



EG

This message must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

Paris Dated September 12, 1938

FROM Rec'd 9:45 a.m.



Secretary of State,

Washington.

1425, September 12, noon. (SECTION ONE)

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

Bonnet returned from Geneva this morning in a dispirited mood. He had talked with Litvinov and with Comnene the Rumanian Foreign Minister. He said that as a result of these conversations he had drawn the following conclusions.

If the Germans should enter Czechoslovakia France would attack Germany and at once Russian planes would fly to Czechoslovakia across Rumanian territory. The Rumanians would not (repeat not) attempt to attack these planes. On the other hand the Rumanians had made it absolutely clear that they would not permit the Russian army to cross the Rumanian frontier in order to bring assistance to Czechoslovakia. Therefore, in case of war the Russians would submit to the League of Nations the question of whether or not they had the right to cross Rumanian territory to assist Czechoslovakia.

Bonnet

760F.62/739

GDG SEC. 1 AND 2

Confidential File

-2- #1425, September 12, noon, SECTION ONE from Paris

Bonnet added that in any event the question would be unimportant from the point of view of the utilization of immediate force as it would be physically impossible because of lack of means of transport for the Russian army to march across Rumanian territory to the assistance of Czechoslovakia.

There was no indication that Poland would do anything. The result would be that if German troops should enter Czechoslovakia France would attack Germany and would be for all practical purposes in a situation of absolute isolation. (END SECTION ONE)

BULLITT

RR:CSB

FS

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TELEGRAM RECEIVED

Dated September 12, 1938

FROM

Rec'd 10:30 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1425, September 12, noon. (SECTION TWO).

The British to be sure would declare war on the side of France but the British army was so totally unprepared that the French army would have to bear the entire brunt of the fight.

In his opinion part of the extraordinary calm and resolution with which the people of France today are regarding the future was due to the fact that very few people had sufficient imagination to understand what modern war would be. The effects of air raids on Paris by German bombing planes were simply beyond ordinary imagination.

(In this connection it may be of interest to the Department to know that Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh who has just returned from a visit to the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia and is completely familiar with the situation in Germany and England as a result of previous visits, has just expressed to me the opinion that while the Russian planes are numerous they are far inferior to the German in quality and while the Russian pilots are courageous

courageous they are extremely inferior.

Lindbergh considers that the Czech air force would be almost worthless in combat against the Germans. He estimates that the French and British air forces are so inferior to the German that even though all the manufacturing facilities of the United States should be made available to France and England in time of war—the Germans would control the air completely for a period of from eighteen months to two years and would be able to destroy every structure in France that they might care to destroy. Incidentally Lindbergh said that at one airport in Czechoslovakia he had seen 25 Russian bombers.)

(END SECTION TWO)

KLP

BULLITT

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

EG

This message must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

FROM

Paris

Dated September 12, 1938

Rec'd 12:30 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

1425, September 12, noon. (SECTION THREE).

Bonnet said he felt the situation had been improved somewhat yesterday afternoon by the declaration of the British Government. Hitler must now know that if he should march into Czechoslovakia he would have immediate war with both France and England. The question remained whether or not Hitler was so confident of the overwhelming superiority of his air force that he would risk war now.

The negotiations between the Czech Government and the Sudeten leaders were progressing fairly satisfactorily as the Sudeten had been obliged to recognize that the concessions offered by the Czech Government constituted at least a 70 percent concession of their demands.

Bonnet added that he was intensely apprehensive with regard to what Hitler might say tonight. He asked if I thought it might be possible for the Government of the United States to instruct our Ambassador in

Berlin

760F.62/739 SEC.3

JDG

Confidential File

-2- #1425, September 12, noon. (SECTION THREE) from Paris

Berlin to say to the German Foreign Office that in our opinion the negotiations now engaged in between the Czech Government and the Sudeten offered great possibilities ^{of} a peaceful settlement of the dispute and that we would regard the use of force at this moment as contrary to the interests of humanity.

I replied that I was extremely doubtful that our Government would wish to make any such demarche and still more doubtful that our Ambassador in Berlin could see anyone of sufficient importance before this evening to have any influence on Hitler's speech.

In conclusion Bonnet said that in spite of the dark features of the present situation which made it impossible to predict what the outcome would be he found it difficult to believe that Hitler would make the deliberate decision to plunge Europe into a war which could end only in the destruction of the Continent.
(END MESSAGE).

BULLITT

RR

TELEGRAM RECEIVED



Handwritten initials: H, Sch

JR
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

Paris
FROM Dated September 13, 1938
Rec'd 4:25 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1436, September 13, 3 p.m.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

I had a long conversation today with Rochat, Chief of the European Division of the Foreign Office who is in my opinion the ablest of the permanent officials of the Quai d'Orsay.

He expressed the opinion that for technical reasons the Czech Government would find it impossible to accept the proposal of a plebiscite in the Sudeten regions and would greatly prefer to have a pronouncement by Runciman accord to the Sudeten all the Carlsbad demands. He is convinced that Bents cannot go further than he has gone and that the Sudeten leaders will not go further than they have gone. He feels therefore that no progress can be made toward a settlement by negotiation. He feels moreover that the danger of war through incidents in the Sudeten regions provoking Hitler to immediate attack is becoming hourly more grave and is of the opinion that Runciman

760F.62/778

GDG

-2- #1436, September 13, 3 p.m., from Paris.

Runciman should issue his pronouncement immediately.

Incidentally he confirmed the information that Runciman had said to Henlein that if no settlement should be reached by September 15th he himself would issue a statement of his opinion as to a just settlement.

BULLITT

NPL:EMB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED



JR

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

FROM

Paris

Dated September 13, 1938

Rec'd 3:42 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1437, September 13, 4 p.m.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

I have just talked briefly with Bonnet who confirms the information that the Czechs have declared a state of siege in eight districts.

He said that he had just stated to the British Ambassador that in his opinion it was ~~essential that~~ Runciman should take full responsibility at once and issue an immediate pronouncement with regard to a just settlement of the dispute.

It is obvious that the continuance of incidents such as those of this morning may impel Hitler to march troops across the border at any moment. More than ever it is true that "peace is at the mercy of an incident."

BULLITT

KLP

760F. 62/781

DG

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
SEP 14 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JR
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (C)

Paris
FROM Dated September 13, 1938

Rec'd 5:30 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1443, September 13, 5 p.m.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Wilson had a talk this morning with the German
Charge d'Affaires. The latter expressed the opinion that
Hitler's speech had been received with "relief" in France
where something more menacing had apparently been
expected.

The Charge d'Affaires said that there was no question
but that Hitler wanted a settlement of the Sudeten
problem by peaceful methods. However, there was one
thing that Hitler would not stand and that was attacks
upon and brutal treatment of Sudeten Germans in
Czechoslovakia. If such incidents multiply (he referred
to a report of two Sudetens killed last night) then
Hitler would go into Czechoslovakia and protect the
German population there "regardless of the consequences".
If under such conditions France should decide to mobilize
and declare war on Germany the responsibility for provoking
a general conflict would be France's.

(END SECTION ONE).

EMB:NPL

BULLITT

760F.62.779

G DG

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
SEP 14 1938

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JR
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (C)

FROM Paris

Dated September 13, 1938

Rec'd 5:36 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1443, September 13, 5 p.m. (SECTION TWO).

In reply to a question as to what sort of settlement would satisfy Hitler the Charge d'Affaires stated that the only settlement which could prove permanently satisfactory would be the incorporation of the Sudeten Germans into the Reich. It might be possible to reach agreement on the basis of complete territorial autonomy as a temporary solution; this would afford the necessary time for opinion to adjust itself to the ultimate solution of incorporation into the Reich.

The Charge d'Affaires spoke in the highest terms of Runciman. He said that it was believed in Germany that Runciman had gone to Czechoslovakia with an open mind and had since become convinced of the justice of the Sudeten complaints. He said that Runciman had been pressing the Czech Government steadily to go further in an effort to meet the Sudeten demands

and

-2- #1443, September 13, 5 p.m. (SECTION TWO) from Paris.

and it was believed that Runciman personally would favor a radical solution of the problem.

The Charge d'Affaires said that there were indications that the Czech Government seemed to be losing its authority. The "soldiers" were becoming more outspoken in their criticism of the Government. (END SECTION TWO)

BULLITT

HTM:NPL

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

JR

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (C)

Paris

Dated September 13, 1938

FROM

Rec'd 5:45 p.m.



Secretary of State,
Washington.

1443, September 13, 5 p.m. (SECTION THREE).

It would be a pity said the Charge d'Affaires if BENES were to resign as this would undoubtedly result in disorders. He alleged that Communist influence was gaining in Praha and stated that a "Communist Congress" was now being held in Praha attended by representatives of Soviet Russia.

The Charge d'Affaires spoke with appreciation of the recent editorial in the LONDON TIMES said that this undoubtedly reflected the views of a considerable part of the English people and that under these circumstances it was difficult to believe that Great Britain would support France in making war on Germany in order to perpetuate the domination of three million Germans by seven million Czechs. He said that the German Embassy had been repeatedly told of ^{late} recognizing "important personalities" in France that if only Germany would go slowly time would work in her favor and she would obtain peacefully

-2- #1443, September 13, 5 p.m. (SECTION THREE) from Paris.

peacefully everything she desired for the Sudeten
Germans.

The Charge d'Affaires reiterated during the talk
that the continuance of serious incidents in which
Sudetens are mistreated or killed would without question
provoke Hitler into taking direct action for the
protection of the Sudetens. (END OF MESSAGE)

BULLITT

NPL:EMB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED



FROM

EG
This message must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (C)

Paris

Dated September 14, 1938

Rec'd 6:19 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1450, September 14, 9 a.m.

PERSONAL AND STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE PRESIDENT.

I am deeply grateful for your telephone call last
night. The suggestions we referred to are in my letter
of August 17. The second suggestion was developed more
fully in my letter of May 20.

I shall of course remain in Paris until calm is
reestablished. I still believe that the chance for
peace is greater than the chance for war.

Love to you all.

BULLITT

GW:RR

123 BULLITT, WM.C./445



TELEGRAM RECEIVED

EG

This message must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

Paris
FROM

Dated September 14, 1938

Rec'd 6:15 a.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

1451, September 14, 10 a.m.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

After speaking with you on the telephone last night I again talked with Bonnet who impressed upon me the fact that the French and British Governments would continue to go to the extreme limit in attempting to avoid the outbreak of war.

Intense efforts will be made today by the French and British Governments and their representatives in Prague, and Runciman, to achieve a solution.

Paris is entirely calm and the French people are prepared to march if need be. There has been no mobilization but the frontier troops are on the alert and everything is in readiness for immediate mobilization and attack.

BULLITT

GW:RR

760F.62/790

GDG P.L.M.

13 SEP 1938

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TELEGRAM RECEIVED



EG
This message must be
closely paraphrased be-
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to anyone. (D)

Paris
Dated September 14, 1938
FROM
Rec'd 11:25 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1454, September 14, 1 p.m.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

(SECTION ONE, PART ONE).

As I told you over the telephone last night
Daladier called Chamberlain on the telephone yesterday
and proposed to him that the British and French Govern-
ments should invite the German Government to meet them
in an immediate conference to work out a settlement of
the Sudeten dispute. Chamberlain, whose French is not
good, had difficulty in understanding and the message
was finally transmitted through the British Ambassador
in Paris.

This morning I talked with the British Ambassador
who expressed the opinion that the suggestion was not
a happy one. His people in London were inclined to
doubt that the German Government would accept such an
invitation. It might be possible to obtain German
acceptance if Italy should be added.

The

760F.62/799 SEC. 1 PART 1

GDC

-2- #1454, September 14, 1 p.m. from Paris

The British Ambassador then read to me the telegrams which he received this morning from Praha. A vitally important one which must be treated as strictly confidential was from Runciman. As I have informed you the French have been doing their utmost for some time to persuade Runciman to make an important pronouncement. Bonnet urged this with intensity yesterday. Runciman's reply of this morning states that he considers that it will be impossible for him to make any pronouncement so long as there is disorder in the Sudeten regions. He feels that the statement which he has prepared would not serve to calm the Sudeten although it might form a basis of agreement in case calm should previously have been established in the Sudeten regions. I ventured to suggest to the British Ambassador that Runciman seemed to be putting the cart before the horse as I could see no possibility of calm being restored in the Sudeten regions except as a result of a statement in definite terms issued by Runciman. The British Ambassador said that he too feared incidents in the Sudeten region would continue until Hitler would be forced to cross the border; but that Runciman was on the spot and that the British Government would have to accept his judgment.

(END PART ONE).

BULLITT

KLP

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

SECRETARY OF STATE
SEP 15 1938
NOTED

EG

This message must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

Paris

FROM
Dated September 14, 1938

Rec'd 1:55 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1454, September 14, 1 p.m.

SECTION TWO. PART ONE.

I discussed the general situation with Bonnet this morning. While I was talking to him Daladier called him on the telephone to inform him that the Czechs without informing the French Government in any way had issued orders for the mobilization on the German frontier of a number of motorized divisions. Daladier expressed the opinion to Bonnet that this was most grave and Bonnet replied that it was outrageous that the Czechs at a moment when everything depended on calming the Sudeten and not provoking the Germans and at a moment when the Sudeten were demanding the withdrawal of extra Czech troops, should send new divisions into the Sudeten area without previous consultation with the French Government. Bonnet went on to say that he felt that the Czechs were not playing straight with the French and he felt that they had failed to play straight so often

760F.62/799. SEC. 2 PART 1 GDE

-2- 1454, September 14, 1 p.m. from Paris

often with France that the French would be fully justified in washing their hands of their obligation to the Czechs. He added that the one issue which could now force France to attack Germany would be if Hitler should send the German army across the Czechoslovak border. Nothing else would produce general European war.

BULLITT

KLP

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

SECRETARY OF STATE
SEP 15 1938
NOTED

W
OK

JR
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

FROM Paris
Dated September 14, 1938
Rec'd 2:05 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1454, September 14, 1 p.m. (PART TWO, SECTION ONE).

Runciman added that he had sent two members of his staff, Gwatkin and Peto into the Sudeten area to investigate the incidents and attempt to produce an atmosphere of calm.

You will recall that Runciman said to Henlein before the latter's visit to Hitler that if agreement should not be reached before September 15 he would issue a pronouncement. It seems possible that the trip of Gwatkin and Peto will be for the purpose of assuring the Sudeten leaders that if they can restore order Runciman will speak.

A telegram from the British Minister in Praha to the British Ambassador here informed him that Hodza was ready to discuss the withdrawal of extra Czech military units sent to the Sudeten area for the purpose of restoring order. I pointed out to the British Ambassador that Henlein had broken off all negotiations this morning and had ordered his representatives in

Praha

760F.62/799 PART 2 SEC. 1 GDG

-2- #1454, September 14, 1 p.m. (PART TWO, SECTION ONE) from
Paris.

Praha to return to the Sudeten area because of the beginning of underscoring refusal end of underscoring of the Czechs to withdraw the extra troops sent to that area.

The British Ambassador then said that it had become clear to the British Government that the trouble maker in the present situation was Benes. He had often promised to carry out measures which would produce appeasement but had not in fact put them into effect. He added that for the first time yesterday he believed that the French Government had become convinced that Benes was really trying to start trouble. This was certainly the view of the British Government.

BULLITT

KLP

TELEGRAM RECEIVED



EG
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Paris
FROM
Dated September 14, 1938
Rec'd 1:50 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1454, September 14, 1 p.m.

(SECTION TWO. PART TWO)

Bonnet was most apprehensive that there would be further incidents in the Sudeten area today. He again expressed the opinion that it was absolute folly for Runciman to delay longer his pronouncement. He said that he thought that a pronouncement by Runciman was the single thing which could calm the Sudeten and that if Runciman should delay longer than today or tomorrow the Sudetens were apt to get completely out of hand and a large number be shot by the Czechs and Hitler march in. He said that he would continue today to urge the British Government to have Runciman speak at once.

With regard to the proposal originally made by Daladier over the telephone to Chamberlain, Bonnet said that while the British had not yet accepted it they had received the idea with favor and had informed him that they were thinking along similar lines. I of course did not mention my conversation with the British

Ambassador

760F.62/739 SEC. 2 PART 2 GDG

-2- 1454, September 14, 1 p.m. from Paris

Ambassador, but it seemed to me possible, in view of this statement of Bonnet's, that the British might propose a four power conference of England, France, Germany and Italy.

BULLITT

GW:KLP



11
Dec

FS
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Paris

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

Dated September 14, 1938

FROM Rec'd 11:45 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1454, September 14, 1 p.m. (PART THREE. SECTION ONE).

I commented that for some time it had seemed to me
that Bonnet shared this opinion.

The British Ambassador replied that it was a question
of degree. He felt that since yesterday the French Govern-
ment had weakened greatly in its support of the Czechs.
He felt that the French at the present time were "ready
for peace at almost any price".

It is true that during the past few days the French
newspapers have published many maps showing the racial
divisions in Czechoslovakia and that public opinion has
begun to develop the attitude "Why should we annihilate
all the youth of France and destroy the continent of
Europe in order to maintain the domination of 7,000,000
Czechs over 3,200,000 Germans?" I am certain, however,
that one must add to the British Ambassador's phrase
the words "except at the price of honor".

If German troops cross the Czech border except as
a result of most outrageous provocation by the Czechs,
France

760F.62/799 PART 3 SEC. 1 GDG

FS 2-No. 1454, September 14, 1 p.m. from Paris

France unquestionably will declare war on Germany.

(END SECTION ONE).

GW:CSB

BULLITT

TELEGRAM RECEIVED



JR
This telegram must be
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to anyone. (D)

FROM Paris
Dated September 14, 1938
Rec'd 2:10 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1454, September 14, 1 p.m. (PART THREE, SECTION TWO).

Bonnet said that the single rays of light at the present moment were the fact that his reports from Berlin indicated that the German Government had accepted the events of yesterday calmly and the additional fact that there had been no further incidents in the Sudeten regions this morning.

In view of the growing belief among the French and the British that Benes in his heart of hearts has decided to provoke general European war rather than accept complete autonomy for the subject nationalities of Czechoslovakia, intense pressure will unquestionably be brought on Praha today by the French and British and the French will continue to request Runciman to issue a pronouncement.

(END OF MESSAGE).

BULLITT

KLP

760F.62/799 PART 3 SEC. 2 GQ

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

JR

GRAY

FROM

Paris

Dated September 14, 1938

Rec'd 8 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH.

1463, September 14, 8 p.m.



As I said to Messersmith by telephone this evening Chamberlain yesterday requested an interview with Hitler which Hitler accorded this evening at about 7:30. Chamberlain will fly to Berchtesgaden tomorrow morning, arriving probably by 3 o'clock.

I have talked with Bonnet about this development and he is, of course, delighted. He feels that all risk of immediate war is now at an end. Bonnet assured me this evening that rumors of changes in the French Cabinet are entirely without basis.

BULLITT

KLP

RECEIVED
SEP 15 1938

760F.62/814

GDG

ED

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

PS

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

Paris

Dated September 15, 1938

FROM

Rec'd 9:45 a.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

Paraphrase L. M. Mappin

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
SEP 15 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1465, September 15, 11 a.m. (SECTION ONE)

CONFIDENTIAL.

The news of Chamberlain's visit to Hitler has been received by all circles in France except the Communists, other agents of the Soviet Government and certain Jews, with intense satisfaction and a relief that approaches ecstasy.

The HUMANITY the Communist organ contains an extremely sour comment by Peri but the Socialist POPULAIRE contains an editorial of wholehearted approval by Blum. The rest of the press applauds.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is of course delighted. The chief aim of Bonnet's foreign policy has been to engage England's intervention in the affair of Czechoslovakia. Before Daladier and Bonnet took office the British had refused consistently to become seriously involved. Chamberlain's personal visit to Hitler is therefore a personal triumph for Bonnet and he is gleeful.

As

760F: 62/827

GDG

Confidential File

FS 2-No. 1465, September 15, 11 a.m. from Paris

As I informed the Department last night by brief telegram after finding a conversation with Mr. Messersmith unsatisfactory due to atmospheric conditions, Bonnet feels that the danger of general European war has disappeared.

The story being circulated by the French press that Daladier suggested Chamberlain's visit to Hitler is untrue.

CSB

BULLITT

FS

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

Paris

Dated September 15, 1938

FROM

REC'd 10:45 AM *W. M. Mathison*

Secretary of State,
Washington.

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS SEP 15 1938 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1465, September 15, 11 a.m. (SECTION TWO)

As I informed the Department Daladier telephoned to Chamberlain and suggested that there should be a conference of representatives of England, France and Germany. His conversation with Chamberlain was most unsatisfactory due in part to Daladier's total lack of knowledge of English and Chamberlain's imperfect knowledge of French. Yesterday afternoon all Bonnet knew was that the British thought some sort of a conversation should be held with the Germans. The British Ambassador informed me last night at about 9 o'clock that he had communicated Chamberlain's intention to visit Hitler in Birchtsgaden to Daladier only at 8 o'clock.

It is certain that the French Government will support any arrangement that Chamberlain may be able to make with Hitler. As I have pointed out repeatedly to the Department in my telegrams since the beginning of last May the only reason why the French have been ready to go to war on behalf of Czechoslovakia is because of the point

FS 2-No. 1465, September 15, 11 a.m. from Paris

point of honor involved. The feeling here today is that Chamberlain will take care of that point of honor completely and that the French Government will be justified in the eyes of its own people and the world in following his lead, whatever that lead may be and however unpalatable to Czechoslovak authorities.

(END SECTION TWO.)

RR:CSB

BULLITT

Eu

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

PS
This telegram must be
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Paris

FROM

Dated September 15, 1938

REC'D 11:45 a.m.
DIVISION OF

EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

SEP 16 1938

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1465, September 15, 11 a.m. (SECTION THREE)

In considering French opinion it must be remembered that the number of persons who believe that France should fight in order to maintain her traditional power and prestige in Central and Eastern Europe has diminished steadily during the past year. Aside from a few permanent officials of the Quai d'Orsay and Paul Reynaud there are almost no persons in positions of influence who still feel that France should fight to uphold this traditional policy. Moreover, the conviction that the Treaty of Versailles is one of the stupidest documents ever penned by the hand of man is now general, although not admitted by men like Mandel who share responsibility for its terms. Both Daladier and Bonnet fought the Treaty of Versailles and wrecked their careers temporarily by telling the truth about the treaty when the truth was unpopular. Both are convinced that the treaty must be revised and at bottom regard an alteration in the

Czechoslovak

760F.62/827 SEC 3 CDG

FS 2-No. 1465, September 15, 11 a.m. from Paris

Czechoslovak state as a necessary revision--the
necessity for which they pointed out nearly 20 years
ago,

(END SECTION THREE)

KLP:CSB

BULLITT

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

Paraphrase of Mr. Maginot
DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
SEP 15 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FS
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D) FROM

Dated September 15, 1938
Rec'd 11:21 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1465, September 15, 11 a.m. (SECTION FOUR)

Daladier, for example, said to me a few days ago that he had had a considerable argument with Mandel who had wished him to mobilize the French army which he had ended by saying to Mandel that he did not intend to sacrifice the entire youth of France merely to white-wash the criminal errors that had been committed by Mandel and his friend Clemenceau and the other members of the big four during the conference which produced the Treaty of Versailles.

Both Daladier and Bonnet have said to me recently that as soon as the Czech affair is settled they hope to enter at once into negotiation designed to bring together Germany and France in genuine friendship. They hope that these negotiations will result in cooperation between Germany, France, England and Italy and that peace may be established in Europe. It is now their hope that Chamberlain's talk with Hitler may be the beginning of this negotiation.

(END MESSAGE)

KLP

BULLITT

760F. 62/827 SEC. 4 GOG

*75-77
79-1-57
740-552*

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

EG

This message must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS FROM SEP 16 1938 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Paris

Dated September 16, 1938

Rec'd 2:20 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

1482, September 16, 4 p.m.

Daladier, Chautemps and Bonnet lunched with Welles, Wilson and myself today. Since no news had reached Paris in regard to Chamberlain's conversation with Hitler it was impossible to have any constructive conversation in respect of future events. Daladier before luncheon said to me that so far as he was concerned there was nothing to do except to shoulder knapsacks. Chautemps and Bonnet are for peace at almost any price. My impression still is that the French Government will follow any recommendation made by Chamberlain.

The only concrete statements of interest in conversation were that Daladier said that he would have the question of settlement of Jews in Madagascar investigated immediately and he asserted that French military regulations would prevent the sending of any retired French general to assist Chiang Kai Shek.

Daladier

WA
MWA

760P.62/858

SEP 22 1938

FILED

GDC

Confidential File

1938

-2- #1482, September 16, 4 p.m. from Paris

452.00
762.05

Daladier said also that in case of war the troops in French Morocco could seize Spanish Morocco in 48 hours and expressed the opinion that two French divisions would suffice to wipe out Franco in the course of a few weeks. I asked if he did not feel that the sending of such divisions would bring Italy at once into war and he replied that in his opinion Italy would enter war at once in any event on the side of Germany. Bonnet concurred.

BULLITT

CSB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

JR
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (br)

FROM

PARIS
DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
RECEIVED SEPTEMBER 16, 1938
SEP 17 1938
REC'D 7:40 p.m.
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

16, 1938

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1490, September 16, 2 p.m.

Bonnet has just told me that the French Ambassador
in London informed him a few minutes ago that the British
cabinet was still sitting; that there would be no
communiqué tonight; and that no information would be
given to the French Government tonight. Tomorrow
morning the British cabinet will meet at 11 o'clock
and immediately after the meeting Sir Eric Phipps,
British Ambassador in Paris, will deliver to the
French Government a full account of the conversations
at Berchtesgaden and the conclusions of the British
Government.

(END SECTION ONE).

BULLITT

RCV:PEG

760F.62/361

RECEIVED

17

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

SEP 17 1938

DEPARTMENT OF STATE 1938

JR
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (br)

FROM

Paris

Dated SEPTEMBER 16, 1938

Rec'd 6:25 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1490, September 16, 2 p.m. (SECTION TWO).

Bonnet added that while Corbin had no specific information whatsoever with regard to the conversations at Berchtesgaden he believed that the British cabinet was now engaged in drawing up with the assistance of Runciman a definite project based on Chamberlain's conversation with Hitler and he thought that this definite project would be given to the French Government tomorrow morning together with the account of the conversation.

Bonnet said that his reports from Czechoslovakia tonight indicated that there had been no serious incidents whatsoever today and said that he thought Hitler would do everything possible to keep the Sudeten quiet until his conversation on Tuesday with Chamberlain. He said that he thought this meant that the British project would give Hitler at least three-quarter satisfaction.

Bonnet

-2- #1490, September 16, 2 p.m. (SECTION TWO) from Paris.

Bonnet was more optimistic with regard to the possibility of avoiding war than at any time during the past few days.

END OF MESSAGE.

BULLITT

EMB:ROW

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

SECRETARY OF STATE
SEP 21 1938
NOT

S
Sec

ML
This message must be _____
closely paraphrased before
being communicated to anyone
(D) FROM

Paris
Dated September 19, 1938
Rec'd 9:50 a.m.

Secretary of State
Washington

RUSH

1503, September 19, noon

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

General European war appears to be closer this morning than at any previous time.

The French Ministers reached Paris from London half an hour ago. They went direct to the Elysee for a council of state. I have talked, however, with Jules Henry who was with Bonnet throughout the London conversations.

The Department has unquestionably been informed fully by our Embassy in London in regard to Chamberlain's conversation with Hitler and the decisions of the British Government.

Briefly I gathered from Henry that Hitler stated to Chamberlain that he would incorporate the Sudeten within the Reich peacefully if possible, by war if necessary. Chamberlain asked if he could be assured that Hitler had no further designs on Czechoslovakia than the detachment from the Czechoslovak state of the Sudeten. Hitler promised Chamberlain that he did not wish anything but

760F. 62/903 SEC
SEP 21 1938
AND
Confidential File
G.D.G.

ML -2- Paris #1503 Sept.19,1938 9:50a.m.

the Sudeten regions. He said furthermore that he had no intention at the present time of taking up the question of Germans in Poland or Memel or other areas in Europe. Hitler refused, however, to go into any general discussion of the organization of European peace or the limitation of armaments. He was at times intensely excited and at times calm.

(END SECTION ONE).-

BULLITT

KLP

5

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

JR

This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (D)

Paris

FROM

Dated September 19, 1938

Rec'd 10:40 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH.

1503, September 19, noon. (SECTION TWO).

When Chamberlain pointed out to him that France
was bound by treaty to Czechoslovakia and that if German
troops should cross the Czechoslovak border the French
would at once attack Germany and that England would not
be able to stand aside from the ensuing conflict,
Hitler replied that he was a young man of 49 years and
that he would live under these circumstances to see
the triumph of Germany and a reorganization of ^{place in} ~~the~~ Europe.

Chamberlain asked Hitler for assurances in case
he should undertake to attempt to persuade the
Czechoslovak Government ^{to relinquish} ~~the~~ the Sudeten to Germany
that during the period of negotiations Hitler would
not march troops across the Czechoslovak border.
Hitler said that he could make him this promise subject
to the proviso that great disorders or a revolution in
the Sudeten region should not compel him to act.

Chamberlain

-2- #1503, September 19, noon (SECTION TWO) from Paris.

Chamberlain therefore left Birchesgaden on the understanding that he would submit to his own Cabinet and to the French Government the proposal that the Czechoslovak Government should be asked to relinquish the Sudeten region to Germany. The British Cabinet approved this proposal and last night Bonnet and Daladier approved it. The French were definitely of the opinion that a plebiscite could not and should not be organized. It was also decided that Great Britain would participate with France and other countries in a guarantee of the Czechoslovak state which would remain after the amputation of the Sudeten.

BULLITT

RGC

5

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

JR

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

FROM

Paris

Dated September 19, 1938

Rec'd 11:16 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH.

1503.

September 19, noon. (SECTION THREE).

Daladier and Bonnet at the Elysee are now engaged in acquainting their fellow members of the Cabinet with the results of their conversations in London and the British are engaged in attempting to persuade the Czechs to relinquish the Sudeten voluntarily.

The situation which will arise if the Czech Government should refuse to permit the Sudeten to enter the German Reich will be desperate. As Chautemps said to me this morning just before the Council of State began the Czechs unquestionably would be better off without the Sudeten and with the general guarantee participated in by Great Britain; but for a sovereign state to relinquish any portion of its territory under threats is ... extraordinarily difficult.

If the Czechs should refuse the British proposals and the German army then should cross the Czech frontier after

760F.62/903 SEC 3 JLG

Confidential File

-2- #1503, September 19, noon (SECTION THREE) from Paris.

after a declaration by Great Britain that Great Britain would stand aside the position of France would become one of agonizing tragedy. If France should refuse to attack Germany the people of France would be compelled to witness the spectacle of the destruction inch by inch of Czechoslovakia by the German army and this horrible slaughter would continue for at least three weeks. The French people would become so aroused that there would be strikes and revolutionary demonstrations and in the end public opinion might decide for war.

(END SECTION THREE).

BULLITT

KLP

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

1-1336

FROM

JR
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (D)

Paris

Dated September 19, 1938

Rec'd 1:30 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH.

1503, September 19, ^{noon} (SECTION FOUR).

Chautemps went on to say that on the other hand
it was clear that France would be alone in
bearing the burden of both German and Italian attack.
Even though Great Britain should be compelled to enter
the war the British forces could be of real assistance
only at sea. The British could put only 65,000 men
on the continent of Europe at the moment and their
air force would barely be adequate to defend Great
Britain. The Russian army could not enter into active
war against Germany because it would be necessary to
cross the territory of either Poland or Rumania which
would result in immediate war with both Poland and
Rumania. The superiority of the German and Italian
air forces was so absolute over the French air force
that every city in France and every military objective
could be destroyed at will. Even with the full

productive

76CF. 62/903 SEC. 4 GDG

Confidential 1938

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248

-2- #1503, September 19, (SECTION FOUR) from Paris.

productive capacity of the airplane factories of the United States operating at full speed it would be two years before parity in the air could be achieved. For France, therefore, the stake was the entire youth of the country and every building in it. In the end there would be nothing left of any construction on the continent of Europe and small vestige of any race.

If the Czechoslovak Government should refuse to give up the Sudeten and Hitler should enter Czechoslovakia, France therefore will confront the appalling decision either of sacrificing the greater part of the race or of suffering a moral wound almost too great to bear. It is idle to speculate at this moment on the decision which will be determined by many small factors but there is still in France so much of the spirit of the Jacobins and behind that Jeanne d'Arc that I feel the French would march into the furnace.

BULLITT

GW:RGC

5

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

JR
This telegram ¹⁻¹³⁸⁶ must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (D)

FROM Paris

Dated September 19, 1938

Rec'd 1:22 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH.

1503, September 19, noon. (SECTION FIVE).

Deladier, Bonnet and Chautemps have all spoken to
me with regard to despatches purporting to give the
opinions of officials of the American Government and of
the American people, all of which indicate that we
desire France to go to war at this time. They have
been intensely disturbed by these expressions of
opinion--for example by the despatch which appeared in
LE TEMPS of September 17, discussing the point of view
of the Department of State and indicating that "an
authorized personality declared: 'if we admit the right
of peoples to dispose of themselves, there is another
right which is that of a constituted Government to maintain
its national unity!"; and the statement by Senator
Pittman reported in this morning's press "Czechoslovakia
has the right to expect and demand protection from the
governments responsible for its creation which pledged it
their protection."

HTM

BULLITT

760F. 62/903 SEC. 5 GDG

5

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

MG

This message must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. D

FROM

Paris

Dated September 19, 1938.

Rec'd 10:48 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH

1503, September 19, noon. (Section Six).

I believe that all members of our Government and officials of the different Departments should refrain from any expression of opinion whatsoever tending to make it appear that we believe that France should go to war in order to keep 3,200,000 Sudetens under the rule of 7,000,000 Czechs. It is entirely honorable to urge another nation to go to war if one is prepared to go to war at once on the side of that nation but I know nothing more dishonorable than to urge another nation to go to war if one is determined not to go to war on the side of that nation, and I believe that the people of the United States are determined not to go to war against Germany. (The Message).

U. S. ITT

GW

RR

760F. 62/903 SEC. 6 GD

CONFIDENTIAL

TELEGRAM RECEIVED



REB

This telegram ¹⁻¹³²⁶ must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

FROM PARIS

Dated September 19, 1938

REC'd 3:33 p. m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH

1509, September 19, 5 p. m. (SECTION ONE)

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

Bonnet has just informed me that the joint telegram of the British and French Governments proposing to Benes that he should cede at once to Germany the districts containing 52% of Germans and over has been despatched to Praha.

I asked what would happen to the Czech minority in these districts and to the German minority in the remainder of Czechoslovakia and Bonnet said that there would be an exchange of populations. I asked him if Chamberlain had discussed this question of exchange of populations with Hitler and he replied that he had. I repeated the question and he repeated the assertion. I asked if Hitler would accept this solution. Bonnet said that since he had asked only for a plebiscite and was being handed the Sudeten Chamberlain was confident he

would

760F. 62/916

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SEP 22 1938

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Confidential File

REB

2-#1509, From Paris, Sept. 19, 5p.m.
(Sec. One)

would accept.

Bonnet said further that the British Government had informed Praha officially today that if the British-French proposal should be rejected by the Czechoslovak Government, Great Britain would not come to the support of Czechoslovakia under any circumstances no matter what might happen. On the other hand if the Czechs should accept the proposal Great Britain ^{would be} ~~not~~ prepared to enter into an international guarantee of the Czechoslovak state.

/ BULLITT

KLP

(*) Apparent omission

S

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

REB

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

FROM PARIS

Dated September 19, 1938

Rec'd 3:53 p. m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

1509,

September 19, 5 p. m. (SECTION TWO)

I asked Bonnet what the position of France would be if Benes should refuse and he replied that the position of France would be the same as the British position. France positively would not march in support of Czechoslovakia. I ventured to doubt the accuracy of this statement and said that I believed Daladier was more belligerent than he was. Bonnet replied that on the contrary Daladier agreed entirely and it was Daladier and not himself who had conducted the discussion in London in the course of which this point had been brought out.

I said to Bonnet that nevertheless I could not imagine the French public remaining quiet and watching the Czechoslovak army slowly destroyed by the German army. Bonnet replied that he could imagine it very well; the people of France desired nothing but peace; at least 80% of the population was opposed to going to war

REB

2- From Paris, Sept. 19, 5 p. m.
#1509 (Section Two)

war under any conditions in support of Czechoslovakia.

I said that on the contrary I should expect an immense public reaction led by the Communists and the Socialists. Bonnet said that the Communists would make all the trouble they could; but he did not believe the Socialists would, and he did not anticipate any serious internal troubles.

BULLITT

KLP

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

REB

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

FROM PARIS

Dated September 19, 1938

Rec'd 3:40 p. m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH

1509, September 19, 5 p. m. (SECTION THREE)

I then alluded to the possibility that the Poles and Hungarians would strike if recession should be accorded to the Sudeten and withheld from the Polish and Hungarian minorities. Bonnet said that it was nonsense for the Poles to take this attitude. The question was one of peace and war in Europe. There were $3\frac{1}{2}$ million Germans involved and only 40,000 Poles (the Poles say 200,000. There are 90,000), and the Poles and Hungarians could perfectly well wait for two or three months and then have their plebiscites.

I said that I remained pessimistic. What would happen if Benes should refuse? Bonnet said: "He cannot refuse. We will not let Benes in order to maintain the domination of 7 million Czechs over $3\frac{1}{2}$ million Germans drive 40 million French people to their deaths and he

knows

REB

2-#1509, From Paris, Sept.19,5p.m.

knows it".

Bonnet said that if the French Government had refused Chamberlain's proposal he would have considered the danger of war enormous. As it was he did not.

Altogether Bonnet was much more confident than I had expected to find him. He had received no indication with regard to Benes' reaction to the British-French proposal.

(END OF MESSAGE)

BULLITT

RGC

KLP

TELEGRAM RECEIVED



NC
1-1336
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

FROM Paris
Dated September 19, 1938
Rec'd 4:06 p.m.

Secretary of State
Washington

RUSH
1510, September 19, 6 p.m. (Section One)
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

I have just talked with Jacques Keyser Vice President of the Radical Socialist party and "confidential diplomatic adviser" to Daladier who was Daladier's assistant in London. He is of the opinion that the agreement reached in London means the preservation of peace for at least 24 hours but also that it has settled nothing.

He was fully aware that the Polish and Hungarian Governments would come forward with immediate demands and indicated that it was not at all palatable to him to have Great Britain and France guarantee the integrity of the portion of the Czechoslovak state which would remain after the amputation of the Sudeten with the prospect of having that guarantee rendered illusory by plebiscites in the Polish and Hungarian regions in the near future.

He had just heard authoritatively from Praha that the Czechoslovak Army had received a most disappointing communication from the Soviet military leaders indicating that

Russia

760F.62/915

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SEP 22 1938

NC -2- #1510 from Paris, September 19, 1938

Russia could not be counted on. This had for the moment diminished greatly the possibility that Benes might refuse the British-French proposal but a later message from Moscow had again revived the possibility.

BULLITT

EMB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

REB

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

FROM

PARIS

Dated September 19, 1938

Rec'd 4:39 p. m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH

1510, September 19, 6 p.m. (SECTION TWO)

I asked Kayser to predict to me what would happen in France if the Czechs should refuse the proposal and the German army should invade Czechoslovakia. He expressed an opinion exactly contrary to that of Bonnet reported in my No. 1509, of September 19, 5 p. m. He said that unquestionably France would come close to civil war. Not only the Communists but also men of every party from the extreme Right to the extreme Left would favor war on the ground that if France should not go to war she would be dishonored. He felt certain that there would be widespread strikes and riots and was of the opinion that in the end France would go to war. Kayser went on to predict that even though the Czechs should submit the action of the British and French Governments would produce a swing in public opinion away from the system of parliamentary democracy. He did not believe that the country

REB

2-#1510, From Paris, Sept. 19, 6p.m.
(Sec. Two)

country would turn to the Communists nor was he able to predict to what individual the nation would turn; but he felt that the democratic parliamentary regime in France had received a blow from which it might never recover.

(END OF MESSAGE)

BULLITT

EMB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

RDG
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EU

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
SEP 20 1938
PARIS DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JR

1-1200

FROM GRAY

Paris DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Dated September 20, 1938

Rec'd 7:35 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1514, September 20, 11 a.m.

The reaction of the people of France to the events of yesterday was expressed completely by Leon Blum in the following words:

"War is probably avoided; but under such conditions that I, who have never ceased to fight for peace and for many years have dedicated my life to peace, cannot feel joy and that my emotions are divided between a cowardly relief and shame."

Five minutes ago the French Foreign Office received a telephone call from the French Minister in Praha reporting that he had received neither the reply of the Czech Government nor any intimation as to the nature of the reply.

BULLITT

RR

FILED
SEP 21 1938

760F.62/917

SOC

TELEGRAM RECEIVED



EDA
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased
before being communi-
cated to anyone (BR)

PARIS
FROM Dated September 20, 1938
Received 11:20 a.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

RUSH

1518, September 20, 2 p.m. (SECTION ONE)

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

While I was lunching with Sir Eric Phipps, the British Ambassador, Bonnet telephoned in great excitement to say that he had just heard from Benes that the Czech Government had not yet decided what course to pursue but was considering two alternatives; one, to appeal for general arbitration of the minority question in Czechoslovakia; two, to accept the British-French proposal.

Bonnet said further that he believed that if Benes should appeal for arbitration German troops would enter Czechoslovakia tonight. He was therefore about to urge the Czech Government in the strongest terms to accept the British-French proposal at once.

(END OF SECTION ONE).

KLP

TELETYPE

760F.62/923

SEP 21 1938

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Confidential File

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

JR

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (br)

Paris

FROM Dated September 20, 1938

Rec'd 11:25 a.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

RUSH.

1518, September 20, 2 p.m. (SECTION TWO).

The British Ambassador said he had replied to Bonnet that he was so sure of the position of his Government that, without consulting his Government, he would at once telephone to Praha and tell the British Minister to express the opinion to the Czechoslovak Government that if the Czechoslovak Government should appeal for arbitration German troops would enter Czechoslovakia tonight.

The British Ambassador added that both the French and British Governments had made it entirely clear to Benes that if he should not accept the British-French proposal and German troops should enter Czechoslovakia no support would be accorded to Czechoslovakia by either Great Britain or France.

The British Ambassador then telephoned to the British Minister in Praha and also to the Foreign Office in

London

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SEP 21 1938

FILED

G-Confidential File

-2- #1518, September 20, 2 p.m. (SECTION TWO) from Paris.

London which indicated entire accord with his views and actions.

The final Czech reply is expected by Bonnet at 3 o'clock this afternoon. (END MESSAGE).

BULLITT

PEG

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

~~4P~~
~~22C~~
~~20P~~
~~108~~
~~27~~

JR

FROM

GRAY

Paris

Dated September 21, 1938

Rec'd 8:35 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH.

1528, September 21, noon.

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
SEP 21 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The British Ambassador has just informed me that the Czech Government has accepted flatly and unconditionally the British-French proposal. He says that it has definitely been decided that Chamberlain will fly to Germany tomorrow to meet Hitler.

The British Ambassador states that the Polish and Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia will probably be given to Poland and Hungary outright in districts where they number more than 50 per cent of the population, and a special regime will be created for the Polish and Hungarian minorities which may remain in Czechoslovakia as well as for the German minorities.

The British Ambassador added that the reluctance of the Praha Government to accept the British-French proposal had been based on promises from the Soviet Government which the Praha Government had finally decided were inadequate. He said that he had the

Impression

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FILED

SEP 22 1938

-2- #1528, September 21, noon, from Paris.

impression that the Czech Government finally was relieved to have the flat statement from Great Britain and France that if the British-French proposal should not be accepted the Czechs would receive no support from Great Britain and France no matter what might happen.

The British Ambassador was confident that although it would take some weeks to work out the detailed arrangements the chance that war might break out over the question of Czechoslovakia was almost nonexistent.

BULLITT

RR

JR **TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

Paris
Dated September 22, 1938
Rec'd 10:05 a.m.

FROM

Secretary of State,
Washington.

Paraphrase to Mr. Maguire

RUSH.

1540, September 22, 1 p.m.

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
SEP 22 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

Rochat said to Wilson this morning that he expected Hitler to move Sudeten armed forces into the entire Sudeten area and occupy it within the next 48 hours. He said that Asch had already been occupied this morning.

Rochat said that he is convinced that Chamberlain will find himself faced with another ultimatum this afternoon by Hitler. He believes it not unlikely that Hitler will demand the complete disappearance of the Czech state. If such should be the case, it would mean war at once. Rochat said that it was inconceivable that the French people would watch passively the entire dismemberment and disappearance of the Czech state. There would be a wave of popular indignation which would sweep all before it demanding war against Germany even with the fear that this might mean national suicide. He believes that British opinion will react in the same manner.

(END SECTION ONE).

PEG:CSB

BULLITT

760F-62/987
SEP 23 1938
FILED
CONFIDENTIAL FILE

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

This message must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

Paris
FROM Dated September 22, 1938

Rec'd 10:40 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1540, September 22, 1 p.m.

Proposed by H. H. ...
DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
File
Ph
(SECTION TWO)
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

If it comes to war Rochat is persuaded that Russia will come in at once against Germany, as well as Rumania. Yugoslavia is more doubtful. On the other side it is clear that there would be a coalition of Germany, Italy, Poland and Hungary.

Rochat stated that this afternoon Chamberlain was bringing "on a platter" entire satisfaction to Hitler's ultimatum of a week ago. (Incidentally it appears that there was in fact a time limit to this ultimatum inasmuch as Hitler "suggested" that he be furnished a satisfactory reply by Wednesday of next week", i. e. yesterday). If in the face of this amazing diplomatic triumph, which means that Hitler has already become the master of Central Europe if not of the whole of Europe, he should now insist upon wiping out the existence of the Czechoslovak state or upon immediate military invasion of the Sudeten regions without affording decent time, even a few days, for transference of authority, it could mean only one thing, and that was war. (END MESSAGE)

SEP 23 1938

FILED

CONFIDENTIAL

GW:CSB

BULLITT

7-01-02/007, etc.

PBC EU

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

JR

1-1296

FROM

GRAY

SEP 22 1938

Paris DEPARTMENT

Dated September 22, 1938

Rec'd 12:30 p.m.

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
<i>[Signature]</i>

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1541, September 22, 2 p.m.

Yesterday morning the Central Committee and the Parliamentary group of the Communist party adopted a resolution against "the abandonment of the interests of France and of peace which results from acceptance of the proposals of Mr. Chamberlain giving Hitler freedom to dismember Czechoslovakia, the integrity of which is inseparable from French security."

The resolution noted that the same sentiment is manifested in the ranks of the Socialist Party and directed the Communist representatives to the delegation of Left parties to propose, among other things, the adoption of a resolution in favor of the integrity of Czechoslovakia, the despatch of a delegation to Czechoslovakia to assure the population and authorities of that country of the desire of the French people to remain faithful to their engagements and the convocation of Parliament.

Yesterday

SEP 23 1938

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730F-62/360

-2- #1541, September 22, 2 p.m., from Paris.

Yesterday afternoon the Socialist parliamentary group adopted a resolution stating that "the Socialist group cannot associate itself with a diplomatic action which aims to impose on a state, without consulting that state, and under the menace of aggression, the sacrifice of its independence, and which will strengthen materially and morally, regimes of violence, isolate France, precipitate an armaments race, and thereby aggravate the risks of war."

At a meeting of the Left parliamentary groups last night the Radical Socialists refused to associate themselves with the Communist and Socialist demand for the immediate convocation of Parliament. (END SECTION ONE).

BULLITT

RR:CSB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FS

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

FROM

Dated September 24, 1938

Rec'd 9:35 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
SEP 26 1938
MR. MESSESMITH

SECRETARY OF STATE
SEP 21 1938
NOTED

RUSH

DIVISION OF
EUROPE

1569, September 24, noon. (SECTION ONE).

SEP 28 1938

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

I have just talked with both Bonnet and the British Ambassador. Neither has any exact information with regard to Chamberlain's midnight conversation with Hitler.

Chamberlain left Godesberg at a quarter before ten this morning. Neither the British Ambassador nor Bonnet expects to have any definite information until some hours after his arrival in London.

The outstanding question (as indicated in my 1564 of September 23, 11 p.m.) is whether Hitler should be permitted to occupy certain districts in the Sudeten area at once or should be required to wait. Bonnet said to me that he believed it would be folly to destroy the Continent of Europe on the issue of whether Hitler took these districts on the 25th September or the 25th of October. The British Ambassador expressed exactly the same opinion. During the past 24 hours public opinion in France has strengthened greatly

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MR. DUNN
SEP 27 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
SEP 26 1938
MR. WELLES

76CF. 62/1052 SEC 1

LDG

FILED

CONFIDENTIAL FILE

SEP 29 1938

FS 2-No. 1569, September 24, noon from Paris

greatly on the side of war in the event of attack on Czechoslovakia. If the decisions of the British Cabinet should be adverse to acceptance of Hitler's demand I believe that Daladier would summon the French Parliament at once. Parliament could probably meet within 12 hours of the summons.

(END SECTION ONE).

GW:KLP

BULLITT

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

1-1386

FROM

EG
This message must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (D)

Paris

Dated September 24, 1938

Rec'd 10:30 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH.

1569, September 24, noon. (SECTION TWO)

It would be necessary to summon Parliament because the Prime Minister under the French Constitution has no authority to order an attack against foreign soil or to issue a declaration of War except in case France is invaded, without a vote of Parliament.

Chautemps said to me last night that he had discussed this point with Daladier recently. Daladier had said to him that if the situation grew more critical he would use to the limit his powers to produce a partial mobilization but positively would not issue an order for general mobilization before he had a vote of Parliament authorizing him to declare war. He would not place himself in the ridiculous position of mobilizing the army and having it stand under arms pending a vote of the Chamber.



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Confidential File

-2- #1569, September 24, noon, (SECTION TWO) from Paris

If the British Cabinet and the French should reject Hitler's demand and German troops should attack Czechoslovakia there probably would be a period of about 12 hours before the French Parliament could vote in favor of war.

I have no doubt that if Germany should attack Czechoslovakia the French Parliament would vote for war.

I asked Bonnet for an opinion as to the chances of preserving peace. He replied that he thought there was still a small faint chance.

BULLITT

GW

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

EG

This message must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

Paris

FROM

Dated September 24, 1938

Rec'd 11:25 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH

1569, September 24, noon. (SECTION THREE).

I know that you and the President have considered what action, if any, the Government of the United States should take to attempt to preserve peace if Chamberlain's efforts should fail. ~~Whatever~~ Whatever may be momentary opinion in the United States I am certain that in the long run all Americans will feel that some effort by our Government is essential even though the effort may prove to be a failure.

I believe, therefore, that if you should receive definite word today that the British and French Governments have rejected Hitler's demand and are ready to make war if Czechoslovakia is attacked, the President should issue an appeal to the Chiefs of State of England, France, Germany, Italy and Poland requesting them to send representatives at once to The Hague to discuss ways and means to preserve European peace and to strengthen the foundations of peace. I believe we should offer to send a representative to such a conference.

-2- #1569, September 24, noon, (SECTION THREE) from Paris

I believe that such an appeal should contain a strong warning against armies crossing frontiers. I consider it essential to include Poland in such a conference and equally essential not (repeat not) to include the Soviet Russian Government.

I believe that the President should issue such an appeal even though German troops should have crossed the frontiers of Czechoslovakia; and in that case should propose an immediate armistice on the basis that troops should not go forward from such positions as they have occupied. (END MESSAGE)

BULLITT

GW:CSB

~~(*) Omission~~

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TELEGRAM RECEIVED

Paris
This telegram ^{FROM} must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

Dated September 24, 1938
Rec'd 7:16 p.m. SEP 26 1938



Secretary of State

Washington

1576, September 24, 9 p.m.

The French Government has not yet received the text of the note handed to Chamberlain by Hitler last midnight and Hitler's note of yesterday afternoon has been received only in the form of a rather garbled text. ^{The} French Government expects to receive the second note sometime tonight from the British Embassy here. I have just talked with Ambassador Kennedy who has informed me that he has already seen both notes and has communicated their contents to you.

The French Ambassador in London, who has also seen the notes, has reported to his Government that the second note contains a demand by Hitler that German troops should occupy immediately all regions where there are Germans in Czechoslovakia and hold them until just before a plebiscite and then withdraw the troops and send them back after the plebiscite. (End of Section One)

BULLITT

HPD

760F.62/1060

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SEP 27 1938

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TELEGRAM RECEIVED

HR
1-1586
This message must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (D)

FROM Paris
Dated September 24, 1938
Rec'd 7:28 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1576, September 24, 9 p.m. (SECTION TWO)

In the absence of an actual text of the note the French Government finds it difficult to believe that such a proposal can have been put forward and is reserving judgment.

It is the view of the French Government however that the portions of Hitler's notes thus far received show no basis for a compromise and war is believed to be near.

The mobilization of the two classes summoned today proceeded admirably and in the best spirit. There was apparently a mentally unbalanced fellow who made a small scene at the Gare de l'Est but otherwise nothing but full readiness to march was in evidence. There is no doubt in my mind that this country will respond to any demand made by the Government without enthusiasm but with unbreakable determination. (End message)

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TELEGRAM RECEIVED

1-1336

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MR. DUNN
SEP 27 1938
FROM
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Paris

EG
This message must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (D)

Dated September 25, 1938

Rec'd 8:50 a.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
SEP 26 1938
MR. MESSERSMITH

RUSH.

1577, September 25, 11 a.m.

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
SEP 25 1938
MR. WELLES

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
SEP 28 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

I have just read in Bonnet's office the text of
Hitler's final note to Chamberlain. Bonnet had also
the appended official map showing the districts de-
manded by the Germans. The gist of Hitler's note was
the following:

One. The Czechs must withdraw all their armed
forces from territory in which there is 50% or more
German population by October 1. This territory will
be occupied at once by the German army and the German
Government will agree to have a member of the Czech
general staff attached to the German general staff
during the occupation.

Two. In districts in which the population is less
than 50% German there must be plebiscites under control
of an international commission.

Hitler

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-2- #1577, September 25, 11 a.m. from Paris

Hitler refuses to guarantee the limits of the
Czechoslovak State remaining, unless the guarantee
is participated in by the Polish and Hungarian
Governments.

BULLITT

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TELEGRAM RECEIVED

HJD

Paris

1-1336

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

FROM Dated September 25, 1938.

Rec'd. 8:55 a. m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

RUST.

1577, September 25, 11 a. m. (Section Two).

Bonnet said that he and Daladier would go to London this afternoon for consultation with Chamberlain and Halifax and added that he felt certain the British would not have invited him and Daladier to London today if the British Government had decided to refuse these proposals. He believed that they were being summoned in order to prepare a counterproposal to Hitler. He said that it was his conviction that the British Government would not go to war on behalf of Czechoslovakia and (since he personally desires to avoid war at all costs) he was much more cheerful than yesterday as he felt that his position would be supported by the British Government. He said that once again he had become somewhat optimistic and asked me if I shared his optimism.

I replied that I could add nothing to what I had said to him since the first moment when he informed me of the decisions taken in London jointly by the British Government,

Daladier

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GG

MJD #2# No. 1577, September 25, 11 a. m. (Section Two)
from Paris

Daladier and himself last Sunday. I had pointed out at that time that by placing the entire affair on the basis of a cession of territory instead of the basis of plebiscites and by ignoring completely the Poles and Hungarians the British and French Governments were thrusting the Poles and Hungarians into Hitler's camp and were placing themselves in a foul position before the public opinion of the world. I pointed out that Hitler had taken full advantage of this gross diplomatic error and now was in a position to say to the Poles and the Hungarians that it was he and he alone who would procure their minorities for them.

W. M. ITT

CSB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

EG

1-1336

This message must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

FROM

Paris

Dated September 25, 1938

Rec'd 9:15 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH.

1577, September 25, 11 a.m. (SECTION THREE)

I called Bonnet's attention to the fact that Hitler's statement that he would not enter into a guarantee of the Czechoslovak state to be signed after the detachment of the German minorities unless Poland and Hungary should enter into the guarantee meant nothing more nor less than a flat demand that the Polish and Hungarian minorities should be returned to those states at once since it is certain that neither Poland nor Hungary will guarantee the frontiers of what remains of Czechoslovakia until they have received their minorities.

Bonnet said that he felt that the matter should be handled by successive steps. First the Germans should receive their minorities and then the Poles and Hungarians should receive theirs. He said that the French Government had already urged the Czechoslovak Government to hand the Teschen district to Poland and that he had some hope that the Czechoslovak Government would do so.

He

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-2- #1577, September 25, 11 a.m. (SECTION THREE) from Paris

He added that the British Government had informed the Czechoslovak Government that it would not enter any guarantee unless the Polish and Hungarian Governments also should enter the guarantee.

I asked Bonnet if he thought that there was the slightest possibility that the Czechoslovak Government would give up its frontier defenses and all the Sudeten regions of Czechoslovakia if in return it should not even receive a German guarantee for what remained. Bonnet replied that the Czechoslovak Government would be obliged to refuse at the beginning; but he felt that as the date of October 1 approached and as it became evident that the concentration of German troops on the Czech frontier, now amounting to 26 divisions, plus the Polish and Hungarian concentrations was overwhelming, the Czechoslovaks would accept at the last hour before October 1. He said that he was convinced that the Czechs would do this (?) at the final hour the French and British Governments would inform the Czechs that they could expect no assistance.

BULLITT

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TELEGRAM RECEIVED

EG

This message must be
closely paraphrased be-
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to anyone. (D)

Paris

FROM

Dated September 25, 1938

Rec'd 9 a.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

RUSH.

1577, September 25, 11 a.m. (SECTION FOUR).

I ventured to doubt the accuracy of this statement and pointed out to Bonnet that while there was no enthusiasm for war in France the entire country was ready to march to a man. He agreed to this; but said that he felt certain that Great Britain would not be ready to march and that when the British made it clear to the French Government that France would have to confront alone war with Germany and Italy the French Government also would refuse to assist Czechoslovakia. There is as I have pointed out a distinct difference between the points of view of Daladier and Bonnet; but I believe that if the British Government again should take the attitude that peace must be preserved at any price Daladier would not resist long. The ultimate decision will be made by the British Cabinet in London.

Osusky,

760F.62/1061

GML

-2- #1577, September 25, 11 a.m. (SECTION FOUR) from Paris

Osusky, Czechoslovak Minister in Paris, has just informed me that he has received by telephone from Praha from his Government the information that Hitler's demands transmitted by the Czechoslovak Government cannot (repeat not) possibly be accepted. He added that this rejection will be communicated to the British and French Governments before the meeting of Chamberlain and Daladier this afternoon in London.

(END MESSAGE)

BULLITT

CSB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
SEP 26 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1-1330

FROM

Paris

Dated September 25, 1938

Rec'd 11 a.m.

EG
This message must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (D)

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH.

1579, September 25, 1 p.m.

The British Ambassador gave me this morning the English translation of Hitler's note to Chamberlain but did not permit me to have it to cable as he said it had been received in a confidential code.

I was able to study it at leisure and at length. In addition to the terms that I telegraphed you this morning after reading the French text in Bonnet's office I noted especially the following:

There is no question of exchange of populations. Hitler demands a plebiscite for the large German island in the middle of Czechoslovakia and demands that if this large island should vote for union with Germany it should become a part of Germany in the middle of what will be left of Czechoslovakia.

The German note demands further that all German speaking persons should be released at once from the Czechoslovak army and permitted to leave at once for

that

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SEP 27 1938

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-2- #1579, September 25, 1 p.m.

that portion of the Sudeten area to be placed under German control on October 1.

The German note demands the immediate release of all Germans now in Czech prisons.

(END OF SECTION ONE)

BULLITT

DDM:CSB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

SEP 26 1938

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

EG
1-1226
This message must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (D)

FROM Paris
Dated September 25, 1938
Rec'd 11:35 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH.

1579, September 25, 1 p.m. (SECTION TWO)

It demands further that on October 1 when the
Czechs evacuate the zones to be occupied by the German
army they should leave behind intact and in good condi-
tion all aviation fields with their equipment; all
radio stations; all railroad rolling stock; all factory
equipment; all military equipment including the forti-
fications in perfect order; all foodstuffs, all cattle,
and all other movable objects now in the Sudeten areas.

I regret that I cannot transmit the note to you
textually and trust that you have received it from our
Embassy at London but I am certain that if you have
read it you will agree with me that it is totally un-
acceptable. The terms asked by Hitler are virtually
those imposed on a defeated German army for evacuation
of northern France.

I

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EG

#2- #1579, September 25, 1 p.m. (SECTION TWO) from Paris

I expressed this opinion to the British Ambassador that I could not see how any Government could conceivably accept such a proposal. The British Ambassador who like Bonnet is for peace at any price continues to hope that his Government and the French will abandon the Czechs completely in order to avoid general war. He said he feared that while Bonnet would be for peace Daladier would be for war. I gathered the impression that his latest information from London indicates that the British Government is inclining toward peace at any price.
(END OF MESSAGE).

BULLITT

DDM