantime the Soviet Government would have made all necessary preparations for the talks, so that they could be concluded within 10 days, as Herr Schnurre must be free again at the latest by the middle of February for negotiations with Poland.

The Soviet Ambassador Merekalov replied that, though the German answer did not completely meet the wishes of the Soviet Government, he saw with genuine satisfaction in this answer the intention of the German Government to take these wishes as far as possible into consideration. He would therefore communicate my statement to Moscow immediately and advocate agreement by the Soviet Union as quickly as possible to the German proposals also with regard to the timetable of Herr Schnurre.

In the further course of the conversation Herr Schnurre called M. Merekalov's attention to the fact that the Russian order list requested by us, which was to form the basis of the negotiations, was still awaited, although we had already handed to the trade representative on December 22 our list of raw materials to be delivered by the Soviet Union. It would be very desirable if he [Schnurre] could receive this list before his departure for Moscow so that he could discuss it with the proper agencies here. If this was not possible, at least the main points of this list must be communicated to him by the Soviet side before his departure.

The conversation closed with a repeated assurance by the Soviet Ambassador that he regarded the sending of Herr Schnurre as an accommodating gesture by Germany and as a good omen for the progress of the negotiations.

WIEHL

### No. 486

2802/548295

*The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Embassy  
in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

BERLIN, January 28, 1939.

zu W IV 343.<sup>1</sup>

Owing to urgent unforeseen need for his services elsewhere, Schnurre unfortunately cannot keep date of January 31, fixed for start of conversations in Moscow, and has been instructed to return here from Warsaw. Soviet Government informed through Ambassador here.

WIEHL

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

## No. 487

472/228735-38

*Ambassador Schulenburg to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

Moscow, February 6, 1939.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: The recall of Schnurre to Berlin—however unavoidable it may have been—has disappointed us: first, because we had looked forward to the visit of that very nice couple, second, and *most important*, for *practical* reasons. I had the impression that we really needed the Russian raw materials, and the negotiations for their acquisition have been rendered more difficult by the unfortunate canceling of Schnurre's journey. In the meantime the Embassy has been instructed to put out tentative feelers to the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Trade, Mikoyan<sup>1</sup>—he is a *very important* Soviet personality! I think that this is feasible, and we shall see how far we can promote German interests.

I mention the matter to you today for the following reasons: Herr Schnurre was recalled because of the senseless fuss made by the French press about his Moscow journey. In Berlin I was of the opinion that it had been stated in the *Soviet* press that a German "delegation" was coming to Moscow for economic talks. Here I learned that this was not true: *the Soviet press did not publish a single word about the affair.* There can therefore be no doubt that the fantastic statements introduced into the French press emanate from those "interested parties" to whom the maintenance of Russo-German antagonism is a matter of interest and who see something "suspicious" if we import so much as a little timber, manganese, and petroleum from the Soviet Union. I am sorry, but I must express the suspicion that in the case of Schnurre's journey our Polish friends are the chief culprits. Herr Schnurre was forced to tell them about his journey to Moscow; they obviously gave the cue to the French press; it is striking that my Polish colleague knew almost before we did that Herr Schnurre was not coming here. However that may be, the statements of the French press have achieved their aim: they have put a spoke in our wheel.

In the last few days the Hungarian-Soviet controversy has engaged our attention. Soviet "theory" maintains: the Anti-Comintern Pact is *not* an ideological agreement directed against *world Communism* but a *political* pact whose aim is an attack on the *Soviet Union*. It is therefore not quite right—i.e. always "theoretically" not quite right—if it is said that the Soviet Government, by its attitude toward Hungary, is identifying itself with the Third International.

<sup>1</sup> Anastas Mikoyan, People's Commissar for Foreign Trade, 1938-49; member of the Politburo from 1934.

In reality, of course, both are one, but it almost seems as if M. Stalin is finding this factual "Union" a certain burden. It is sometimes heard here that the Comintern is going to be moved from the Soviet Union, presumably to Brussels.

We have learned from a very good source that in no circumstances will Japan let the fisheries dispute with the Soviet Union develop into a conflict. *If necessary Japan will give in completely.* It appears that the Japanese Government does not consider Japan's fishing interests important enough to commit for their protection naval units which might run into danger.

With many cordial greetings and Heil Hitler!

I am, dear Herr von Weizsäcker,

Yours very sincerely,

F. W. SCHULENBURG

No. 488

103/111284-85

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, February 6, 1939.

THE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF A RUPTURE OF RELATIONS WITH  
THE SOVIET UNION

1. Imports from the Soviet Union, which formerly amounted to hundreds of millions of reichsmarks, were about 50 million reichsmarks in 1938 and consisted of raw materials, mainly timber, manganese, and oils. Exports to the Soviet Union amounted to about 32 million reichsmarks. In the event of a rupture of relations this foreign trade with the Soviet Union would lapse completely, as in that case the U.S.S.R. trade delegation in Germany would also be dissolved and there would therefore be no agency which could place orders in Germany.

2. On instructions from Field Marshal Göring and with the agreement of the Foreign Minister, negotiations with the Soviet Union have been going on for some time in order to increase Germany's imports of raw materials. We stated our readiness to grant the Russians a credit of 200 million reichsmarks, if the Soviet Union for her part undertook to make definite deliveries of raw materials to Germany in the years 1939 and 1940 amounting to 300 million reichsmarks. At present it cannot be foreseen whether these negotiations will be successful. If relations were broken off, these negotiations would of course automatically come to an end.

3. The Soviet Union still owes us, from a goods credit granted in 1935, the sum of about 185 million reichsmarks to be repaid as from 1941 in foreign exchange or raw materials. Negotiations must be conducted at the appropriate time on the method of repayment. It is

to be expected that, if relations with the Soviet Union are broken off, the repayment of this credit will encounter the greatest possible difficulties.

4. German industry and the agencies handling the supplying of Germany with raw materials, especially the Commissioner for the Four Year Plan, the Minister of Economics, and the Food Minister, not only are interested in a maintenance of the exchange of goods with the Soviet Union but insist on extending this exchange of goods in every possible way in the interests of our raw-materials supply. It is to be assumed that these agencies will raise strong objections to a rupture of relations with the Soviet Union, as a cessation of raw-materials imports from Russia, even at their present level, would incur grave economic disadvantages.

Submitted to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister.

WIEHL

No. 489

103/111286-87

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, February 6, 1939.

Merekalov, the Soviet Ambassador, called on me today, accompanied by Skossyrev, the deputy head of the trade delegation. I had asked him to call so that I could inform him that Counselor of Legation Schnurre had had to cancel his intended journey to Moscow on account of urgent official business elsewhere and that our Embassy had been instructed to negotiate with the Soviet Government on the credit agreement.

In the course of the short conversation the Ambassador showed special interest in the question whether our Embassy in Moscow had been empowered to negotiate on all questions of the credit agreement or on individual points only. I answered this question by saying that the Embassy had all the material necessary to negotiate on all conditions of the credit agreement but that the actual conclusion of any treaty would of course have to take place here in Berlin.

In reply to a further question by the Ambassador as to whether Herr Schnurre would go to Moscow at a later stage of the negotiations, I answered that nothing definite could be said about this, as it was not known how long Herr Schnurre would be occupied with his negotiations with Poland.

At the end of the conversation the Ambassador emphasized that he was counting on a favorable outcome of the negotiations; he hoped that these negotiations would lead to an extension of trade relations between the Soviet Union and Germany.

The Ambassador made no mention at all of false reports appearing

in a section of the foreign press <sup>1</sup> about the proposed journey of Counselor of Legation Schnurre and the negotiations to be conducted by him in Moscow.

WIEHL

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 487.

## No. 490

2208/474314

*The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 14 of February 10

Moscow, February 10, 1939—9:06 p.m.

Received February 10—11:05 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 12 of February 4.<sup>1</sup>

During the first conversation today I handed Foreign Trade Commissar Mikoyan the draft of the credit agreement. Apart from some preliminary objections (credit period 7 years, application of ZAV,<sup>2</sup> payment by bill of exchange not separately for individual transactions but in over-all amounts), Mikoyan mainly stated that, apart from credit, the Soviet Government could give orders in Germany for only 50 million reichsmarks annually and could deliver that amount of raw materials to Germany during 1939 and 1940. I told Mikoyan that for such a small return our credit offer would lose much of its interest for us. Mikoyan has been asked to reconsider the matter. Next discussion tomorrow evening. Written report <sup>1</sup> follows by courier on Monday.

SCHULENBURG

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> *Zusatzausfuhrverfahren* (supplementary export procedure), an arrangement by which the German Government covered the difference between prices German firms placed on their goods and lower prices in the world market or bid by foreign buyers—in effect, a trade subsidy.

## No. 491

2208/474315

*The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 15 of February 11

Moscow, February 11, 1939—11:33 p.m.

Received February 12—1:10 a.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 14 of February 10.<sup>1</sup>

Mikoyan stated in a second conversation today that in the meantime he had studied the contents of our draft of the credit agreement and examined the arguments that we brought forward to him orally. He

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 490.

said that he has seen from these arguments the wish of the Germans to meet him halfway and therefore he wishes to do as much himself by raising the value of Soviet deliveries of raw materials in 1939 to a total of 70 million reichsmarks and in 1940 to 75 million reichsmarks. He handed us a list of commodities specified accordingly.

Mikoyan then held out the prospect of the dispatch of the Soviet counterdraft of the credit agreement during the next few days and mentioned especially the following points from it:

1. Soviet Government insists that, as in 1935, credit be given exclusively on a reichsmark basis without introducing foreign currency.
2. Soviet Government wishes that the proposed credit be freed from all character of a credit to firms by the issuing of undertakings to make over-all payments [*Globalzahlungsverpflichtungen*] in place of bills of exchange for separate transactions.
3. Soviet Government hopes for further German concessions in the matter of interest.
4. Soviet Government asks that shipment be made also by Soviet ships.

Please deliver above telegram to Counselor of Legation Schnurre at his home.

SCHULENBURG

No. 492

276/178477

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Schulenburg*

BERLIN, February 15, 1939.

Received February 17.

DEAR COUNT SCHULENBURG: Many thanks for your kind letter of February 6,<sup>1</sup> which I passed on to the Foreign Minister, and extracts of which I showed to the people interested in the individual questions.

Schnurre's recall was unfortunately unavoidable even if the Russians, whom at first I, too, considered as the cause, were not guilty of the press storm. We must hope to reach the goal in spite of this difficulty.

In the matter of the Hungarian-Soviet dispute it may interest you to know that we have turned down a Hungarian suggestion that we demonstrate the solidarity of the anti-Comintern front by a temporary withdrawal of Ambassadors. Although the idea of a common gesture is worth considering, the proposed method did not seem practical to us.

Cordial greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours,  
WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 487.

## No. 493

2092/452601-05

*Ambassador Schulenburg to Ministerialdirektor Wiehl*

Moscow, March 1, 1939.

(With reference to my other report).

DEAR HERR WIEHL: I think you are fully informed about the course of our negotiations with M. Mikoyan through our telegraphed and written reports and in particular through the detailed memoranda which Counselor of Legation Hilger prepares. We were very pessimistic after our last visit to the Commissar for Foreign Trade. We thought that it would be useless to make any further efforts. The next day the situation changed, and M. Mikoyan is now prepared after all to deliver 200 million marks' worth of raw materials. His counterdemands are much too high but that can be discussed. (We await with interest your new instructions.)

I enclose a copy of a memorandum giving the gist of a conversation I had with my Japanese colleague. Mr. Togo<sup>1</sup> wishes us to postpone our economic negotiations for a few weeks so that he can complete his fisheries negotiations. That seems to me to be asking rather too much. I told Mr. Togo so, but he was so insistent that in the end I could not avoid promising to let you know of his request. The Russians' obstinacy in the negotiations with Japan dates from as far back as before Christmas, that is, long before the Führer's statement to Beck.<sup>2</sup> Also it is thought throughout the Diplomatic Corps here that Mr. Togo is conducting his negotiations very badly and that his predecessor, Shigemitsu,<sup>3</sup> would have done it much better. We can hardly be expected to clear up the mess which other people have made! Furthermore, Mr. Togo would probably derive no benefit from a postponement of our negotiations. M. Litvinov does not regard M. Mikoyan's negotiations with a friendly eye at all. If by obstinacy toward Japan he can sabotage the zealous activities of the Commissar for Foreign Trade, he will intensify rather than moderate this line of action. I consider therefore that we must continue our economic negotiations in the same way as before. Things will not move very quickly anyway.

<sup>1</sup> Shigenori Togo, Japanese Ambassador in the Soviet Union, October 1938–October 1940; previously Ambassador in Germany.

<sup>2</sup> At Berchtesgaden Jan. 5, 1939. See vol. v of this series.

<sup>3</sup> Mamoru Shigemitsu, Japanese Ambassador in the Soviet Union, December 1936–October 1938; in London October 1938–December 1941.

I am only informing you of the whole affair in case Mr. Togo or his Berlin colleague \* should mention the matter in conversation with you.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!  
I remain, dear Herr Wiehl,

Yours sincerely,  
F. W. SCHULENBURG

[Enclosure]

Moscow, February 28, 1939.

I dined with the Japanese Ambassador, Togo, today. After dinner he took me aside and told me the following:

He had not made any progress with his fisheries negotiations. He had been to see Litvinov again today but had not met with the slightest response. As the whole Diplomatic Corps in Moscow agreed, Litvinov's obstinacy could only be explained by the fact that, as a result of the Führer's statement to Beck that he had no designs on the Ukraine, the Soviet Union felt herself secure as far as Europe was concerned and therefore believed she could act all the more energetically in the Far East. Mr. Togo thought that our current economic negotiations with the Soviet Union also served to make Moscow more obstinate. He asked if we would postpone these negotiations for a few weeks.

Mr. Togo mentioned that he was leaving tomorrow for Berlin (for 3 days!), where there was to be a gathering of Japanese diplomats.

In reply I told Mr. Togo that it was still quite uncertain when Herr Schnurre could come here for the economic negotiations and whether these negotiations would in fact lead to any result. In any case it would be quite a few weeks yet before they would be concluded, so that in all probability his wish would be fulfilled automatically. Moreover, he could utilize his forthcoming visit to Berlin for putting his request direct to Ministerialdirektor Wiehl, whom he knew already.

Mr. Togo said that he would probably have no time in Berlin to visit Herr Wiehl or Baron von Weizsäcker. (My guess is that the Japanese Ambassador in Berlin would not allow it!) He urgently asked me for my part to inform Berlin (Herr Wiehl) of his request. He stressed that it was only a suggestion made by him personally and that he had no instructions of any kind on the matter from his Government.

Since he pressed me, I finally promised to inform Herr Wiehl accordingly, but I repeatedly emphasized that it was not really necessary to slow up negotiations with the Soviet Union—Moscow would take care of that on its own!

Mr. Togo assessed the Japanese fishing interests in Soviet waters at 20 million American dollars.

SCHULENBURG

\* Hiroshi Oshima.

## No. 494

276/178488-84

*Ministerialdirektor Wiehl to Ambassador Schulenburg*

BERLIN, March 8, 1939.

Received March 10.

DEAR COUNT SCHULENBURG: I have received your letter of March 1 and your memorandum on the conversation with Mr. Togo.<sup>1</sup> I am afraid Mr. Togo's wish will of necessity be fulfilled,<sup>2</sup> as after Schnurre's return from Warsaw new and quite considerable obstacles have arisen, having their source in the difficulties which will face our export trade to an increased degree during the coming period. We are not in a position to deliver even approximately what the Russians have put on their order list. The agencies involved are trying to put the order list of the Russians on a widened basis, and I hope that by the next courier we shall be able to give you definite and, I hope, positive instructions for the continuation of the negotiations.

With best wishes, Heil Hitler!

WIEHL

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 493.<sup>2</sup> Footnote in Wiehl's handwriting: "Which Togo, however, does not need to know!"

## No. 495

2825/548991-95

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department<sup>1</sup>*

No. 10

BERLIN, March 11, 1939.

W HA 716.

MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC POLICY COMMITTEE ON MARCH 11, 1939

Present:

For Ministerialdirektor Wucher,<sup>2</sup> Ministerialrat Scherer<sup>2</sup>For Ministerialdirektor von Jagwitz,<sup>3</sup> Ministerialdirigent  
Schlotterer<sup>3</sup>

Also present:

Ministerialdirektor Gramsch<sup>4</sup>Ministerialdirigent Landwehr<sup>3</sup>

Reichsbankdirektor Treue

Oberregierungsrat Ter-Nedden<sup>3</sup> (for discussion of Point VI)<sup>1</sup> Only the section dealing with the Soviet Union has been printed. Point I deals with Belgium, II with Afghanistan and Iran, III with Holland, IV with the treatment of foreign Jews in Germany, and V with Hungary.<sup>2</sup> Of Department II of the Ministry of Finance.<sup>3</sup> Of the Ministry of Economics.<sup>4</sup> Director of the Foreign Exchange Department of the Board of the Four Year Plan.

## VI. RUSSIA

Herr Schlotterer reports that, after detailed examination by the Ministry of Economics, the pending negotiations on the Russian credit must be brought to a standstill in a suitable way because German economy, on account of its preoccupation with certain domestic tasks, is not in a position to make the necessary deliveries amounting to 300 million reichsmarks in the next 1 to 2 years. Even in cases in which individual branches of industry would be in a position to execute part of these deliveries, there is the danger that these exports would be at the expense of exports paid for in ready foreign cash. The Ministry of Economics had not objected to the continuation of the Russian negotiations earlier, because this deterioration of the production situation arose only very recently as a result of newly issued instructions.

It is generally agreed that the rupture of credit negotiations with Russia is extremely regrettable in view of Germany's raw-materials position, but that on the other hand, having regard to the actual technical impossibility of carrying out the German counterdeliveries, the responsibility for the conclusion of the credit negotiations cannot be assumed. The negotiations, however, are not to be completely broken off vis-à-vis the Russians but are to be continued in a dilatory fashion. In certain circumstances this would also present the possibility of reaching a result after all, if an improvement in the German export capacity were to occur in the near future.

WIEHL

## No. 496

1256/338480-81

*The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

No. A 440

Moscow, March 13, 1939.

Received March 15.

Pol. V 2332.

Subject: Support of Poland and Rumania by the Soviet Union.

With reference to instruction of March 8.<sup>1</sup>

I have tried, as far as is possible here, to check the *Daily Express* report in question, to the effect that the Soviet Government has informed the Governments of Poland and Rumania that if their western frontiers are attacked Soviet Russia will employ her forces to oppose such attack. So far nothing has emerged which would enable us to confirm the report which, moreover, is not known here at all. The Soviet press has not so far taken up the affair; neither has it been

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1256/338479). The Foreign Ministry instructed the Embassies in Moscow and Warsaw to investigate the truth of a report printed in the *Daily Express* of Mar. 8.

mentioned in the important international newspapers which are read here.

I think it is possible that the report in question has been put out by the Russians in order to stimulate interest in the Soviet Union in British political circles. This would be understandable in view of the incipient feeling in certain British circles regarding the Soviet Union. It is also striking that the report is published before Colonel Beck's journey to London. It fits in with the oft-repeated assertion in the Soviet press that the next victims of German aggression will be Poland and Rumania. Finally, it is possible that Soviet propaganda has put out the report as a diversion in view of Gafencu's visit to Warsaw and of the revival of the Polish-Rumanian alliance.

To sum up, I would give it as my opinion that it may be a Soviet trial balloon similar to Litvinov's recently published soundings regarding a Black Sea pact. The object of these experiments is to bring the Soviet Union into international politics.

As regards the matter itself, I should like to observe that so far the Governments of Poland and Rumania have always looked upon assistance from the Soviet Union as being undesirable, as for obvious reasons they do not want the Red Army on their territory nor do they wish to contribute their territory as a battlefield. The attitude of the Soviet Government toward the question has just been laid down in principle for the first time by Stalin at the Eighteenth Communist Party Congress: that the Soviet Union will support any state which is attacked by the aggressors. Stalin, however, did not say what form this support would take, and he even pointed out in another part of his speech that he wishes to avoid complications with other countries.

SCHULENBURG

CHAPTER VII  
GERMANY AND THE UNITED STATES  
SEPTEMBER 1938—MARCH 1939

No. 497

2422/511575

*The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT                      WASHINGTON, D. C., September 30, 1938—1:54 a.m.  
No. 270 of September 30              Received September 30—10:30 p.m.  
Pol. IV 6792.

For the Foreign Minister.

Germany's brilliant diplomatic success at the Munich conference is generally acknowledged here today: "Hitler has obtained all he wanted without war." An especially deep impression has been made by the fact that an agreement could be reached between the four Great Powers on so difficult a question, and that, over and above this, a foundation has been laid for a real improvement both in Franco-German and particularly in Anglo-German relations. As the eyes of America are always particularly directed upon London, the joint declaration of the Führer and Chamberlain on the future shaping of Anglo-German relations has been given special attention here. Naturally, our numerous antagonists here find it hard to come to terms with this enormous German success, and there is no lack of spiteful commentary comparing the outcome of Munich with the partition of Poland and arguing that this outcome will not be of long duration. Characteristically, the Jews and pacifists can least of all conceal their vexation at the preservation of peace. The vast majority of the American people are, however, glad that a grave conflict has been avoided and—although this fact is not yet fully expressed in the press—they sincerely welcome the *rapprochement* between the four European Great Powers.

DIECKHOFF

## No. 498

2422/511576-81

*Ambassador Dirksen to State Secretary Weizsäcker*[LONDON,] October 13, 1938.  
Pol. IX 1790.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: Today I would like to resume the correspondence which I exchanged with you in June and July regarding Kennedy, the American Ambassador in London.<sup>1</sup> When I called on Kennedy today, after my return from leave, he immediately referred again to his plan of undertaking a trip to Germany. He mentioned the information given to him by Herr Kordt and hinted that he would like to pay his visit to Germany quite apart from its connection with the wheat conference.<sup>2</sup> It was doubtful how much longer he would remain Ambassador to London; the Presidential-election campaign would shortly be set in motion, for which he would probably have to transfer to America permanently. In any case he would be going to the United States in December for a stay of several months so as to be present at the sessions of Congress. He was, therefore, considering making his visit some time in November, as he did not wish to visit Germany immediately after the Munich conference; he had also wished to await my return.

He would go to Germany only if he were certain of speaking to the Führer. He intended explaining to the Führer the position of the United States as regards both economics and the functioning of public opinion and in general wished to try to bring about a better understanding between the United States and Germany. He therefore also intended transmitting to President Roosevelt the impressions he gained in Germany and from his conversation with the Führer. Roosevelt was an extremely intelligent and shrewd man but, like all persons in his position, was dependent on the information given to him; it was therefore difficult for him to form an objective picture. Kennedy hinted in this connection that persons who regarded Germany sympathetically were prevented from seeing the President. It was for this very reason that he, Kennedy, believed he could be of general use in the advancement of German-American relations, as he had the ear of the President and approached the Germany of today with understanding and sympathy. He was, besides, anything but a bureaucrat or career diplomat and would therefore be able to speak more freely and unrestrainedly to both the Führer and Roosevelt than would official persons.

<sup>1</sup> See vol. I, documents Nos. 457 and 459. Joseph P. Kennedy was American Ambassador in Great Britain, March 1938–November 1940.

<sup>2</sup> Eventually the meeting of the International Wheat Advisory Committee was arranged to take place at the Board of Trade, London, on Jan. 10, 1939.

Kennedy then went on to say that a trade agreement must be arrived at; also, the exchange rate of marks to dollars at present laid down, which was unfavorable to us, must and could be altered; a decision of Congress was by no means necessary for this; it could be done by the Treasury if the matter were sufficiently explained to them. Kennedy added that when he developed such a line of thought regarding Germany to Hull, the Secretary of State, he found no understanding but encountered marked reserve.

The American Ambassador further said that he believed a conversation between him and the Führer could be profitable also for the reason that he had heard a great deal from Mr. Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, regarding the latter's impressions during his negotiations in Germany. Chamberlain was convinced, above all things, that the Führer was sincere and well-intentioned and that he would always honor the obligations he had undertaken. Chamberlain had arrived at this impression, as he said, through a knowledge of men gained in a long life. From the further course of the conversation it appeared that Chamberlain had taken Kennedy into his confidence regarding his conversations with the Führer. Kennedy observed that he had visited the Foreign Office probably 20 or 30 times during the critical days. He was in particularly close contact with the inner Cabinet. When Chamberlain had returned from Godesberg, and the position was very critical, he had asked the assembled members of the Cabinet what they would do with Czechoslovakia after a victorious war on the part of Britain and how the frontiers of Czechoslovakia would then appear. The answer was that the frontiers would roughly coincide with those now under discussion. He had then pointed out that it would be two-fold madness to wage war over frontiers when agreement already existed regarding their demarcation.

I again expressly asked Mr. Kennedy whether he had the intention of visiting Germany quite apart from the occasion of the wheat conference; to this he answered in the affirmative and added that, providing he received the consent of the Führer and the German authorities, he would now like to get President Roosevelt's sanction; he would write to him about this today. Wilson,<sup>3</sup> the American Ambassador in Berlin, with whom he had also spoken regarding the Berlin visit on the occasion of a meeting in Paris, had warmly welcomed his intention and was in complete agreement with it. Naturally, it was possible that Roosevelt would not give him permission to visit Germany if he believed that this would cause too great a sensation in the United States. Kennedy mentioned a fortnight as the length of his stay in Germany; he said that he was more anxious to acquaint himself with the institutions of the new Germany than to have official conversations only.

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<sup>3</sup> Hugh R. Wilson, Ambassador in Germany, January 1938-September 1939.

Mr. Kennedy dwelt at considerable length on the need to initiate disarmament, as otherwise all nations would ruin themselves with their expenditure on arms.

He repeatedly emphasized the sympathy which the average American felt for the German and which was greater than his liking for the average Englishman. It was simply a case where, on both sides, more understanding for the other nation should be fostered.

Today, too, as during former conversations, Kennedy mentioned that very strong anti-Semitic tendencies existed in the United States and that a large portion of the population had an understanding of the German attitude toward the Jews.

Finally, it is also noteworthy that Kennedy said he had caused the Führer's great speech in the Sportpalast to be broadcast directly over the American radio, as against the former practice of first translating it and then broadcasting excerpts. He had established direct contact with the head of an American broadcasting system for this purpose.

That, in broad outline, was the substance of my conversation with Kennedy. As you will gather from it, Kennedy is now awaiting an indication from our side as to whether his visit to Germany would be agreeable to us and whether he would have the opportunity of seeing the Führer. If one considers his former statements to me and compares them with the firmness of his present intention of visiting Germany, it is clear that an evasive attitude on our side would be unwelcome to him and would put him out of humor. I therefore hope that I shall be authorized to give him our consent. From his whole personality I believe that he would get on well with the Führer. It also seems to me beyond question that he will come with good intentions and that his friendship with President Roosevelt guarantees that he will impart the substance of the observations made to him in Berlin accurately and with good intent.

I would therefore be very grateful if you could soon furnish me with instructions.<sup>4</sup>

I enclose a copy of my letter for office use. I have sent another copy directly to Dieckhoff.

With best wishes,

Yours ever,

DIRKSEN

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<sup>4</sup> Dirksen received an answer from Weizsäcker, written on Oct. 18 (2422/511582-83), in which the latter confirmed that Kennedy's visit would be welcome, even if unconnected with the wheat conference, and thought it probable that a reception by the Führer could be arranged; this would, however, have to await President Roosevelt's permission.

## No. 499

2422/511585-86

*Ambassador Dieckhoff to Ambassador Dirksen*

WASHINGTON, D. C., November 2, 1938.

DEAR DIRKSEN: Many thanks for kindly sending the memorandum of October 13.<sup>1</sup> I am willing to believe that Kennedy is sincere, although many things point to the fact that, like most true "politicians,"<sup>2</sup> he thinks only of himself and hopes to put himself in a better position by his visit to Germany; in any case, his argument that the President should be better informed regarding Germany cuts no ice. The President certainly is well informed from the reports of his Berlin Ambassador, and also from other sources, on how things are looking in Germany and what Germany wants; if, in spite of this, he assumes so unfriendly an attitude as he has unfortunately done for a long time, the reason is not that he is uninformed but that he wants to do so. Even Mr. Kennedy will be able in no way to alter this attitude of the President and most of the members of his Government. Moreover, Kennedy's prestige has suffered here considerably from the fact that his reports on the probable British attitude in the event of a serious Czech conflict took the wrong line; I do not believe that his influence with the President is still as great as it probably was even a few months ago. How wrongly he sums up the situation in his own country may clearly be seen from the developments of the last few weeks; it would hardly be possible to express a more hostile and negative attitude toward Germany than is now being shown almost daily by the President and many members of the Cabinet, as well as by the entire press, radio, and film industry. Even Mr. Kennedy will be able in no way to alter this, should he seriously want to. American public opinion vis-à-vis Germany cannot be rectified by small palliatives but only by the rebuilding of Europe through joint, successful action of the European Great Powers; if signs of this are clearly discernible, the propaganda campaign here will abate, for in the long run no one can be more Catholic than the Pope.

With many cordial greetings from my wife and myself and with regards to your wife, I am, my dear Dirksen,

Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

DIECKHOFF

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<sup>1</sup> This must refer to the letter from Dirksen to Weizsäcker, document No. 498.

<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

## No. 500

2663/527833-34

*Ambassador Dieckhoff to State Secretary Weizsäcker*WASHINGTON, D.C., November 8, 1938,  
Pol. IX 1975.

DEAR WEIZSÄCKER: From my reports the problems of the German-American Bund and the problem of Fritz Kuhn, the leader of the Bund, will be known to you. I have been assured during the last few months by all the German authorities concerned that no connections with Herr Fritz Kuhn and the German-American Bund exist, and I have gathered from a memorandum by Captain Wiedemann<sup>1</sup> in March that, although Fritz Kuhn during his last visit to Germany did call on Herr Wiedemann, his ideas were completely rejected. Now the assertion has been made in a letter, sent by a person in the German-American Bund in Chicago to Herr von Stolzmann, at present in charge of the Consulate General there, that Herr Kuhn had been received during his last stay in Germany—that is, in February and March—by Ministers Göring and Goebbels, that he had been given specific directions by them for the activities of the Bund in the United States, and that the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle had in fact kept in closest contact with Kuhn during the whole time. I do not believe in the correctness of his information. It would be of value to me, however, if I knew with absolute certainty that it were false. As I have repeatedly reported, our position in the United States, in the face of the hostile attitude toward Germany of the President and the Government and of spiteful propaganda among large sections, is already difficult enough; to allow this situation to be further complicated by the German-American Bund, whose leading personalities again and again secretly point out or hint that they are in closest contact with the Reich Government and even receive instructions from it, is impossible. However much I oppose the Government here on all other points, I must take care that, regarding the question of the German element here, the line sanctioned by the Foreign Ministry is rigidly adhered to and that complete clarity exists in all official quarters of the United States regarding this matter. I would be very grateful to you if you would look into the assertions of the gentleman from Chicago and let me know how the matter stands.

With many thanks and cordial greetings,

Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

DIECKHOFF

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. I, document No. 448, enclosure.

Capt. Fritz Wiedemann, aide-de-camp to Hitler 1935-39, was sent on unofficial diplomatic missions to the United States in 1937 and 1938; he was Consul General in San Francisco from January 1939 until expelled in June 1941.

## No. 501

2422/511596-97

*The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

WASHINGTON, D.C., November 14, 1938—4:25 a.m.

No. 329 of November 14

Received November 15—3:00 a.m.

Pol. IX 1911.

For the Foreign Minister and State Secretary.

I believe that the storm at present sweeping across the United States will subside again in the foreseeable future and that we shall then be able to work again. At the moment a hurricane is raging here which renders steady work impossible. The fact that a great section of the American press has long been attacking Germany in the most spiteful and bitter manner, and that this campaign has embraced comparatively wide circles, is well known to you. Until November 10, however, large and powerful sections of the American people had still remained aloof from this campaign, partly out of indifference toward European affairs, partly from skepticism regarding the press, and partly out of sympathy for the Third Reich, in which they saw a stronghold of order and a bulwark against riots and against unlawful encroachments upon private property. Today this is no longer the case.<sup>1</sup> Though no doubt there are still wide circles which are indifferent, and certainly there are still many isolated persons who remain calm, any expression of public opinion is without exception incensed against Germany and hostile toward her. And as regards this, the outcry comes not only from Jews but in equal strength from all camps and classes, including the German-American camp. What particularly strikes me is the fact that, with few exceptions, the respectable patriotic circles, which are thoroughly anti-Communist and, for the greater part, anti-Semitic in their outlook, also begin to turn away from us. The fact that the Jewish newspapers write still more excitedly than before and that the Catholic Bishops' campaign against Germany is still waged more bitterly than before is not surprising; but, that men like Dewey, Hoover, Hearst, and many others who have hitherto maintained a comparative reserve and had even, to some extent, expressed sympathy toward Germany, are now publicly adopting so violent and bitter an attitude against her is a serious matter. One central theme runs

<sup>1</sup> On Nov. 15 the American Embassy delivered the following note—No. 240—to the Foreign Ministry:

"The Embassy of the United States of America has the honor to inform the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that the Embassy has been advised of damage to certain American business properties in Germany which occurred in the course of the recent anti-Jewish manifestations and to state that, on behalf of American owners of such properties, the Government of the United States of America reserves all rights" (B21/005672).

through all these utterances, and a trusted American friend characterized it as follows:

"It is generally felt, even among well-wishers of Germany, that the recent events are the best thing that could have happened to the Jews because they arouse universal sympathy, and the worst thing that could have happened to Germany. It jeopardizes the appeasement that was to follow Munich."<sup>2</sup>

Particularly noted here are the repercussions in Britain where, according to the newspapers, the excitement is similar to that here, and where, if the press reports are accurate, the patriotic circles which have hitherto shown understanding toward Germany are just as annoyed as those in the United States; the argument which we have hitherto put forward against the American propaganda campaign and their peace sabotage, that the Europeans, since Munich, are on the threshold of jointly building up a new peaceful Europe, is reduced *ad absurdum* or at any rate largely discredited.

In the general atmosphere of hate the idea of boycotting German goods has received a new fillip, and trade negotiations cannot be considered at the moment.

DIECKHOFF

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<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

## No. 502

2422/511606

*Ambassador Dieckhoff to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

WASHINGTON, D.C., November 15, 1938.  
Pol. IX 2009.

DEAR WEIZSÄCKER: You will have learned from my telegraphic reports of the effect on public opinion here caused by the spontaneous and legal measures adopted in Germany in connection with the murder of Secretary of Legation vom Rath.<sup>1</sup> It is not surprising that the press is even more bitter than before (if that is possible), but it is very regrettable that well-balanced and respectable circles too are now adopting a hostile attitude. I feel sure that we will get over this jolt, but there should be no mistake about the fact that it is a rather serious jolt. To me the most regrettable thing seems to be that, as a result of these incidents, cooperation between Germany and Britain will obviously encounter increased obstacles, a fact which—as I have always reported—is immediately noted here and poisons the atmosphere. The good prospects for a gradual spread of anti-Semitism

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 269, footnote 2.

have suffered a serious setback as a result of the Grünspan incidents; even the most bitter anti-Semites are anxious to dissociate themselves from methods of this kind. Yesterday in an old Protestant church in Massachusetts they went so far as to have a Rabbi preach for the first time, departing from a 300-year-old tradition, in order to show that in a situation like the present they stand by the Jews. This is perhaps a rather insignificant incident, but it is typical of the feeling here.

I enclose a copy of the latest weekly report<sup>2</sup> of Dr. Sell, our Press Attaché. Since the report was written, the tide has rather tended to rise.<sup>3</sup>

With best wishes,

Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,  
DIECKHOFF

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5240/E311398-401).

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Dieckhoff's handwriting: "Many thanks for your letter of the 2nd [438/220963-65], which has just arrived."

## No. 503

38/26277-80

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, November 18, 1938.

### OUTLINE OF THE PRESENT STATE OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN GERMANY AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA<sup>2</sup>

#### 1. *Germany's Foreign Trade with North America*

	<i>(in millions of reichsmarks)</i>		
	1937	1932	1929
Imports from the United States . . . . .	282	592	1,790
Exports to the United States . . . . .	209	281	991

The sharp decline in the exchange of commodities during the last year is to be ascribed to the difficulty of selling German goods in the United States, which has been brought about by the depreciation of the dollar, as well as to the anti-German trade boycott.

Our primary imports from North America are cotton, petroleum and petroleum products, and copper. German exports to the United

<sup>1</sup> In a covering note (38/26276) Becker states that the contents of the memorandum were telephoned on Ribbentrop's instructions on the previous day, Nov. 17, to him at Düsseldorf, where he was attending vom Rath's funeral.

<sup>2</sup> A minute by Woermann (38/26274), on Nov. 18, states that the Führer had received statistical material about imports from and exports to America in order to consider severe countermeasures in reply to "the continued insults by President Roosevelt."

States are spread over all fields of the German manufacturing industry.

## 2. *Development of Commercial Policy*

The trade treaty of 1923,<sup>3</sup> which was concluded on an unconditional most-favored-nation basis, is still today, although in a modified form, the treaty basis of our economic relations with North America. The treaty was denounced by us in 1934 from a desire to introduce certain modifications regarding the most-favored-nation principle. New negotiations have not been entered upon since then. The old treaty was, on the other hand, renewed in 1935 by an exchange of notes but with the omission of the most-favored-nation principle as regards exchange of commodities.

We also do not enjoy *de facto* most-favored-nation treatment in the United States. Indeed, America has declared that we discriminated against the United States and, by virtue of American customs regulations providing for this, has placed us on the so-called "black list," i.e. German goods do not enjoy the treaty tariff rates which the United States has agreed upon with other countries under the Hull system of commercial policy. Germany is at present the only country which is not accorded most-favored-nation treatment.

After the depreciation of the dollar in 1933 the resultant need for reducing the price of German goods exported to the United States offered us considerable difficulties in consequence of the American customs regulations opposed to such a reduction of prices. We succeeded, however, by means of compensatory transactions, the use of the ASKI mark<sup>4</sup> and registered credits, and also by means of an export drive on the German side (ZAV system)<sup>5</sup> in bringing our prices back to a competitive level in the North American market. At the end of 1936, however, a legal judgment given by the United States Attorney General at the suggestion of the Treasury, and based on the American customs regulations, curtailed the possibility of the further application of the above methods.

Since then, with the indirect assistance and tacit toleration of the United States Treasury, a new form of barter transactions has been evolved which, although apparently open to attack under the American tariff laws, has worked smoothly and well in practice. These barter transactions are based on German orders for cotton and copper.

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<sup>3</sup> The treaty of friendship, commerce, and consular rights was signed at Washington, D. C., on Dec. 8, 1923. For its text see *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1923* (Washington, D.C., 1938), vol. II, pp. 29-45.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 262, footnote 2.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 490, footnote 2.

The greater part of the exchange of commodities between Germany and the United States is carried on by way of these barter transactions. Only a comparatively small percentage is carried out on a foreign-exchange basis.

Outside the field of the exchange of commodities, comparatively large amounts of foreign exchange accrue to Germany's credit from American legacies (the amount of the legacies falling due to Germany is many times greater than the amount of German legacies falling due to the United States) as well as from the shipping trade.

### *3. Interrelationship of Capital*

Germany's capital debt to the United States is assessed by the Reichsbank at 2½ billion reichsmarks. Of this, American capital investments in German industrial undertakings, real estate, and the like represent about one billion. The remaining 1½ billion reichsmarks consist of the German loans and other capital debts to the United States. These are, however, quite rough figures. The Reichsbank has no exact documentation at its disposal.

On the other hand, the German capital claims on the United States in the form of investments and mortgages in North America are given at 150 million reichsmarks. The Reichsbank has no data regarding other German industrial and private property in the United States. The total amount, therefore, may well be considerably higher. One difficulty in assessment lies in the fact that the German capital investments and other assets in North America are partly conducted via third countries, as for instance, in the case of the American organization of the I. G. Farbenindustrie.

### *Supplement*

In drawing up a capital balance-sheet between Germany and the United States, the total of German assets in the United States must, in my opinion, be rated at several hundred million reichsmarks.

In assessing the German obligations to the United States, attention must further be paid to the danger (which has already become manifest during the last year over several German private-loan liabilities to the United States) that American creditors can successfully lay hands on German property in third countries on the basis of legal decisions reached in the United States. If logically carried out, this gives the American creditors a means of rendering German business activities extraordinarily difficult in other countries besides the United States.

## No. 504

38/26283

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, November 22, 1938.

For the Foreign Minister.

I enclose herewith, as instructed, a memorandum on the repercussions, from the political aspect (Part I) and the economic aspect (Part II),<sup>1</sup> of breaking off diplomatic relations.

The memorandum is based on the assumption that the rupture of diplomatic relations would result in a complete cessation of trade. This, however, need not necessarily follow. There are examples to prove that a brisk trade may be carried on between countries without the existence of diplomatic relations.

It does not necessarily follow that the rupture of diplomatic relations implies the cessation of consular activities as well.

The upshot is that the unfavorable consequences of a rupture of diplomatic relations would preponderate. The disadvantages, however, are not so decisive that they could not be put up with, if need be.

WOERMANN

2422/511601-05

[Enclosure]

BERLIN, November 20, 1939.<sup>2</sup>

Pol. IX 1951.

MEMORANDUM ON THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF A POSSIBLE RUPTURE OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

A breaking-off by the United States Government of its relations with Germany would be a logical conclusion of the policy which is outlined in the utterances of American statesmen and the savage anti-German press campaign. Admittedly, Roosevelt has declared that the recall of Wilson does not signify a rupture of relations;<sup>3</sup> we must, however, reckon with the possibility that the ultimate object of his present political struggle is the rupture of relations with us but that he is anxious to place the onus on our shoulders and to force us to undertake the rupture in order to take the wind out of the sails of those in his own camp and in the Latin American states who might be opposed to the adoption of such measures against Germany.

<sup>1</sup> See addendum, p. 733.

<sup>2</sup> This is clearly an error; a marginal notation gives the date as: "20.XI.38."

<sup>3</sup> On Nov. 14, 1938, the Ambassador was recalled to the United States for report and consultation and did not return to his post.

*American Domestic Policy*

A rupture of relations would give Roosevelt the opportunity to continue openly, and with the employment of still greater resources, his anti-German policy. The President is an apt pupil of Wilson. Just as the latter, from 1914 on, systematically prepared his countrymen for a war with Germany, so Roosevelt too has, through the press which serves him, carried on without respite since his reelection a campaign of incitement against Germany and has created in the minds of the American people a psychological receptiveness to any anti-German measures, even though these might in the end involve America in war.

We must consequently put up with the fact that a breaking-off of relations with Germany will initially be received with approval in America. In this connection the United States Government will be able to record a further advantage in that the attention of the public will be diverted from the unsatisfactory domestic situation and directed to the field of foreign policy. A breaking-off of relations would thus strengthen Roosevelt's position at home and obliterate the painful impression of the electoral defeat at the beginning of November. It would facilitate the execution of his gigantic rearmament program and would place him in a position to demand, under the pretext of a threatening German attack, additional billions of dollars for military purposes. First, he could in this way combat unemployment, which he cannot master by economic means; and further, the billions of dollars granted him would place in his hands a campaign fund for the election struggle of 1940 which is already taking shape and which is to give him the longed-for third term.

How long Roosevelt can maintain this policy without coming up against resistance in his own camp cannot yet be ascertained. Reports from America show that, for the moment at least, the entire country seems to stand behind him almost unanimously. Our few friends have become silent. The American press stands solidly in the opposite camp. Even the German element [*Volksdeutschtum*—as was always predicted by official German quarters in the event of a conflict between the United States and Germany—stands back, intimidated and disconcerted. Important German newspapers such as the *New Yorker Staatszeitung* have veered round to the camp of our opponents. Of course, it can be assumed that sober second thoughts will arise and that the political opponents of Roosevelt are in the long run not prepared to miss the good opportunity for exploiting, in the coming elections, the breaking-off of relations with Germany because of pro-Semitic sympathies. Anti-Semitism, which had everywhere made progress during recent months, but which has suffered a set-back since November 10, will with time regain strength and prove a valuable ally to the political opponents of Roosevelt.

The isolationists, too, who have lost much ground through recent events, will with time again raise their heads and will join the circles which are fighting against Roosevelt on grounds of domestic policy.

### *The German Element*

In the field of American domestic policy a rupture of relations would be the prelude to a general campaign against the German element in the United States. The Reich Germans would be chiefly affected by this, and their expulsion is to be reckoned with in the event of a further deterioration of the situation. How many Germans would be affected by this is difficult to say, as the registration of Reich Germans has not yet been carried out. I assume that their number is not over 200,000 and not under 100,000. The *volksdeutsch* element, too, will have to reckon with incisive measures. The hopeful first beginnings of a new German cultural life will again be crushed. Of course, club life will probably remain untouched, as it is a question of clubs formed by naturalized Americans of German background. It is only the German-American Bund and a few Reich-German clubs which will in all likelihood be dissolved. The German propaganda organizations, such as the Central European Service and the Propaganda Bureau of the Reichsbahn, will be closed. The position of the shipping companies will be treated in the economic section of this memorandum.

In this connection mention should further be made of the political trials involving us, at present pending in the United States; that is, the espionage trials in New York and Panama and the sabotage trials in connection with the Black Tom <sup>4</sup> and Kingsland cases.<sup>5</sup> The espionage trials will end with heavy sentences for the Germans involved, for the United States judges are not to be credited with sufficient objectivity to evaluate in favor of the accused the meager evidence produced.<sup>6</sup> Nor will the American Government want to let slip the opportunity for effective anti-German propaganda which will result from a conviction. In the sabotage trials, which have been pending for almost 20 years, it will probably be possible to avoid paying material compensation by means of treaty concessions. However, should such compensation be exacted by our opponents in these trials, it will

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<sup>4</sup> The Black Tom Dock, Jersey City, was blown up and set on fire July 30, 1916. Two persons were killed and the damage was estimated at 22 million dollars.

<sup>5</sup> An ammunition plant of the Canadian Car and Foundry Co., near Kingsland, N. J., was burned Jan. 11, 1917.

<sup>6</sup> Four Germans (including one woman) accused of conspiracy to steal U.S. military secrets were tried by a New York Federal Court Oct. 17–Nov. 30 and sentenced on Dec. 2, 1938, to terms of imprisonment ranging from 2 to 6 years. Schackow and Kuhrig, two Germans, after trials in the Panama Canal Zone, Dec. 7–14, 1938, and Jan. 4–12, 1939, respectively, were convicted of espionage and of photographing the fortifications and on Jan. 20, 1939, were each sentenced to 2 years at hard labor.

also have to take the feelings of Government and public into consideration and it will go heavily against us.

In the field of international politics a rupture of relations will have particularly strong repercussions in two directions:

### 1. Latin America

A rupture of diplomatic relations will not remain without its repercussions in the relations between Latin American states and Germany. In addition to the pan-American idea, which has been spread and propagated in South and Central America for years by the United States of America, North American influence in other American countries has just of late months developed along the line of calling upon the democratic states to enter the field solidly against the totalitarian states. Under the slogan of democracy a pan-American continent is to be formed. This concept is furthered by Latin America's growing distrust of the League of Nations. The outcome of the Munich four-power conference has on many sides led to the view that the idea of collective security within the framework of the League of Nations has suffered a severe reverse and that the best line to take would be to hold themselves more aloof from Europe and follow the initiative of the United States as regards foreign policy. A rupture of relations between Germany and the United States would therefore naturally result in North American propaganda and economic pressure being greatly increased in the Latin American countries. These influences would find particularly fruitful soil in Brazil in view of the strained relations existing between that country and Germany, and in Argentina, the stronghold of Jewry in South America. In Chile, too, the newly elected President<sup>7</sup> is an adherent of the Popular Front and leans strongly toward the United States. Even though there is still temporary opposition in leading circles of the Latin American countries to a hegemony by the United States over the American continent, the economic predominance of the United States and the all-powerful influence of the North American press in Latin America will be utilized, in the event of crisis, to try to remove these last scruples and render the South American states tractable to the desires of the United States. In this respect, to be sure, there will be strong resistance to overcome in many South American countries, as Germany is the second most important purchaser in Latin America.

### 2. European democracies

The United States will attempt to reimburse herself politically for the costs of the concession in the recently concluded Anglo-American trade treaty<sup>8</sup> and to aline the big European democracies with the anti-

<sup>7</sup> Don Pedro Aguirre Cerda, elected President on Oct. 28, 1938.

<sup>8</sup> Signed at Washington on Nov. 17, 1938.

dictatorship front. Even as Wilson had, Roosevelt has also his saviour complex. Whereas Wilson wanted to make the world ripe [safe?] for "democracy," Roosevelt wishes to overthrow the dictatorships and to restore the world authority of liberalism, the one and only true political creed. It is therefore to be assumed that he will support all enemies of Chamberlain and Daladier in Britain and France in order to assist the opposition to obtain victory. In this connection he could also reopen the question of Allied war debts in order to . . .<sup>9</sup> render the alinement with the anti-German front more palatable to the British and French electors.

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<sup>9</sup> Thus in the copy of the document printed here.

### No. 505

B21/004991

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

WASHINGTON, D.C., November 30, 1938—9:32 p.m.

No. 364 of November 30

Received December 1—6:00 a.m.

For the Personnel Department.

It appears expedient to remove to Berlin the present accumulation of secret political files in view of current strained relations and the lack of security for secret material in the Chancery building; the latter situation, which has been reported frequently, cannot be remedied without extensive alterations, the advisability of which is questionable because of the poor condition of the building. The files are so bulky that they cannot be destroyed quickly enough should the necessity arise. The intention is to retain only a small, absolutely necessary amount of political archives and to send what can be dispensed with to Berlin as it accumulates.

A separate report will be sent regarding cipher material.

Furthermore, please instruct captains of mail steamers not to deliver letter pouches marked "Care of the Captain" to the American postal authorities in New York any longer but to hand them to the representative of the Consulate General in New York. Otherwise letter pouches remain in the custody of the American postal authorities for 20 hours or more (cf. instruction IIIA No. 2946 of October 23, 1925). For security reasons letter pouches, "Care of Captain," will in the future be collected in New York or delivered there as the

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<sup>1</sup> Ambassador Dieckhoff was recalled to Germany on Nov. 18, 1938.

case may be. For other letter pouches, shipping facilities and postal transmission as hitherto.

I request telegraphic instructions.<sup>2</sup>

THOMSEN

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<sup>2</sup> In telegram No. 352 (B21/004992) of Dec. 1, permission was given to return the secret political files; instructions about the remaining material were to follow. The shipping lines had already been instructed regarding the letter pouches.

### No. 506

B21/005675

#### *Note Verbale to the American Embassy*

84-60 3/12 Sdh. Ang. 1

BERLIN, December 10, 1938.

The Foreign Ministry has the honor to reply as follows with reference to *note verbale* No. 244 of November 22<sup>1</sup> of the Embassy of the United States and the Foreign Ministry's *note verbale* 84-60 22/11 of November 29.<sup>2</sup>

Pursuant to the decree of November 12, 1938,<sup>3</sup> excluding Jews from the German economy, all Jews have been forbidden as from January 1, 1939, to carry on retail businesses, exporting businesses, or mail-order businesses, as well as to carry on a trade independently. Furthermore, they have been forbidden, effective the same date, to offer goods or professional services on any type of market, fair, or exhibition, to canvass for these things, or to accept orders for them.

This decree also refers to Jews who possess foreign citizenship. In all cases respecting an American citizen, however, the proper higher administrative authorities will, before taking steps, have regard to the stipulations of the German-American agreements in force.

The Foreign Ministry ventures in this respect to refer to the representations in its *note verbale* 82-32 20/6 of June 24.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (B21/005673-74).

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (4920/E256789-90).

<sup>3</sup> *Reichsgesetzblatt*, vol. I, p. 1580.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (B21/005668).

### No. 507

B21/005678-79

#### *Note from the American Embassy*<sup>1</sup>

No. 263

BERLIN, December 14, 1938.

EXCELLENCY: I have been instructed by my Government to express its disappointment that Your Excellency's Government has not as yet conveyed the assurances which my Government felt confident

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<sup>1</sup> In English in the original.

would be received concerning nondiscriminatory treatment in Germany of American citizens without exception based on race or creed.

The attention of Your Excellency's Government was expressly invited to this matter in Mr. Wilson's note of May 9, 1938,<sup>2</sup> and my Government's concern and its desire for the assurances sought therein have been reiterated on several occasions in communications to Your Excellency's Government.

My Government is concerned with the provisions of the decree laws which if made applicable to American citizens would have the effect of arbitrarily dividing them into special classes and subject them to differential treatment on the basis of such classification. It is one of the fundamental principles of my Government to make no distinction between American citizens on the basis of race and creed, and uniformly in its relations with foreign nations it has emphatically declined the right of those nations to apply on their part such discrimination as between American citizens. This principle furthermore is applied by my Government to nationals of foreign countries residing in the United States, including Germans. The application to American citizens of the measures referred to would be incompatible with this principle.

My Government believes, therefore, that upon further consideration Your Excellency's Government will decide that American citizens will not be discriminated against in Germany on account of race or creed and that they will not be subjected to provisions of the nature of those embodied in the decree laws in question.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurance of my highest consideration.

PRENTISS GILBERT<sup>3</sup>

*Chargé d'Affaires ad interim*

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<sup>2</sup> Not printed (B21/005665/1-66). It pointed out that the measures following the decree of Apr. 26, 1938, which required all Jews, both German and of foreign nationality, to declare all property held in Germany, violated the rights of American citizens under the treaty of friendship, commerce, and consular rights of Dec. 8, 1923. The protest was repeated on Dec. 8, 1938 (B21/005676-77).

<sup>3</sup> Prentiss B. Gilbert, Counselor of Embassy in Berlin, July 1937-February 1939.

## No. 508

2663/527833-40

*Under State Secretary Woermann to Counselor of Embassy Thomsen*

BERLIN, December 15, 1938.

zu Pol. IX 2068.<sup>1</sup>

Drafting Officer: Counselor of Legation Freytag.

DEAR THOMSEN: Herr Dieckhoff, in his letter of November 8<sup>2</sup> to Herr von Weizsäcker, again brought up the thorny problem of the

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2663/527836-37).

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 500.

German-American Bund. As you will know from the Foreign Ministry instructions on this subject, it was agreed here at the time between the appropriate agencies and Party authorities that Herr Kuhn should merely be received by the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle. Although we were convinced that all offices adhered to this, we have after all got in touch with the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle again.<sup>3</sup> This office has replied that, except for his reception in Stuttgart by Captain Wiedemann and Mayor Strölin,<sup>4</sup> Herr Kuhn was received last summer only by the officials of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle. The Embassy had been informed in a letter of May 21<sup>5</sup> of the subject of the talks carried on in Berlin. Herr Kuhn had been advised at that time, among other things, that the Reich authorities could not sanction the course followed by the German-American Bund under his direction. It had further been suggested to him to remove the Reich Germans from the Bund and to communicate with the Embassy in Washington regarding the modification of his tactics. Captain Wiedemann had exerted his influence on Kuhn to the same end. Mayor Strölin had not had any authority to promise Herr Kuhn support; it was not known whether he had done this. The Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle rules out the possibility of Herr Kuhn's having been received by Ministers Göring and Goebbels. In these circumstances the natural conclusion is that Herr Kuhn has—as already on other occasions—consciously deviated from the truth in order to strengthen his position with his adherents.

Kindest regards,

Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

W[OERMANN]

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (2663/527835).

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Karl Strölin, also President of the Deutsches Auslands-Institut.

<sup>5</sup> Not found.

No. 509

B21/005633-34

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, December 16, 1938.

Field Marshal Göring has just acquainted me with the following by telephone:

According to his information, a movement is in progress in America to discharge workers of German origin from American firms and to fill the vacant posts with Jews. The Field Marshal apparently based his assumption on an American newspaper advertisement according to which replacements for people of German origin who were to be dismissed were being sought in refugee circles.

In carrying out the Four Year Plan the Field Marshal wishes to see a bold scheme introduced in order to attract people of German origin here from America (even those who are already American citizens) so as to meet German requirements. The people concerned could be promised all possible preferential treatment such as free passage, tax exemption for one year, and so on. The Führer, with whom the Field Marshal has already spoken, agrees to the scheme and has entrusted him with its further execution. Perhaps it would be possible to organize an exchange of people of German origin returning home for Jews to be sent there.

The Field Marshal added that he was chiefly interested in agricultural workers, skilled artisans, engineers, and technicians. The Field Marshal did not completely dismiss my question as to whether he had thought of examining the views of the people returning home but said that anyone over there who had to give up his employment in favor of a Jew would be ready and willing to fit in with us.

In conclusion, the Field Marshal also remarked that he was informing the Foreign Ministry of the whole affair in order to hand over to it the practical execution; otherwise he himself would have to entrust the task to a fully authorized representative. He requests that in a short time—in approximately 3 or 4 days—a plan should be submitted to him, as plenipotentiary, setting forth how the matter should be organized on a grand scale, including consultation with our consulates in the United States and with the necessary propaganda.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 510

B21/005635-37

*Memorandum by Ambassador Dieckhoff*

BERLIN, December 16, 1938.

1. I cannot say whether the information is correct that a movement is in progress in the United States to dismiss workers of German origin from American firms and to fill the vacant posts with Jews, as I have been absent for more than 3 weeks from the United States, and before I left no such movement was to be observed. Meanwhile I have seen a newspaper report according to which the Jewish firm of Macy's in New York (a large department store) dismissed all employees with German names at the end of November and replaced them with Jews. Whether this news is correct I do not know, and I am uninformed whether further cases of the kind may possibly have occurred. The Embassy in Washington could be asked by telegram whether it has made observations to this effect.

2. I very much welcome the idea of repatriating Germans on a large scale from the United States to Germany; over there Germans will, in the long run, be lost to the German community [*Deutschtum*]; here many of them can be usefully employed.

In my opinion a distinction must be drawn between *Reichsdeutsche* and *Volksdeutsche*. To repatriate the Reich Germans is our absolute right, and the American Government cannot object to this. The number of Reich Germans in the United States is estimated at between 150,000 and 200,000. Of these, many will probably be of service for our purposes at home and will at the same time be politically reliable. Many will not be suitable, and some who would be suitable will not wish to return. In this latter case a certain pressure may be brought to bear, if necessary, by withdrawal of passports or by other measures. The question of a planned, practical withdrawal of a large number of Reich Germans from the United States to Germany has been worked on for quite some time. The Foreign Ministry and German diplomatic and consular authorities in the United States will be able to give particulars of results so far achieved.

To bring *German-Americans*, that is, American citizens, to Germany is a considerably more difficult problem. Even insofar as they are politically reliable and practically suitable, it is likely that only a few will wish to leave their country and move to Germany. In the case of German-Americans we must never forget that they are not compelled to live under foreign dominion—as the Sudeten Germans were formerly, and many *volksdeutsch* groups in Europe still are—but that they went to America of their own free will in order to live there as Americans. But even if many should be ready and suitable for repatriation to Germany, this problem must still, in my opinion, be tackled in cooperation with the American Government, and it seems to me very doubtful whether the American Government is disposed to concur in this matter. The likelihood that it will decline to cooperate and will seek to obstruct and hinder the withdrawal of its citizens in every way is, on the contrary, very great. To proceed *without* the cooperation of the American Government would certainly lead to failure. Even if comparatively small groups of American citizens of German origin were brought over here it would become known and would lead to controversies. Even if, in certain cases, German-Americans should successfully be brought over to Germany, difficulties would have to be expected. These people would continue to be regarded by the American Government as “American citizens”<sup>1</sup> and, if occasion should arise, would be claimed by the American consulates in Germany for the United States or be “protected” by them.

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<sup>1</sup> In English in the original.

I therefore recommend that the question of repatriation should be limited to those Germans in the United States who are *Reich Germans* and, if we proceed correctly, a valuable supplement to German manpower could be obtained from these groups.

DIECKHOFF

No. 511

2422/511613-15

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, December 17, 1938.  
e.o. W. VIIIa 2720.

THE POSSIBILITY OF GERMAN-AMERICAN TRADE CONVERSATIONS

On the occasion of a social meeting with Heath, the First Secretary at the American Embassy,<sup>1</sup> at the end of November, I entered into a conversation with him in continuation of former official talks regarding the prospects of German-American economic discussions. I told him that, in view of the attitude of the United States Government and public opinion, the prospects must surely be regarded as very slight. The speech of State Secretary Brinkmann,<sup>2</sup> too, made before the United States Chamber of Commerce here in August of this year had had a very cautious reception in Washington. In particular, Secretary of State Hull once again pointed to the fundamental differences between the two trade systems, which render it extremely difficult to find a basis for a trade agreement. Mr. Heath at that time emphasized as his personal opinion that these difficulties could not after all be insuperable, since similar differences also existed in the trade systems of Italy and Soviet Russia, and yet American trade agreements had been concluded with these countries.

When, on December 3 of this year, I talked with Mr. Gilbert, the American Chargé d'Affaires, on the question of the Austrian debts, he referred of his own accord to my conversation, mentioned above, with Mr. Heath. He brought a copy of the report on the statements of Secretary of State Hull of August 18 regarding the Brinkmann speech and emphasized that this speech, besides the observations I had mentioned, contained representations to the effect that no one would be more pleased than the American Government if a sound basis could be found for a restoration of the former volume of German-American trade.

Following this Mr. Gilbert made lengthy statements—for which he had brought notes—on the historical development, since his arrival

<sup>1</sup> Donald R. Heath, 1938-41.

<sup>2</sup> Of the Ministry of Economics.

here, of the question of holding conversations for a German-American trade agreement and on his own activities in this matter. The purport of these statements was that he had always endeavored to clarify and overcome the *technical* difficulties of such an agreement on the assumption that, if he succeeded in doing this, a trade agreement could be concluded in spite of possible *political* difficulties standing in the way or at a time when these political difficulties had receded into the background. He personally would continue to work in this direction and considered himself empowered by his Government to do this on the basis of a general instruction of the Department of State to all American missions abroad to promote, if possible, the conclusion of a bilateral most-favored-nation agreement with the country to which they were accredited. This order had not been withdrawn or limited in any way as regards Germany.

He had, at the beginning of his service here in the autumn of 1937, unofficially obtained the opinion of a very high authority in the Department of State (Mr. Grady,<sup>3</sup> adviser to the Department on trade treaties) as to whether the strong anti-German feeling in the United States possibly stood in the way of a trade agreement and had received the answer, with reference to the above-mentioned general instruction, that this was not the case.

At the end of 1937 the negotiations for the conclusion of an Anglo-American trade treaty were under way, and it was considered necessary, in view of the treaty's outstanding importance for America, to put off any conversations with Germany until after its conclusion.<sup>4</sup> This was also the reason why no further reaction to the speech of State Secretary Brinkmann last August was heard from the American Government. It was only this need to await the Anglo-American settlement which had further decided the Government of the United States to postpone German-American conversations. As a proof of this, Mr. Gilbert stated that, immediately after the Munich Agreement at the end of September, he had been informed by a high authority in Washington that, in the latter's personal opinion, the position was now such that, should a satisfactory result be achieved with Britain, America would also conclude a treaty with Germany within a few months.

With this Mr. Gilbert concluded his observations. To my question as to whether, as the Anglo-American trade treaty was concluded shortly afterwards, this was now in effect the true attitude of the American Government, Mr. Gilbert replied evasively by saying that he had received no further communications since then. It seemed to him, however, that, now that the need to await the Anglo-American

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<sup>3</sup> Henry F. Grady, Vice Chairman, United States Tariff Commission, 1937-39.

<sup>4</sup> It was signed at Washington on Nov. 17, 1938.

settlement had ceased to be the obstacle to the beginning of German-American trade conversations, waiting for a German-American agreement on the question of the treatment of the American Jews in Germany would have the same effect.<sup>5</sup>

WIEHL

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<sup>5</sup> Copies of this memorandum were distributed for information to the Ministry of Economics, the Finance Ministry, the Food Ministry, the Four Year Plan, and the Reichsbank, as well as to Foreign Ministry officials.

## No. 512

B21/005000-01

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, D.C., December 17, 1938—6:53 p.m.  
No. 389 of December 17 Received December 18—4:20 a.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 388 of December 16.<sup>1</sup>

For the State Secretary and Ambassador Dieckhoff.

New confidential information and the attitude of the American press toward the publication of the last American note on the Jewish question<sup>2</sup> strengthen the impression that our relations with the United States have entered a decisive phase. The President is under strongest pressure from radical and Jewish circles, which, in view of German measures against Jews and allegedly also in view of the rights and interests of American citizens of Jewish race, as well as discriminating measures against American trade, have demanded reprisals against Germany. In this connection the foremost aim is to raise duties on German goods by 50 percent on the basis of powers vested in the President pursuant to Section 338 of the customs regulations.

On the other side, according to reliable information, strong forces are at work which seek to exert influence on the President for a normalization of relations between both countries.

By his last note the President obviously wishes to bring about a decision in one direction or another. According to present information it must be assumed that the President, in the absence of the desired assurance, will not shrink from employing the countermeasures demanded of him and that hence Jewry will attain its object.

Thus the position at the moment is that a normalization of relations, by concurring with the American point of view expressed in

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<sup>1</sup>Not printed (38/26295-96). In it Thomsen records his belief that the American note was drafted by President Roosevelt himself and that the aim of the note was to obtain from the Reich Government an unequivocal assurance that it would not adopt any measures based on "race or creed" against American citizens in the future.

<sup>2</sup>Document No. 507.

the last note, seems attainable. It is probable, however, that this normalization could only be attained if the United States Government were allowed to publish the German answer, as it needs an outward reason for the public in order to be able to send Ambassador Wilson back to Berlin. From the limitation of the last American note to the question of the treatment of American citizens of Jewish race in Germany, it follows that *in this connection* assurances on the well-known six points of grievance (cf. Ambassador Dieckhoff's memorandum of July 28<sup>3</sup>) are not demanded on the American side. Obviously the objective and sober reports of Wilson have contributed substantially toward the fact that the President has watered down his arrogant attitude toward the Jewish question in Germany and today confines himself to American interests and considerations.

THOMSEN

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<sup>3</sup> Vol. I, document No. 460.

## No. 513

B21/005640-44

*Memorandum by the Director of the Cultural Policy Department*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, December 19, 1938.

Kult. E 2601.

Subject: Organized repatriation of German workers from the United States.

### I

The Foreign Ministry will organize the desired repatriation of workers in short supply here (skilled artisans and agricultural workers) in the following manner:

1. *Reich Germans.* The consulates are authorized to carry on the necessary direct and indirect propaganda (through newspapers, announcements in the German clubs, etc.) among the Reich Germans. The German press here, too, might be employed to recruit Reich Germans in America through their relatives here.

The following inducements are considered to be adequate to begin with: the advance of traveling expenses, long-term conditions of repayment, good wages and secure employment with living accommodations, and the most favorable exchange for any foreign currency which they may bring with them (due regard to be paid to proceeds from the sale of household goods). The returning emigrants will

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<sup>1</sup> Stieve submitted this memorandum as a reply to Göring in accordance with the wishes expressed by the latter to Weizsäcker on Dec. 16. See document No. 509.

be advised and selected through the consulates, which have of late had extensive experience in these matters in connection with the repatriation not assisted by the Government.

The screening for political reliability is to take place in consultation with the confidential agents of the Party.

2. *Volksdeutsche*. The propaganda directed at Reich Germans will not remain without great effect on German-Americans (i.e. American citizens). They may in exceptional cases be included in the scheme and will then be advised and looked after by the consulates.

On account of the serious political objections to a larger undertaking of this sort among American citizens, attention is drawn to Ambassador Dieckhoff's appended memorandum of December 16.<sup>2</sup>

## II

On the basis of the experience gained as a result of the Foreign Ministry's fund for repatriating destitute Reich Germans, the traveling expenses per 10,000 workers (35,000-40,000 persons including their families) are to be reckoned at about 8½ million reichsmarks. It is questionable whether a reduction could be obtained through the North Atlantic Conference,<sup>3</sup> which is the governing authority in these matters. To charter special ships is, as experience has shown, uneconomical. If full use is made of the third and tourist-class capacity of normal German shipping, approximately 7,000 persons a month can be conveyed.

The expenses for the journey of approximately half of the families to the ports must be reckoned at about \$250,000. To a moderate extent the more affluent of the returning emigrants will be able to make good this deficiency with the foreign exchange they bring with them.

The sharp increase of repatriation would necessitate a reinforcement of consular personnel. The costs arising during the entire course of the undertaking are estimated at 670,000 RM (about \$200,000) per annum, to which the traveling expenses of the officials must be added.

## III

The American Government cannot, from the purely legal point of view, raise any objections to the repatriation of Reich-German emigrants; however, in view of its attitude, countermeasures must be reckoned with. It might, for instance, delay departure because of non-payment of taxes or make the inclusion of children born there conditional upon the giving of financial guarantees or similar stipulations.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 510.

<sup>3</sup> A committee existing to safeguard the interests of the principal trans-Atlantic shipping companies.

## IV

A connection between the *Jewish* emigration and the German repatriation, especially in the form of an exchange of jobs, will seldom be possible because very few Jews are represented in the occupations from which we need capable workers.

## V

From the time of his arrival in a German port the returning emigrant is to be received and initially looked after by a German domestic authority—preferably by the tested organization of the repatriation office of the AO. This authority and the Reich Employment Exchange and Unemployment Insurance should make arrangements for placing him in employment.

The objections raised by the Ministries concerned during the previous examination of a larger repatriation scheme (in particular, housing difficulties) are outside the scope of the present task assigned to the Foreign Ministry but must be cleared up by the home authorities and the firms concerned. For nothing could be more obstructive to the further execution of the plan than letters of complaint from returned emigrants who might not be well accommodated here.

## VI

The successful execution of the plan described above depends upon the Field Marshal's handing over the conduct of the repatriation scheme to the Foreign Ministry in respect of all foreign countries.

Submitted herewith to the State Secretary in accordance with instructions.

STIEVE

## No. 514

38/26302-06

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, December 19, 1938.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNITED STATES ECONOMIC REPRISALS AGAINST  
GERMANY AND THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES

(a) *Exchange of Commodities*

By American Government measures—retaliatory duties and import restrictions on German goods, as well as discontinuation of the inland-account system<sup>1</sup>—and by an increase in the boycott, the export of German goods to the United States would be as good as cut off. It amounted in 1938 to 150 million reichsmarks; our purchases from the

<sup>1</sup> See *Foreign-Trade and Exchange Controls in Germany*, pp. 161-163.

United States amounted to 450 million reichsmarks; our debit balance was, therefore, 300 million reichsmarks. In spite of this, the discontinuance of German-American trade would probably not be of advantage to us. Nine-tenths of our purchases from the United States consist of urgently needed raw materials (cotton, mineral oil, copper, ores, scrap) which we could, indeed, obtain from other countries also against foreign exchange but not against commodities, as German exports to all other countries are already raised to the utmost, and therefore a supplementary increase to offset the discontinued export to America is not possible. Our balance of foreign exchange would therefore, in comparison with 1938, drop by 150 million reichsmarks which we would have to use to obtain from third countries the raw materials we imported from the United States against goods in 1938. As compared with the foreign-exchange estimate for 1939, in which a considerable increase in exports to the United States is foreshadowed, the drop would be correspondingly even greater.

As far as the United States is concerned, import from and export to Germany amounts to approximately 3 percent of her total foreign trade. She could dispense with the imports from Germany without difficulty. The discontinuance of exports to Germany would, indeed, injure the interested firms (in the case of mineral oil and copper, big combines which do not stand close to the United States Government). As far as the total economy is concerned, it would only be the damage to the cotton growers which would be unpleasantly felt. Already, however, in 1938 our cotton imports from America have fallen off considerably.

#### *(b) Shipping*

In the event of the discontinuance of cargo trade between Germany and America and a considerable decline in the passenger traffic connected with it, German shipping to the United States would largely come to a standstill. The possible deterioration in our foreign-exchange balance as a result could, with the 18 million reichsmarks in foreign-exchange surplus hitherto gained on shipping and the 5.7 million reichsmarks in foreign-exchange obligations further to be paid, amount to 23.7 million reichsmarks. It would not be counter-balanced by the discontinuance of the Reich subsidies of 21.5 millions given the German service to New York, as these are effected in reichsmarks. On the contrary, laying up the ships employed in the American service (their employment on other lines would not be possible in view of the excessive supply of cargo space) would lead to increased costs of 50 to 60 million reichsmarks annually, and a later resumption of the service would involve an initial cost of between 80 and 100 million reichsmarks.

(c) *Interrelation of Capital*

American financial claims on German debtors amount to approximately 1,360 million reichsmarks. Over and above this, American property in Germany (share holdings, real estate, etc.) is estimated at between 500 and 1,000 million reichsmarks.

German claims and investments in the United States amount to approximately 300 million reichsmarks. Our annual debt service to America requires about 72 million reichsmarks, of which 13 million are transferred in foreign exchange and 59 million by travel marks and registered marks.<sup>2</sup>

By a discontinuance of the debt service, which could be considered as a countermeasure to American reprisals, these amounts would, of course, be saved. However, the discontinuance of 59 million travel marks and registered marks would damage the German tourist trade and, over and above this, repercussions would arise which would far outweigh the saving of 13 million reichsmarks of foreign exchange: the United States Government would stop the transfer of American legacies from [to] Germany (between 8 and 10 million reichsmarks in foreign exchange annually) in order to reimburse American creditors injured by the discontinuance of the debt service. The American banks, which under the standstill agreement allowed a credit of 196 million reichsmarks to remain in Germany, would denounce this agreement if the agreed interest on this amount was no longer transferred to them. Consequently not only the American, but all standstill credits, which at present amount to approximately 800 million reichsmarks, would become due for repayment. As repayment would be impossible, the creditors would be able to seize upon the property of the German debtor banks owing these credits not only in their own countries but anywhere abroad. Even if, improbable as it is, the other creditors continued with the standstill, it is still possible that the American banks would adopt such measures to retrieve their 196 millions credit. In the same manner the American creditors of loans could take steps against the assets abroad of German industrial firms and shipping companies which owe the loans, whereby a further 118 million reichsmarks of German assets abroad would be threatened. Such measures would, even if of doubtful success in individual cases, certainly cause great injury to German commerce, finance, and shipping throughout the world.

Even if the discontinuance of the debt service gave the Americans no cause for the immediate denunciation of the standstill agreement expiring in May 1939, they could, however, oppose its renewal and hence bring about the same contingencies.

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 414, footnote 2, and document No. 433, footnote 2.

A seizure of American property in Germany would not make good the above-mentioned disadvantages to us. It would presumably make all the less impression on the American Government because the latter could, by seizing all German property in the United States, at least partially compensate the injured American parties.

(d) *Trade with Third Countries*

The United States is already fighting German trade whenever she can, especially in South America, from whence, for the most part against an account of approximately 1 billion reichsmarks, we mainly import raw materials which are costly in foreign currency. The United States could exert still greater pressure in this struggle and would then, by virtue of her economic preponderance in South America, probably have more success than heretofore. The prospects of the universal export drive ordered by Field Marshal Göring, which are not very favorable in any case, would thus become still more unfavorable.

WIEHL

No. 515

38/26308-09

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*  
Telegram

MOST URGENT WASHINGTON, D. C., December 21, 1938—4: 06 p.m.  
No. 398 of December 21 Received December 22—1: 55 a.m.

For the Foreign Minister and the State Secretary.

With reference to my telegram No. 396 of December 20.<sup>1</sup>

I called on the Acting Secretary of State<sup>2</sup> as instructed and, in the name of the Reich Government, lodged an extremely sharp protest with him against the shameful insults directed by Ickes,<sup>3</sup> Secretary of the Interior, against the Führer and Chancellor. I told Welles that the words of the Secretary of the Interior left no doubt that the latter had intended to affront the Head of State of the German Reich and that the responsibility of a member of the American Cabinet for this line of conduct was established.

Though Mr. Welles today also expressed regret that insults of this sort have occurred, he stated that he could not accept my protest.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (38/26307). In it Thomsen states that he had already made representations about the matter on his own initiative with Welles on Dec. 20, before he received Weizsäcker's telegram No. 369 (2422/511633) instructing him to deliver the sharpest protest of the Reich Government.

<sup>2</sup> Sumner Welles, Under Secretary of State, 1937-43.

<sup>3</sup> Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, 1933-46.

The Secretary of the Interior had expressed feelings which were extremely widespread among the American people. Moreover, there was no cause for a protest, because both the President of the United States and members of his Cabinet had been attacked in an irresponsible manner by the German press . . . (group garbled) which, as was well known, was controlled by the German Government. When I strongly objected that an analogy could not be drawn with the German press in this connection, quite apart from the fact that I was unaware of similar coarse affronts to the American President in the German press, Welles replied that the Department of State had sufficient material available regarding this and that the German Government could have immediately put a stop to such attacks had it so desired. I once again energetically denied that the behavior of the German press could with any relevance be introduced into this discussion.

On my renewed objection that it was a question of an affront to the Head of the German Reich made by an active member of the Cabinet, he replied that similar attacks had been made on the President of the United States by German statesmen. When I asked him for proof of this statement he merely quoted the observations which the Führer and Chancellor had allegedly made during a speech against the late President Wilson, whose memory is held in high honor here.

I broke off the discussion at this point as hopeless. Welles once again expressed regret that such affronts had come about, and he hoped that a situation could be created in which no further cases of this sort would occur.

Nothing will be published here regarding my protest and the reply of the Acting Secretary of State.

THOMSEN

## No. 516

B21/005749-53

*Ambassador Dieckhoff to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

LENZKIRCH, SCHWARZWALD, December 21, 1938.

DEAR WEIZSÄCKER: I must unfortunately burden you with yet another letter. Hinrichs<sup>1</sup> telephoned me a little while ago and informed me of both the text of the American note handed over in Berlin on December 14<sup>2</sup> and of Thomsen's two telegrams<sup>3</sup> regarding this note and the present situation. As far as I can judge from here, Thom-

<sup>1</sup> Walther Hinrichs, head of Sonderreferat Deutschland.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 507.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 512 and footnote 1.

sen's two telegrams give a very accurate picture; in Washington a show-down is taking place between the moderate elements (Hugh Wilson) and the extreme elements; the outcome of this struggle will determine the development of relations between Germany and the United States. If the moderate elements are victorious it is probable that normal relations will be reestablished between us, otherwise we shall gradually drift to a breach.

If we have not yet come to a decision I would like to make the following remarks:

1. If we reply in the negative, the breach will come either immediately or in a very short time. I consider a breach to be politically and economically so grave a matter that we must avoid it under any circumstances as long as we possibly can. It must be added that the American legal position is, by reason of the trade treaty, which after all does exist, a very strong one; a charge of breach of contract would be a serious matter. Finally, the interests in Germany of American Jews are comparatively unimportant so that it would not be worth while to bring about a breach for this reason.

2. If we reply in accommodating terms, the moderate elements in Washington will see that a normal state of affairs is reestablished. In this case I would recommend that the note be so drafted that counter-inquiries from the American side are no longer necessary; that is, that it be clear and unequivocal, even though, naturally, in so refined a form that a publication of our note would be unobjectionable. A precedent for third powers would have to be feared only where most-favored-nation obligations would compel us to accord to other foreign Jews the rights accorded to American Jews. That is probably an awkward point but is, I think, in comparison with the magnitude of the problem (Germany's relations with the United States) of little importance.

You know that I was always in favor of sharply rebuffing American interference in German *domestic* questions, a position which I still maintain. But here it is a question of *American* interests and, in fact, only such as are firmly based on the American-German trade treaty. I know that lawyers can explain away treaty obligations, but the spirit and text of the trade treaty of 1923 <sup>4</sup> support the American case.

With cordial greetings,

Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,  
DIECKHOFF

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<sup>4</sup> See document No. 503, footnote 3.

No. 517

38/26369

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, December 24, 1938.

The Foreign Minister has commissioned Minister Kiep<sup>1</sup> with the study and subsequent organization of the repatriation of Germans and people of German origin from the United States. Herr Kiep is first of all to make a visit, to be described as private, to the United States in January and will be back here in Berlin in from 1 to 2 months to make a report. The private appearance of the journey must be maintained. When an opportunity arises, Herr Kiep will tell the American Chargé d'Affaires, whom he has known for a long time, that he is visiting friends in the United States. The announcement of Kiep's visit is to be made to the German Chargé d'Affaires in Washington in the form of a private letter, the drafting of which Herr Kiep has taken in hand and which I am to sign; and it is to be so timed that Herr Thomsen will receive it as soon as Kiep sets out. Herr Kiep will be in Berlin at the beginning of January prior to his departure and will get in touch with all the authorities concerned. The press is to hear nothing of Kiep's visit.

I have informed Field Marshal Göring of Kiep's mission through State Secretary Körner.<sup>2</sup>

The Foreign Minister has further ordered that Herr Kiep is for the present to retain his position on the Non-Intervention Committee in London.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Otto Carl Kiep had served as Consul General in New York from 1931 until 1934 when he retired for political reasons.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Körner, State Secretary and permanent deputy to Göring as Commissioner for the Four Year Plan, 1936-45.

No. 518

2422/511736-38

*Note to the American Embassy*

84-60 Sdh. 14/12.

BERLIN, December 30, 1938.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: With reference to your note No. 263 of December 14<sup>1</sup> regarding the treatment of American citizens in Germany, I have the honor to reply to you as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 507.

According to your note the Government of the United States of America believes that it can expect from the German Government a general assurance to the effect that American citizens in Germany should be subjected to no discriminatory treatment on account of their race or creed. It considers that it can base this expectation on the statement that it is one of its fundamental principles to make no distinction between American citizens on the basis of race and creed and that, in its relations with other states, it has always disputed the right of these states to apply on their part such discrimination to American citizens.

It is, of course, the right of the Government of the United States of America, as of every sovereign state, to lay down political principles of one kind or another for the measures to be taken in its own country regarding the questions here under consideration. It is quite another question, however, whether such principles have binding force upon other governments also, in respect of the measures proper to their sovereign territory. Manifestly, that could be the case only if such principles either corresponded to generally recognized precepts of international law or if they were made the subject of special agreements between individual states.

There exists, however, no general principle of international law whereby a state would be obliged to abstain from discriminatory treatment of the foreign citizens living within its frontiers on account of their race, creed, or other characteristics. The American Government must also be aware that the German Government is not the first nor the only Government to consider such discriminatory treatment necessary in certain cases. It [the German Government] had, however, in no case taken such action because of the foreign citizenship of the affected persons but had only applied special measures of the kind under discussion to particular categories of foreign citizens if its own citizens of like category were subjected to these measures. Over and above this, the German Government has, in this respect, out of special consideration for foreign citizens, even entitled them by law to more favorable treatment than that received by its own citizens where the facts permitted.

Consequently, there remains only the question whether and to what extent special agreements fixed by treaty between Germany and the United States of America stand in the way of applying to American citizens the German measures objected to by the American Government. In this respect the Foreign Ministry has frequently declared to the American Embassy, both in writing and orally, that the German Government will naturally respect rights to which American citizens are entitled as a result of treaties between the two countries. The American Embassy has hitherto informed the Foreign Ministry of no

single case in which, in its opinion, such treaty rights have been infringed by German measures. The German Government is prepared, for its part, should it be informed of such cases by the American Embassy, to examine and decide upon them on the basis of existing treaty regulations.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurance of my highest esteem.

WEIZSÄCKER<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Weizsäcker had sent a draft of this note to Ribbentrop on Dec. 27 (B21/005692) and had explained: "The idea underlying the draft is to furnish the United States with an answer—and this should be done before the opening of Congress on January 3—which the American Government can only with difficulty turn to our discredit and from which on the other hand it cannot derive much advantage."

### No. 519

B21/005651

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, December 30, 1938.

The Foreign Minister wishes Minister Kiep<sup>1</sup> to be told the following through me:

Kiep should not make contact with any official personages whatsoever in the United States. Nor should he call on Prentiss Gilbert. If, however, anything about Kiep's journey were to appear in the press, he would have to be recalled.

Also, as regards his second task, Kiep is to meet only with German officials and private American friends in exploring the possibilities of collaboration with Roosevelt's opponents.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 517.

### No. 520

B21/005014

#### *Memorandum by the Director of the Protocol Department*

BERLIN, January 4, 1939.

Prot. 18783 V 70.

The Foreign Minister has directed that members of the Foreign Service shall, until further notice, neither accept invitations from the American Ambassador and members of the American Embassy here nor issue invitations to them. In declining, political reasons are not to be given.<sup>1</sup>

DÖRNBERG

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<sup>1</sup> A minute by Weizsäcker dated Dec. 30 (B21/005013) submits the same instructions to the Chief of Protocol and makes the adherence of other Ministries dependent on the speech to be made by President Roosevelt on Jan. 4, 1939.

## No. 521

B21/005021-23

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

WASHINGTON, D.C., January 9, 1939—6:49 p.m.

No. 6 of January 9

Received January 10—4:30 a.m.

Dr. Rettig, the director of the New York office of the [German] Student Exchange Agency, sent a circular at the beginning of November, without the knowledge of the Embassy or Consulate General and presumably on his own initiative, to all German exchange students, in which, in addition to unimportant matters, he appealed to the latter to report on the observations they had made in their universities on academic and *political* matters. In particular those questions were to be answered as to what attitude the individual members of faculties, university boards, and the students themselves adopted toward the exchange and toward Germany in general, and further, as to what political and financial influence stood behind the universities concerned and influenced their attitude. In addition a regular scrutiny of the university newspapers was desired, and it was requested that all clippings should be sent in which Germany's academic or political relations with the United States, South America, and the Far East were concerned.

This circular fell into the hands of the American authorities. Mr. Dunn,<sup>1</sup> political adviser to the Department of State, asked me to call on him today and, by virtue of an instruction from the Acting Secretary of State, informed me as follows:

The circular constituted an act [*erfülle einen Tatbestand*] which was punishable under American law. The American authorities were in a position simply to arrest Herr Rettig and bring him to trial. The Department of State desired the continuance of the exchange of students between Germany and the United States as such. The further existence of the exchange was, however, gravely endangered by conduct such as that of Rettig. Mr. Dunn left it to me to draw the necessary conclusions but clearly intimated that the American Government expected Herr Rettig's recall, and hence the liquidation of the New York office.

I answered Dunn that the facts of the case as he had described them to me certainly were grave, if I accepted that Rettig's circular did in

<sup>1</sup> James Clement Dunn, adviser on political relations in the Department of State, 1937-44.

fact exist; I must, however, convince myself of this. We were acquainted with the fact that American students in Germany, too, furnished situation reports as required. No official German quarters could accept the responsibility for Herr Rettig's circular, as the branches working in other countries were not organs of the Reich Government.

Mr. Dunn replied that there was no doubt as to the authenticity of the document. In this connection I am reporting the following: Herr Rettig called on me a few days before my conversation of today at the Department of State and informed me of the circular. He himself assumed, by virtue of hints from academic circles, that the American authorities were already aware of its contents or of its distribution. He asked for my protection. He himself was fully conscious of having committed a grave error. I sharply censured Rettig's behavior and left him in no doubt that he himself would have to bear all the consequences of his imprudence.

I am of the opinion that Rettig should be recalled immediately as he is in danger of being arrested and brought up for trial. I do not need to emphasize what such a trial would mean, with the temper that is prevailing here, when connected with the espionage trial, the congressional investigating committee, and the attacks already made upon the exchange of German and American students. Apart from the fact that it would be grist to the mill of the sensational press and all circles hostile toward us, it would presumably bring about the end of the present exchange of German and American students. The American Government could have taken this course immediately had it wished. It has given proof of its consideration by indicating how the matter can be disposed of without attracting attention. When I asked him, Mr. Dunn assured me that the text of the circular was known to no agency but the Department of State and that the Department of State did not intend to make the matter public. The blame for the situation thus created falls squarely upon Herr Rettig. First, he must have known, as one supposedly familiar with existing conditions, that he has been under constant observation ever since his arrival here, and, second, he should have got in touch with the Consulate General in New York or with me before sending out the circular.

It does not seem expedient to me that Rettig should leave at once, as unnecessary attention might be aroused thereby. However, please authorize me by telegram as soon as possible to inform the Department of State that Rettig will be recalled and that the office will accordingly suspend its activities until further notice.

THOMSEN

## No. 522

B21/005698-701

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, January 11, 1939.

The American Chargé d'Affaires handed over to me today the note hereby appended with annexes,<sup>1</sup> in reply to that of December 30<sup>2</sup> regarding the treatment of American Jews.

Mr. Prentiss Gilbert said that the American Government wished to publish this note just as it had published its first note on this question. It was asking for our consent to publish the German note of December 30, too, at the same time. He asked for an answer by tomorrow, January 12.

Mr. Prentiss Gilbert advanced it as his personal view that our note of December 30 had been very ingenious. In point of fact, apart from the seven cases which were treated as annexes to the [American] note, there were comparatively few other cases, and these had already been settled directly between the consulates and the subordinate authorities. If, therefore, the actual interest of the United States were measured according to the number of cases, it would be found to be only very small. This fact, however, should not be permitted to obscure the fact that the Government of the United States must, by reason of the internal structure of the country, abide by the principle that American Jews in Germany should not be discriminated against. I remarked in this connection that it appeared to me more practical at present to examine the concrete instances of complaints than to conduct a discussion on principles. I interpolated the view that the United States itself pursued a policy of discrimination with regard to Negroes. Mr. Prentiss Gilbert said, in this connection, that individual states still pursued such a policy but that the Federal Government did not do so. I characterized this as irrelevant so far as we were concerned.

In my opinion it is desirable that our note of December 30 should be published in the United States when the new American note of January 11 is published there.

WOERMANN

[Enclosure]

No. 288

BERLIN, January 11, 1939.

EXCELLENCY: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the note signed by Mr. Weizsäcker of December 30, 1938,<sup>2</sup> concerning the

<sup>1</sup> The annexes are not printed (B21/005702-10). The note is in English and is addressed to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 518.

treatment in Germany of American citizens, and under instructions of my Government to reply as follows:

My Government, maintaining the position set forth in the note of December 14, 1938,<sup>3</sup> reiterates its fundamental position that it declines to recognize the right of other nations to apply on their part to American citizens measures which would have the effect of arbitrarily dividing them into special classes and subjecting them to differential treatment on the basis of such classification, irrespective of measures applied by other nations to their own citizens on the basis of differential classification of their own citizens.

The treatment accorded in Germany to American citizens, however, is governed not only by the principles of international law, but by the prevailing treaties between Germany and the United States, and in this respect my Government has been gratified to note in Your Excellency's declaration that the rights to which American citizens are entitled by virtue of treaties between the two countries would be respected, and that the German Government for its part is prepared to examine and settle on the basis of prevailing treaty provisions cases which in the opinion of my Government are violations of such treaty rights and of which the German Foreign Office is informed by this Embassy.

My Government has accordingly instructed me to present to Your Excellency as they arise such cases of American citizens which heretofore it has been the practice to take up with the competent local authorities and with regard to which formal assurances in general form have repeatedly been sought from Your Excellency's Government that the measures in question would not be applied to American citizens.

I am therefore presenting for examination and settlement certain specific cases of the nature referred to which have already been brought to my attention, and shall pursue this practice should similar cases be brought to my attention in the future.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my most distinguished consideration.

PRENTISS GILBERT  
*Chargé d'Affaires ad interim*

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<sup>3</sup> Document No. 507.

No. 523

B21/005655-58

*Ambassador Dieckhoff to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

HOTEL KAISERHOF, BERLIN, January 12, 1939.

DEAR WEIZSÄCKER: I have just heard by chance that Minister Kiep is to leave for the United States in the next few days in connection with repatriation problems. However much I agree that the repatriation problem should be tackled, I have strong misgivings regarding the dispatch of a Minister to the United States at this moment.

Although I was always available my opinion has unfortunately not been sought, otherwise I should have submitted my misgivings. To send a German official of ministerial rank to America now will cause a sensation in the American Government and in American public opinion and will be interpreted politically as submissiveness, compliance, or wooing. Please trust my judgment; I have some knowledge of this country and people. Are we to expose ourselves to this? Would not this be the very opposite of what we want? I am certain that the Foreign Minister, too, will share this opinion. If you desire an oral report, I am naturally at your disposal.

I see no objections to the dispatch of a junior official or to the commissioning of an official already in America.

Heil Hitler!

DIECKHOFF

No. 524

2422/511652-53

*The Embassy in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

WASHINGTON, D. C., January 12, 1939—9: 17 p.m.

No. 8 of January 12

Received January 13—6: 20 a.m.

Pol. I M 157 g.

For Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht, Military Attaché Section, Army, Navy, and Air.

President Roosevelt's message on rearmament, which has just appeared, avoids attacks such as were contained in the message to Congress, warns against war hysteria, demands more speedy preparedness for war for the purpose of defense against aggression, and expressly declares that the United States, in rearming, is not thinking of participation in European wars or of a policy of aggression.

Requests for 525 millions are made: 450 millions for the Army, 65 millions for the Navy, 10 millions for the training of civilian pilots.

Of the total sum 210 millions are to be voted for the coming financial year.

To increase the air arm of the Army by 3,000 aircraft, 300 millions are to be allocated. It is expressly stated that there is no intention of increasing the air arm commensurately with the strength of the air forces of other nations. The development of the air arm with regard to range, speed, and carrying capacity has, however, compelled modification of former plans. The essential purpose of strengthening the Army air arm is to strengthen the defense of the mainland of the United States of America, as well as of Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Canal Zone.

Of the remaining 150 millions allocated to the Army, 110 are to be employed for making such war equipment as cannot be immediately supplied by industry on the outbreak of war, e.g. antiaircraft guns, semiautomatic rifles, tanks, armored cars, artillery, and gas masks. About 32 millions are to be spent in placing production orders with industry as preparation for industrial mobilization. The remaining 8 millions are to be employed for the improvement of the coastal defenses of Panama, Hawaii, and the United States.

Of the 65 millions allocated to the Navy, 44 millions are proposed for the development and construction of bases and 21 millions for strengthening the Naval air arm and for research work in this connection.

The President further refers to the need for special measures for the defense of the Panama Canal and requests reinforcement of the troops there.

The program has therefore been toned down from the extravagant and provocative rearmament campaign of late weeks and is, especially in regard to the air arm, less far reaching than certain parties would wish. It signifies a clear victory for the circles advising moderation and should reflect the views of the Armed Services.

BOETTICHER<sup>1</sup>  
WITTHOEFT<sup>2</sup>  
THOMSEN

<sup>1</sup> Lt. Gen. Friedrich von Boetticher, Military and Air Attaché, April 1933–December 1941.

<sup>2</sup> Vice Admiral R. Witthoef-Emden, Naval Attaché, September 1933–December 1941.

## No. 525

B21/005659

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St. S. No. 32

BERLIN, January 13, 1939.

The Foreign Minister has directed that the Kiep mission to the United States should be canceled and that the task which it was intended to assign to Herr Kiep should be taken over by Consul General Borchers.<sup>1</sup> Herr Borchers has been summoned by telegram to Berlin where he will, during a rather short stay, undertake the necessary preliminary work and receive the requisite instructions. Herr Borchers' announcement of his arrival has not yet been received.

As regards the change of personnel, the internal authorities are to be informed as far as may be required that, after all, Herr Kiep cannot

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hans Heinrich Borchers, Consul General in New York, October 1933–June 1941.

at the present time be taken away from his London activities for so long a period as would be necessary for the other task.

The letter to the Chargé d'Affaires in Washington, in which Herr Kiep's visit was announced, must be countermanded—probably by telegram—and the purpose of Borchers' summons here must be explained at the same time.

To the Under State Secretary for the Referat Deutschland for further action.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 526

2422/511058

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

WASHINGTON, D. C., February 3, 1939—6:01 p.m.

No. 31 of February 3

Received February 4—3:35 a.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 25 of February 1.<sup>1</sup>

The President's declarations of today in his press conference<sup>2</sup> (see detailed DNB report) do not signify, in my opinion, any abandonment of the President's previous line of foreign policy, which is characterized by support of the democratic front by all possible means and simultaneous injury to totalitarian powers as far as opportunities for this are presented to the United States. Roosevelt's statements serve, first and foremost, the purpose of silencing the opposition in his own country and of keeping it within bounds. It is quite possible that the expression "the frontiers of America lie in France" has not been used by the President but is pure invention. But it renders, in a most pregnant form, the President's actual frame of mind. The President has, by his *démenti*, if anything admitted that his statements before the Senate Committee were in essence devoted to the theme of what attitude the United States would adopt in a European conflict; and this may clearly be seen from the fourth point of his statement. When once deliveries of aircraft to France have been made on a large scale, it must be assumed, in spite of all gloss of economic arguments, that the deliveries would be continued in case of war also and then in real earnest. The opposition in Congress does not inveigh against the deliveries of aircraft, but censures the President because, through his concealment of highly important facts connected with events on the

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> President Roosevelt said that the United States was against entangling alliances; in favor of maintenance of world trade for all nations; in sympathy with every effort to limit or reduce armaments and with peaceful maintenance of political, economic, and social independence of all nations. He also denied reports that he had declared America's frontier to be on the Rhine.

European political stage, he is arbitrarily, and without reference to Congress, maneuvering America into a position similar to that of 1917. Revelations of the last few days will, however, hardly suffice to give the opposition enough strength to contest effectively the President's measures on foreign policy which, by virtue of the wide powers conferred upon him, he is carrying through.

THOMSEN

No. 527

1147/325636-42

*The Consul General in New York to the Foreign Ministry*

No. IX 4

NEW YORK, February 27, 1939.

Received March 13.

Pol. IX 430.

Subject: Demonstration by the German-American Bund.

The pro-American demonstration and George Washington celebration by the German-American Bund took place on February 20 in Madison Square Garden, New York, under unusually strong police protection. Over 20,000 people were present in the closely packed hall of New York's largest place of assembly. The external stamp of the meeting, the decoration of the hall, and the order of the program were in the American spirit. All speeches, among them the commemorative address by S. G. von Bosse, the German-American pastor, and by Fritz Kuhn, were delivered in English and were extremely critical of the advance of Jewish-Communist influence in the United States. In this connection the speakers referred with words of praise and acknowledgment to the anti-Communist campaign of Father Coughlin, the well-known Catholic priest and radio speaker who, however, did not appear at the demonstration. During the address by Kuhn, the leader of the Bund, one incident occurred: Isidore Greenbaum, a 26-year-old Jew, suddenly sprang upon the platform but was quickly and very energetically removed from the hall by ushers and police officers; he was arrested for disturbing the peace and, a few days later, subjected to a fine. The journalist, Dorothy Thompson, notorious for her continual propaganda articles, was also temporarily removed from the hall during the further course of the meeting on account of her obstructive behavior. While, for the rest, the big demonstration in Madison Square Garden proceeded quietly and according to program, wild demonstrations were held in the neighboring streets by innumerable anti-German elements who were, however, held in check to such an extent by the enormous police muster that, except for a few arrests, no incidents occurred.

It is worth noting that the pro-American George Washington celebration of the Bund left a strong impression on those present at the meeting, owing to its careful preparation and disciplined execution. The massed attendance at the demonstration, which was in the overwhelming majority composed of Germans and people of German origin, was secured by months of active propaganda work. There can be no doubt that the German-American Bund has by this massed demonstration scored a considerable success as regards organization. It has been to the advantage of the Bund that it has understood how to make good use of the general trends of thought of the American people, such as, for instance, Coughlinism, to further its aspirations, although, as a result of this, the former far more exclusively *volksdeutsch* character of its meetings has been not a little modified.

Over and above the Bund's success as regards organization, however, the massed demonstration of the German-American Bund calls for a fundamental political evaluation from the standpoint of German-American relations. In this respect it must unfortunately be observed that the function, in spite of its disciplined and impressive procedure and the unquestionably well-meaning intentions of its promoters, has done no service to the German cause in the United States. It is true that the executives of the Bund, warned by former tactical mistakes, did everything possible in order to give their function a purely American stamp. All speakers spoke in English, as already mentioned. There was not a single German flag to be seen in the hall, and only two swastika emblems formed part of the stage decoration. Furthermore, Kuhn, the leader of the Bund, had printed the following declaration in the program:

"The Bund is opposed to all isms in American public life, including Nazism and Fascism, regarding these political systems as affairs of the people who live under them (supported, as they are, by upward of 95 percent of the electors in nation-wide plebiscites), but impracticable and inexpedient innovations in the American system of government."<sup>1</sup>

Similar remarks were also uttered in the course of the meeting by several speakers.

Nevertheless, its past record and its propaganda weigh so heavily on the Bund that the American character of the meeting has been unanimously rejected as "camouflage" by the public. The circumstance that exclusively *volksdeutsch* speakers appeared—in part, as in the case of Kuhn himself, possessing an inadequate knowledge of English—made it easier for the critics to assert this. To sum up the conception here of the Bund, in its essence and in plain words, something of the following point of view has taken root in American

<sup>1</sup> In English in the original.

public opinion: Germany has, in the Bund, fashioned herself a tool which, by adopting all National Socialist views but cleverly cloaking its aims, has taken upon itself the task of destroying the United States from within by awakening dormant racial feelings and promoting those which are already more or less active. This attitude has, as the result of years of propaganda, mistakes of the Bund, and perhaps also, occasionally, as a result of misunderstandings on the part of Reich Germans, today become a deep-rooted conviction with the overwhelming majority of Americans. And in this connection the fact that the Department of State, for instance, or well-informed private individuals have realized the inaccuracy of this view is completely insignificant, particularly as political interests have prevented them from guiding public opinion along the right lines. It is not difficult to imagine by what feelings toward the Bund and toward Germany the patriotic Americans who hold such views are prompted.

The press has, during the last few days, faithfully portrayed these views. Side by side with the complete lack of approval of the Bund meeting, there is a solid phalanx of hostile comment in which spiteful innuendoes against the New Germany as the driving force behind the un-American activities of the Bund, activities allegedly serving foreign political interests, are not rare. The *Brooklyn Post*, a publication of the American Legion, the American war veterans' association, has addressed a request for an investigation of the meeting to the authorities of the Federal Government with a view to instituting subsequent legal proceedings. In the House of Representatives the Democratic Congressman Martin referred to the members of the German-American Bund amid general applause as "traitors to their country," and even Father Coughlin himself, who was mentioned in such laudatory terms at the demonstration, adopted in his widely heard radio address of yesterday an attitude toward the Bund and its mass meeting which, although perhaps dictated by tactical considerations, was nevertheless decidedly disapproving.

In such circumstances, the need for the official German authorities to exercise extreme reserve with regard to the German-American Bund and its political activities becomes, to my mind, even greater. In consequence, it is only by our complete dissociation from the Bund that it will be possible to contest successfully the dangerous delusion that the Bund is our weapon for the destruction of America. The objection which might be raised against this dissociation, that is, that the aims of the Bund, at least insofar as they concern the struggle against international Jewry, are also German aims, misses the decisive point since anti-Semitism in the United States is itself greatly increasing and, given the mentality of the Americans, its effects can only be prejudiced by the campaign of the Bund, the self-styled "German Fighting

Organization" [*deutsche Kampforganisation*]. Seen as a whole the development of the Bund in the last few years, with its repercussions on German-American relations, is fresh proof of the correctness of the view that Germany can scarcely anticipate great advantages from politically organizing a so-called German-American element. Particular reference must be made in this connection to the fact that the meager influx of immigrants of German origin into the United States—themselves a relatively weak foundation for the establishment of a German organization—in conjunction with the American purposeful work of assimilation in respect of all immigrants must from the outset render practically hopeless the growth of a group which might exert a really *decisive* influence on United States policy. Instead of endeavoring to organize politically a German-American element which, even at best, will be forced to compromise, it therefore seems to me to correspond more closely to German needs of today if we try to win back from the ranks of the *Volksdeutsche* in the United States at least some *wholly* for Germany, those who are able and willing to render service to the reinvigorated homeland, and whose character and physical condition justify the hope that they could become useful citizens in Germany.

The Embassy has received a copy<sup>2</sup> through safe channels.

A prospectus and a number of newspaper clippings are appended.<sup>3</sup>

BORCHERS

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<sup>2</sup> i.e. of this dispatch.

<sup>3</sup> Not reprinted.

## No. 528

B21/005033-35

*Memorandum by Ambassador Dieckhoff*

BERLIN, March 16, 1939.

As 4 months have now passed since the American Ambassador left Berlin and as—so far as I know—there are no serious signs that the Government in Washington contemplates establishing normal relations in the near future, the question arises whether we should continue to suffer this situation in silence for any length of time. It should be considered whether we ought not soon to ask the American Government when it contemplates resuming normal relations by sending back its Ambassador. Such a question would clarify the situation in one direction or another. If such a step appears premature or inopportune to us at the present time, it should be considered whether we ought not gradually to proceed to make it increasingly clear to the American Government that, by persisting

in its incorrect attitude, it is damaging itself. As long as the American Chargé d'Affaires here is still politely received and his notes are promptly and correctly answered, the American Government experiences no disadvantages from the present situation. However, if it becomes clear to it that, in regard to important questions in which considerable American interests are at stake, we are prepared to deal only with the Ambassador, it is probable that Washington will decide in favor of a normalization of relations. The first of such cases ought soon to arise when the American Government inquires of us here, of our Chargé d'Affaires in Washington, or of the representative of the Foreign Ministry in Prague<sup>1</sup> what we intend to do regarding American rights in respect to the Czechoslovak loan. I recommend that we should answer this question evasively—regardless of our attitude on the merits of the problem—and that, when pressed, we should finally intimate that we would enter into a discussion only when we could carry it on with the fully authorized Ambassador. As the question of the loan will presumably soon come up, I should like to propose that a directive be issued shortly.

Respectfully submitted herewith to the State Secretary.<sup>2</sup>

DIECKHOFF

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<sup>1</sup> Counselor of Legation Hencke.

<sup>2</sup> Weizsäcker referred the document to Woermann and Wiehl. On Apr. 6 the latter returned it to the State Secretary with the handwritten comment: "Superseded."

CHAPTER VIII  
GERMANY AND THE FAR EAST  
SEPTEMBER 1938—MARCH 1939

No. 529

2399/500417

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 359 of September 29

Тоkyo, September 29, 1938—6:13 p.m.

Received September 29—12:30 p.m.

For the High Command of the Army and the High Command of the Navy.

I have instructed the Naval Attaché<sup>1</sup> to sound out the Japanese Navy personally on the possibilities of the defense of German ships in general and at the present juncture in particular. The Navy and the Foreign Ministry state confidentially that if Japan remains neutral the new Chinese Government will also remain neutral so that hostilities against German ships in Chinese territorial waters, including Shanghai, are out of the question.

Moreover, the Japanese Fleet is prepared to prevent English or French attacks on German ships in waters where Japanese naval forces are available. The Navy and the Foreign Ministry recommend therefore that in case of need German ships should seek protection in such waters.

I request telegraphic instructions and, if required, guidance for our representatives in China. OTT

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<sup>1</sup> Capt. Joachim Lietzmann.

No. 530

2610/525477-78

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, October 4, 1938.

The Counselor of the Japanese Embassy<sup>1</sup> made an appointment to see me in order to communicate some important information respecting

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<sup>1</sup> Hisao Yanai, 1936-38.

the German-Japanese economic negotiations, on instructions from Ambassador Togo.<sup>2</sup> I received him today in the presence of Ministerialdirektor Wohlthat.<sup>3</sup>

Yanai stated that the Japanese Commercial Attaché, Shudo, with whom negotiations had been conducted here until now, would probably return to Tokyo shortly. The Japanese Government was considering sending here a delegation to continue the negotiations, consisting of a chairman with the rank of minister, and, as members, representatives of the ministries concerned and a banker. The Japanese Government thought that this might speed up the negotiations, which seemed particularly desirable to it. His instructions were to inquire of us whether we were prepared to continue negotiations with such a delegation.

Herr Wohlthat and I replied that the German Government also wished to speed up the negotiations. As a suitable means toward this it welcomed in principle the proposed sending of a delegation. The latest Japanese proposals submitted by Mr. Shudo about a fortnight before differed, however, from the German proposals, regarding which negotiations had been conducted during the last 6 months, to such an extent that we could not regard them as a suitable basis on which to continue the discussions. It was therefore advisable that the Japanese Government should take note of our views on the latest Japanese proposals before the delegation left Tokyo. This standpoint and our ideas about the basis on which the negotiations were to be continued would be communicated by us to the Japanese Embassy as soon as possible, probably by the end of the week, in the form of a memorandum. If in this way a certain measure of agreement on the basis for negotiations were reached before the departure of the delegation, it would facilitate the rapid and successful conclusion of the negotiations by the delegation in Berlin.

Mr. Yanai expressed himself satisfied with this and will report to Tokyo to this effect.

Submitted herewith to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister.

WIEHL

<sup>2</sup> Shigenori Togo, Ambassador in Germany, January–October 1938.

<sup>3</sup> Of the Office of the Commissioner for the Four Year Plan.

No. 531

140/75755

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Ott*

BERLIN, October 11, 1938.

DEAR HERR OTT: During the critical days in September, as far as was permissible, we kept the Japanese Embassy here informed in

accordance with our special relationship with Japan. I do not recollect that the Japanese in that connection gave any indications as to their own attitude in the event of a European war. To me personally, Ambassador Togo expressed just once the pious hope that the Czechoslovak affair might still be settled peaceably. The present Ambassador, General Oshima,<sup>1</sup> may have said more to Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop, but the latter is not here at the moment so that I cannot ask him about it.

It would be interesting to know if you have noted down any observations during the period in question which would give a clearer picture of the diplomatic and military measures envisaged by Japan in such an eventuality. We are trying here to obtain from the experiences of the latter days of September as clear a picture as possible of the behavior of the different foreign powers. That is why we ask you also, in case you have not already done so, to let us know more on the subject.

Cordial greetings and Heil Hitler!

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Lt. Gen. Hiroshi Oshima, the Military Attaché, was promoted to be Ambassador in October to succeed Togo, who was transferred to Moscow.

## No. 532

111/116195-97

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, October 13, 1938.

The Chinese Chargé d'Affaires<sup>1</sup> called on me today and made the following communication in accordance with his instructions:

The Führer has sent to Japanese War Minister Itagaki<sup>2</sup> a telegram which has been published in the Japanese and international press in answer to congratulations on the settlement of the Sudeten-German conflict. In it is expressed the hope that the Japanese campaign will be very successful and that the friendly relations between the German and Japanese Armies for the combating of Bolshevism will be drawn closer. The Chinese Government asks whether this text as published abroad is correct. If so, the telegram would not be compatible with neutrality in the Sino-Japanese war, which is after all the German policy. The Chinese Government asks that if the press report is incorrect a denial be issued. Moreover, it is the continued intention of the Chinese Government to live in truly friendly relations with Germany.

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<sup>1</sup> Beue Tann, Counselor of Embassy and head of the Commercial Section.

<sup>2</sup> Lt. Gen. Seishiro Itagaki held this post in the Konoye and Hiranuma Cabinets, June 1938-August 1939.

I replied that I knew nothing of the telegram and that for today, therefore, all I could do was to take note of his complaint.

It has meantime been ascertained that the telegram had not been shown either to the Foreign Ministry or to the Presidential Chancery. The matter, which had become known to us through the foreign press, had really been dealt with by the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht. The text of the telegram, as given to Trans-Ocean by the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht for publication, is enclosed.

I take it as agreed that I should ask the Chinese Chargé d'Affaires to call on me during the next few days and show him the text of the telegram. According to this telegram the Führer in quite general terms wished the Japanese Army "further glory." He made no reference at all to the Sino-Japanese conflict or to successes in this conflict. I would tell the Chargé that he has obviously been misinformed and that I consider there is no occasion for a further discussion of the matter or for a denial. In this I was assuming that the Chinese Government would not regard the reference to the combating of Bolshevism as a reflection on itself.

WOERMANN

[Enclosure]

To H. E. the Imperial Japanese War Minister Itagaki.

I send to Your Excellency and to the Imperial Japanese Army my most cordial and sincere thanks for the congratulations expressed to me on account of the reincorporation of Sudeten Germany. As Commander in Chief, on behalf of the joint Armed Forces of the German people, I also wish from the bottom of my heart additional glory to the Imperial Japanese Army. I further express the hope that the friendship and spirit of comradeship between the Japanese and German Armed Forces may be further strengthened in defense against world Bolshevism and for the prosperity of both our peoples.

ADOLF HITLER

No. 533

111/116198-99

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Trautmann*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, October 17, 1938.

DEAR HERR TRAUTMANN: Thank you very much for your kind letter of October 9<sup>2</sup> telling me of your recent talk with the Chinese Amba-

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Oskar P. Trautmann, German Ambassador in China since 1935, had been recalled in July 1938 and was at the time on leave in Germany. This letter was addressed to him at a hotel in Jena, Thuringia.

<sup>2</sup>Not found.

sador.<sup>3</sup> I fully agree with what you say, particularly your point that the time is not yet ripe for an attempt at mediation, whether asked for or not. In any case, from whatever side it came, such action would be considered by the Japanese as awkward pressure just now when they seem to be striking a decisive blow at Canton and Hankow. The present bridge over the various fronts in Europe is so precarious that collective action seems out of the question in view of the completely divergent political aims and endeavors of the powers mainly interested in the Far East.

Of course it remains to be seen whether with the capture of Canton and Hankow the Japanese will have come nearer to their real war objective. In this connection it is interesting to note the last statement of the spokesman for the Japanese Foreign Ministry (which refers back to that of January 16<sup>4</sup>) that when Chiang Kai-shek had been beaten *and* the remaining regime turned into a pro-Japanese regime, it would be possible to conclude peace. These are factors over which we can exercise no control at present.

Wishing your wife a speedy recovery, and with best wishes,

Heil Hitler!

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>3</sup> Dr. Cheng Tien-fong, February 1936–December 1938.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. I, documents Nos. 556 and 558.

## No. 534

2610/525479-80

### *Unsigned Memorandum*

BERLIN, October 29, 1938.  
e.o. Pol. VIII 2047.

The attitude of the Japanese authorities toward the Czechoslovak crisis was very reserved so long as there was a possibility of war, obviously because they did not want to commit themselves. On September 9, 14, 16, and 22 the spokesman for the Foreign Ministry made statements on the European situation, all more or less to the effect that "Japan remains ready to unite her forces with Germany and Italy for the fight against the Red intrigues in the spirit of the Anti-Comintern Pact." But the spokesman added that this statement implied no obligation beyond the Anti-Comintern Pact. He stressed on September 9 that Germany had requested neither material nor moral support. Heads of Japanese missions abroad made similar statements to the effect that Japan was not directly affected by the Czechoslovak crisis, and her attitude toward other powers was decided purely by their attitude toward her, especially as she was under no obligation to support Germany. Regarding the attitude of the Japa-

nese occupation authorities in China, the Tsingtao Consulate reported that they refused a request to take common action against an inflammatory English-language newspaper. As late as September 30 Ambassador Ott reported "the conspicuous reserve of the Foreign Ministry regarding the European crisis."<sup>1</sup>

At first the attitude of the Japanese press was similarly indefinite. Ambassador Ott on September 9 found it necessary to make representations to the Japanese Foreign Ministry regarding the circulation by Domei, the semiofficial Japanese news agency, of Reuters and Havas reports criticizing the conduct of the Reich Foreign Minister. As a result of these representations the Japanese press thereupon upheld the rights of the Sudeten Germans in a more positive manner.

A definitely pro-German attitude from the beginning was taken only by a few nationalist organizations, which passed resolutions demanding that Japan should intervene openly on Germany's side.

The Japanese authorities abandoned their reserve only when it transpired that the German demands had been obtained without war, that is, after the Munich conference.

On September 30 the Prime Minister, Prince Konoye, congratulated the Führer by telegram "on the brilliant success." Similar telegrams were received from the Ministers of War and of the Navy.

The Japanese press then also printed congratulations on the success, stressing the isolation of the Soviet Union.

Respectfully submitted herewith to the head of Pol. IV, together with the documents,<sup>2</sup> which should be returned.

<sup>1</sup> This refers to Ott's telegram No. 360 (2399/500418).

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

## No. 535

155/130943-48

### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

TOKYO, November 1, 1938.

Pol. VIII 2164.

#### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Japan's attitude toward the European crisis.

In order to describe Japan's attitude toward the events in Europe, it is appropriate to refer to something which happened at the end of July—the incident near Chang-ku-feng on the Russian frontier—on which I have previously reported.

There were in the battle area picked troops who had not yet been in action, who had been holding defensive positions ever since the outbreak of the China conflict, and who were keen to give vent to their

Japanese zest for attack. Nevertheless, disregarding provocative attacks by the Russian Air Force, the Japanese Army High Command had completely held its troops back and eventually even allowed a part of the area to be evacuated in order to reach a peaceful solution. From the very first day the Foreign Ministry and the Army showed that they were making the most strenuous efforts to prevent any serious conflict from developing with Russia; there was general relief at the peaceful outcome. This incident furnished the first proof that Japan was resolved not to enter into any kind of action which might impair her concentration of forces against China.

During the months of August and September the attack on Hankow demanded the operational employment of the strongest forces so far deployed since the beginning of the conflict. In order to bring the Hankow Army up to strength and form the assault group against Canton, large-scale call-ups were carried out, and production in the war industries had to be increased to the maximum. Japan had thus reached the stage of making a supreme effort, which forced her to a considerably greater extent than in the case of Chang-ku-feng to concentrate exclusively on her objective in China.

At this juncture the crisis in Europe took a turn for the worse. The manner in which Japan reacted to the crisis can be understood primarily in this light. It can be described on the whole as friendly approval of German policy, without preparations for or the announcement of active cooperation. A direct form of cooperation consisted in weakening British influence in China and in the threatened attack on Canton.

The sources from which this account is derived are principally the press, the authorities controlling foreign policy, the Army, and the broad mass of the people. The following phenomena were to be observed in particular:

The Japanese-language press was attuned to a basically friendly attitude by the Foreign Ministry, together with the Armed Forces, favoring the German point of view during all the phases of the crisis and allowing little to be heard of the extremely active counteraction by the Reuters and Havas agencies. Numerous conversations at that time with leading men of the Japanese press gave me proof of a genuine understanding for the German demands and a great admiration for the firmness of the German Führer. The ground on which the suggestions from the Foreign Ministry and the Armed Forces fell was thus thoroughly favorable and receptive.

An exception was the semiofficial Domei News Agency when supplying the English-language papers with news. As it did nothing about the fact that the preponderant publication of Havas and Reuters reports in these newspapers was beginning to distort the picture to Ger-

many's disadvantage, I protested to the Vice Foreign Minister<sup>1</sup> and further used my personal influence on the manager of the agency with such success that the picture also improved considerably in this section of the press. A reassuring statement on September 26, in accordance with your telegram No. 256/24,<sup>2</sup> was given prominence by the whole of the press.

Those in charge of foreign policy were, for all their friendliness, cautious and reserved. They were obviously intent on avoiding as far as possible any further deterioration of relations with the Great Powers beyond the unavoidable consequences of the China conflict. This explains a number of things which I have observed.

At our two meetings during the days of crisis the Prime Minister, Prince Konoye, did express keenly his respect for German policy, but it was noteworthy that during these conversations he evaded going into greater detail which might have clarified the Japanese attitude. Through Mr. Shiratori,<sup>3</sup> the new Ambassador in Rome, who is particularly active on behalf of anti-Comintern policy, I have endeavored to induce him [Konoye] to come forward with a more definite statement of policy. His congratulatory telegram to the Führer and Chancellor, with which he emerged in an unwonted fashion from his proverbial reserve, may well be due to such influence as this.

Ugaki, the Foreign Minister,<sup>4</sup> was moreover influenced in particular by his own attempts to reach a settlement with Britain and avoided an open expression of opinion in favor of Germany, as far as it was possible for him to do so. Thus it is not due to his initiative either, but to the Army's suggestion, that after the Führer's speech in Nuremberg on September 14 the statement you know of was made by a spokesman of the Foreign Ministry, but which was however still cautiously worded. When I urged a more definite statement of policy by Japan after the Führer and Chancellor's first conversation with Prime Minister Chamberlain in Berchtesgaden, the Foreign Minister was unable to make up his mind to act on the suggestion. There was at that time a whole series of public demonstrations in connection with the leader-exchange meeting of the Hitler Youth, attended by members of the Government, at which the Foreign Minister deliberately avoided mentioning the Sudeten question, although the cue could have been easily taken each time from the speeches by the German Ambassador.

This lukewarm personal attitude of the Foreign Minister led to a healthy reaction by the political forces which uphold anti-Comintern

<sup>1</sup> Renzo Sawada, 1938-39.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> Toshio Shiratoria, Ambassador in Italy, 1938-39.

<sup>4</sup> Gen. Kazushige Ugaki, May-September 1938.

policy; they based mainly on this attitude their attacks on Ugaki which led to his resignation. The fact that Minister Arita, during whose previous term of office as Foreign Minister<sup>5</sup> the Anti-Comintern Pact was concluded, and the Vice Foreign Minister, Sawada, who is closely connected with activist circles and the Army, have been newly appointed to the highest positions in the Foreign Ministry, holds out the prospect that for the future a stronger line in anti-Comintern policy can be counted on and that practical results will be the aim.

The most emphatic support for the German cause came from the Japanese Armed Forces in accordance with their traditions as supporters of anti-Comintern policy. It was the Army in particular which followed the German moves with keen and approving interest, influenced the press in this direction, and brought about the above-mentioned official statement.

In strategic policy also the most important interplay arose between the European crisis and the Far East, in that Britain's increasing preoccupation with Europe brought about the Japanese decision to break off the Foreign Minister's attempts to reach an understanding with Britain and to carry through the much disputed attack on Canton against his will. It is to be assumed that both measures, and particularly the preparations against South China, which have not been hidden, have had the effect of increasing pressure on Britain and thus have worked in our favor.

With regard to the question as to what attitude the Japanese Armed Forces would probably have adopted in the event of a European war, I should like to make the following comments:

As a form of active assistance in war the Navy offered protection to German merchant ships in those waters in which Japanese naval forces were available. Beyond this, active measures against Russia or Britain have definitely neither been prepared for nor planned. I have discussed in detail at the beginning of this report the reasons connected with the conflict with China. The view of the Japanese Army can be described thus, that the increasing tension in Europe was welcomed as a source of relief to its own position in China, but its possible development into a world conflict was regarded with anxiety, a view that has been repeatedly expressed in authoritative quarters. Such a conflict would in all probability have prejudiced the success of the war in China, because among other things it would have brought to a standstill the import of raw materials vital for Japan. As has been stated above, the Japanese Armed Forces would not however have been in a

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<sup>5</sup> April 1936-January 1937.

position to cooperate actively against a third power, despite the best of intentions. In my telegraphic reports I have on several occasions referred to this dilemma of the Japanese Armed Forces. It was confirmed by the leader of the radical right-wing group himself, when, in reply to my thanks for his active poster propaganda in favor of stronger support for the German point of view, he stated that if this support was to be given it could only be by means of demonstrations.

In order to complete the picture, reference must be made to the whole attitude of the Japanese people toward Germany. The consistently friendly attitude of the Japanese press, already mentioned, has continually brought the Führer's policy home to Japanese readers, who are strongly influenced by their newspapers. Furthermore, two events took place during the crisis weeks which had a profound propaganda effect: the visit of the leader group of the Hitler Youth and the Greater Germany Exhibition. In Tokyo and many other parts of the country, both measures achieved a success which is quite inconceivable to our own way of thinking and which was echoed in the most diverse ways. Thus the image of the power of Germany and the friendship uniting us became deeply imprinted on the minds of the broad masses of the Japanese people during these critical weeks and has created a foundation of very real value for the practical development of our relations.

In conclusion, it can be said that the friendly attitude toward the German people and the support for the Anti-Comintern Pact in the Armed Forces, in the press, and among the mass of the people was vividly revealed and considerably strengthened during the weeks of crisis. Whenever resistance or lack of good will, as in the attitude of the Foreign Minister, became apparent, they had to be abandoned.

However, the practical effect, i.e. the Japanese contribution toward German success, is not in proportion to this prevailing mood. It is essentially restricted to the interplay of measures in the Far East and German action in Europe to the embarrassment of Britain; beyond this the full employment of Japanese forces in China did not, even with the best intentions, permit active measures to be announced or prepared against a third power.

These impressions confirm anew the view that a rapid conclusion of the Chinese conflict is urgently desired in order to bring friendly Japan's forces to a pitch where she can transform her strong desire for anti-Comintern policy into economic and political cooperation with Germany.

## No. 536

174/135888-89

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 447 of November 17

Tokyo, November 17, 1938—5:40 p.m.

Received November 17—3:20 p.m.

With reference to instruction Pol. VIII 1859 of October 13<sup>1</sup> and W 738 g of August 9,<sup>2</sup> together with subsequent telegrams.<sup>3</sup>

On his return I made most urgent representations to the new Foreign Minister<sup>4</sup> today regarding our claims for compensation and the commercial situation in China for which I had prepared the ground by a conversation with the Vice Foreign Minister.

1. I submitted a list of 126 investigated cases of damage which had been reported individually by *notes verbales* hitherto unanswered. I pointed out the incomprehensible contrast between the Japanese attitude toward British and toward German claims. While, according to statements in the press, Japan was promising Britain consideration for individual claims if the latter modified her general attitude toward the China conflict in Japan's favor, the same was refused to Germany, although this condition was already fulfilled in practice long since on our own initiative.

Arita admitted that a special settlement with Germany was urgent and took up the question of Togo's proposal for compensation, with which he was not acquainted. I expect Japanese concessions here, whereby the extent of compensation [*Trostgelder*] will be the subject of negotiations.

2. I pointed out that my representations at the end of August concerning the commercial situation in China have not been dealt with owing to the change of Foreign Ministers; I repeated my demand for:

A statement in writing on more favorable treatment for Germans and the practical lifting of trade restrictions;

Notification of future economic policy and the opportunities for Germany.

Arita wanted to grant preferential treatment only to the Japan-Manchukuo-China economic bloc and to leave remaining economic opportunities open to the Great Powers on an equal footing. At my sharp rejection of equal treatment with the Anglo-American group he suggested preferential treatment for Germany in *actual practice*. In

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. I, document No. 606.

<sup>3</sup> Including Ott's telegram No. 327 of Aug. 30 (5243/E311420).

<sup>4</sup> Hachiro Arita joined the Konoye Cabinet as Foreign Minister on Oct. 29, 1938.

this I expect some measures by the Foreign Ministry for alleviation of trade restrictions whose practical effect depends on local authorities, on which I insisted emphatically.

Arita promised information on adequate outlines of a reconstruction plan for China, the possibility of German cooperation, and an indication of the appropriate channel for further practical discussions.

I pointed out, however, that the uncertain situation in China rendered impossible any settling of details. I promised new discussions soon. I shall certainly continue representations . . . (group garbled) to General Yanagawa, new head of the China Office.

I have the impression that Japan is now seriously embarking on the expansion of her economic hegemony in China. An East Asiatic conference has been called for November 22 in Tokyo.

Arita, and especially the Army, seeks German cooperation in principle but is chary of preferential treatment laid down by treaty, because Japan's trade relations with Britain and America are vital.

OTT

## No. 537

2610/525481-82

### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 2119

TOKYO, November 18, 1938.

Received December 7.

Pol. VIII 2250.

Subject: Leading article in *Kokumin* on British attempts to undermine German-Japanese relations.

I am enclosing a press clipping from the *Japan Advertiser* of November 12, 1938,<sup>1</sup> reproducing a leading article of November 11 this year from the *Kokumin*, which is closely connected with the Army. In this the newspaper refers to the danger that Britain might, as a condition for colonial concessions of her own, demand the return of the Japanese mandates in the south Pacific to Germany, in order thus to disturb German-Japanese relations and embarrass Japan. The *Kokumin* thereby expressed—albeit in somewhat involved ideas—a feeling of anxiety, as has been evident everywhere here in connection with the Munich conference, both in the press and in private and official conversations. This is a fear that a *rapprochement* between the Anglo-French and the German-Italian groups of powers might take place at the expense of Japan and might gradually lead to a weakening of Germany's interest in Japan.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2610/525483).

This anxiety is further accentuated sharply by the propaganda, obviously designed to disturb German-Japanese relations, which the British and French press is conducting at the moment with the slogan of "the new solidarity of the white race."

The general and at least outward stiffening in the British and American attitude toward Japan, following on the victory at Hankow and Konoye's statement on November 3,<sup>2</sup> may also have contributed toward this feeling of disquiet. An obviously very energetic note by America, demanding equality of treatment for American interests in the occupied parts of China based on the principle of the Open Door and attempting to prove the violation of this principle by citing a large number of examples, was followed by a further British move in the same direction. The statement by Secretary of State Hull<sup>3</sup> on Konoye's radio speech of November 3 and the debate in the British House of Commons on the situation in the Far East also contributed to this. Finally, the Tokyo representatives of Britain, France, and the United States also handed in on November 7 identical notes on the question of freeing the Yangtze River area for their merchant shipping.

I will submit later a more detailed report on the attitude of the powers since the fall of Hankow.

On all occasions when I have been directly asked about the question of an Anglo-German *rapprochement* and its possible repercussions on the Far East I have emphasized that our policy will as a matter of course continue to develop within the framework of the Anti-Comintern Pact.

Signed in draft:  
OTT

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<sup>2</sup> See *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Japan, 1931-1941* (Washington, D.C., 1943), vol. I, pp. 478-481.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 481-482.

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[EDITORS' NOTE. On November 25, 1938, the second anniversary of the Anti-Comintern Pact, a German-Japanese cultural agreement was signed in Tokyo by German Ambassador Ott and Japanese Foreign Minister Arita. According to the official communiqué accompanying the published text, the two Governments intended by this action "to express their determination to work in closest cooperation in the field of cultural affairs and to resist the world-wide menace of Bolshevism also in this significant and important area" (960/301883-85).]

## No. 538

145/81131

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 462 of November 26

TOKYO, November 26, 1938—6:55 p.m.

Received November 26—6:30 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 334 of November 15.<sup>1</sup>

The meeting with Fischer,<sup>2</sup> not reported by the Japanese press on instructions from the Foreign Minister, produced agreement that it is not possible to envisage peace at present. The main Japanese demand, that Marshal Chiang Kai-shek should retire either of his own free will or under the influence of a third party exercised to this end, cannot in Fischer's opinion be carried out; for influential Chinese economic and intellectual circles fear chaos if the Marshal should retire, and they therefore retain him. As a result, although Chiang Kai-shek's military stock has slumped heavily, the political reshaping of China by the Japanese is being psychologically very much handicapped, as Arita, the Foreign Minister, also admitted to me yesterday. There was also agreement with Fischer that there is at present no prospect of England's exercising influence in China and Japan.

Japan's desire for German recognition of a Chinese central government came much less to the fore here than vis-à-vis our Embassy in China, where evidently the otherwise unoccupied Italian Ambassador,<sup>3</sup> Tal . . . (group garbled) is also very interested in its formation and recognition. Since the personal suggestion by the Vice Foreign Minister and the reference in the press (cf. Nos. 407<sup>4</sup> and 413<sup>5</sup>), the matter has rested here. I have the impression that the delay in forming a central government is due to the fact that the personal and political conditions for it do not yet exist. The Minister of War also expressed this view in a press interview. The Italian Minister<sup>6</sup> here said he had no instructions regarding Italian intentions. Regarding economic interests, the conversation resulted in agreement that there should be permanent exchange of suggestions as to practical participation by Germany in the reconstruction of China.

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> Martin Fischer was German Chargé d'Affaires at Nanking during the absence in Germany of Trautmann, the Ambassador. In November he had a meeting with Ambassador Ott at Nagasaki and then proceeded to Shanghai.

<sup>3</sup> Marchese Francesco Taliani, 1938-42.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (5242/E311416).

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (111/116203).

<sup>6</sup> Giacinto Auriti; he had the rank of Ambassador.

I propose to maintain touch with Shanghai by monthly Embassy courier.

Copy to Shanghai.

OTT

No. 539

174/135891

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 476 of December 9

TOkyo, December 9, 1938—7:00 p.m.

Received December 9—1:10 p.m.

1. Foreign Minister Arita informed the British and American Ambassadors<sup>1</sup> yesterday that the new order in East Asia would be based on a Japanese-Manchurian-Chinese economic bloc. The principles of the Open Door and equality of rights in China would have to be revised in accordance with the completely changed situation and could in the future be applied only to third countries which were engaged in purely economic activities.

2. In reply to an inquiry the Foreign Minister promised a reply soon to my *démarche* of November 17.<sup>2</sup>

As I learn from a reliable source, the Minister refused a *written* statement on more favorable treatment for Germans in China but agreed that Germans in China should be given *de facto* preferential treatment.

OTT

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Robert Craigie, September 1937–December 1941, and Joseph C. Grew, June 1932–December 1941.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 536.

No. 540

174/135892-93

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, December 21, 1938.

Today I informed the Japanese Ambassador on behalf of the Foreign Minister that the latter holds to the written confirmation of our favored position vis-à-vis third powers in the *pro memoria* on German-Japanese economic cooperation in China<sup>1</sup> and requests the Ambassador to work for a speedy settlement in this direction.

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. I, documents Nos. 602, 604, 605, and 606.

I also handed Mr. Oshima our last draft which I had given Mr. Togo on October 6.<sup>2</sup> I added that we had certain information from Tokyo that the Japanese Government had been prepared to concede a written declaration of favored treatment. Mr. Togo also had originally envisaged this favored treatment but had later held that the Japanese Government could not grant it. On the other hand the newly appointed Japanese Ambassador in Rome, Shiratori, had also spoken in an interview on October 26 in Tokyo of favored treatment for German engineering, industry, and trade. I stressed again that our support of Japan (recall of military advisers,<sup>3</sup> stoppage of war deliveries, and the great losses arising therefrom) entitled us not only on political but also on economic and moral grounds to a favored treatment, especially over the Americans and British, whose diametrically opposed attitude in the war had just been demonstrated again by the granting of credits to China.

I also brought to Mr. Oshima's notice the unsatisfactory handling of our complaints to the effect that the Japanese had in practice hindered German economic activity in China; I handed him another memorandum on the subject.

The Ambassador showed complete understanding for my remarks. On the question of favored treatment he said that he had always striven for it but that opinion in Japan was divided. The Army was in favor of it, as was also part of the Foreign Service, e.g. Shiratori, but the obstruction came chiefly from economic circles at home. On the question of hindering economic activity in China, he stressed that here military considerations often made this inevitable; that the dissatisfaction at the Japanese front because at the beginning of the war the Chinese were often found to possess almost exclusively German-made arms might still make itself felt here and there. He told me that he himself had already sent a vigorous telegraphic report to Tokyo on about December 9 to the effect that favored treatment should be granted in writing and that either the German complaints in China should be remedied or the German authorities in Tokyo and in China itself should be given detailed reasons by the Japanese why this was not yet possible. He had also handed letters to this effect, addressed to leading personalities of the Japanese Army, to a Japanese general who was recently here and who would have returned to Tokyo about December 10. He promised to report again to Tokyo on the basis of today's talk, by telegraph as well as by a written report to be dispatched with a courier due to reach Tokyo on January 20.

WIEHL

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<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. military advisers in China.

## No. 541

2910/566156-58

*The Chargé d'Affaires in China to the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

No. Sh. 131

SHANGHAI, December 29, 1938.

Pol. VIII 127.

Subject: Assumption of post by the new Chinese Ambassador in Berlin.

With reference to previous reports.

The following picture of the feeling and opinions in Chungking before the reception by the Führer and Chancellor of the new Chinese Ambassador, Chen Chieh,<sup>2</sup> emerges from Secretary of Legation Dr. Kempe's written report, which has now arrived:

The news of the postponement of the date for the presentation of the letter of credence appeared in the Chungking press at first only in obscurely placed paragraphs unaccompanied by official newspaper commentaries. Thus at the beginning there was little publicity given to the matter, although informed circles, Ministry officials, and above all the numerous German-educated Chinese who are now in Chungking and some of whom hold high positions, followed with very great interest the fixing of the date when the letter of credence should be presented. Their interest was heightened by the fact that for some time news had been circulated, obviously from Japanese sources, to the effect that the German and Italian Governments intended to recognize the Chinese central government of Japanese origin immediately after its formation. The reception in Berlin of Ambassador Chen Chieh therefore became the touchstone by which to gage the truth of these reports.

The critical tone among authoritative circles became gradually sharper. It was not only that the alleged repeated postponement of the date for the reception of Chen Chieh was felt as a deliberate insult but also that the political attitude which, in the opinion of the Chinese, was finding tacit expression thereby, and which only awaited the formation of the new Chinese central government, was considered definitely hostile.

<sup>1</sup> See footnote 2 to document No. 538.

<sup>2</sup> He arrived in Berlin on Sept. 22 to take up his post as Ambassador and at once requested permission to present his letter of credence to Hitler. An appointment was made for this to take place on Nov. 16, but the presentation was continually postponed, although in the meanwhile both the new Japanese Ambassador and the Manchukuo Minister had been received. Chen Chieh was finally received by Hitler on Dec. 16. He remained as Ambassador until Germany established diplomatic relations with the Japanese-sponsored Nanking Government in 1941.

Then on November 28 Vice Foreign Minister Hsü Mo asked Herr Kempe to call on him to discuss the question of the reception of the Chinese Ambassador.

A copy of the memorandum dealing with this discussion is enclosed.<sup>3</sup>

Soon afterwards the question of the presentation of the letter of credence became a matter of public discussion which was widened to include the consideration of Sino-German relations as a whole. The Chinese Government was strongly urged by the press to draw the inevitable conclusions, if news did not soon come from Germany that Mr. Chen Chieh was to be received as Ambassador. The most extreme consequence, openly suggested by the radicals, was the necessity for breaking off relations. It is doubtful if the Chinese Government for its part had made up its mind definitely on such action. However, the increasing anxiety of official circles was evident from the more dilatory progress of various current negotiations.

The news that a date had been fixed for the reception, though it did not put an end to the discussion which had been taken up in the foreign press, also deprived it of its sensational character and removed the grounds for unfavorable views about German policy in East Asia.

If conclusions on the general Chinese attitude can be drawn from the behavior of Chinese circles in close touch with us here, we would be safe in saying that the news has been received with a feeling of great relief.

For a further statement the account of the circumstances in telegraphic instruction No. 23 of December 23<sup>4</sup> will be used.

M. FISCHER

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<sup>3</sup> Not printed (2910/566159-60).

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

No. 542

483/231547

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

BERLIN, January 13, 1939.

St. S. No. 29

When the Japanese Ambassador again hinted to me yesterday that the agreed date of January 28 proposed for the formal signing<sup>1</sup> was after all extremely soon, I made it quite plain to him that the Foreign Minister attached the greatest importance to the observance of this time limit and requested him to do what he could toward concluding the matter by the appointed date.

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<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 421 and 426.

Mr. Oshima then explained to me that the final version of the text, which was the point at issue, was on its way to Japan by courier and would arrive there on the 20th. In view of the generally known procedure of the Japanese Government, he, Oshima, could not with the best will in the world guarantee that he would receive the requisite instructions within the short space of the 6 or 7 days which still remained.

I merely repeated my above statement to Mr. Oshima.  
Herewith to the Foreign Minister.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 543

472/228685

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

No. 39 of January 28

TOKYO, January 28, 1939—6:35 p.m.

Received January 28—1:10 p.m.

For the State Secretary personally.

*Kokuanin*, which is closely associated with Army circles, reports on January 27 that during the next few days discussions are to take place in Berlin between the Reich Foreign Minister, Count Ciano, and Oshima on anti-Comintern policy, "by which the relations between the three countries will be decisively strengthened." The Japanese Cabinet in its meeting on January 27, the report states, dealt with the matter and will instruct Oshima accordingly.

I hear from a reliable press source that the report regarding the Cabinet meeting is correct.

Army circles have informed the Military Attaché in strict confidence that they anticipate a military alliance between Germany, Italy, and Japan in about 2 months and that the alliance will be officially directed against Russia, though it also contains secret protocols against other powers.

Statements from the Foreign Ministry, which continually stress the declaration in the Chamber by the Prime Minister<sup>1</sup> and the Foreign Minister,<sup>2</sup> also let it be understood that the Japanese Government is pressing forward with the extension of the Anti-Comintern Pact, of which Japanese public opinion as a whole is in favor.<sup>3</sup>

OTT

<sup>1</sup> Baron Kiichiro Hiranuma, January–August 1939.

<sup>2</sup> Hachiro Arita.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "1. To Under State Secretary: The Foreign Minister will wait another 14 days before informing Ott.

"2. To be resubmitted to me on Feb. 10 (courier Feb. 14). W[eizsäcker] Feb. 1."

## No. 544

226/153984-85

*The Consul at Hanöi, French Indochina, to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 102/Pol. 16/Ch. 2

HANÖI, February 2, 1939.  
Pol. VIII 291.

With reference to the reports of January 14, No. 32,<sup>1</sup> and of January 30, No. 101.<sup>2</sup>

Colonel Chantacho, former Director General of the Chinese Aircraft Equipment Company at Kunming and brother-in-law of Wang Ching-wei,<sup>3</sup> paid me a visit lasting several hours today and told me the following in confidence:

He had to flee from Kunming, which he succeeded in doing only through the benevolent assistance of the Governor of Yunnan Province, who is secretly on the side of Wang Ching-wei. The position in Chungking is very confused. Chiang Kai-shek is falling more and more under Russian influence. A Japanese advance on Chungking is expected, which would eventually necessitate the removal of the seat of the Central Government to Lanchow and that would mean a further considerable strengthening of Russian influence in the Chinese Government.

The differences between Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Ching-wei may be judged chiefly from this point of view. Wang Ching-wei thinks the time has now come for negotiations with Japan on the basis of the statements by Prince Konoye<sup>4</sup> on December 22 last year, but with the following modifications:

1. The sovereignty of China to be unconditionally maintained.
2. No *de jure* recognition of Manchukuo, but a tacit recognition of the *de facto* situation.
3. China to join the Anti-Comintern Pact.
4. The areas occupied by the Japanese to be evacuated, also the province north of the Hoangho and Shantung, but Japanese garrisons to be permitted along the frontier of Inner Mongolia and at other strategic points in the north to insure observance of the Anti-Comintern Pact.
5. Foreign concessions to be maintained intact and no foreign treaty rights whatever to be infringed.
6. Right of settlement to be granted to Japanese subjects throughout China in accordance with Chinese law.
7. The anti-Japanese boycott movement to cease.
8. An economic agreement, favorable to Japan, to be concluded, taking account of the interests of the other powers.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (212/146099).

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5244/E311424).

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 292, footnote 3.

<sup>4</sup> See *Documents on International Affairs, 1938*, vol. I, pp. 353-354.

Colonel Chan, who goes on to Hong Kong in a day or two, will return to Hanoi in a few weeks and will then look me up again. He expressly assured me that he was authorized by Wang Ching-wei to negotiate. He was not willing to discuss the object of his journey to Hong Kong, but presumably negotiations on these lines are already in progress there.

I got the impression from the conversation that Wang Ching-wei would like to get in touch with us. However, I made it clear that I would not take the first step but was willing to talk with Wang Ching-wei, if the latter wished it. In my opinion we must be cautious and reserved; apart from the question of credentials (though it is not impossible that Wang Ching-wei is acting partly in agreement with Chiang Kai-shek, with whom he continually exchanges telegrams), further developments in the Far East should first be awaited.

I request instructions and would be grateful for information whether Wang Ching-wei has meanwhile been in touch with other German official representatives (Tokyo?) also.<sup>5</sup>

NEUMANN

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<sup>5</sup> A minute by Knoll, head of Pol. VIII, on Feb. 16 (212/146110) reports that the German Chargé d'Affaires in China had on Jan. 27 instructed the Consul General at Canton to ascertain the object of an inquiry made by an emissary of Wang Ching-wei as to whether an official of the German Embassy in China would meet him in Hong Kong. This investigation had led to no result. Dr. Knoll suggested therefore that the Consul at Hanoi should be told to give no encouragement to Wang Ching-wei's approaches. A telegram to this effect was sent to him on Feb. 17 (212/146109).

## No. 545

555/241359

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, February 6, 1939.

Pol. VIII 248.

I asked the Japanese Ambassador to call on me today and informed him that the Foreign Minister had instructed me to explain to him urgently once more that we were waiting for the Japanese Government's early agreement to the *pro memoria*<sup>1</sup> on German-Japanese economic cooperation in China, in which our privileged position vis-à-vis other powers was to be laid down in writing. At the same time I drew attention to the recent debate in the Japanese Parliament and to the speech by the Japanese Prime Minister on the radio yesterday, in which were expressed support for the strengthening of anti-Comintern policy and explicit thanks for Germany's continual and

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 540, footnote 1.

unstinting aid. On the other hand I mentioned fresh reports of British and American deliveries of war matériel to China based on the credits recently granted to the Chinese Government by these countries.

The Ambassador again mentioned that from the very beginning he had advocated the implementation of the *pro memoria* and begged us to rest assured that he would also continue to do his utmost in connection with it. After our last conversation on December 21<sup>2</sup> he had received from Foreign Minister Arita at the end of December telegraphic confirmation that the latter too was supporting the *pro memoria*. Thus the Foreign Ministry had now been won over to this in addition to the Army, which had always been in favor of it. The chief obstacle [previously] was the Japanese Minister of Finance,<sup>3</sup> who had however been superseded in the recent changes in the Government. The Ambassador thought that these changes would mean that his efforts would be facilitated; he emphasized several times that he was optimistic about the situation and hoped soon to be able to make some communication to us to this effect.

Herewith submitted to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister.

WIEHL

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 540.

<sup>3</sup> Seihi N. Ikeda, who was replaced by Sotaro Ishiwata when the Hiranuma Cabinet was formed in January 1939.

### No. 546

472/228686

*State Secretary Weissäcker to Ambassador Ott*

BERLIN, February 11, 1939.

Sent February 14.

I owe you a reply to a number of telegrams addressed to me personally, the last of which, if I am not mistaken, bears the number 39 and the date January 28.<sup>1</sup> It goes without saying that I have reported orally to the Foreign Minister on these telegrams and on other announcements in the press in the same vein, having in mind also the detailed reply to be sent to you. The Foreign Minister, however, does not wish you to have a detailed reply, as he is certain that from your latest visit to Berlin you are so well acquainted with the line of his policy that there is no need to say anything particular about it.

My kindest regards and Heil Hitler!

Sincerely yours,<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 543.

<sup>2</sup> Initialed in margin: "W[eissäcker] Feb. 11."

## No. 547

174/135899

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 70 of February 18

Tokyo, February 18, 1939—2:10 p.m.

Received February 18—1:00 p.m.

For State Secretary personally.

With reference to my telegram No. 44 of the 1st.<sup>1</sup>

Further information on Anti-Comintern Pact yields the following picture:

The Japanese Cabinet is said to have finally decided on strengthening the pact, in opposition to misgivings by pro-British partisans, particularly in court circles. The British Ambassador in great agitation recently described to me Japan's policy toward the pact as a mistaken course, seriously aggravating relations with Britain. Similarly in the Diet a former Japanese Ambassador in Washington gave the Government urgent warning against estrangement from the Anglo-Saxon powers and secured a debate on anti-Comintern policy lasting for an hour, which was not published. Other deputies on the other hand repeatedly supported the Government in its pact policy.

Consul General Ito is said to have been sent to Europe with the special task of indoctrinating recalcitrant heads of missions.

The Polish Ambassador<sup>2</sup> and Reuters agency are spreading the report here that a military alliance has been concluded, which I described privately as pure invention. These rumors are engrossing diplomatic and Japanese Government circles and also the international press, particularly in connection with aggravation of the situation in Europe. In this connection junior officers and . . .<sup>3</sup> circles are expressing hopes of conflict in Europe which might considerably relieve the pressure of the Great Powers in the Far East.

OTT

<sup>1</sup> Not found, but see document No. 543.<sup>2</sup> Tadeusz Romer, 1937-39.<sup>3</sup> The word omitted is *aktuelle*, presumably an error in transmission.

## No. 548

472/228687-88

*State Secretary Weissäcker to Ambassador Ott*

PERSONAL

BERLIN, March 2, 1939.

Sent March 3.

DEAR HERR OTT: I have read your letter of [February ?] 4<sup>1</sup> with keen interest and have submitted it to the Foreign Minister. We are

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

grateful to you for having reported regularly to us on your observations concerning the development of the Triangle from time to time in such detail and also without any knowledge of the events which have taken place here in the meantime. I am instructed by the Foreign Minister to inform you that you are on the right track and that it is a question not only of strengthening but of a basic, substantive tightening and cementing of the Triangle relationship. We have had no contact yet with the Japanese representatives who have been sent here and who have now arrived in Berlin. I cannot therefore give you any information about the further course of events. The Foreign Minister does not wish me to give you any more details today than I have already given you. There is, moreover, an arrangement whereby your Italian colleague is not to be taken into your confidence for the time being concerning the strictly secret conversations being held here. The relevant conversations are to be held in and confined exclusively to Berlin until further notice.

I hope that by this I have at least given you a certain amount of enlightenment.

W[EIZSÄCKER]

No. 549

977/303342-51

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET  
Pol. 177

TOKYO, March 14, 1939.  
Pol. VIII 510.

POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Japan's relations with the powers.

With reference to my report Pol. 88 of February 10.<sup>1</sup>

I. *The Anti-Comintern Pact*

Japan's relationship with Germany and Italy will now be determined to an increasing extent by the fundamental question which is being keenly discussed in public, in the Diet, and in the Armed Forces, namely, whether the Anti-Comintern Pact is to be expanded into a political and military alliance with both the Axis Powers. There is connected with this the further question whether the "reinforced" Anti-Comintern Pact is to be restricted to jointly combating the Soviet menace or whether it should be aimed beyond this at all states which threaten the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Triangle; in particular, therefore, at the democratic Great Powers, Britain, America, and France. The whole problem is inextricably bound up with the unsolved problems of

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5241/E311405-11).

the China conflict and the hopes cherished by many that the reinforcement of the pact will facilitate the achievement of Japanese aims in the Far East. On the other hand, the fear is frequently expressed that any reinforcement of the pact, no matter how it is worded, would decisively worsen Japan's relations with the Anglo-Saxon powers, especially with America.

This consideration for the United States is explained by the simple fact that Japan is economically dependent on America to a great extent and that America could strike extremely dangerous blows by means of hostile measures, not only at Japanese trade and Japanese finance, which is heavily encumbered in any case, but also at Japanese war strategy in particular. Consideration for the British Empire, too, is never entirely lost sight of here, and the avoidance of a break in the present critical situation is regarded as essential for Japanese policy.

On the other hand, authoritative circles are fully aware that Britain and America, whose moral and material support decisively determine the continuation of the Chinese policy of resistance, are Japan's real opponents in China. Nor is this undeniably correct view modified in any way by the fact that in its statements the Government itself again and again makes the Soviets responsible for the outbreak of the China conflict and the continuation of the anti-Japanese struggle by the Nationalist Government. This version regularly affords Government spokesmen the opportunity to emphasize the importance of the Anti-Comintern Pact in its original defensive character and to avoid discussing the awkward subject of the more effective Anglo-Saxon counteraction in China.

Besides these difficulties, the present stagnation of Japanese policy in the occupied regions of China and the lack of success in implementing the Japanese reconstruction program are in particular regarded with growing anxiety.

The Japanese have not succeeded so far in gaining the support of any appreciable section of the Chinese population or of investing the Japanese cause with an attractiveness which could menace Chiang Kai-shek's internal position and induce the Chinese masses to drift gradually into the Japanese camp. The emergence of Marshal Wu Pei-fu has brought no progress in this direction, as is frankly admitted. The question is, therefore, whether or not a further campaign on a grand scale will be necessary in order to smash the Chiang Kai-shek regime once and for all, which would mean that further dangerous factors in relation to third powers and further enormous increases in expenditure would have to be faced as well. In many quarters it seems doubtful, however, whether a further continuation of the war would lead to the collapse of the Nationalist Government

or whether Chiang Kai-shek will continue his previous tactics of transferring the center of Chinese resistance away from Chungking and begin the old game afresh, whereby he could then also count upon the support of Britain and America. The Russian threat to the Japanese flank would also still remain effective in this event as before.

The Japanese Armed Forces and the overwhelming majority of the Japanese people are demanding today a victorious conclusion of the China conflict, the repudiation of any compromise with Chiang Kai-shek, and the carrying out of the Japanese program for the Far East as the victory reward for so much sacrifice of treasure and blood, which must not have been made in vain. Every Japanese Government is obliged to take this mood into account. In order to surmount the obstacles standing in the path of such objectives, to remove the Russian menace, and also to neutralize Anglo-American pressure by means of strong counterpressure and thereby to deprive Chiang Kai-shek of his foreign means of support as far as possible, the active and progressive forces in the nation are demanding the expansion of the Anti-Comintern Pact into an alliance. This demand is opposed by those circles who are primarily striving for an agreement with Britain and America and who advocate a speedy peace. As reported several times, they find their chief support in business and court circles. The Government is doubtless in a tremendous dilemma between the two currents. It is forced to evade a cross-fire of questions in the Diet on this delicate subject, which is in no way suitable for public discussion, by means of involved statements. In this way the Foreign Minister caused a particular sensation at a committee meeting on the 6th, with the following statements:

The friendship with Germany and Italy, based on the Anti-Comintern Pact which was directed against the destructive efforts of the Comintern, formed the basis of Japanese policy. The activities of the Comintern were one of the chief causes of the China conflict; they would have to be vanquished in order to bring the conflict to an end and to carry out the new order in East Asia. At the same time the sympathy of the world, particularly that of Britain and America, would have to be aroused on behalf of the Japanese attitude. It was wrong for Britain, America, and France to regard Japan's friendship with Germany and Italy as the formation of a bloc by the totalitarian powers against the democratic powers. Japan's participation in the Anti-Comintern Pact did not mean that her attitude was hostile toward Britain, America, or other countries.

In foreign press circles here this statement by Arita led to keen speculation as to an impending change of course in Japanese policy on the lines of a *rapprochement* with the Anglo-Saxon powers and a rejection of the reinforcement of the Anti-Comintern Pact. When the Embassy approached the Foreign Ministry on this subject, the

Foreign Ministry—as was reported elsewhere—hastened to give an assurance that there is no question of a change in Japanese policy, which adheres unswervingly to the pact. According to further confidential information from the Foreign Ministry and the Armed Forces, the Japanese Government not only adheres to its anti-Comintern policy but is also prepared to reinforce the pact. The forces behind this demand among the people, in the Army, and in the Navy are stronger than all countercurrents. Japan's complicated position vis-à-vis the powers and in China also makes this move appear advisable. To be sure, for the reasons described above, Japan must always show full consideration for America and to a lesser extent for Britain. It may appear difficult and contradictory to reconcile the reinforcement of the pact with consideration for these powers, but Japan must find a synthesis here and go in both directions. It remains to be seen whether Japan will succeed in achieving this synthesis, even by displaying the greatest elasticity; one is reminded to some extent of squaring the circle, especially with regard to the strained relations between Germany and America. Thus difficult questions are apparent which await solution. The answer to the decisive main question is, however, plain. There can be no doubt that Japan will continue to follow the line of the Anti-Comintern Pact.

## II. *Relations with America*

According to confidential information received from the Foreign Ministry here, Japanese relations with the United States have greatly deteriorated during recent months. The enormous increase in American armaments, the ever closer cooperation of the United States with Britain, the pro-Chinese and anti-Japanese attitude of the American public and the growing violence of the press campaign, the granting of a loan of 25 million dollars to Chiang Kai-shek, and the plans of the Roosevelt administration to fortify the Island of Guam and develop it into a great military base have not failed to make an impression in Japan. The Japanese Government has furthermore received reports that the American Government is seriously considering imposing an embargo on imports and exports from and to Japan as a counterstroke to Japanese economic policy in China.

It is true, Foreign Minister Arita made optimistic statements at the meeting of the Diet on the 9th to the effect that economic sanctions by America or Britain would harm not only Japan but the sanctions countries as well and would not be easy to put into effect. Japan would in that case reply with countermeasures and was prepared for all eventualities as regards the supply of materials.

In spite of this, the Government here is perfectly aware of the gravity of the situation which would arise through an economic war with America. It therefore welcomed with the greatest relief Presi-

dent Roosevelt's gesture of returning to Japan in the American cruiser *Astoria* the ashes of Saito, the former Japanese Ambassador in Washington, who died in America. The Japanese press and radio were full of this news for days on end, and echoes of good will and gratitude can still be heard today. The whole press reported at great length on the great honor which was being shown to the dead Ambassador, and at the same time to the Japanese people, by this sympathetic action by the American Government. Foreign Minister Arita has expressed the most sincere thanks of the Japanese Government to America on several occasions in the Diet. Yonai,<sup>2</sup> Minister of the Navy, has spoken in the same vein.

The arrival of the American warship at Yokohama on April 17 with the ashes of Saito is to be made the occasion of a large-scale demonstration of friendship and good will in which the Government, Diplomatic Service, and Armed Forces will take part. As Saito was no longer occupying the post of Ambassador, the posthumous honor accorded to him is unusual. It was psychologically a shrewd move, in which the question can remain open to what extent Roosevelt wished by this to drive a wedge between Japan and the Axis Powers and thus bring Japan nearer to America again and in turn to Britain also. At any rate the Japanese Government, as is reliably stated, intends to make use of this opportunity to improve relations with America as far as possible and to arrive at a tolerable *modus vivendi* with Washington, without prejudice to any later reinforcement of the Anti-Comintern Pact.

### III. *Relations with Britain*

A new acute state of tension has arisen in relations with Britain as a result of the granting of the British loan amounting to 10 million pounds to the Chinese Nationalist Government for the purpose of maintaining the current rate of exchange between Chinese currency and the English pound. The British Ambassador here gave the Japanese Vice Foreign Minister official notification on the 8th and attempted at the same time to minimize the effect of the British measure by pointing out that it served exclusively the interests of British trade, which would suffer heavy losses as a result of a devaluation of the yuan. The news caused a sensation among the Japanese public and aroused general indignation. In very bitter attacks the newspapers confronted British policy with the charge that the loan was intended as assistance by Britain for Chiang Kai-shek and would be bound to protract the war in China, since Chinese currency had been on the verge of collapse. Britain had probably acted in agreement with America. The press demanded an energetic protest by the Japanese Government and economic countermeasures.

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<sup>2</sup> Admiral Mitsumasa Yonai, June 1937–August 1939.

The spokesman for the Foreign Ministry repeated this criticism in a milder form. He stated that Britain could not stop the decline of Chinese currency; the loan meant merely an injection for a dying man. As for the motives of the British move, it was the declared aim of British policy to restore the *status quo ante* in East Asia; the loan was fresh proof of this policy, which would, it was hoped, soon change. To the question whether the Japanese Government would protest in London, the spokesman replied evasively that this would depend on the circumstances.

The efforts of the Government to attenuate the repercussions of the loan on Anglo-Japanese relations as far as possible, in spite of the agitated state of public opinion, became even more plain from the statements by the Foreign Minister at the meeting of the Diet on the 10th.

It is significant that to a question whether the Government would protest or "do something," Arita replied in characteristic fashion that in his report on the conversation between the British Ambassador and the Vice Foreign Minister he had forgotten to mention that it was pointed out to the British Ambassador that the loan meant assistance to Chiang Kai-shek and was therefore calculated to embarrass Anglo-Japanese relations to a considerable extent. Moreover, the Japanese Government would keep a careful watch on the practical results of the loan and would make the decision as to an eventual protest dependent on the results of these observations.

Even though the Foreign Minister in his efforts to spare Britain went so far as to "forget" in the Diet the only unfriendly thing which his deputy had been able to say to the British Ambassador, there can be no doubt that the Japanese public regards the British measure as an insulting challenge. To be sure, the view is held in business circles that the maintenance of Chinese currency has its advantages for Japan also, since it spares Japan a further extension of the yen bloc and thereby a further burden on her financial strength. In this connection a report in *Asahi* on the 13th originating from Reuters is worthy of note; according to this, Chiang Kai-shek is alleged to be striving for an international conference to be held to settle the China conflict. Though this report appears incredible, it is nevertheless striking that it is put out by Reuters just now shortly after the granting of the loan. In any case the idea should not be dismissed that at the back of the British grant of credit there lurks hope of bringing about a *rapprochement* between Japan and China by financial measures.

#### IV. *Relations with France*

Japan's relations with France are decidedly bad. It is true that France's initial anger at the occupation of the Island of Hainan has

calmed down. The Japanese Government and the Armed Forces regard the occupation as a *fait accompli*, which leaves no more room for discussion. No further *démarches* have been made by the French Ambassador here.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless the occupation of Hainan, and the consequent threat to Indochina, amounts to a lasting source of embarrassment to their relationship. The French Embassy here even seriously feared that Japan would advance on Indochina from Hainan, in order to cut off any supplies to Chiang Kai-shek from the French protectorate. According to reliable information, however, Japan does not intend to take any action of this sort, which would make war with France unavoidable and probably would mean war with Britain as well. It is true that in Japan attention is indignantly being drawn again and again to deliveries of arms to Chiang Kai-shek via Indochina. War Minister Itagaki stated in the Diet on the 8th that the Chinese were being supplied with war matériel principally by rail from there. Deliveries from India via Burma were only of secondary consideration, while Russia was obviously sending mainly aircraft to the Chinese.

Furthermore the whole trend of French policy is felt to be anti-Japanese, since France made herself, together with Britain, spokesman for anti-Japanese and pro-Chinese aspirations during the Manchuria conflict and later in Geneva and is to be found today on the side of Britain and America in all questions concerning East Asia.

A particular source of aggravation to relations is the fact, reported elsewhere, that the French Government is making the granting of its *agrément* for Minister Tani<sup>4</sup> (previously the Japanese diplomatic representative in Shanghai) as Ambassador in Paris dependent on his retracting previous statements on deliveries of arms from Indochina. According to the Japanese view, Tani only represented his Government's official point of view in this so that any retraction is impossible. On the other hand, for reasons of prestige, the Japanese Government refuses to propose another candidate for the post of Ambassador in Paris. The Foreign Ministry here describes the affair as completely confused and states that the French Ambassador here will sooner or later have to leave his post unless a change is apparent in the French attitude.

#### V. *Relations with Russia*

The dispute over fisheries, which is still not settled, continues to provide inflammable material in the relations between Japan and the Soviets.

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<sup>3</sup> Charles Arsène-Henry, March 1937–December 1941.

<sup>4</sup> Masayuki Tani, principal Japanese diplomatic representative in China, 1938–39, then Vice Foreign Minister.

The negotiations between the Japanese Ambassador and Litvinov have reached a particularly critical stage, since the Soviet Government has stated several times that it intends to auction the disputed fishing grounds on March 15.

Now as previously, the unconditional maintenance of Japanese rights is demanded among the Japanese public and in the Diet. Nevertheless, the Government seems determined to avoid an armed conflict if this is at all possible. According to confidential information from the Foreign Ministry, the Armed Forces, too, regard the present time as unsuitable for a military show-down which could scarcely be localized and would then lead to a war on two fronts, and which would mean too great a burden for Japan today. Japan was therefore striving for a peaceful settlement and was also prepared to make concessions for this purpose. Since the avoidance of a war is also in the interest of the Soviets an agreement will probably be reached.

Furthermore, War Minister Itagaki stated again in the Diet that the aim of the Japanese action in China was not only to remove the Nationalist Government but also to combat the Russian menace. The Japanese Armed Forces had this menace constantly in view and were adopting suitable defense measures in north China and Manchuria.

#### VI. *Conclusion*

In summary, it can be said that the Japanese action in China has aggravated relations with all the Great Powers which have interests in China. The China conflict has thus worsened Japan's relationship with the powers ranged against the anti-Comintern Axis and has automatically brought Japanese policy closer to the Axis Powers.

The Embassy in Shanghai and the Legation in Hsinking are receiving copies of this report.

OTT

### No. 550

472/228689-90

*Ambassador Ott to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

TOKYO, March 15, 1939.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: Thank you very much for your letter of February<sup>1</sup> and the kind purpose behind it, which anticipated my own letter.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 546.

As I have reported, the Japanese Government was compelled to make repeated public statements on the further development of the Anti-Comintern Pact. It tried to follow the middle course, to reinforce the pact without further aggravating its relations with the Anglo-Saxon powers. But in my opinion hard facts, together with the clash of interests in China, will make this middle course impossible and will bring Japan closer to the Axis.

In accordance with the wishes of the Foreign Minister expressed in the summer of 1938, I have given my views in another letter<sup>2</sup> to him today on the subject of Japan's readiness to take up arms against England. I argue that Japan is at present forced to develop her position on the mainland, which involves the expenditure of much strength and time, and that a secondary effect of her action in China has been an increased pressure on the powers opposed to the Axis. Her task on the mainland weakens Japan temporarily as a partner but may later make her into a more valuable ally, if the danger of her becoming exhausted is counteracted. This is the duty of the partners of the Anti-Comintern Pact.

The following means of giving support to Japan may be considered: cooperation in eliminating Chiang Kai-shek, which I have stated to be impossible; the effect on Japan of moderating her harsh treatment of the Chinese people; assistance by way of a credit, which would have a particularly good effect, both psychologically and actually; and finally, a military pact, which would be primarily in Japan's favor and would stimulate morale, whereas active support for Germany and Italy, amounting to more than a tying-down of forces on the spot, could not be expected for the time being.

I finally pointed out that Japan will strive to maintain her freedom of action vis-à-vis England, and particularly America, for as long as possible, so long as her present economic dependence does not considerably improve. In this consideration of the pros and cons I have put forward the view that our Japanese partner should be supported in consolidating her position on the mainland.

With best regards and Heil Hitler!

Yours very sincerely,

OTT

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<sup>2</sup> Not found.

## No. 551

174/135901

*Ambassador Ott to Ministerialdirektor Wiehl*Excerpt from a letter<sup>1</sup>

Tokyo, March 15, 1939.

In the matter of our preferential position in China, I understand from conversations in the Foreign Ministry that Ambassador Oshima has actually telegraphed repeatedly endorsing our point of view. I get the general impression that nobody is anxious to concede this preferential position in writing. As a way out, a preferential position in fact is being envisaged, which will be confirmed in practice without being laid down in writing. The practices of Japan thus far [*die bisher von Japan gebotenen Tatsachen*] are, however, not very encouraging.

OTT

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<sup>1</sup> The complete letter has not been found.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix I

# ORGANIZATION OF THE GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTRY FEBRUARY 15, 1939<sup>1</sup>

THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER  
von Ribbentrop

(a) Secretariat:

Head . . . . .  
*Attached:* Minister Dr. Schmidt (Paul)  
Counselor of Legation Dr. Brückmeier  
Secretary of Legation Dr. Sonnleithner

(b) Personal Staff:

Head: Counselor of Legation Hewel  
Counselor of Legation Dr. Schmidt (Paul)

THE STATE SECRETARY OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY  
Baron von Weizsäcker

*Secretariat:* Counselor of Legation Dr. Siegfried  
Counselor Reifegerste

THE HEAD OF THE AUSLANDSORGANISATION  
IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY  
State Secretary E. W. Bohle

STATE SECRETARY FOR SPECIAL DUTIES  
W. Keppler

*Protocol Department*

Diplomatic Corps in Berlin, foreign consuls in the German Reich, audiences with the Führer and Reich Chancellor, ceremonial, decorations:

Head of Protocol: Minister Dr. Baron von Dörnberg.

Deputy: Counselor of Legation Dr. von Halem.

*Special Party Section*

Business between the Foreign Ministry and the departments of the NSDAP (excluding the sphere of the AO and liaison with the SS).  
Counselor of Legation Luther  
Participation by the Foreign Ministry and foreigners in the Party Rally. Visits abroad by prominent persons in the State and Party.

<sup>1</sup> This organization plan has been translated and condensed from a German Foreign Ministry organization circular of Feb. 15, 1939, filmed as serial 1780, frames 406632-58. A similar table of organization for Dec. 1, 1937, is printed in vol. I; for June 1, 1938, in vol. II; and for September 1936, in vol. III.

*Special Section for Germany*

Information for foreign missions about important internal political events. Policy toward the Jews. Racial policy. Anti-Comintern questions. International police cooperation. Émigré affairs. Flags. National hymns. Counselor of Legation Dr. Hinrichs.

## PERSONNEL AND BUDGET DEPARTMENTS (PERS.)

Director of Department:	Ministerialdirektor Dr. Prüfer.
Deputy Director:	Minister Dr. Dienstmann.
Head of Budget and Financial Affairs:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Schellert.
Special duties:	Counselor of Legation (unassigned) Schroetter.
Pers. H	Organization of the foreign service, training for the foreign service, personal data of higher officials, of honorary consuls, experts, etc., information center: Counselor of Legation Dr. Rohde.
Pers. M	Personal data on other officials and employees, organization and efficiency of the working of the Ministry: Counselor of Legation Schroeder.
Pers. O	Decorations for faithful service: Counselor Schönhertz.
Pers. R	Preparation and general administration of the budget, and general questions relating thereto: Counselor of Legation Rieger.
Pers. B	Salaries and wages, welfare and maintenance, travel and removal expenses of officials and employees of the foreign service and other persons: Counselor of Legation Engelman.
Pers. D	Administration of funds for official requirements: Consul General Dr. Saller.
	Courier matters: Consul General Hermans.
	Inspector of Accounts: Counselor of Legation Rieger.
	Legation accounts: Accountant: Counselor Eger.
Pers. Bibl.	Library; acquisition of books of reference for departments and sections; supply of literature to posts abroad: Counselor Dr. Holleck-Weithmann.
Pol. Arch.	Political Archives: Dr. Ullrich (Joh.).
Pers. Hist.	Historical section: Dr. Ullrich (Joh.), acting.
Pers. Z	Cipher and communications, including necessary equipment: Counselor of Legation Selchow.
Pers. L	Language services: Counselor Gautier.

## POLITICAL DEPARTMENT (POL.)

Director of Department:		Under State Secretary Dr. Woermann.
Deputy Director:		Minister Prince von Bismarck.
Special duties:		Minister (unassigned) Dr. Baron von Richthofen.
Pol. I	League of Nations, military questions, armaments, aviation, defense:	Counselor of Legation von Kamphoevener.
Pol. Ia	Special duties:	Consul General (unassigned) Dr. von Luckwald.
Pol. II	Western Europe (Great Britain, Ireland, British possessions—unless dealt with elsewhere—France—North Africa, Morocco, Tunis—Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Luxembourg):	Counselor of Legation von Rintelen.
Pol. IIIa	Spain, Portugal:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Schwendemann.
Pol. IIIb	Vatican:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Haidlen.
Pol. IVa	Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy (Ethiopia, Libya), Yugoslavia, Rumania, Hungary:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Heinburg.
Pol. IVb	Austria (Liquidation), Czechoslovakia:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Altenburg.
Pol. V	Eastern Europe (Poland, Danzig, Soviet Union):	Counselor of Legation Dr. Schliep.
Pol. VI	Scandinavia and Baltic States (Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania—Memel Territory):	Counselor of Legation Dr. von Grundherr.
Pol. VII	Near and Middle East (Egypt, Afghanistan, Arabia, Ceylon, Cyprus, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, India, Iraq, Iran, Sudan):	Counselor of Legation Dr. von Hentig.
Pol. VIII	East Asia and Australia (Japan, Japanese mandated territories, China, Manchukuo, Mongolia, French Indochina, Siam, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Netherlands Indies, Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, South Sea territories):	Counselor of Legation Dr. Knoll.
Pol. IX	America: North America (United States with possessions—except Philippines—Canada), Central and South America, Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic:	Counselor of Legation Freytag.

Pol. X	Africa (except Morocco, Algeria, Tunis, Italian possessions, Egypt, Sudan), mandate and colonial questions:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Bielfeld.
Pol. M.C.	Matters connected with German property seized in the United States. German-American Mixed Claims Commission:	Minister (unassigned) Rohland.
Pol. Grenz	Frontier treaties and other technical questions concerning Reich frontiers, which are the subject of negotiations with foreign governments:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Roediger (Conrad).

## ECONOMIC POLICY DEPARTMENT (W)

Director of Department:	Ministerialdirektor Wiehl.
Deputy Director:	Minister Dr. Clodius.
Directly subordinate to Director of Department:	
Leader of delegation for negotiation of commercial treaties:	Minister Dr. Hemmen.
W I	General section for questions concerning economics and finance: . . . . ., Secretary of Legation Dr. Pawelke.
W II	Western and Southern Europe—except Great Britain and Italy—(Belgium, including colonies and mandated territories, France, including colonies, protectorates, and mandated territories, Luxembourg, Netherlands, including colonies, Portugal, including colonies, Spain, including colonies): Switzerland: . . . . ., Secretary of Legation Dr. Pawelke.
W III	Southeast Europe with Italy and Near East (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy with colonies, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Reunion of Austria, Afghanistan, Egypt, Arabia, Cyprus, Iraq, Iran, Palestine, Sudan, Turkey, Yemen): Counselor of Legation Morah.
W IV	Eastern Europe, (Danzig, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Memel, Poland, Soviet Russia): Counselor of Legation Dr. Schnurre.
W V	Northern Europe (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden): Counselor of Legation Dr. van Scherpenberg.
	monopolies and whaling:

W VI	Great Britain, Dominions and British possessions except Canada (Australia, Ceylon, Great Britain, British India, Ireland, Malay States, New Zealand, Straits Settlements, South Africa):	Counselor of Legation Rüter.
W VII	East Asia (China, Hong Kong, Japan, Manchukuo, Philippines, Siam, South Sea territories):	Counselor of Legation Dr. Voss.
W VIII	America (a) North America including Canada and Mexico (Canada, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Liberia, Mexico, United States): (b) South America including Central America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, El Salvador, Uruguay, Venezuela):	Counselor of Legation Dr. Davidsen.  Counselor of Legation Dr. Becker.
W IX	Shipping:	Counselor of Legation Bleyert.
W X	Reich Office for Foreign Trade (economic news and information service; chambers of commerce abroad):	Counselor of Legation Dr. Wingen.
W XI	Raw materials:	Counselor of Legation Bisse.
W XII	General questions relating to transport and communications:	Minister Dr. Martius, (directly subordinate to the Director of Department).

## LEGAL DEPARTMENT (R)

Director of Department:	Ministerialdirektor Dr. Gaus.	
Deputy Director:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Albrecht.	
R I	International law, cooperation in conclusion of treaties. Arbitration, Permanent Court of International Justice:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Lohmann (Johann Georg).
R II	Diplomatic law, extraterritorial rights. Customs matters affecting German and foreign diplomats:	Counselor of Legation Günther.
R IIIA	Nationality. Constitutional and administrative law. Ecclesiastical law:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Siedler.
R IIIB	Penal law. Legal aid in criminal cases, especially extradition cases:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Kastner.

## THE AFTERMATH OF MUNICH

R IV	Compulsory military service. Compulsory labor service:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Sethe.
R V	Labor law. International aspects of the German Labor Front:	Counselor of Legation Rödiger (Gustav).
R VI	Consular jurisdiction in matters of civil law and lawsuits:	Counselor of Legation von Haeften.
R VINa	Matters connected with inheri- tance:	Secretary of Legation Groep- per.
R VII	Matters appertaining to Austrian law. Austrian state treaties. Legal matters emanating from the Sudetengau:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Schwagula.
R VIII	Passports, welfare, refugees, assist- ance, pensions. Entry and resi- dence permits. Extraditions:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Kranek.
R IX	Consular law. Consular treaties. International finance. Copy- right:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Schiffner.

## CULTURAL POLICY DEPARTMENT (KULT.)

Director of Department:		Ministerialdirektor Dr. Stieve.
Deputy Director:		Counselor of Legation Dr. von Twardowski.
Kult. A	Position of German ethnic groups abroad and of minorities in the Reich:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Lorenz.
Kult. B	Economic questions relating to Germanism:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Schwager.
Kult. E (Kult. Nf)	Emigration and repatriation. Set- tling abroad. Germanism in Russia:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Kundt.
Kult. Gen. (Kult. Gen. C)	General cultural policy. Cultural conventions. International so- cieties. Appearances by Ger- man artists abroad. Films:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Pfleiderer.
Kult. H	Administration of funds of depart- ment:	Consul General Grosskopf.
Kult. S (Kult. J)	German educational system abroad. Foreign educational systems:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Wolf (Gerhard), temporary.
Kult. Spr.	Drive for spreading German lan- guage abroad:	Secretary of Legation Dr. Schmidt (Werner), acting.
Kult. U	University affairs. Exchanges and guest professorships. Scholar- ships for foreigners in Germany:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Schaefer-Rümelin.
Kult. W	General scientific relations with foreign countries and foreign learned organizations. Con- gresses and exhibitions:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Roth.

## INFORMATION AND PRESS DEPARTMENT (P)

Director of Department:		Minister Aschmann.
Deputy Director:		Counselor of Legation Dr. Schmidt (Paul), press officer to the Foreign Minister.
Special duty	<i>Deutsche diplomatisch-politische Korrespondenz:</i>	Counselor of Legation Braun von Stumm.
I	General matters:	Counselor of Legation Behrend.
II	Foreign press (research assistants) and archives:	Counselor of Legation Dr. Busse.
III	England, Ireland:	Secretary of Legation Leithe-Jasper.
IV	France and colonies, Belgium and colonies:	Counselor of Legation Eckhardt.
V	Spain, Portugal:	Secretary of Legation Dr. Platzer.
VI	Southeast Europe (Czechoslovakia, Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Hungary):	. . . . .
VII	Italy (Ethiopia and Libya), Vatican, Switzerland:	Counselor of Legation Zeileisen.
VIII	Poland, Danzig, Baltic States, Soviet Russia:	Secretary of Legation Dr. Staudacher.
IX	Scandinavia, Netherlands:	Secretary of Legation Dr. Schlemann.
X	Near and Middle East (Turkey, Egypt, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Palestine, Syria, British India, and Netherlands Indies):	Minister (unassigned) Dr. Schwörbel.
XI	East Asia (including Siam, Straits Settlements, Philippines):	Counselor of Legation Behrend, acting.
XII	North America (including Canada):	Consul Dr. Ponschab.
XIII	South America:	Consul General (unassigned) Dr. Soehring.
XIV	Mandate and colonial questions, Africa (excluding French, Italian, and Belgian colonies), Australia, New Zealand:	Consul Dr. Hellenthal.
XV	Oral and written reporting on the press:	Dr. Schacht.

## Appendix II

### LIST OF GERMAN FILES USED

The following table identifies the German file from which each document has been derived. The documents of the Foreign Ministry were bound into volumes by the Germans. The documents in these volumes have been microfilmed, and each film of a file has been identified by a film serial number, while each page of the documents has been identified by a frame number stamped on the original at the time of filming. The documents published in this collection are identified by the film serial number and frame numbers in the upper left-hand corner of each document. By reference to the following table of film serial numbers the location in the German Foreign Ministry archives of the copy of the document used in this publication may be determined.

<i>Film Serial Numbers</i>	<i>Title of File</i>
B21	State Secretary: U.S.A.
28	German Legation in Czechoslovakia: Foreign Ministry Telegrams.
38	Under State Secretary: United States of America.
54	State Secretary: Memoranda on Visits of Nondiplomatic Personages.
66	Secret Files of Paul Schmidt.
100	German Embassy in Italy: Mackensen's Papers.
103	State Secretary: Russia.
109	State Secretary: Anglo-Italian Relations.
111	State Secretary: Sino-Japanese War.
116	Foreign Minister: Danzig.
121	State Secretary: Franco-German Relations.
140	State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
145	Under State Secretary: Far East Conflict.
155	<i>Pol. VIII</i> : Japan, Political Relations of Japan with Germany.
167	German Embassy in the Soviet Union.
174	State Secretary: Japan.
217	Foreign Minister: South Africa.
226	<i>Pol. VIII</i> : China, Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
258	German Embassy in the Soviet Union: Anglo-Soviet Relations.
276	German Embassy in the Soviet Union: Secret Political Papers, Schulenburg.
313	Under State Secretary: Anglo-Franco-Italian Negotiations.
315	German Embassy in the Soviet Union: Miscellaneous Papers from <i>Pol. V</i> .
334	Under State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
351	<i>Pol. V</i> : Russia, Foreign Policy, General.
376	Under State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
379	Under State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
383	Under State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
393	<i>Pol. V</i> : Russia, Political Relations of Russia with Germany.
401	Under State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.

<i>Film Serial Numbers</i>	<i>Title of File</i>
438	State Secretary: Correspondence of State Secretary with German Diplomatic Representatives Abroad.
472	State Secretary: Correspondence of State Secretary with German Diplomatic Representatives Abroad.
483	State Secretary: Memoranda on Visits of Diplomats.
533	State Secretary: Vatican.
555	<i>Pol. VIII</i> : Japan, Political Relations of Japan with Germany.
583	State Secretary: German-Italian Relations.
615	Dienststelle Ribbentrop: Foreign Ministry Matters.
621	<i>Pol. II</i> : France, Political Relations of France with Germany.
631	<i>Pol. II</i> : France, Political Relations of France with Poland.
634	<i>Pol. II</i> : France, Political Relations of France with Italy.
977	<i>Pol. II</i> : Great Britain, Political Relations of Great Britain with Japan.
1147	<i>Pol. IX</i> : Germans Abroad, United States.
1212	<i>Pol. II</i> : Belgium, Military Matters.
1256	<i>Pol. V</i> : Poland, Political Relations of Poland with Russia.
1271	State Secretary Keppler: Miscellaneous Papers.
1340	<i>Pol. V</i> : Poland, Political Relations of Poland with Czechoslovakia.
1398	<i>Pol. II</i> : Great Britain, Foreign Policy, General.
1404	<i>Pol. II</i> : Great Britain, Foreign Policy, General.
1486	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Italy, Foreign Policy, General.
1546	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Italy, Political Relations of Italy with Yugoslavia.
1570	State Secretary: Franco-German Relations.
1580	<i>Pol. II</i> : Great Britain, Political Relations of Great Britain with France.
1585	<i>Pol. II</i> : Great Britain, Political Relations of Great Britain with Germany.
1586	<i>Pol. geheim</i> : France.
1613	<i>Pol. geheim</i> : Czechoslovakia.
1628	<i>Pol. I.M.</i> : Anglo-German Naval Negotiations.
1647	State Secretary: International Commission for the Cession of Sudeten-German Territory.
1648	State Secretary: International Commission for the Cession of Sudeten-German Territory.
1665	<i>Pol. I.M.</i> : Naval Armament in General.
1848	State Secretary: German-Italian Relations.
1863	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia, Political Relations of Czechoslovakia with Hungary.
1864	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia, Political Relations of Czechoslovakia with Hungary.
1895	<i>Pol. IV</i> : International Political Problems, Little Entente.
1916	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia.
1939	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia, Question of a Possible German Entry into Czechoslovakia.
1941	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia, Political Relations of Czechoslovakia with Germany.
1957	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Germans Abroad, Czechoslovakia.
1969	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Carpatho-Ukraine, Political Relations of Carpatho-Ukraine with Hungary.
1975	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Rumania, Political Relations of Rumania with Hungary.
1982	German Embassy in Italy: Mackensen's Papers.
2002	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Slovakia, Political Relations of Slovakia with Germany.
2003	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Slovakia, Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.

<i>Film Serial Numbers</i>	<i>Title of File</i>
2005	Economic Policy Department: Wiehl, Great Britain.
2006	<i>Pol. IV:</i> Slovakia, Political Relations of Slovakia with Hungary.
2031	Economic Policy Department: Wiehl, Italy.
2037	<i>Pol. IV:</i> Czechoslovakia, Political Relations of Czechoslovakia with Hungary.
2038	<i>Pol. IV:</i> Czechoslovakia, Political Relations of Czechoslovakia with Hungary.
2050	State Secretary: Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.
2058	Economic Policy Department: Clodius, Italy.
2080	Ritter files: Czechoslovakia.
2092	Economic Policy Department: Wiehl, Russia.
2129	German Embassy in Italy: Secret Papers.
2130	German Embassy in Italy: Secret Papers.
2134	State Secretary: Memoranda on Visits of Diplomats.
2139	Economic Policy Department: Wiehl, Czechoslovakia.
2165	State Secretary: Correspondence on Political Affairs.
2185	State Secretary: Memoranda.
2208	Economic Policy Department: Clodius, Russia.
2313	State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
2369	<i>Pol. IV:</i> Czechoslovakia, Racial Questions, etc.
2377	Ritter files: <i>Autobahn</i> .
2396	Economic Policy Department: Wiehl, Carpatho-Ukraine.
2399	Economic Policy Department: Wiehl.
2409	<i>Pol. IV:</i> Czechoslovakia, Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
2410	<i>Pol. IV:</i> Italy, Racial Questions, etc.
2421	<i>Pol. II:</i> Great Britain, Political Relations of Great Britain with Germany.
2422	<i>Pol. IX:</i> United States, Political Relations of the United States with Germany.
2441	<i>Pol. II:</i> Great Britain, Political Relations of Great Britain with Italy.
2446	Cultural Policy Department: Secret Papers of Kult. A (transferred to <i>Inland II g</i> circa 1943).
2447	Economic Policy Department: Clodius, Great Britain.
2451	<i>Pol. geheim:</i> France.
2457	<i>Pol. II:</i> Great Britain, Political Relations of Great Britain with Italy.
2459	<i>Pol. II:</i> France, Political Relations of France with Germany.
2467	Economic Policy Department: Clodius, France.
2468	Economic Policy Department: Wiehl, France.
2483	<i>Pol. II:</i> France, Foreign Policy, General.
2485	German Embassy in France: Franco-German Relations.
2490	Economic Policy Department: France.
2491	Legal Department: Treaty Negotiations with Czechoslovakia.
2496	Economic Policy Department: Great Britain.
2497	Economic Policy Department: Great Britain.
2526	Press Department: Great Britain.
2529	Under State Secretary: Hitler's Visit to Italy.
2536	German Embassy in France: French Internal Affairs.
2538	Under State Secretary: Franco-German Conversations.
2539	Economic Policy Department: Clodius, Great Britain.
2540	<i>Pol. II:</i> Great Britain, Political Relations of Great Britain with Germany.
2610	<i>Pol. VIII:</i> Japan, Political Relations of Japan with Germany.
2614	<i>Pol. VIII:</i> Japan, Foreign Policy, General.
2620	Schmidt (Press) Papers.

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<i>Film Serial Numbers</i>	<i>Title of File</i>
2657	<i>Pol. III</i> : Holy See, Relations of the Holy See with Germany.
2663	<i>Pol. IX</i> : Germans Abroad, United States.
2727	Economic Policy Department: Wiehl, Russia.
2797	Economic Policy Department: Wiehl, France.
2802	Economic Policy Department: Clodius, Russia.
2810	<i>Pol. IX</i> : Germans Abroad, United States.
2825	Economic Policy Department: Wiehl, Afghanistan.
2871	Political Department: Treaties, 1936-1944.
2910	<i>Pol. VIII</i> : China, Political Relations of China with Germany.
5204	Economic Policy Department: Great Britain.
5207	German Embassy in France: French Internal Affairs.
5210	German Embassy in Italy: Economic Negotiations.
5216	German Embassy in Italy: Canals.
5725	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia, Political Relations Between Czechoslovakia and Germany.
F3, 6, 8, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20:	German Foreign Ministry Film of Files of the Reich Foreign Minister's Secretariat.

## Appendix III

### LIST OF PERSONS <sup>1</sup>

- ALTENBURG, Günther, head of Political Division IVb in the German Foreign Ministry, 1938-1939.
- ARITA, Hachiro, Japanese Foreign Minister in the Konoye and Hiranuma Cabinets, October 1938-August 1939.
- ASHTON-GWATKIN, Frank, Counselor in the British Foreign Office, 1934-1939; attached to Viscount Runciman's Mission to Czechoslovakia in 1938.
- ATTOLICO, Bernardo, Italian Ambassador in Germany, September 1935-May 1940.
- BECK, Jozef, Polish Foreign Minister in successive cabinets, November 1932-September 1939.
- BENEŠ, Eduard, President of the Czechoslovak Republic, December 18, 1935-October 5, 1938.
- BERAN, Rudolf, Secretary General of the Czechoslovak Agrarian Party, November 1935; Minister President, December 1938-March 1939.
- BERGEN, Diego von, German Ambassador to the Holy See, April 1920-July 1943.
- BONNET, Georges, French Foreign Minister in the Daladier Cabinet, April 1938-September 1939.
- CADOGAN, Sir Alexander, Permanent Under Secretary of State in the British Foreign Office, 1938-1946.
- CHAMBERLAIN, Neville, British Conservative M.P., 1918-1940; Leader of the Conservative Party; Prime Minister, May 1937-May 1940.
- CHIANG KAI-SHEK, Generalissimo, Commander in Chief of the Chinese Armed Forces from 1932; Chief Executive of the Kuomintang from March 1938.
- CHURCHILL, Winston Spencer, British Conservative M.P. since 1924.
- CHVALKOVSKY, František, Czechoslovak Minister in Italy, July 1932; Foreign Minister in the Syrový and Beran Cabinets, October 1938-March 1939.
- CIANO DI CORTELLAZZO, Count Galeazzo, son-in-law of Mussolini; Italian Foreign Minister, June 1936-February 1943.
- CLODIUS, Carl, Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department of the German Foreign Ministry, 1937-1943.
- COOPER, Alfred Duff, British Conservative M.P., 1924-1945; First Lord of the Admiralty, May 1937-October 1938.
- COULONDEE, Robert, French Ambassador in the Soviet Union, November 1936-October 1938; Ambassador in Germany, November 1938-September 1939.
- CSÁKY, Count István, Chef de Cabinet to the Hungarian Foreign Minister, 1936; Foreign Minister in Imrédy and Teleki Cabinets from December 1938 until his death January 27, 1941.
- DALADIER, Édouard, President of the French Council of Ministers and Minister of National Defense, April 1938-March 1940.
- DARÁNYI, Kálmán, Hungarian Minister President and Minister of Agriculture, October 1936-May 1938; President of the House of Deputies from December 1938 until his death November 1, 1939.

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<sup>1</sup>The biographical details given relate principally to the period and subjects covered by the documents in this volume.

- DIECKHOFF**, Dr. Hans Heinrich, German Ambassador in the United States, May 1937; recalled to Berlin for consultation November 1938 and did not return to his post.
- DIRKSEN**, Dr. Herbert von, German Ambassador in Great Britain, May 1938; recalled to Berlin for consultation August 1939 and did not return to his post.
- DRUFFEL**, Ernst von, German Consul at Bratislava, 1932; Consul General and Chargé d'Affaires, March–July 1939.
- DURČANSKY**, Ferdinand, university professor at Bratislava and member of the Slovak People's Party; Minister of the Interior in Tiso's Slovak Cabinet, October 1938; Cabinet, October–December 1938; Minister of Transport in Tiso's Slovak Cabinet January 1939; dismissed by President Hácha, March 10, 1939; Foreign Minister in the Tiso Cabinet, March–October 1939.
- EDEN**, Anthony, British Conservative M.P. since 1923.
- ERDMANNSDORFF**, Otto von, German Minister in Hungary, May 1937–July 1941.
- FRANCO Y BAHAMONDE**, Francisco, Spanish General; leader of the Nationalist troops, July 1936–April 1939; Chief of State, President of the Government, and Generalissimo of the Army, Navy, and Air Force from October 1936.
- FRANÇOIS-PONCET**, André, French Ambassador in Germany, September 1931–October 1938; Ambassador in Italy, November 1938–June 1940.
- FUNK**, Walther, German Minister of Economics, November 1937–May 1945; President of the Reichsbank, January 1939–May 1945.
- GÖRING**, Hermann Wilhelm, German Field Marshal; President of the Reichstag, 1932–1945; Minister President of Prussia and Reich Minister for Air, 1933–1945; Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe, 1935–1945; Commissioner for the Four Year Plan, 1936–1945.
- HÁCHA**, Emil, President of the Czechoslovak Supreme Court, 1925; member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague; President of the Czechoslovak Republic, November 30, 1938–March 15, 1939.
- HALFAX**, Viscount, Edward Wood, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, February 1938–December 1940.
- HENCKE**, Andor, Counselor of the German Legation in Czechoslovakia, November 1936; Chargé d'Affaires, September 1938–March 1939.
- HENDERSON**, Sir Neville, British Ambassador in Germany, April 1937–September 1939.
- HESSE**, Prince Philip of, son-in-law of King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy; Oberpräsident of Hesse-Nassau, 1933–1943; employed as special envoy between Hitler and Mussolini, 1938–1939.
- HEWEL**, Walter, representative of the Foreign Minister with the Führer, 1938–1945; head of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff, 1939–1941.
- HILGER**, Gustav, Counselor of Legation dealing with economic affairs at the German Embassy in the Soviet Union, January 1923; Counselor of Embassy, November 1939–June 1941.
- HITLER**, Adolf, Chancellor of the German Reich, January 30, 1933; Führer and Chancellor, August 2, 1934; assumed command of the Wehrmacht, February 1938.
- HOFMANN**, Hamilkar, Secretary of Legation at the German Legation in Czechoslovakia, September 1937; in charge of the Consulate at Chust, February–May 1939.
- HORTHY DE NAGYBÁNYA**, Admiral Miklós, Regent of Hungary, March 7, 1920–October 16, 1944.

- HUDSON, Robert Spear, Secretary to the British Department of Overseas Trade, May 1937–April 1940.
- HULL, Cordell, United States Secretary of State, March 1933–November 1944.
- HUSÁŘEK, Karel, Czechoslovak General; Deputy to the Chief of the General Staff; Minister of Public Works in the second Syrový Cabinet, October–December 1938.
- IMRÉDY, Béla, Hungarian Minister President, May 1938–February 1939.
- KÁNYA, Kálmán, Hungarian Foreign Minister in the Gömbös, Darányi, and Imrédy Cabinets, January 1933–November 1938.
- KETTEL, Wilhelm, German General; Chief of Staff of the OKW, February 1938–May 1945; member of the Reich Defense Council, September 1938–May 1945.
- KEPPLER, Wilhelm, State Secretary for special duties in the German Foreign Ministry, March 1938–May 1945.
- KONOYE, Prince Fumimaro, Japanese Prime Minister, June 1937; Minister of State without Portfolio in Hiranuma Cabinet, January–August 1939.
- KORDT, Dr. Erich, attached to the German Foreign Minister, March 1938; member of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat, January 1939–February 1941.
- KORDT, Theodor, brother of Erich Kordt; Counselor of the German Embassy in Great Britain, April 1938–September 1939; Chargé d'Affaires, July–October 1938, March–May, and August–September 1939.
- KUNDT, Ernst, leading member of the Sudeten-German Party; spokesman of those Germans remaining in the Czech State after Munich.
- LEITH-ROSS, Sir Frederick, Chief Economic Adviser to the British Government, 1932–1946.
- LITVINOV, Maxim Maximovich, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, July 1930–May 1939.
- MACKENSEN, Hans Georg von, German Ambassador in Italy, April 1938–September 1943.
- MAGISTRATI, Count Massimo, First Secretary of the Italian Embassy in Germany, 1934; Counselor, 1936–1940.
- MASTNY, Vojtech, Czechoslovak Minister in Germany, July 1932–March 1939.
- MOLOTOV, Vyacheslav Mikhailovich, chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union, December 1930–May 1941.
- MUSSOLINI, Benito, founder of the Italian Fascist Party; Head of the Government and Prime Minister from October 1922; Minister for Italian Africa, November 1937–October 1939; Commander of the Armed Forces, 1938.
- OSHIMA, Hiroshi, Japanese General; Military Attaché in Germany, 1936; Ambassador in Germany, November 1938–October 1939.
- OTT, Eugen, German Ambassador in Japan, April 1938–February 1943.
- PIROW, Oswald, South African Minister of Defense, Railways, and Harbors, March 1933; Minister of Defense, Commerce, and Industry, November 1938–September 1939.
- RIBBENTROP, Joachim von, German Foreign Minister, February 1938–April 1945.
- RITTER, Karl, former German Ambassador in Brazil, employed on special duties in the Foreign Ministry in connection with economic matters, October 1938–May 1939.
- ROOSEVELT, Franklin Delano, President of the United States of America, March 4, 1933–April 12, 1945.
- SCHACHT, Dr. Hjalmar, President of the German Reichsbank, March 1933–January 1939; Minister without Portfolio, November 1937–January 1943.

- SCHMIDT, Dr. Paul Otto, interpreter in the German Foreign Ministry, 1923-1945; member of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat, 1939-1945.
- SCHNURE, Julius Karl, head of Division W IV in the Economic Policy Department of the German Foreign Ministry, May 1936-December 1941.
- SCHULENBURG, Friedrich Werner, Count von der, German Ambassador in the Soviet Union, October 1934-June 1941.
- SIDOR, Karol, Deputy of the Slovak People's Party; Minister without Portfolio representing Slovakia in Beran Cabinet, December 1938-March 1939; Minister President of the autonomous Slovak Government, March 12-14, 1939; Minister of the Interior in Tiso Cabinet, March-April 1939.
- STALIN, Josef Vissarionovich, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; member of the Politburo and Orgburo since 1922.
- STANLEY, Oliver, President of the British Board of Trade, May 1937-January 1940.
- SYROVY, Jan, Czechoslovak General; Inspector General of the Armed Forces, 1934; Minister President and Minister of Defense, September-October and October-December 1938; President of the Republic *ad interim*, October 5-November 30, 1938; Minister of Defense in Beran Cabinet, December 1938-March 1939.
- SZTÓJAY, Döme, Hungarian Minister in Germany, December 1935-March 1944.
- TELEKI, Count Pál, Hungarian Minister of Education, May 1938; Minister President, February 1939-April 1941.
- THOMSEN, Hans, Counselor of the German Embassy in the United States, July 1936; Minister, December 1940-December 1941; Chargé d'Affaires from November 1938.
- TISO, Dr. Jozef, leader of the Slovak People's Party, August 1938; Minister President of the autonomous Slovak Government, October 7, 1938; dismissed by President Hácha, March 10, 1939; Minister President again, March 14-October 26, 1939.
- VOLOŠIN, Augustin, Roman Catholic priest and leader of the Farmers' Party in the Carpatho-Ukraine; President of the Council of Ministers of the autonomous Government of the Carpatho-Ukraine, October 26, 1938-March 15, 1939; also Minister of the Interior until March 6, 1939, and Minister of Justice and Education, March 6-15, 1939.
- WEIßSÄCKER, Ernst, Baron von, State Secretary in the German Foreign Ministry, April 1938-April 1943.
- WELCZECK, Johannes, Count von, German Ambassador in France, April 1936-September 1939.
- WIEHL, Emil Karl Josef, director of the Economic Policy Department of the German Foreign Ministry, June 1937-September 1944.
- WILSON, Sir Horace, Chief Industrial Adviser to the British Government, 1930-1939; seconded to the Treasury for service with the Prime Minister, 1935-39.
- WOERMANN, Dr. Ernst, Director of the Political Department of the German Foreign Ministry with the title of Under State Secretary, April 1938-April 1943.

## Appendix IV

### GLOSSARY OF GERMAN TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS<sup>1</sup>

- Abwehr**, counterintelligence, the Foreign Intelligence Service of the OKW
- Anschluss**, the annexation of Austria by Germany
- AO**, Auslandsorganisation, foreign organization of the NSDAP concerned with German nationals living abroad
- Bergrat**, high official in the State mining administration
- Chefsache**, top secret military
- DAZ**, *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, a leading Berlin daily newspaper
- Dienststelle Ribbentrop**, office of Ribbentrop in his capacity as foreign-affairs adviser to Hitler; of decreasing importance after his appointment as Foreign Minister
- DNB**, Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro, German News Agency, owned by the Ministry of Propaganda
- e.o.**, ex officio; where this precedes the file number, it indicates a draft for which there are no preceding papers (see zu)
- Führerbau**, one of the three buildings in Munich comprising the headquarters of the NSDAP, used for important conferences
- Gauleiter**, highest official in a Gau, the largest territorial administrative unit of the NSDAP, 43 in number
- Geheimrat**, Privy Councilor, title conferred on high Government officials prior to 1918
- g Kdos**, geheime Kommandosache, top secret military
- Hauptscharführer**, SS rank equivalent to British staff sergeant major, U.S. master sergeant
- K or Kult.**, Kulturpolitische Abteilung, Cultural Policy Department
- Kanzler**, archivist, head of an archives department or chancery in a diplomatic mission
- Kapitänleutnant**, equivalent to lieutenant in the Navy
- Kapitän zur See**, equivalent to captain in the Navy
- Konteradmiral**, equivalent to rear admiral
- Korvettenkapitän**, equivalent to lieutenant commander
- Leibstandarte**, special bodyguard for the Führer
- Ministerialdirektor**, grade in the Civil Service, usually the director of a department in a Ministry
- Ministerialdirigent**, grade in the Civil Service, usually deputy director of a department in a Ministry
- Ministerialrat**, grade in the Civil Service, usually head of a division (Referat)
- NSDAP**, Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, National Socialist German Workers' Party, the full title of the Nazi Party.
- Oberführer**, SS rank approximately equivalent to colonel
- Obergruppenführer**, SS rank approximately equivalent to lieutenant general

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<sup>1</sup> This list includes such German terms and abbreviations as are found in the text of documents appearing in this volume. For an explanation of a number of other terms appearing in Foreign Ministry documents see vol. I, pp. 1215-1220, vol. II, pp. 1061-1070, and vol. III, p. 951.

- Oberregierungsrat**, grade in the Home Civil Service equivalent to Counselor of Legation first class in the Foreign Service
- OKW**, Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht
- Pol.**, Politische Abteilung, Political Department of the Foreign Ministry; subdivided according to geographic areas, each designated by a Roman numeral, e.g. Pol. IV (see appendix I)
- Qu**, or **Quir**, Quirinal; thus "Rom (Qu or Quir)" in addresses to distinguish the German Embassy to the Kingdom of Italy from that to the Holy See
- RAM**, Reichsaussenminister, Reich Foreign Minister
- Regierungsrat**, grade in the Home Civil Service equivalent to Counselor of Legation in the Foreign Service
- Reichsbankdirektor**, Director of the Reichsbank (German State Bank, founded 1875, reorganized 1924; under the direct control of the Führer after June 15, 1939)
- Reichsbankoberinspektor**, official in the Reichsbank
- Reichsdeutsche**, Reich Germans, i.e. those Germans who were Reich subjects, used usually with reference to those living outside the frontiers of the Reich (see **Volksdeutsche**)
- Reichsführer-SS**, Commander in Chief of the SS (i.e. Himmler)
- Reichsstatthalter**, Reich Governor, representative of the Reich Government in one of the Federal States of Germany (Länder) or administrative area (Reichsgau) in the annexed territory, controlling its entire administration
- RM**, Reichsmark, the unit of German currency
- RM**, Reichsminister, Reich Minister; any member of the Reich Cabinet but in Foreign Ministry documents usually the Reich Foreign Minister
- Sicherheitshauptamt**, Chief Security Office, Headquarters of the Gestapo
- SK**, Seekriegsleitung, Naval Warfare Directorate
- Sonderreferat Deutschland**, Special Section for Germany in the Foreign Ministry (see appendix I)
- SS**, Schutzstaffel, elite corps of the NSDAP, used for military and police purposes
- St. S.**, Staatssekretär, State Secretary; the permanent head of a Reich Ministry
- Sturmabführer**, SS rank equivalent to major
- v.**, von
- VB**, *Völkischer Beobachter*, the principal daily newspaper of the NSDAP
- Volksdeutsche**, ethnic Germans, i.e. persons of German race living outside the frontiers of the Reich who were not Reich subjects (see **Reichsdeutsche**)
- Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle**, central agency for the resettlement and repatriation of **Volksdeutsche**
- Volksgruppe**, ethnic group
- Wehrmacht**, Armed Forces
- WFA**, Wehrmachtsführungsamt, Operational Office of the Wehrmacht, Directorate of Military Operations
- Winterhilfswerk**, Winter Relief Organization
- zu**, to, in connection with; where this precedes the file number it indicates that the previous papers on the subject have this number.

## ADDENDUM

EDITORS' NOTE. When document No. 504 was prepared for the printer, Part II had not been found. Subsequently, after the volume was in page proof, a later draft of the complete memorandum was discovered.

In this later and final draft, Woermann's covering memorandum (6375/E474295) was unchanged. This covering memorandum was referred to Hitler by Ribbentrop and contained the following marginal notations in the latter's handwriting:

"For Führer.

"1. Shipping tonnage insufficient. Freight to other ports?

"2. How much interest must we pay?

"I do not share the view of my Economic Policy Department and of the Minister of Economics."

Part I of the final draft (6375/E474296-301) is dated November 21 and shows only minor revisions of the draft of November 20 printed as an enclosure to document No. 504. The text is identical except for the introductory paragraph and a condensation of the section headed "2. European democracies."

Part II (6375/E474302-05) presents essentially the same facts and arguments, under identical headings, which Wiehl used in his memorandum of December 19 printed as document No. 514.

There is no documentary evidence for Hitler's decision on Woermann's memorandum, but Wiehl was instructed to ascertain the views of other Ministries on "the possible economic results of a sharpening of tension with the United States" and on December 5 reported that the Ministries were agreed that the economic results of a rupture of diplomatic relations with the United States would be very serious for Germany (6375/E474323-40). A penciled note on this document by Wiehl dated December 11 reads: "This memorandum was read by the Foreign Minister at a conference with me on the Paris-Berlin train on December 8, 1938, and no further instruction was given."

A letter of December 7 from State Secretary Neumann on behalf of Göring as Commissioner for the Four Year Plan pointed out that a break in relations with the United States would, because of the losses of foreign exchange which would result, "render substantially more difficult not only the supplying of necessary raw materials for the German economy but also the fulfillment of the armament program ordered by the Führer."

