

● PSF

FRANCE: Wm. C. Bullitt

1937

PSF: *France*
Bullitt

Paris, January 10, 1937.

Personal and
~~Confidential~~

Dear Mr. President:

As Anne and I have just come from seeing the movie version of "Green Pastures," I feel sufficiently like that excellent negro God who was constantly on the verge of wiping mankind from the planet, to write you about the state of Europe.

I have thought and talked endlessly about ways and means of stopping the deluge which is approaching. I am still convinced that the only possible method of stopping it is through direct negotiations between Paris and Berlin. But I am not at all sure that such negotiations can succeed because I suspect that the Eastern frontiers of Germany fixed by the Treaty of Versailles remain just as unacceptable to Germany as the day they were decreed.

Philip

The Honorable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,
The White House,
Washington, D. C.

Philip Kerr, that is to say, Lord Lothian, spent the night before last with me. He is in close touch with the Germans and knows Hitler. He is convinced that Hitler will not accept peace except at the price of domination of Eastern and Central Europe and the Balkans (Russia excluded as not being part of Europe).

Kerr personally would like to see Germany get that domination and is absolutely opposed to any armed interference by England to prevent it. I do not know a single Frenchman, however, who is ready to accept such a solution. Those French who agree with Kerr in his diagnosis of the German attitude--like Mandel and many other politicians of the Right--draw the conclusion that any attempt to reach reconciliation with Germany through economic and financial concessions and limitation of armaments will merely strengthen Germany for the inevitable conflict. There is so much to be said for that point of view that it is difficult to argue against it except on the simple basis that to accept it is to render inevitable an early war, and that there is a small chance that it may be possible to reach a genuine reconciliation with Germany.

Last night I had an intensely interesting conversation with the Minister of Czechoslovakia who is Benes' right hand man. He has just returned from Prague and he tells me in
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the greatest confidence that Benes is attempting to get Rumania and Yugoslavia to support him in urging France to attempt to reach a direct understanding with Germany. He went so far as to say that Benes had decided that if France did not do this, Czechoslovakia would immediately start to make her own deal with Germany rather than wait to be crushed.

The crucial period will be the next eight months. Lothian told me that he had had a talk with Inskip just before leaving London and that Inskip had stated to him that Great Britain's air program was much further advanced than anyone suspected and that in about six months Great Britain would be able to give a good account of herself in the air. On the other hand, Great Britain cannot put a single division on the continent at the present time--the only one available is now in Palestine--and if Germany makes war in the near future, Great Britain will be able to do little more than blockade Germany and use her airplanes for defense. The French army will be alone on the western front.

Blum and Delbos are still away on vacation and so is Vienot, the Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs. The absence of these three men is the surest indication, as I said to Judge Moore over the telephone, that the French do not anticipate war arising from the present rumpus over Morocco. The conversation I had with Leger, which I telephoned in
detail

detail to the Department and assume that you saw, seemed to me to be equally convincing on this point.

The single circumstance that gives me much hope is that I hear constantly from people who have just come from Germany that the Germans are beginning to be a bit frightened by the forces now arrayed against them. They seem to have begun to realize that if they get into war against an immense coalition, the result will be the result of the Second Punic War rather than the result of the First. Germany will be cut to pieces.

Osusky, the Czech Minister, said that he and Benes had precisely the same idea that I have discussed with Blum and with many others here, to wit, that France should attempt to reach an agreement with Germany by direct negotiations which would couple, in one global agreement, limitation of armaments and economic and financial assistance.

Many of the French outside the Cabinet have the same idea in mind. Monick has just written two more colossal memoranda, copies of which I enclose. As you will see from them, he proposes the creation of international trusts, organized as the Suez Canal Company is organized, for the delivery of raw materials to countries that need them and for the placing of finished products.

It

It is, of course, an old scheme. I remember H. G. Wells suggesting something similar in about 1906. The difficulty is that the U. S. A. and other countries would have to supply credits to Germany and Italy for the purchase of the raw materials and then would have to allocate markets to Germany and Italy for the distribution of the finished products.

In other words, they would have to subsidize German competition with their own products in the world markets. I cannot imagine our country or any other taking very kindly to such a solution.

The only chance that I can see is the slim one that after Francois-Poncet has done some preliminary work, Blum will be able to take an enormously high ground and come out with a sweeping proposal for limitation of armaments and financial and economic peace on the continent. That is to say, some scheme which would be little short of the proposal for the unification of Europe.

He would have the fullest support of Poland and the Scandinavian States, Belgium, Holland, Czechoslovakia, Austria and all the smaller countries of Europe with the exception of Hungary and Bulgaria; but, as soon as he got down to details the squabbles would become bitter and success would be inordinately difficult to achieve.

It

It would be especially difficult because the Soviet Union and Italy would do everything they could obliquely to kill any such proposal. I am not certain what the British would do. Sir George Clerk talks as if the British would welcome real reconciliation. But there are many indications that the British want nothing of the sort. For example, read the enclosed clipping from the LONDON TIMES of December 28, 1936. Georges Bonnet will go to Washington as French ambassador.

I understand that the story emanated from the British Embassy in Paris. The British got worried because Marcel Knecht, Secretary General of the MATIN went to Berlin on a plain mission of inquiry to find out if Germany might be in a mood to negotiate with France. The mere fact that old Bunau-Varilla sent Knecht put the British into such a state of mind that they shot a torpedo of this sort.

With every day that passes I become more convinced (if such a thing is possible) that the only policy for us is to stay as far out of the mess as possible. As I have written you before, if Blum does manage to start something that looks promising and if he should need the assistance of a word from you at a crucial moment, or some diplomatic non-entangling assistance, you might well help him. But we should not attempt to take the lead.

As

As I wrote to Judge Moore recently, we ought to make it clear that the United States, like God, helps those who help themselves.

I have heard from a large number of sources that the Germans are much disturbed because their relations with us are so bad and that they are thinking of replacing Luther at an early date.

Georges Bonnet will go to Washington as French Ambassador. You will, I think, dislike Bonnet. He is highly intelligent and well-versed in financial and economic matters but is not a man of character. You will remember that he was the head of the French delegation at the London Economic Conference and that he led the personal attacks on you until I scared him to death in a certain gay and historic scene. He now pretends to be a great friend, but he has a shifty eye.

As I told you over the telephone, we left Paris to spend Christmas in the Sahara and came back by way of Tunis. It was a lovely trip and Tunis and Algiers remind me of California in the year 1900. Incidentally, you may be interested to know that it has been discovered recently that it is possible to get water by artesian wells in almost any portion of the Sahara. My own guess is that the water table will
sink

sink rapidly if many of these wells are drilled but that remains to be seen.

Another thing which amused me in Algiers was the discovery that slavery still exists. Quantities of negroes come from the Sudan to sell themselves and their families into slavery in Algiers. They have been used to the institution and like it. I talked to the French Administrator of the Sahara regions about it and he said there was nothing to be done. The negroes were entirely free legally even after they had sold themselves but they preferred to regard themselves as slaves. They are as black as anthracite and their dress consists of a belt of skins of the small desert foxes!

The internal situation in France has improved definitely. There are lots of financial worries ahead but the feeling of the whole country is much calmer and less jittery than it was a few weeks ago, and the international outlook is somewhat less ominous.

But to return to "Green Pastures": this is a good time to build a large ark labeled "The United States of America." Henceforth, I shall think of you as Brother Noah.

Every good wish to you, Mrs. Noah, and Ham, Shem and Japhet.

Incidentally

Incidentally, do you know how the French Bible translates that Beatitude which goes: "Blessed are the meek and humble in spirit, for they shall inherit the Earth!" Well, sir, it is this: "Heureux sont les débonnaires, car ils hériteront la terre!"

Yours affectionately,

William P. Bellitt
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P L A N
POUR LA CONSTITUTION DE GRANDES SOCIETES INTERNATIONALES
CHARGEES DE DEVELOPPER ET DE COORDONNER LES ECHANGES
DES PRINCIPALES MATIERES PREMIERES

I - IL EXISTE UN PROBLEME DES MATIERES PREMIERES

a) Nations insatisfaites.

Il faut le reconnaître,
il existe un certain nombre de nations - et nous ne songons pas seulement à l'Allemagne - qui ont un besoin urgent de matières premières, et qui, faute du crédit nécessaire, ne peuvent se les procurer. C'est le thème actuel de leurs revendications. Mais, en soulevant en même temps la question des colonies, certaines nations donnent abusivement au problème réel des matières premières, un caractère politique qui risque de le rendre insoluble.

Rendrait-on, par exemple, au Reich toutes les colonies qu'il avait avant la guerre, que le problème

de son approvisionnement en matières premières n'aurait marqué aucun progrès . Où l'Allemagne trouverait-elle en effet , dans son état d'épuisement financier, les fonds nécessaires pour exploiter ses nouvelles colonies ? Qui lui donnerait les territoires qu'elle revendique ?

b) Le problème général .

Mais, ce n'est pas seulement pour les nations insatisfaites que se pose le problème des matières premières . Il existe pour le monde entier . C'est la réalité de demain qu'il faut savoir reconnaître dès maintenant .

En effet, toutes les grandes économies nationales sont actuellement orientées vers la préparation de la guerre . Il en est résulté une demande accrue de matières premières qui a entraîné, tout particulièrement dans ces derniers mois, une hausse considérable de leurs cours .

De là cette conséquence : le passage d'une mobilisation industrielle à but militaire à une production de paix tant souhaitée peut entraîner un choc dans l'économie mondiale . Un tel changement d'orientation doit faire craindre une baisse des matières premières analogue à celle qui a été la principale cause de la crise mondiale dont nous sortons à peine . Toutes les nations en seraient atteintes et particulièrement les grands pays producteurs .

II - IL Y A URGENCE A RESOUDRE CE PROBLEME .

a) Les dix-huit mois qui viennent - mais plus encore l'année 1937 dès maintenant - seront décisifs pour la paix . Vers le milieu de 1938 les nations pacifiques auront retrouvé leur puissance. Dès lors, si la paix peut être achetée en 1937, par un effort entrepris immédiatement, elle aura peut-être été acquise pour des générations .

b) D'ailleurs, il est de l'intérêt évident des grandes puissances financières d'agir sans délai. Le maintien de l'accord monétaire tripartite dépend directement de cette action. Les menaces de guerre en Europe poussent irrésistiblement les capitaux vers les Amériques . Une nouvelle crise financière doit être redoutée si la sécurité, rétablie à tout prix en Europe, ne permet pas aux capitaux de s'y fixer .

III - LA SOLUTION QU'IL FAUT ECARTER .

Le Dr Schacht il y a plusieurs années a fait valoir l'idée de grandes Compagnies ayant des territoires sous leur obédience, exploitant certaines matières premières et les distribuant aux nations auxquelles elles font défaut .

Ce plan n'apporte pas de véritable solution au problème actuel pour les raisons suivantes :

a) Quels seraient en effet les pays qui céderaient une partie de leurs territoires coloniaux pour les soumettre à l'autorité de ces Compagnies ?

b) Quels ne seraient pas les délais et les dangers des négociations d'ordre territorial que supposent de telles Compagnies, alors que, pour sauvegarder la paix, il faut une solution immédiate ?

IV - UNE SOLUTION CONCRETE ET IMMEDIATEMENT REALISABLE .

Si l'on veut réellement aboutir et passer sans délai à des réalisations on doit chercher une autre solution .

A) Au lieu de Compagnies de production exploitant des territoires, il faut concevoir des Compagnies de commerce et de financement (trading and financial Cies). Au lieu des Compagnies à caractère politique du Dr Se hecht , il faut s'inspirer du remarquable exemple donné par la COMPAGNIE UNIVERSELLE DU CANAL MARITIME DE SUEZ .

B) La réalité nous offre déjà un exemple de ce qu'il nous faut faire aujourd'hui. Il existe en effet une grande Compagnie Internationale dont la réussite est connue de tous.

La Compagnie du Canal de Suez a su en effet résoudre sur le plan économique et financier un problème essentiellement politique . Remettre à une grande Compagnie

internationale le soin de concilier l'opposition de certains intérêts nationaux, lui confier la garde et le maintien d'un des principaux passages du commerce du monde, c'est une expérience qui a brillamment fait ses preuves, non pas seulement au cours du dernier siècle, mais tout récemment encore .

Ne doit-on pas reconnaître aussi à la Compagnie du Suez le mérite d'avoir inauguré, par un abaissement délibéré de ses tarifs depuis 1929, une politique économique nouvelle qui, abandonnant la défense exclusive d'intérêts privés, a mis au premier plan la notion de service public international?

C) A l'exemple de la Compagnie Universelle du Canal de Suez - qu'il serait d'ailleurs souhaitable de voir internationalisée plus complètement en y admettant des personnalités américaines, allemandes, italiennes, ... - pourquoi ne pas créer pour résoudre le problème des matières premières de grandes compagnies internationales (Raw materials adjustment Corporations) , dans lesquelles les nations insatisfaites siégeant aux conseils d'administration sur un pied d'égalité avec les grands empires du monde, recevraient une satisfaction de prestige et auraient la possibilité de discuter de leurs intérêts essentiels .

Ne serait-ce pas d'ailleurs l'application sur le plan international des principes qui ont inspiré toute l'expérience Roosevelt aux Etats-Unis ?

Ces grandes Compagnies, en effet, sans en recevoir obligatoirement le monopole se verraient assigner les deux buts suivants :

a) Régulariser et coordonner les marchés et les prix des grandes matières premières : pétrole, coton, caoutchouc, matières grasses, métaux non ferreux, viande , etc ...

b) Consentir, grâce à une puissance de financement considérable, des crédits s'étendant sur plusieurs années pour la fourniture des matières premières aux pays qui en ont le besoin le plus pressant et qui précisément sont exclus des marchés par leur manque de disponibilités financières .

D) Un tel plan ne serait-il pas d'ailleurs la continuation sur le plan économique des principes qui ont présidé à la conclusion de l'accord monétaire tripartite ? De même que les grands mouvements erratiques de capitaux qui survivent à la crise mondiale viennent se fondre et s'amortir, sans danger pour les monnaies, dans les fonds d'égalisation des changes, de même les échanges encore troublés des grandes matières premières seraient développés en même temps que régularisés par l'intermédiaire de grandes compagnies internationales constituées à cet effet .

CONCLUSION

Si un tel plan devait être pris en considération, il conviendrait que les Etats-Unis d'Amérique, la France et l'Angleterre le prissent immédiatement à leur actif, comme le plan des trois grandes démocraties occidentales pour sauvegarder la paix, dès que l'initiative en aurait été prise par le Président Roosevelt. Elles représentent en effet à elles trois les 9/10^e de la richesse et du crédit du monde .

Quelle prospérité ne donneraient pas à l'Europe le sentiment d'une sécurité enfin retrouvée et l'apaisement des besoins trop longtemps insatisfaits ? Quelle stabilité nouvelle n'apporterait pas à la prospérité des Etats-Unis et à celle du monde entier le retour à un équilibre harmonieux des grandes économies nationales ? L'Europe Occidentale ne bénéficierait pas seule d'un tel plan. La Russie, grande productrice de matières premières, l'Extrême-Orient même, et la Chine en particulier, pourraient y trouver un puissant intérêt .

Par leur prestige et leur autorité à l'intérieur même de chaque pays, ces grandes compagnies pourraient et devraient suivre l'emploi des matières premières pour que l'amélioration des classes sociales - but même de ce projet - ne soit pas frustrée au profit de nouveaux armements. Tout au contraire, elles devraient promouvoir une production de paix, organisée et favorisée précisément en contrepartie de l'abandon solennel des productions de guerre .

Il va de soi enfin qu'un tel plan suppose que le développement des transactions internationales, prévu par l'accord monétaire tripartite, soit poursuivi par l'abaissement des barrières douanières, afin que, les facilités données aux échanges de matières premières trouvent une contrepartie dans l'ouverture de nouveaux débouchés . Ainsi pourrait être réalisée dans un effort général pour la prospérité une oeuvre durable de paix .

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MEMORANDUM

SUR L'URGENCE D'UN APPEL POUR LA PAIX

I - Il est maintenant trop tard pour que d'
une conversation entre pays d'Europe puissent se dégager
les éléments d'une paix européenne .

Il est facile de le montrer, *Qui* dit "conver-
sation", "négociation" dit par là même "liberté de mouve-
ment", "concessions mutuelles", "abandon de l'esprit
de prestige ."

Tout cela est-il encore possible en Europe ?

Soyons réalistes .

Les dictatures viennent d'entrer dans la dernière
phase de leurs difficultés économiques et financières. Elles
ne se soutiennent plus que par "l'exaspération des senti-
ments nationaux" . Dès lors, elles ne peuvent renoncer,
sans se suicider, à aucun élément de leur soi disant pres-
tige .

Le véritable danger de guerre - si semblable à celui de juillet 1914 - est que déjà les événements paraissent plus forts que les hommes .

Il est possible que les nations comme l'Allemagne et l'Italie, des hommes comme leurs dirigeants, aient le désir de changer leur politique, au bout de laquelle ils aperçoivent la catastrophe. Mais tout indique qu'ils ne se sentent déjà plus la liberté de mouvement nécessaire pour modifier leur attitude .

De même les dirigeants des démocraties européennes souhaitent faire des sacrifices économiques et financiers pour sauver la paix, ^{Mais} à l'intérieur même de ces démocraties - il faut le reconnaître - plus nombreux chaque jour sont ceux qui disent; " il ne faut pas traiter avec les dictatures au moment où elles vont s'effondrer." (Comme si les dictatures pouvaient s'effondrer avant d'a voir tenté leur dernière chance qui est la guerre !)

Voilà des deux côtés l'état d'esprit qui paralyse les initiatives, cristallise les positions et laisse les événements entraîner l'Europe au conflit .

II - Si l'on veut sauver la paix, il faut avoir le courage de voir la réalité .

Pour qu'il soit possible même en Europe de parler ^{vraie} de la paix il faut d'abord qu'un choc psychologique de paix brise d'un seul coup toutes les cristallisations existantes, propose un but nouveau aux nations et leur permette ainsi de modifier leur attitude.

Tous les peuples d'Europe sont d'ailleurs prêts à subir un tel choc avec enthousiasme; L'heure est venue d'agir, mais elle passera vite . Ceux mêmes qui

accueilleront une telle initiative avec le plus de joie seront peut-être ceux à qui elle permettra de sauver la face et de se libérer eux-mêmes de leurs propres entraînements .

III - L'échec psychologique ne peut venir que de l'extérieur de l'Europe .

Aucun homme d'Etat en Europe n'a un prestige suffisant auprès des masses populaires de tous les pays pour tenter le geste sauveur.

Aucune nation en Europe ne jouit d'une réputation d'impartialité suffisante pour tenter un tel rassemblement des esprits .

Si généreux qu'il soit, tout geste, venant de l'Europe, est voué d'avance à l'échec .

Seul le Président des Etats-Unis, triomphalement réélu par sa nation entière, jouit d'un prestige, d'une réputation d'impartialité et d'une puissance d'action sur les masses populaires du monde entier, qui lui permettent de jeter un appel pour la paix qui ait des chances d'être entendu .

IV - Ce message solennel adressé au monde, il faudrait - si l'on ose le suggérer - qu'il fut :

- un suprême appel à la sagesse des nations avant la folie de la guerre ,

- un appel aux mères de tous les pays avant le carnage de leurs fils ,
- un appel à la liberté et à la dignité humaines avant la fin d'une civilisation,
- une malédiction à toute nation qui oserait prendre la responsabilité de la guerre ,
- mais aussi un appel de charité pour un renoncement aux égoïsmes nationaux ,
- - un appel aux nations riches pour qu'elles prennent conscience de leurs responsabilités et de leurs devoirs d'entr'aide et de solidarité ,
- une immense espérance pour les nations pauvres, insatisfaites, qui, selon l'expression même du Président Roosevelt, comprendraient enfin que la paix peut être plus fructueuse que la guerre ,
- un suprême effort d'intelligence pour faire triompher les idées généreuses, libérales, humaines, sur les doctrines de violence et de haine
- un appel aux principes d'une politique économique nouvelle appelée à régir aussi bien les classes sociales que les nations ,

927:Fr:Bulletin
1-10-37

File

Excerpt from the London TIMES, December 28, 1936.

HOPES IN PARIS

NEED FOR GERMAN MODERATION

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

PARIS, DEC. 27

The French Government earnestly hope that Herr Hitler, whose deliberations at Berchtesgaden are being anxiously followed in Paris, may finally decide to accept the suggestions put forward by the French and British Ambassadors in Berlin and so to make a decisive contribution towards the easing of European anxieties. French observers, both official and unofficial, would like to feel that Herr Hitler was likely to follow the example of moderation which Signor Mussolini seems to have set in the matter of the negotiations for an Anglo-Italian agreement; but they have no definite evidence, one way or the other, of Herr Hitler's intentions.

Interference in the foreign relations of the Government now comes not from the platforms and Press of the extreme Left, but from a very different section of the French political world. The most conspicuous example of such interference at the moment is the mysterious activity in Berlin of a director of one of the principal Paris newspapers.

This self-appointed envoy is believed to have had conversations with Dr. Schacht, General Göring, and other prominent Germans, in the course of which he has suggested possible settlements of German colonial demands, largely at the expense of Great Britain. With these suggestions, it is believed, has been coupled a revival of the plan, long beloved of a section of the extreme Right in France, for a Franco-German alliance directed ostensibly against Soviet Russia, and incidentally but necessarily against Great Britain. It appears, moreover, that the suggestion has been made that influential members of the present French Government would be prepared to support such a policy. Since a close understanding with Great Britain has always been and remains one of the first principles of M. Blum's foreign policy, it need hardly be added that there is not the slightest official backing for such a suggestion.

PST
James
Bullitt

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Personal and
Confidential

Paris, January 17, 1937.

Dear Mr. President:

When François-Poncet told me about his conversations in Berlin with regard to limitation of armaments, he said that the British had indicated they did not wish to enter into any agreement for limitation of armaments until the completion of their present program. He asserted that the discussions he had had in Berlin, therefore, had been on the basis of "no new programs".

It occurred to me at once that we might wish to come in on any general limitation of armaments scheme and that we might be greatly embarrassed if we had no program in being. I don't know what you are thinking of in the way of future armaments, but I feel that there is sufficient possibility that Poncet may have some success in Berlin to make it advisable for us to have

The Honorable
Franklin D. Roosevelt,
President of the United States of America,
The White House.

have some sort of a program announced.

I have as yet heard nothing of any great importance which would indicate that the countries of Europe may try to settle their difficulties at the expense of the Western Hemisphere. There is some talk in Paris of giving Germany economic outlets in South America but no concrete proposals have been developed. Yesterday, however, Van Horn, the Belgian banker, who is an intimate friend of Van Zeeland's and Neville Chamberlain's and has most unusual connections in England, lunched with me and said that he knew that a proposal to give Germany, British, French, and Dutch Guiana as a colony had been discussed seriously in London. I treated the matter as a joke but he insisted it was serious. I then said that he might tell any of his friends who were thinking of such a proposal that the United States would not permit European nations to swap territories and peoples in the Western Hemisphere.

I really do not believe that this is serious, but I think that at the present juncture in world affairs, our chances of remaining at peace are increased measurably by every bit of additional strength possessed by our fleet and army.

Good luck and blessings.

Yours affectionately,

Bill

William C. Bullitt.

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY
WASHINGTON

January 26, 1937

*P.F.S.
File Bullitt*

My dear Mr. President:

I am inclosing herewith copy of
the cable which I received from Bill
Bullitt and copy of my answer to him.

Respectfully,

H. M. ...

The President,

The White House.

PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM RECEIVED

NO.: 101

DATE: January 25, 1937, 6 p.m.

FROM: American Embassy, Paris

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY OF THE
TREASURY.

Rueff said over the telephone this morning that he had been asked to call on me today by Auriol.

On his arrival, Rueff stated that favorable progress was being made in the negotiations for the loan in London of four and a half to five billion francs to the French railroads. He said that there now remained only a few details to be worked out. He felt certain that before the end of this week the loan would be announced.

Rueff told me that pressure on the franc had ceased today and that a considerable offering of pounds from London had been made. He said that this was another extremely satisfactory symptom.

Rueff quite understood, he went on to say, that the informal suggestion which he made last Thursday was unacceptable. This suggestion, which I telephoned to you, was that francs be purchased by our stabilization fund and held without conversion into gold for a few days. In

a discussion of the situation this morning, Rueff and Auriol reached the conclusion that France's financial difficulties would be completely ended if it were announced shortly after announcement of the British loan that dollars to the amount of four to five billion francs had been made available to the French stabilization fund by the American stabilization fund for a period of six months or a year. that the the United States was prepared to

I at once told him any such transaction would, in my opinion, be impossible. I told him that it would be against the spirit if not the letter of the Johnson Act. This Act was based on the wish of Congress to make it impossible for the financial resources of the United States to be available to foreign governments who had not paid their debts to the United States Government, I said. I also told him that in my opinion there would be violent attacks on the Government in Congress if his proposal should be accepted.

It would be a perfectly adjustable transaction as between stabilization funds, he argued; its purpose would be simply to maintain the established rate of exchange; it would be a normal supplement to the tripartite monetary accord; the most explicit and public guarantee could be given by the French Government that no profit whatsoever from the transaction would accrue to the French Government.

proposal is refused.

I informed Mr. Rueff that it was my opinion that such arguments would not carry much weight in the United States.

Mr. Rueff then told me he desired to have such a transaction made public for the reason that the mere fact of the support of the United States would have great effect in the money markets of the world and that if it were known that the the United States was prepared to support the frank, it would not be necessary to use any of the money available. The political effect, he also added (quite correctly) would be very great.

He then said that the transaction might be carried out secretly by the stabilization funds since the support would be very valuable^{even} if it were secret.

I again told him that it was my belief that the acceptance of such a proposal would be most difficult for our Government. Nevertheless, he requested that I submit the proposal to my Government and I said that I would do so.

It will be noted that in his conversation with me on January 23 Auriol made no mention of a proposal of this kind. It seems that Rueff is the prime mover in the matter. I feel that there will not be the least ill feeling or indeed more than slight disappointment if the proposal is refused.

If

If our Government should consider it wise to accept the proposal for reasons of major international policy, a considerable (though temporary) outburst of enthusiasm for the United States would of course be produced. I venture to suggest that the easiest method of handling the matter, if our Government desires to reject the proposal, would be to permit me to convey to Mr. Rueff informally the information that the United States Government considers that such a transaction is forbidden by the Johnson Act.

BULLITT

EA:EB

RECEIVED

JAN 28 1937

THE STATE DEPARTMENT
RECEIVED
JAN 28 1937

PSA
France

February 8, 1937

Dear Bill:

I am perfectly delighted with the chart which you sent me and any time I get off the course from now on, I shall put the blame directly on you! Thank you ever so much. It was good of you also to send me the cable on my birthday.

We are all delighted that you are coming home soon and I am looking forward to getting some real first-hand information. When do you plan to leave?

Affectionately,

Honorable William C. Bullitt,
Ambassador of the United States,
Paris,
France.

mal/tmb

*Missy
has letter of thanks
perfectly delighted*

Paris, January 25, 1937.

Dear Mr. President:

As I cannot be at the White House in person to make a chart indicating the routes on which you should sail the Ship of State, I am enclosing herewith one for your guidance. You will also note full indications as to the method by which the Federal Housing Program may be transferred effectively to the hands of the efficient beavers.

I hope this reaches you on your birthday. Anyhow, it brings you my love and every good wish.

Yours always,

Bill

William C. Bullitt.

The Honorable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

The White House,

Washington, D. C.

Bullitt R.F.

Paris, May 5, 1937.

Personal and
Confidential.

Dear Mr. President:

This letter should reach you about the day you return to Washington. I hope you found a lot of vigor and endurance in the Gulf of Mexico because I have a lot to say.

(1) For cat's sake put through Howland Shaw as Chief of Foreign Service Personnel. The morale of the Service is becoming more demoralized every day and nothing could turn the tide of discouragement so quickly and completely as his appointment.

(2) You will remember that we discussed the possibility of sending Edgar A. Mowrer as Minister to Czechoslovakia. Unless I miss my guess, Czechoslovakia will be a post of the most vital importance during the next twelve months. The new policy of Belgium which will prevent France from using Belgian territory

The Honorable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

The White House.

territory to attack Germany in case Germany should attack Czechoslovakia has increased greatly the chance that Germany will go after Czechoslovakia. We shall need at Prague a man who knows Germany and Czechoslovakia intimately and has guts.

Mowrer is admirably equipped, in my opinion, for the post. I felt him out discreetly and found that he would be ready to take the financial sacrifice involved if he could go either to Prague or Vienna. As you know, he has worked for many years for the Chicago DAILY NEWS but has never been a Republican in politics. For that matter, he has never been a Democrat either. He has lived abroad for so many years as a foreign correspondent that all one can say is that he is a genuine progressive more or less of the Harry Hopkins type. Will you please ask Miss Le Hand to drop me a line with regard to him so that I can know whether or not you are still interested?

(3) You have perhaps seen the long telegram I sent with regard to my conversation with Van Zeeland. If not, you might find it worth reading. There is one thing that I hope you will remember when Van Zeeland calls on you. Belgium, at the present time, is the

little

little brother of England. Van Zeeland is, to all intents and purposes, a representative of the British Government. You can count on anything you say to him being repeated to Chamberlain and you can count on his displaying an acceptance of all British points of view. I gathered from Van Zeeland that the British would take no initiative whatsoever with regard to his mission and would give him no active support, but would expect him to get the other countries of the world committed to something in advance which could then be served up to them for their acceptance or rejection.

(4) Tom Lamont came to Paris a few days ago and in the course of a long conversation made one statement which I thought was of some interest. He said that he knew Chamberlain very well indeed and that he was somewhat disturbed about the manner in which Anglo-American relations might develop with Chamberlain as Prime Minister "since if it could be said that any Englishman was anti-American, Chamberlain was that anti-American Englishman." It surprised me that Lamont should say such a thing but he presumably had some reason for his remarks.

- 4 -

I could extend the points in this letter to a thousand but I think this is a sufficient dose for one evening.

Blessings and good luck.

Yours affectionately,

Bill

William C. Bullitt.

*file
personal**Brace*

Personal and
~~Confidential~~

Paris, May 10, 1937.

Dear Mr. President:

I have sent an enormous number of telegrams lately. But, as you were away, I assume that you have not seen any of them.

The general situation is this: Delbos and Blum are more or less in despair with regard to the possibility of keeping Austria and Czechoslovakia out of the hands of Germany. Hitler has the ball and can run with it in any direction he chooses. There never was a time when it was more essential for us to have an Ambassador in Berlin in real contact with the German Government.

I do not expect an immediate crash; but before next October we ought to be ready for anything. We ought to have an Ambassador and a staff in Berlin who can find out exactly what Hitler, Goering, Goebbels and the rest
of

The Honorable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

Washington.

of the gangsters are thinking about. That means personal contact.

If we had a diplomatic service in the sense that the British and French have, we should not hesitate for one minute to move Dodd and replace him by the most efficient man we can discover. I am convinced that Hugh Wilson is the best man for that job and I think it is genuinely important to send him there. I know some of your difficulties and I would not bother you again with this recommendation if I did not feel that it was seriously in our national interest.

Meanwhile, I have a withdrawal of a recommendation to make, and with shame. I have just this day discovered what I had not learned in ten years of acquaintance with the Mowrers. Mrs. Edgar Mowrer is an English woman. I should be afraid of that in as tight a spot as Czechoslovakia. Mowrer is really exceptionally fitted for that post and I am sorry.

Blessings and good luck.

Yours affectionately,

Bill

William C. Bullitt.

PSF: France
Bullitt folder
Jm

June 17, 1937.

~~CONFIDENTIAL AND PRIVATE~~

Dear Bill:

You may thank Mr. Theodore Spicer-Simson for the bronze medal and tell him that I am grateful to him for sending it and that I am glad to have it. Entre nous, although my name surrounds the head, the features suggest to me a cross between any two of the best known murderers you can think of.

Your friend, Tom Watson, has just been here and has described your situation as a neighbor of the Paris Exposition. By the way, when you said that Steiger is interred in the Lubyanka, did you mean that literally or is he merely interned.

I am not worrying greatly over your continued association with royalty. What gives me more kick is the thought of Litvinoff appearing at the Coronation in short pants.

I am very proud that my Ambassador has rented the Park and the Great Chateau of Chantilly. May the ghost of the Great Conde haunt you and upset the canoe when you pull a water party on the great waterway.

Tell Offie that I count on him to prevent you from spending more than ninety percent of your capital in the next few years.

As ever yours,

Honorable William C. Bullitt,
Embassy of the United States of America,
Paris, France.

FDR/dj

Paris, May 27, 1937.

Dear Miss Le Hand:

I am transmitting, under separate cover, a bronze medal of the President which is the work of Mr. Theodore Spicer-Simson. Mr. Spicer-Simson has asked me to forward it to the President with his compliments.

Very sincerely yours,

Bill

William C. Bullitt.

*P.S. Please write a note of
thanks in case of use.*

Miss Marguerite Le Hand,
Secretary to the President,
The White House,
Washington, D. C.

B

Personal and
~~Confidential~~

Paris, May 28, 1937.

Dear Mr. President:

I enclose herewith a photograph taken from my bedroom window. It is as good a description of Europe as any dispatch could be. You will note on the left, the eagle of the Nazis; on the right the cross of the Pope, and in the middle, the Bolshevik's hammer and sickle. The latter statue, incidentally, has a name in Paris. It is called, "Hurrying to the Lubyanka". (If you do not remember what the Lubyanka is, ask your friend Grace Davidson. Her love, Steiger, is now interred there. You will certainly remember the gentleman she adored so because he used to knock her on the floor and jump on her stomach. For a New England girl, that was exciting.)

Paris has become a madhouse and each day about fifty persons appear with letters of introduction from
the

The Honorable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

The White House.

the Secretary of State and Senators. I stack them together in colossal teas in accordance with your recommendation. I admit that I still give them champagne and caviar, as my self-respect continues to be more Virginian than the Whitelaw Reids, who, if I remember correctly your description, served their guests pink lemonade in the garden.

The American visitors aren't the worst of it. I had five royalties that I could not avoid at luncheon yesterday, and in addition, had to give cocktails to the brother of the Shah of Afghanistan!

The only one of the royalties who was thoroughly agreeable was a son of little Willy! His name is Friedrich von Preussen and he is a really nice boy. He is the white hope of the Hohenzollerns and left the luncheon table to go visit his grandpapa at Doorn.

The flood of visitors leaves me little time to do any real work and since the young men in the Embassy think they have fulfilled the whole duty of man when they have entertained each other at luncheon and dinner each day, we do not cover the town as well as I wish. I would have a lot of them transferred if there were

any

any one better in the Service to bring here; but as Mr. Shakespeare remarked, "It's poor picking between rotten apples." As a matter of fact, by leaving out sleep entirely, I have managed to see very nearly everyone I should see.

I had one conversation of peculiar interest. Old George Lansbury, who recently spent three hours with Hitler, wrote me and asked if he could come to Paris for a conversation with me. As you know, we have been rather intimate friends for twenty years. He talked to me for about three hours and gave me the first coherent idea I have had of Hitler. He is convinced that there is no possibility of Hitler coming to any understanding with the Soviet Union and no possibility that he may let up on his persecution of the Jews; but he believes that Hitler wants to come to some understanding with England which will enable him to work out the economic future of Germany peacefully.

I have known George for so long that I do not take his judgments too seriously; but his detailed account of his conversation was rather impressive.

Hitler

Hitler received him in the simplest possible manner with his feet on the table while George put his up on the sofa and they went to it in a very direct way. Lansbury said, and I agree with him, that he felt that if the British Government would push hard at the present time for the reconciliation of France and Germany, economic rehabilitation and limitation of armaments, the Germans and the French would fall in line.

He then added that he did not believe the British Government would do anything of the sort. After his return from Berlin, he had had long conversations with Eden, Baldwin, Chamberlain, Hoare, et al and he feared Britain's policy would be to continue to rearm to the hilt, to tell the Germans that Britain would be glad to come to an understanding with them, and to tell the French that Britain had no idea whatsoever of coming to an understanding with Germany.

I had a curiously interesting confirmation of this judgment of Lansbury's from two sources. Eden and Chamberlain said to Delbos that they were convinced that it was absolutely impossible to come to any understanding with Germany and that the great problem was to gain time by pretending to Germany that reconciliation between Britain and Germany was possible. On the other hand,

Eden

Eden told Beck whom he thinks (quite rightly) is apt to repeat to the Germans most of the things he hears, that Great Britain desires nothing so much as to reach understanding with Germany. In other words, while the British do not want war on the continent of Europe, they remain just as anxious as they have been all through their history to keep France and Germany from reaching any real understanding. So long as the British remain in that state of mind, I believe there is nothing that we can do to bring the continent together.

The situation in Austria continues to be puzzling. I believe that Hitler will not make any attempt to take over Austria so long as he has hopes that he may reach a friendly understanding with Great Britain; but the moment he becomes convinced that the British have been playing him for a sucker, I think he will act - probably via a revolt of the Nazis within Austria.

Your friend, Tom Watson, turned up day before yesterday in a state of depression as he is ashamed of our representation in the Exposition. However, I put him on his feet again by giving a luncheon in his honor at

which

and good luck.

Yours affectionately,

B.H.

William C. Phillips.

which he was smothered in princesses and duchesses.

Your baseball nine of Ambassadors who have been in London recently are now on their way to Paris. I expect to be able to keep this house open just long enough to entertain the lot. The gate of the Exposition which is at my front door is not yet finished. The day it is opened, I shall have to leave.

I have found the pleasantest country place in France to live in, a little chateau in the Park of the Great Chateau of Chantilly. The magnificent joker is that by renting the little chateau, I become the sole proprietor of the Park of Chantilly! I even have had it stipulated in the lease that I can swim in all the lake ponds and rivers, and can place an American Indian canoe on the great waterway which hitherto has been reserved for the Grand Conde' and Louis XIV!

I am sure that this will meet with your approval. Incidentally, it will meet even more with your approval when I tell you that the total rental I pay is \$1000 annually. This combination of grandeur and thrift has received the approbation even of Offie, so that I do not fear any objections from you.

Blessings and good luck.

Yours affectionately,


William C. Bullitt.

PSF: France
Bullitt folder
France

July 17, 1937.

Dear Bill:-

I want you to thank Mrs. Tuck and tell her how very grateful I am for her splendid thought in regard to the children at Warm Springs.

Among the patients there are on the average about who have to be given lessons in order to keep them up with their school work, and this has to be done, of course, on the Foundation, as it would be impossible to send them to the public schools in the vicinity.

Furthermore, we have to use an old wooden cottage, which is not in the least adequate and we only have one teacher for all the different ages.

I am deeply touched by Mrs. Tuck's desire to be of help, and I would suggest that the details could be looked into by talking with or writing to D. Basil O'Connor, 120 Broadway, New York City, who will be able to get all the necessary facts and estimates, as he is the Treasurer of the Foundation. It goes without saying that I will always keep my great interest in the work at Warm Springs.

The Paris Exposition has nothing on the Congress for -- well, I won't put just what into this letter!

As ever yours,

Honorable William C. Bullitt.

Personal.

Paris, July 5, 1937.

Dear Mr. President:

The wife of the First Secretary of the Paris Embassy, S. Pinkney Tuck, is an exceptionally charming lady, and an exceptionally rich one. For many years she has been interested philanthropically in the matter of infantile paralysis. A few days ago we were talking about Warm Springs and she made a proposal which was so generous and charming that I hope you will let me have a word for her instanter.

Mrs. Tuck said that she had been informed that at Warm Springs there was no adequate school for the children, and that she would like to know if you felt personally that the establishment of a small school at Warm Springs would be of real value.

I said to Mrs. Tuck that I thought the main question in adding any new activity at Warm Springs was the question of endowment for upkeep and running expenses. She replied

The Honorable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

The White House.

plied that if you should think it desirable she would be glad to put up the money for the construction of a small school and an endowment for the maintenance of the school and the payment of a teacher or teachers. She desired to be assured merely of one thing; that you intended to keep up your interest in Warm Springs so that the whole enterprise might not collapse.

I told her that I knew you would be deeply touched by her desire to be of help and that I would communicate with you as soon as possible.

Please write me immediately what you think of the idea and if you should approve, please let me know with whom Mrs. Tuck should correspond.

You will be glad to know that your telegram for the opening of the American Pavilion yesterday did not arrive, as it was sent to the closed office of Mr. Watson and not to the Embassy. However, the peerless Offie, anticipating that this matter would be handled with the same magnificent inefficiency which has marked all operations of the American Government in connection with the Paris
Exposition,

- 3 -

Exposition, had taken the trouble to get your message from America by the Associated Press, and at the beginning of the ceremony, I was able to hand the text to the bewildered Watson who read it inaudibly but correctly.

Every possible good wish and good luck.

Yours affectionately,

Bill.

William C. Bullitt.

August 5, 1937.

file -
Bullitt - France -
Drawer 2-37

Dear Bill:-

I am delighted that Anne has taken to the collecting of stamps. Tell her from me that this is an excellent way of saving the Bullitt family fortune. Starting with the year 1840, the value of stamps has increased on the average 3% a year. That means that the return on your money is better than you would get in any reputable savings bank in the United States — and having locked the cash up in stamps, Anne will have the assurance that you will not spend it on hiring the Palaces of the former monarchs of France! The latest inside information is that not content with having leased Chantilly for the summer of 1937, you are negotiating with the French Government for the lease of Versailles during the summer of 1938. I understand further that there are no bathrooms in Versailles but that you will provide them.

I have been looking at those two delightful ninety centime stamps and the only difference I can see is that M. Descartes had washed his face in one copy and had not in the other.

On further examination I see that "de" has been substituted for "sur." As if anybody cared!

It was grand of you to have Franklin meet the heads of the Government — and that he behaved himself well. It was a wonderful opportunity for him.

I am surprised at your colleague in Brussels. He is wholly entitled to talk with the King of the Belgians. I do my own discussing with Van Zeeland!

I am writing you about the school at Warm Springs as soon as I drag some information from the Manager of the Foundation.

The ceremonies at Montfaucon came through splendidly and your voice and what you said were excellent. I am glad to know, too, that my voice got through to all of you who were at the field.

All well on this Western Front in spite of what you read in the newspapers!

As ever yours,

Honorable William C. Ballitt,
American Embassy,
Paris,
France.

Personal and
~~Confidential.~~

Paris, July 23, 1937.

Dear Mr. President:

I have a number of complaints to make with regard to your conduct.

(1) You have infected my daughter, Anne, with a passion for stamp collecting and she now spends all her time, to say nothing of whatever funds she can wheedle out of her father, on stamps. She came back to the house a few days ago with the two stamps I enclose herewith. As she is already a true stamp collector, she had been careful to buy duplicates for herself. She wanted to know if you could tell off-hand which stamp was correct and which was incorrect and thought that you would like to have the pair as a curiosity.

I am merely an agent for their transmission but I venture to express the hope, in the best diplomatic manner, that my daughter may recover.

(2)

The Honorable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

The White House.

(2) Why did you never tell me what an astonishing youth Franklin, Jr. is? He and his bride dined with me the night they arrived and after dinner I had a chance to talk with him. I have never had a more interesting conversation with a boy of that age. Then, as he said he wanted to meet some of the heads of the French Government, I had a little luncheon for him at Chantilly which consisted of Chautemps, Blum and Delbos.

I must say the luncheon began rather well because Chautemps was so pleased to escape for a moment from his duties as Prime Minister that even before a cocktail, he turned somersaults on the lawn! But the point is that Franklin, Jr., not only spoke excellent French but also had things to say which interested everyone. He is wise beyond his years and, in my humble opinion, as promising a youth as I ever saw.

Incidentally, Chautemps phoned me the same evening and said that he had never talked with a more intelligent or charming boy. You ought to feel just a little bit proud of yourself.

(3) What the devil is Mr. Hoover's Ambassador to Brussels up to? He has now passed through Paris three times and has carefull avoided seeing me each

time

time and his Belgian wife has been announcing to all and sundry that he is now to take up again his duties under the Hoover regime, which consisted of running the entire diplomatic service of the United States of America on the continent of Europe, representing the President at all conferences, etc.

You may or may not remember that it was your humble servant who, when everybody else wanted Gibson kicked out of the Service because he was Hoover's best friend, stood up for him and advised you to keep him in the Service. I have nothing personal against him but it seems to me bad ball when an Ambassador straight from headquarters does not cooperate to the extent of coming in even for a conversation. Gibson, of course, loves you, myself and all other Democrats in the same manner that Mr. Hoover does and I think that whoever sold you that baby as an ambassador in Europe was not especially wise.

I don't want you to do anything about this except to be damned careful not to put Brother Hoover in charge of the conduct of our relations with the European continent.

(4) I hope you have written me before this in reply to my letter about Mrs. Tuck's offer to build

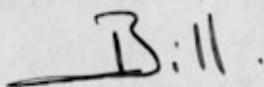
and

and endow a school at Warm Springs. I enclose a recent letter from her and I hope that it will stir you to instant action if you have not already behaved as well-behaved Presidents and Grotonians should behave.

I shall close by telling you that your ex-boss, Josephus, who was at Chantilly with me yesterday and with whom I lunched today, is in great form and seems much younger than when he was Secretary of the Navy. He is a grand old man.

Blessings and good luck.

Yours affectionately,

Bill.


William C. Bullitt.

Enclosure:
Letter as stated above.

7, RUE OCTAVE FEUILLET
PARIS, XVII^e

July 10th 1937.

Dear Mr. Bullitt,

In my enthusiasm I fear I am sending you too much information about the work I have been interested in since 1918.

I am deeply grateful to you for your interest and help, and the encouragement both give me to start a new enterprise in a new field.

I looked into the orthopaedic situation carefully when I was in America. I believe I have done my share in the city in which I was born. I not only admire greatly the work the President is doing at Warm Springs, but I feel it is the center of all such work.

I created a charitable fund a year or so ago, and I am anxious to have the activities

As to the project at Warm Springs, I want to thank you most sincerely for speaking to the President. I am overjoyed to think that a school is needed, - that he approves, - and that I can be of assistance.

I enclose a letter from my friend Mrs. Lynn Person, & some information about Warm Springs, which you probably have seen. I have marked in red pencil the type of building I had in mind for a school.

There will be many questions to decide. The occupational therapy, as well as the regular class work, - charity patients, & paying patients, and of course I am anxious to know how many children they average a year.

I am looking forward with joy to the beginning, & completion of the work ahead, in which you have so generously helped me amidst the many duties facing you each day. All I can add, is thank you with all my heart.
Very sincerely, Catherine's Mother.

DSF: France
Bullitt

see
private

Paris, September 7, 1937.

Personal and
~~Confidential~~

Dear Mr. President:

This note is to warn you that Mr. Dennie Heinemann is on his way to America apparently at the request of King Leopold of the Belgians.

Heinemann is an astonishing character. He is of American birth as were his father and grandfather, but has lived in Belgium for twenty years and controls SOFINA, the largest holding company in the world of gas and electric properties. He was an intimate friend of King Albert of the Belgians who used him to handle his personal fortune, and serves King Leopold in the same way, I believe. He is extraordinarily sensitive and self-centered and in view of his immense position in European business circles I think you ought to waste at least five minutes on him if he asks to see you at the White House.

He

The Honorable

Franklin Delano Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

The White House.

He will arrive in the United States before this letter as he came down to see me just on the eve of his departure. He said to me that he had spent the entire evening with the King the night before and stated that the King intended to push his project for the organization of European peace. Heinemann predicted that Van Zeeland would get a majority in the Belgian Chamber but that he would resign shortly afterward and that the King would then place him in charge of his (The King's) plan for creating peace. All this sounds a bit strange but in any case I feel sure that bit of butter planted by your deft hand on Heinemann is worth-while.

The general impression in Paris is that Van Zeeland is finished as an European force. His whole position was based on his absolute moral integrity and that integrity has now been questioned, which is quite enough to diminish his authority fatally. Strictly between ourselves, I have a piece of information in this regard which is not pleasant. Just before Van Zeeland devalued the Belga, his brother, who is also his closest friend, borrowed quantities of money and speculated for a fall of the Belga. This fact is, I believe, unknown to

Degrelle

Degrelle or any of Van Zeeland's opponents. I have it direct from the B. I. S., the speculation having been carried out in Switzerland. My guess is that this fact will not appear in public but its mere existence would, I should think, make Van Zeeland feel too compromised to carry on much longer. Incidentally, I don't believe that Heinemann knows anything about it and we should keep it as dark as possible.

I shall see you so soon that it doesn't seem worth-while to add anything to the many cables which I send each week. There are endless things to talk about and I hope you will be back from the West for a day or two at least before the fatal date of October 13th when I shall have to sail again for Paris.

Your mother is in tremendous form. You might as well have asked me to stop the flow of Niagara as to have asked me to see to it that she did not accept a vast number of invitations. She is feeling exceedingly well and by her own wish goes out constantly. She is, of course, having an immense personal success. All the French love her and unlike the thirty-six Senators, Congressmen, and wives that are now with us, she speaks
admirable

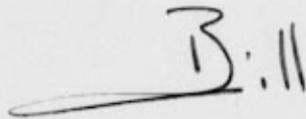
admirable French.

For the past two months I have had an unending flood of inescapable visitors to entertain and I now understand why all my predecessors fled from Paris during the summer.

Chantilly is lovely but over-run with visiting firemen and I am about dead.

Love to you all.

Yours affectionately,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "B. Bullitt". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal stroke under the "B" and a vertical stroke for the "litt".

William C. Bullitt.

The President said to invite
her to something at the White
House.

Home.
For. to
The Lib

C O P Y

Paris, November 2, 1937.

P J
file
Bullitt - France
(S) Drawer 2-37

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I hope you will not mind my writing to you about an American resident of Paris who expects to sail for New York on the S. S. NORMANDIE on November 3rd and is most anxious to have the honor of meeting you and the President.

The lady in question is Mrs. Henry S. Downe, wife of the Vice-President of the American Radiator Company. She is a delightful person and in addition is a moving spirit in all good works in Paris. As you know, because of my official position, I am the honorary president of a score of American charitable institutions in Paris and without Mrs. Downe I should be condemned to see them all go into bankruptcy. This will probably sound as if Mrs. Downe is a solemn bore. On the contrary, she is very gay and amusing, and I can promise you that you and the President will enjoy her.

I hope that you will not think it impertinent if I ask you to invite her to some White House function, large

OR . . .

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt,
The White House,
Washington, D. C.

or small, at which she may have the honor of seeing you and the President at least for a few moments.

Mrs. Downe's address in New York will be: Hotel Pierre, Fifth Avenue and 61st Street.

I was delighted to see you in Washington, even if only for a moment, and I hope that the next time I come to America, I may have the pleasure of bringing Anne to call on you.

With all good wishes and kindest regards, I remain,
Very sincerely yours,

William C. Bullitt.

Personal and
Confidential

Paris, November 3, 1937.

Dear Mr. President:

I am sending you the enclosed as a proof of my greatness. I will bet you five dollars to one of your three-cent stamps that you have never had a sonnet written to you yet, to say nothing of a sonnet in Provençal!

I have also to add that on my return from Nîmes this morning, Chautemps phoned me to ask if I would accept the vacant post of French Ambassador to the United States! I told him that I feared the American Government would refuse the agrément.

The three days at Nîmes were really grand. All the way from the black bulls to the girls who danced the Farandole in the old Roman arena, the quality was such as to make me feel continuously how superior the peasant Boulets were to the aristocratic de Lannoys!

Yours

The Honorable

Franklin Delano Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

The White House.

Bill

W.C.B.

Journées d'amitié franco-américaine

SONNET

DU

POÈTE LAFORÊT

lu au Grand-Théâtre de NIMES

le Samedi 30 Octobre 1937

par M. André GIRARD.



A MOUSSU BOULET

Vuei, poudès evouca l'amo de vòsti rèire
Ici mout'an viscu : ome fièr et leiau...
...N'en soun parti pèr pas trahi soun Ideau
e vièure libramen, dins lou respèt di crèire.

Urous aquèu que pòu en regardant à rèire.
Cavant lou terrun drud de soun founs ancestrau,
ié trouva, tau que, li relicle d'oustau :
Sapiènci, tenesoun di premié bastissèire

.*.*

...Creisson, en terro d'O, de porto-grèfe san
que gardon long-tenas lou franc goust dòu terraire
coume de paire en fièu li vertu d'un bon sang

.*.*

Sias, vous, l'eisèmples astra de tout ço que pòu traire
en fru goustous, en vin fasèire de sang nòu,
l'American grefa sus bon plant Cevenoù

LAFORÈT.

A Monsieur BULLITT

Vous pouvez évoquer l'âme de vos aïeux
qui vécurent ici ; hommes fiers et loyaux.
Ils sont partis pour ne point trahir leur idéal
et vivre librement en leur foi respectée.

Heureux celui qui peut, tourné vers son Passé,
fouillant la terre drue de son fonds ancestral
y retrouver intacts les trésors familiaux :
sagesse et constance des premiers bâtisseurs

* * *

Il pousse en terre d'Oc des portes-greffes sains
qui gardent très longtemps le goût pur du terroir.
comme de père en fils bon sang ne peut mentir.

* * *

Vous êtes l'exemple prédestiné de ce que peut produire
en fruits savoureux, en vin faiseur de sang nouveau
l'Américain greffé sur bon plant Cévenol

LAFORÊT.

PSF: France
Bullitt folder
File
confidential

Personal and
Strictly Confidential.

Paris, November 3, 1937.

Dear Mr. President:

Strictly between you, myself and the angels,
I have just had a letter from Judge Moore which leads
me to believe that he is so acutely unhappy that he
is about to resign. Inasmuch as he is the only man
in the Department who sincerely and completely loves
you and would gladly stand up against a wall and be
shot to help you, I should hate to see that happen
for your sake; and I should hate to see that happen
for his sake as I am deeply fond of him.

As you know, Moore has been deprived of all his
duties in the Department and has been removed from the
Personnel Board. So nearly as I can discover, the only
reason for the recent abolition of the Eastern European
Division was because Moore supervised it and its abolition
made it possible to encyst him completely as if he were
a very dirty germ.

It

The Honorable

Franklin Delano Roosevelt,

President of the United States,

The White House.

It would, I am sure, buck him up enormously if you could have him put back on the Personnel Board either as the representative of the Secretary of State on that Board or, if necessary, by having a small act passed in Congress to provide that the Counselor of the Department of State should be on the Personnel Board.

I am convinced that you won't have Moore long in Washington or indeed, on this earth, unless he is given something to do. His service as Acting Secretary of State during the Secretary's absence in South America was completely distinguished and to be reduced now to a post which is somewhat less than that of the negro messengers in the halls of the Department is necessarily very discouraging.

Needless to say, Moore is the one man in the entire Administration who is completely loved and respected by the House and the Senate and any act concerning him would pass unanimously.

Good luck and best wishes.

Yours affectionately,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bill", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

William C. Bullitt.

1
P.F. *James Ballitt*

Paris, November 4, 1937.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Mr. President:

I talked to the Duke of Windsor and his Duchess for several hours last night and I had the curious impression that while the marriage has been very good for the boy, it has been very bad for the girl. He is much calmer and much more self-confident, and seems to be taking as serious an interest in housing and other problems connected with the life of the industrial workers as his royal intelligence will permit. Incidentally, he drank almost nothing and is obviously intensely in love with his wife.

The girl, on the other hand, behaved like a person whose insides have been taken out and replaced by an idea of what a king's wife should be like. She has gone English in a big way so far as her accent is concerned and, indeed, at the moment is talking a rather nasal cockney which is more English than her husband's rather good pronunciation. She has lost that

The Honorable
Franklin Delano Roosevelt,
President of the United States of America,
The White House.

that spontaneous wit and twinkle which used to make her very attractive; instead she is "gracious". I had the feeling that if one had her alone for a few minutes she would probably say: "Isn't this a hell of a mess but don't you think that I am doing it well?" In other words, she has stopped being herself and is engaged in trying to be exactly what she thinks he wants her to be.

I am sorry that Mrs. Roosevelt will be on her speaking tour when the Windsors arrive and I explained to them both, as you ordered, that the tour had been arranged months in advance and could not be cancelled. I have the feeling that Mrs. Roosevelt would produce a rapid return to nature on the part of Wallis. Incidentally, the Duchess expressed at considerable length, and apparently with sincerity, a deep admiration for Mrs. Roosevelt, and I hope they may meet somewhere sometime while the Windsors are in the United States.

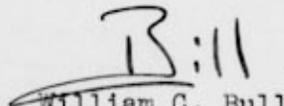
I am giving a dinner tonight in honor of the pair and if anything interesting occurs I'll get off another letter to you at once.

The most interesting thing last evening was when the Duchess remarked, in describing Hitler's intense interest in architecture, that the Führer had said to her:

her: "Our buildings will make more magnificent ruins than the Greeks'". That seemed to me to be about as revealing psychologically as anything I have ever heard. The curse of the Germans is that they have swallowed the Niebulungenlied and do not recoil even before the Götterdämmerung.

Love to you all and good luck.

Yours affectionately,


William C. Bullitt.

*file
Bullitt*

Letter sent around the eighth of Nov. 1937 to
the Duke of Windsor via Bill Bullitt from F.D.R.

SEE--Great Britain-Drawer 2--1937

PSF: France
Bullitt folder

file
Bill Bullitt -
France - Drouot 2-37

November 11, 1937.

Dear Bill:-

It is a good sonnet -- even in Provençal -- but it does not hold a candle to the sonnet recently written to me by my fellow Americans, the Eskimos of Alaska.

Is the story printed in the Hearst papers true -- that the Boulets of Nîmes are directly descended from the Pope Joan, who, I am given to understand, lived in that neighborhood? Compared to that the de Lannoy ancestry was plebeian!

It is all very well for you to send me Caleb Hyde's generous offer but you sent no recommendation with it. What do you think? And what do you think Congress (which would have to accept the offer) would say to the additional cost of up-keep?

I have always thought that the house on the Avenue d'Iena was a mistake and that the office building on the Place de la Concorde should have been so designed as to include the residence of the Ambassador. If that had been done it would have been obvious and proper to give the Ambassador a place at Versailles -- but three establishments will look a bit steep to the Congressmen from Missouri, etc.

Meanwhile, I will talk with the Secretary about the offer -- and you might tell Mr. Hyde that I am deeply appreciative but that a good many questions are involved, including that of Congress, and that I will let him hear from me in a short time.

As ever yours,

Honorable William C. Bullitt,
American Embassy,
Paris,
France.

*file
personal*

Personal and
Strictly Confidential

Paris, November 3, 1937.

Dear Mr. President:

I am enclosing herewith a letter from James Hazen Hyde to you, together with a copy of an accompanying letter from him to me.

It sounds all right to me but I am investigating the technicalities with regard to the tax question; and I beg to report that Mr. James Hazen Hyde dined with me a few evenings ago and, in spite of the fact that he insisted on rice, carrots, potatoes and crackers while the rest of my guests were enjoying twelve courses with Meursault, Haut-Brion, Pommery and Cognac, he looks as if he would last for another forty years. His French wife reports hopefully, however, that he has a bad heart!

Love and best wishes to you all.

Yours affectionately,

Bill

William C. Bullitt.

The Honorable

Franklin Delano Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

The White House.

Personal and Strictly
Confidential.

Paris, November 2, 1937.

Dear Mr. President:

I talked with Norman Davis at length on his arrival here and informed him as well as I could with regard to the point of view of the French Government; and he was kind enough to inform me or, I hope, misinform me, with regard to your own point of view. He made it sound as if you thought God had laid Woodrow Wilson's mantle upon you, and were about to take on your shoulders, or rather those of the people of the United States, all the pains of the world.

I don't believe this is so; but for Gawd's sake remember that Woodrow Wilson, as a collapsed ex-President, used to lie in bed thinking of the text, "By their fruits ye shall know them."; and recalling that the fruits he could report to St. Peter were war and the Treaty of Versailles.

There

The Honorable

Franklin D. Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

The White House.

There are a lot of people in America at the moment who are beginning to be ashamed of the idea of keeping the United States at peace. A number of times in Washington I heard the statement, "Well, I'd rather not be in the Government if the United States won't intervene in the Far East and the war which is coming in Europe." That sort of thinking seems to me the product of nothing but overgrown egotism on the part of men who are so old that they know they won't have to go out and die.

You may have seen a recent book of Bertrand Russell's which contains a brilliant analysis of the present international situation. Bertrand (who is in many ways an ass) holds as the one hope of the world the possibility that the United States will stay out of war in the Far East or in Europe and will have, at the end of the holocaust, a civilization intact and sufficient strength to pick up the pieces and put them together again.

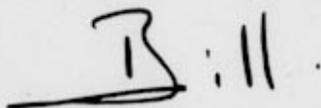
I believe that it is a damned sight nobler to act on that line than to throw the United States again into war in order to produce again a peace worse than the present peace to end peace.

- 3 -

I apologize for this outburst; but when I listened to the fluff and fuzz of your edition of Benjamin Franklin's Mr. Bancroft talking about what you intended to do, I was moved on behalf of the U. S. A. -- even though I didn't believe a word he said.

Blessings and keep your shirt on.

Yours affectionately,



William C. Bullitt.

PSF 3025
(Francis Bullitt folder)

November 22, 1937.

My dear Bullitt:

Thank you for your letter. You are right that the majority of business men, both large and small, are sincerely doing their best and should not be classed with the small minority found in every class of citizens, professional, business or laboring man.

One of the difficulties, quite frankly, is that I have had so little cooperation from the great majority of business men in efforts to eliminate certain real abuses of the past. If the majority could really come out, lay all the cards on the table and show a definite wish to help in ending abuses, there would be the kind of team work which is so sadly needed. The trouble is that so many people like you admit certain abuses but push them to one side. In other words, they ask for cooperation — i.e. give and take — but when it comes to action, the Administration is asked to do all of the giving and none of the taking.

I think little brother Bill feels the way I do about it, don't you?

Very sincerely yours,

Orville H. Bullitt, Esq.,
Oxmoor,
White Marsh, Pennsylvania.

For correspondence see PPF 3231.

PSF: France
Bullitt folder

Paris, November 23, 1937.

Personal and Strictly

~~Confidential~~

Dear Mr. President:

I am sending you herewith a copy of a despatch to the Department of State. You will find, I guarantee, the portion of it which deals with my conversation with General Goering, a source of amusement to say nothing of instruction. It was really an amazing conversation and I hated to have to put it into respectable form for the Department.

You will remember that when I was representing you at the funeral of Marshal Pilsudski, I had to sit and walk next to General Goering for three days and found him so repellent that I literally could not address a word to him. When I reached Berlin last Thursday I was horrified to discover that the Italian Ambassador there, Attolico, who is an old friend of mine, without the slightest suggestion from me and without obtaining my consent, had gotten in touch with Goering and told him that I was coming through

The Honorable

Franklin Delano Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

The White House.

through Berlin and that Goering had said that he would like to see me. I was a bit staggered by the prospect but Attolico had put himself in such a position by arranging for the conversation that I could see no way out except an immediate attack of ptomaine poisoning. I at once informed Dodd and asked him if he thought the ptomaine poisoning advisable but he said that he thought it might be worth-while to go and ask the General some questions.

As a result, I went to see Goering in his private residence. He has built for himself a house in the middle of a huge block of public buildings. You go in through the entrance of the old Herren House and after being marched by soldiers through endless halls and past endless sentries find yourself in a garden of four or five acres in the middle of which this house stands. Goering had provided an interpreter for the interview but as he had somebody with him and I had to talk with the interpreter for five minutes while waiting, and as the interpreter was properly impressed by the extreme fluency of my German, he said that he would like to inform the General that an interpreter could only be an encumbrance - so I saw the man alone.

His

His office is a big room with a huge oak table at one end; a table about fifteen feet long, six feet broad, and at least four inches thick. There were three chairs, all built in mammoth proportions and covered with cerise velvet, trimmed with gold. The chairs were so big that Goering looked rather less than the size of a normal man and, as you know, he strongly resembles the hind end of an elephant. In my chair I must have looked like some sort of animated flea.

The whole décor was obviously designed to reduce his bulk to normal and the feat was accomplished. He has also lost about thirty pounds since I saw him in Warsaw and looks more human. You will find that I jolted him a bit and he liked it. For any man who spoke good German and had some brains and bluntness it would, I think, be the easiest thing in the world to have a direct relationship with him.

In the account of the conversation which I am sending to the Department, I have left out, for obvious reasons, his reference to Dodd. After he had expressed to me his desire to have better relations with the United States he then said that he desired to say

something
be pushed to asking for his withdrawal but we
have to ask for it unless he should be removed.
Neurath said that he desired to have better relations

with

something to me which he hoped I would not resent. The matter was a delicate one. But he considered it simply disastrous that there should be no American Ambassador in Berlin. Neither he nor anyone else in the German Government could recognize Dodd as an American Ambassador. Dodd was too filled with venomous hatred of Germany to have any relations with members of the Government, and in fact did not exist.

Most of my conversation with Neurath was taken up by Neurath's remarks on the subject of Dodd which were far more violent than Goering's. Neurath said to me that as we had known each other well for so many years, he felt he had a right to speak to me frankly about a matter which he felt was doing a great injury to German-American relations and indeed to the general world situation.

I was perhaps aware that some weeks ago he had had the German Ambassador in Washington speak to Mr. Welles and say that the German Government could not have any further relations with Dodd and would be extremely relieved if he could be withdrawn from Germany; that the German Government did not wish to be pushed to asking for his withdrawal but would have to ask for it unless he should be removed. Neurath said that he desired to have better relations

with

with the United States instead of worse relations and, therefore, did not wish to be compelled to ask for Dodd's withdrawal; but the fact was that the German Government could no longer tolerate his presence in Berlin and would in the near future ask for his withdrawal unless the American Government should withdraw him. He said that he hoped I understood and that my Government understood the reason for this attitude on the part of the German Government. Dodd was so consumed with hatred of the present régime in Germany that he never ceased in any conversation he might have with anyone to attack the German Government in any possible way. He was totally blind to such virtues as the German Government might have and magnified every fault. He had even spoken publicly against the German Government and the activities of his son against the German Government had been utterly outrageous.

I asked Neurath why he had spoken to me about this matter at the moment since presumably it had been arranged through conversation between Dieckhoff and Welles. He replied that Dieckhoff had informed him that the matter had been arranged; but that Dodd,

on

on his return to Berlin, had stated to countless persons that although he had desired to resign the President had insisted on his returning to Berlin and that he expected to remain indefinitely. (I ascertained later through Dodd's similar statement to me and from his Counselor of Embassy to whom he had made the same statement, and from various other sources, that this was the line which Dodd had taken.)

Neurath went on to say that although Dodd had always been violently hostile to the leaders of the Nazi Government, he had for a long time maintained personal relations with him. However, at the present time, Dodd was treating him with the same contempt and hostility with which he was treating all other members of the Government and he could tell me flatly that he, Neurath, would in future refuse to have any relations whatsoever with Dodd.

I attempted to pass off this matter without further conversation and turned to another subject but before I left Neurath again returned to it and said, "I want to impress upon you once more that Dodd's presence in Berlin is intolerable and if he should not be withdrawn, in the near future we will be compelled to ask for his withdrawal."

Attolico, the Italian Ambassador, also spoke to me

Neurath went on to say that he felt that it was about
possible for the United States

about Dodd's present attitude in Berlin, saying that he felt the United States could play an immense role in Berlin at the present time as the German Government was most anxious to have good relations with the United States and that a great opportunity to promote peace was being lost by keeping Dodd in Berlin.

I was not surprised that this statement should come from the Italian Ambassador but I was extremely surprised when the French Ambassador, François-Poncet, whom Dodd considers his good friend, said to me, "Bullitt, for Heaven's sake, get Dodd moved out of Berlin. He used to be bad as an Ambassador but now he is impossible. He even scolds me because I invite members of the German Government to my Embassy. And he embarrasses all of us ambassadors by taking the line that we should not be ambassadors to the Government to which we are accredited but should carry on a sort of holy crusade against National Socialism. He is conducting a personal crusade against the Nazi Government and has no patience with anyone who will not join him in that crusade, forgetting that a crusader against a particular government should be anything in the world except an ambassador accredited to that government."

Poncet went on to say that he felt that at the present time it might be possible for the United States

to

to exercise great influence in Berlin in the direction of European peace, provided we had a really first-rate ambassador, and that he hoped ardently he would soon have an American colleague with whom he could work.

I have written you too much lately but you have brought it on your own head by telling me that you wanted me to write you more often. I have poured upon your unoffending head too many words of wisdom; but I have got the habit now and here are a few more. The situation today as I see it is the following:

Germany is increasing in military strength more rapidly than France and England combined. I have heard this statement repeatedly from military men in Paris and had it in Berlin from the French Military Attaché who is the great foreign expert on German armament. He said, for example, that at the present time Germany has between five thousand and six thousand planes ready for action. The French have possibly less than two thousand. He said also that the rate of increase in German armament would inevitably, in his opinion, continue to be greater than that of France and England combined unless England should introduce conscription at once.

The atmosphere in Berlin today is singularly like
the

the atmosphere before 1914. The Germans are confident and cocky; sure that time is working for them; sure that they can get exactly what they want and determined to get it.

The Poles are convinced that this German estimate of their position is absolutely correct. Except in case of a direct attack on France - in which case, I believe, the Poles would respect their alliance and enter war against Germany - they will do nothing whatsoever to stop Germany's march.

The Russians, by general agreement even on the part of their protagonists in Paris, are completely out of the picture so far as Europe is concerned. All hope that they might help Czechoslovakia has been abandoned.

The Italians, fully aware that when Hitler has cleaned up Austria and Czechoslovakia, they will become mere German satellites, nevertheless are ready to accept this position because they hope that in return for their cooperation, Hitler may some day toss them Tunis and perhaps Algiers.

The French are at their wit's end, divided between the belief that it is better to have war now rather than let Germany take in the Germans of Czechoslovakia

and

and their fear that they will be defeated in such a war by the combined efforts of Germany and Italy.

The British, so nearly as I can discover, are at the moment on the following line: They will finally, deviously, by silences and tacit approvals, as the lesser evil, permit Hitler to take Austria; take the Germans of Czechoslovakia and dominate Central Europe and the Balkans; relying on the possibility that when Hitler is firmly established on the Brenner Pass, Mussolini, in self-defense, will be compelled to swing into the French-British orbit. Furthermore, I believe the British are prepared to offer Hitler a colonial domain but no portion of their colonial domain. The colonial domain they will offer will be first, that of Portugal; then that of Belgium; and finally, if necessary, that of France.

I am less sure than I was a few weeks ago that France will actually go to the support of Czechoslovakia in case of a German attack. I still believe that France will do so but there is a considerable possibility that if the Germans begin their attack by a revolt of the Germans of Bohemia, the French will communicate at once with London and ask if Great Britain will support France in defending Czechoslovakia and the British will reply

by

by advising France to refer the matter to the League of Nations and adding that until the League has decided on appropriate action they will do nothing. This may prevent the French from taking any action until Germany has overrun Czechoslovakia. Under these circumstances, I should not be surprised to find Chautemps, in the course of the next few weeks, swinging to the view that it is better to make a spectacular effort to reach terms with Germany. He will unquestionably be opposed by the Quai d'Orsay whose only policy since 1919 has been to register German violations of the Treaty of Versailles in order to prepare a beautiful White Book to be published at the outbreak of the next war.

Chautemps, I think, will wish personally to enter into direct conversations with Germany and perhaps make the necessary concessions: In other words, to abandon Austria and the Germans of Czechoslovakia to Hitler. But he will know that his Government will fall if he tries to put this policy in practice. The Communists, on whose votes he depends for his majority, would throw him out and the French have, on the whole, that curious sort of a sense of honor which makes it possible for them to contemplate submitting to a

German

German fait accompli with regard to Czechoslovakia but makes them unwilling to advise the Czechs to submit before a fait accompli.

This is not a promising picture but there is one element in it that is not altogether dreadful. The Russians have now apparently retired behind their swamps, and the fact is beginning to be recognized even in France that the eastern boundary of Europe is not the Ural Mountains but the swamps which extend from Finland, past Poland, to Rumania. To give up the Russian Alliance and admit that Germany, having lost the war, has won the final victory and will be henceforth the dominant factor in Europe, would be, I believe, today regarded as the part of wisdom by the vast majority of the people of France who think about international affairs. It is not today practical politics.

The only way that I can see that the growth of German strength, which I regard as inevitable, can be used for constructive instead of destructive purposes is by a general effort to make the giving of these concessions to Germany a part of a general plan of unification for Europe. I believe that we can have a considerable influence in bringing about
such

such a result. I am not advising that we should get into the game ourselves or start again to play an active part in European politics; but I was struck in Germany by the fact that I was told by everyone, not simply Nazis, but also Americans and also the ambassadors and ministers of half a dozen other nations that the Germans have the most profound desire to improve their relations with us and that we can influence them. We can certainly also influence the Italians. We do not have to do more than give them decent, simple advice of which every American would approve and to transmit from one nation to another the good things about each rather than transmitting the bad things.

I realize that all this may sound as if I had become a Pollyanna. I don't think I have. I admit that the chances are against peace and in favor of war, and I believe that the year 1938 will be decisive, but I think we ought to make the effort to preserve peace - just as quietly as possible.

Incidentally, François-Poncet, in saying to me that we could exercise an immense influence for peace in Germany, added, "For Heaven's sake, don't try to exercise your influence for peace by calling any

general

general conference at the present time. It could only serve to emphasize differences and not to bring about reconciliation. The ground must be prepared carefully by regular diplomatic channels and in that your Government can play a great part." I agree.

Love and good luck.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

William C. Bullitt.

Enclosure:

Copy of Embassy's despatch
dated November 23, 1937,
entitled: "Visit of Ambassador
Bullitt to Warsaw".

PSF: France
Bullitt folder

Paris, November 23, 1937.

PERSONAL AND ~~STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL~~

Dear Mr. President:

A brief note of warning on a subject about which I know a great deal. Colonel Philip R. Faymonville, who is the greatest Bolshevik lover at large and is at present our Military Attaché in Moscow, is about to attempt to get you to sign an Executive Order prolonging for another four years his tour of duty as Military Attaché in Moscow. Faymonville went in with me and was without question the most unsatisfactory member of the staff as he constantly went behind the back of the Embassy to assure the Bolshies that they were loved by our Government whatever I might say. He should have been withdrawn long ago but was not because the War Department could not dig out any other officer who spoke

The Honorable

Franklin Delano Roosevelt,

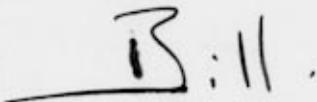
President of the United States of America,

The White House.

spoke Russian.

I consider his continued stay in Moscow not in the public interest and a prolongation of his stay by the unusual act of an Executive Order would undermine greatly the prestige of our Embassy there which - in spite of the incumbency of Mrs. Davies' husband - continues to be high because the State Department staff is exceptionally able.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill", with a horizontal line underneath the first part of the name.

William C. Bullitt.

file

Paris, November 24, 1937.

Personal and
~~Confidential - Confidential~~.

Dear Mr. President:

I have to report that, in accordance with your instructions, I delivered respectfully into the hands of His Royal Highness the Duke of Windsor your communication with photograph. The Duke was appreciative; but, on regarding himself as Prince of Wales, seemed somewhat depressed by his present appearance.

You would really like that boy now. He is much nicer than he has ever been and the Duchess has become completely human again - at least in conversation with me. You will be glad to know that her favorite bridge partner is Offie! That shows progress.

I never believed you were about to mount a white charger but Cordell's friend, Norman, had assured me
that

The Honorable

Franklin Delano Roosevelt,

President of the United States of America,

The White House.

that just as soon as the Japanese should refuse to join the conference at Brussels you would launch a project for the effective quarantining of Japan by use of our Fleet in the Far East, and even more violent measures. rather than excite Vandenberg

At this moment, when you are nursing the poison of a bad tooth in Washington and I am nursing the poison of a bad tooth in Paris, it seems to me that we both are in a position to appreciate that the slightest lowering of resistance is apt to produce bad results when there are germs around. You get so much cockeyed advice on foreign affairs that you have to keep your resistance to germs in that area particularly high. Norman simply made me fear for a moment that you had an international infected tooth.

The white charger reminds me that you are shortly going to have to decide who is to be the Chief of Cavalry. Colonel Joseph A. Baer, now at Headquarters of the Third Corps Area at Baltimore, is one of the two leading candidates. I don't know whether the other man is better than he is or not, but I can promise you that Baer, whom I know well, is absolutely first-rate. the Sûreté Générale today, and with

In view of the remarks of Vandenberg on my visit

to

to Tony Biddle, I have decided that my travels for the moment must be confined to the Bois de Boulogne. The United States Government on January 1st will owe me 107 days holiday. I think I will take most of them in the spring rather than excite Vandenberg again by returning to see Anne for Christmas, and joining the homeward flight of Bingham, Davies, et al. I shall have Anne mount the SS EUROPA on December 16th and spend her Christmas holidays with me here.

I understand that people in America are rather excited because the French Government is digging arms out of various cellars in Paris. No one here is in the least excited. On my return from Warsaw no one mentioned the matter to me for forty-eight hours. I finally began to consider this somewhat peculiar and said to a lady at a ball at the Polish Embassy that I wondered why this was so. "Why", she said, "ever since the 6th of February, 1934, everyone in Paris has had a passion for collecting machine guns!"

I talked with the Minister of the Interior and the Chief of the Sûreté Générale today, and with Chautemps, Delbos and Bonnet on the subject yesterday.

There

There wasn't a single one of them who had anything to add to the lady's comment!

You will understand the French attitude; but I can't imagine many other Americans comprehending it in the least.

Blessings.

Bill

William C. Bullitt.



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Bullotti

Paris, December 3, 1937.

Dear Miss Le Hand:

I am sending along with a friend of mine from the office who is enroute to America an extra little box of French soap which I think you will like. It's a gift from me to you for Christmas and I think it's enough soap to keep you clean for a long time provided you don't begin doing the only thing which you aren't doing as yet at the White House - that is, stoking the White House furnaces!

We've had a very exciting week here with the French getting back from London; Mr. and Mrs. Norman Davis both ill on our hands - she has leucomia (sp.?) and he has a bad bronchial cold. They're both much better today but shouldn't be taking a boat train at 8:30 in the evening in this damp, chilly climate. The newspapers from Calais announce that Mr. Davies sneaked through France on his way to London but he couldn't escape the press who got hot on his trail and asked him when he expected to take charge in London. Mrs. Davies' first daughter by her first husband (~~she~~ has three living husbands and we must keep them straight) lives in Paris and is announcing semi-publicly that she will be spending "a great deal of my time in London soon with mother."

Did you know I tried to get you on the telephone on Saturday afternoon, November 27th? Apparently, you had just left for Florida or were helping the President get off to Florida? The reason I called you was the following: The Ambassador is completely run down and should have a vacation. He is working much too intensely and much too hard and should get away from here for real rest from time to time. He is extremely popular here and is doing a swell job and, according to Mr. Hull, Mr. Welles, Mr. Moore, etc. etc. is doing the swellest job in the Service and in fact is the only man in Europe today doing first-class reporting. In order to live up to this reputation he is kept constantly on the go from fourteen to eighteen hours a day and it's just too much. I have tried to do all I could to get him to slow down some but it's impossible so long as he stays in Paris.

Miss Marguerite A. Le Hand,
The White House,
Washington.

I also tried to persuade him to go home for Christmas but he merely replied by saying that his work was in Paris and he shouldn't be in America too often. So there you are. Anne is coming over here instead.

I wish that someone, somehow would jump on his neck and force him to slow down. I know Judge Moore has advised him by letter time and again not to overwork himself but letters don't seem to help. I hope, therefore, that you will either persuade your Chief to mention this subject to him sometime, or else speak to him about it when you see him again. AND DON'T MENTION TO ANYONE THE FACT THAT I WROTE YOU ON THIS SUBJECT.

With all good wishes for a very happy Christmas and New Year, I remain,

Very sincerely yours,

C. Offie

PSF: France
Bullitt folder

file

Paris, December 7, 1937.

Personal and Confidential:

Dear Mr. President:

I was distressed to read in the papers that you had to break off your vacation on account of your jaw. I hope to Heaven it is nothing serious and that you will be in fine shape again soon. Whatever the doctors say, don't let them begin to pull out all your teeth. They pretend it is a simple matter; but I know two people whose hearts have almost stopped beating from the shock of having most of their teeth pulled at once. Old Doctor Bullitt feels inclined to come home and take care of you, and I hope you will be able to let him know soon that you are not really ill.

I can not tell you how delighted I was to get the news of Hugh Wilson's appointment to Berlin. I have felt like singing a TE DEUM LAUDAMUS.

As you will have gathered from the account of
the

The Honorable
Franklin Delano Roosevelt,
President of the United States of America,
The White House.

the conversations I had during a mere twenty-four hours in Berlin, it is not difficult to establish good conversational relations with the Nazi leaders, and Hugh Wilson should be able to give you the same sort of information from Berlin that I can send you from Paris. His appointment at this moment is especially well-timed. The Germans are anxious to get together with the French and the French are even more anxious to get together with the Germans, and Hugh and I, without seeming to move hand or foot, ought to be able to pour a lot of useful oil on the troubled waters. There are sufficient favorable elements in the present situation to make it possible to hope that, if they are nurtured with sufficient diplomatic skill, this coming summer may mark not the beginning of the destruction of Europe but the beginning of the construction of peace in Europe. I don't say that the result will necessarily be peace; but I do think that the chances for peace in Europe are increased definitely by your appointment of Hugh to Berlin, and I thank you profoundly. I hope that you will advise Hugh to pass through Paris on his way to Berlin. The Germans will see nothing out of the way in that and I shall arrange
for

for him to have long conversations with Chautemps, Delbos and the rest. His interest to the leaders in Berlin, indeed, will be considerably enhanced by his stay in Paris. Twenty-four hours here will be enough and there could be no possible criticism of that.

I have telegraphed so fully this past week that there is little to add. I think it might be most useful if on any occasion when you see either the German Ambassador or the French Chargé d'Affaires, you would say that you are delighted to see that there has been an improvement in Franco-German relations. The French care tremendously about your opinion and the Germans care a lot also because to them America represents the great question mark. They are afraid that in spite of all our efforts to remain out of the next war, we shall be drawn into it as we were drawn into the last war. They want tremendously to diminish the chance that we may come in against them and, therefore, want to improve their relations with us, not realizing that diplomatic politeness would not affect our ultimate action or inaction in any way. Their desire to improve relations, however, may enable us to get out of them a lot of things we want.

If

If and when you send Fred Sterling to Vienna and are looking for someone to go to Latvia, you could do a lot worse than to send John Wiley there as Minister. There would be no point in having two senior career men in Vienna, and Wiley would be grand in Riga.

I have been interested in the past few days to have both Stanley Hornbeck and Edgar Mowrer say to me separately that Norman Davis had told them that he was astonished that, when the Japanese refused to come to Brussels, you had not taken an extremely strong line of action against Japan, as you had told him that you intended to do so. You will perceive, therefore, that his remarks to me, which made me believe that the white charger was standing at the White House door, were not isolated.

Just before Davis left Paris, he asked me my opinion with regard to the following proposal: that the United States, Great Britain and France should agree never to recognize any territorial conquests of Japan in China and never to permit any of their institutions or nationals to make any loans to Japan so long as Japan should remain in occupation of Chinese territory.

I told Davis that before answering any such question

question I should want to lie on my back and look at the ceiling for a number of hours while imagining all the possible consequences of such action. I remarked, however, that one objection occurred to me at once. The use of the words "ever" and "never" should be prohibited in American diplomacy. This applied especially to the Far East which is today a focal point of international conflict. I still believed, as I have for several years, that conflict between Japan and Russia is inevitable because of the position of Vladivostok as the geographical center of the Japanese Empire. I felt certain that we have no vital interests in the Far East any more than we have in Africa.

From me to you my opinion is this: we have large emotional interests in China, small economic interests, and no vital interests. The future is obscure; so obscure that I can not help recalling that the Kaiser persuaded T.R. to urge France to accept a conference in the Moroccan affair of 1905 by the argument that the destruction of the German Navy in a war would leave Great Britain and France free to partition China!

By 1914 T.R. must have thought that his fears about destruction of the German Navy leading to
partitioning

partitioning of China by Great Britain and France had been a rather lousy basis on which to determine policy.

There is no basis of policy more unreal or disastrous than the apprehension of remote future dangers. As our mutual friend, Euripides, wrote:

"There be many shapes of mystery,
And many things God brings to be;
Past hope or fear,
And the end men looked for cometh not,
And a path there is where no man thought,
So hath it happened here."

The far-off bugaboo of complete Japanese domination of Asia and an eventual attack on us seems to me no basis whatsoever for present-day policy. The Japanese will have their hands full with China and the Soviet Union and their one hope will be to avoid war with us. I think, therefore, that for the foreseeable future we should watch events in the Far East but not participate in them if we can avoid participation. It seems to me that we should at the moment discourage any Americans from lending a penny to Japan - provided any are so idiotic as to want to - but I think our Government should do it on the quiet, without making any large announcements of policy or giving any pledges to that effect to France or England or anyone else.

I feel also that the more ships we add to our

Navy

Navy the better. If the Japanese try to keep pace with our building it will diminish by just so much their resources for the domination of China.

I had a visit this morning from a nervous gentleman who obviously thought very well of himself. He came in to say that he desired to make a visit to the United States as a friendly gesture to you. He wanted to tell you officially that he had no hard feelings. He was the Mayor of Cannes! I sat firmly on his head and sent him back to Cannes squashed. Poor Johnny enabled him to get on the front page and he would like to get back there again. As you occasionally say, "Aren't human beings awful?"

I haven't seen your little friends, the Windsors, for sometime but, from reports, I gather that they are winning friends daily in Paris. The ladies of France are captivated by the Duchess who dresses better even than they do.

The old Deputy, Charles Baron, who called on you to give you the portraits of Lafayette and the Chevalier Bayard called on me today. In the customary manner, you had reduced him to gasping admiration. He said, however, that the Mayor of Grenoble was becoming most impatient because he had not received

a letter of thanks for the portrait of Bayard. He said that Chautemps, who has to receive a letter of thanks for the portrait of Lafayette, would understand any reasonable delay, but that the Mayor of Grenoble felt that he had made a great gesture and wanted some thanks quick. So please produce them.

Good luck for the tooth, Merry Xmas, a Happy New Year and my love to you and all the family.

Bill

William C. Bullitt.



THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Bullitt File
PSF

AMERICAN LEGATION
Vienna, December 21, 1937.

Dear Bill:

I return herewith the copy of your despatch No. 1267 of November 25th, which I have gone over carefully and with the greatest interest. The statements of Beck, Neurath and especially Goering are all smack down my alley. They confirm many conjectures and substantiate our reports to a gratifying degree. Indeed, the conversation with Goering is a ten strike of monumental proportions.

1. Conversation with Sakoh.

I have always been impressed by Sakoh. Not only have I never known him to lie but I have found him independent in mind, communicative in speech, and extremely well informed. His remarks to you seem exceptionally interesting.

2. Conversation with Schacht.

Schacht's attitude towards Hitler and the National Socialist Party seems to confirm current reports. His theme song apparently remains unchanged: economic concessions to Germany in the vague hope of political appeasement.

3. Conversation with Beck.

Beck's statements confirm the impression gained in Warsaw by Guido Schmidt during his visit there in November that there had been no improvement in Czech-Polish relations. Beck is a notorious liar and I doubt whether he really believes that Germany's

The Honorable
William C. Bullitt,
American Ambassador,
Paris, France.

intentions in respect of Sudeten Germans are as imminent as he suggested. However, Mussolini is reliably reported to have made similar statements to Stoyadinovitch in Rome and to have shown real anxiety over the situation; so there may be something to it. My own impression is quite to the contrary, namely that the Germans are turning off the Nazi heat on both Hungary and Czechoslovakia in order to concentrate pressure on Austria, and that Goering wants the Anschluss by penetration and manoeuvring; not by direct methods.

Beck sounded quite convincing, however, when he declared that there would be no casus foederis if France became involved in war with Germany following the latter's intervention in Czechoslovakia. On the contrary, there would be loud cheers. In fact I think that Poland would weasel out of the casus foederis with France irrespective of the circumstances which France might be able to invoke.

Czech-Polish antipathy is probably one of the outstanding negative successes of German policy. Probably Beck will play fairly close to the Germans in the hope of obtaining in anticipation a prolongation of the ten year truce.

Beck's insistence that if Benes granted concessions to the German minority, similar concessions would have to be extended to the Polish minority demonstrates the difficulty of the situation for the Czech Government. Hungary, too, would raise the same hue and cry. And finally, the various minorities of Czechoslovakia all united on a pro-German platform might wag the dog.

4. Conversation with Attolico.

That negotiations for a new Locarno should require as a condition precedent the recognition of Ethiopia and the "exception" of the Franco-Soviet mutual assistance pact, makes difficult the approach; particularly so since a colonial settlement with Germany would seem to enter the picture with equal force. There is a line in PARADISE LOST which seems particularly pertinent to the Franco-Soviet agreement: "Faith unfaithful shall keep them falsely true."

It would be interesting to know still more regarding the sincerity of Italian intentions towards Spain. My feeling is that the Italians will get out; that the Spaniards in the long run would make it difficult, if not impossible, for them to stay. The Italians, however, will very probably seek concessions from France and England before they evacuate their troops. Every additional item for negotiation is another obstacle in the path of a European settlement.

5. Conversation with Neurath.

Neurath's argumentation with regard to Franco-German relations and a European settlement has the same initial premise as that of Goering. Neurath appears much more moderate and reasonable. Is he? One might suspect that Neurath advocates a policy of successful nibbling, without shocking sensibilities by raising the spectre of Germany's eventual aims. His point of view may be more astute tactically than Goering's rather than essentially different.

One might infer from what Neurath said that Germany would be quite satisfied if the Sudeten Germans received Gleichberechtigung and fair treatment but not autonomy. It is not impossible that this formula might be worked out and provide a temporary détente. Hodza seems to recognize the need of attempting to adjust the legitimate complaints of the German minority. I am sure that Hodza has been under considerable Austrian pressure in this sense.

6. Conversation with Goering.

One could hardly ask for a more perfect clarification of the position of Germany in Europe than the one you elicited from Goering. It is a historical statement. Clearly, Goering's conception of a Franco-German rapprochement is based on French acquiescence in yielding the hegemony of Europe to the Reich. While the French position has been progressively weakened since the War, it is still too strong to suggest that the danger of war in Europe could be averted on this basis. It is German folly to expect the French to yield to such an extent.

Perhaps the most significant admission elicited

from Goering was in respect of Anschluss: "The German Government at the present time is not pressing the matter because of certain momentary political considerations, especially in its relations with Italy." This clearly confirms previous reports that both Mussolini and Ciano have made it clear to Goering that Italian interest in the maintenance of Austria's independence has not been abandoned. I wonder what the implication of "momentary" is? There is perhaps more possibility of conflict than of cohesion in the long run in the Rome-Berlin axis. This seems to be a period where nations hate their enemies and mistrust their allies.

Goering, even more than Hitler, suffers from nostalgia for all that was German Austria. Moreover, he seems to inherit from his father an unhappy passion for overseas colonies. I wonder, though, whether his disavowal of any German desire to expand Eastward truly reflects the German mentality. In my day in Germany the thesis of "floating frontiers" was widely indoctrinated. Personally, I very much doubt whether Germany would ignore a favorable opportunity, should there ever be one, to march into the Soviet Union.

It is not impossible that both Neurath's assurances in regard to the anti-Comintern pact and Goering's disavowal of interest in the Ukraine were an attempt to forestall the suspicion that Germany planned concerted action with Japan. Goering's statement that the Japanese campaign in China was preliminary to her inevitable attack on Russia was particularly frank and convincing.

The situation of Austria is desperate but I am not sure that it is immediately serious. Austria has waged every campaign on the basis of defensive tactics. Her armies have rarely advanced victoriously. But they have almost never retreated in disorder. Politically, Austria's tactics are defensive and they are not without a certain resilience.

The present Austrian form of government is not a benevolent despotism in the Greek sense. It is amiably authoritarian. In my opinion, the

Nazi menace within the country has been considerably exaggerated. Numerically, the Nazis are strong. Most of them, however, are given to a diet of veal and pastry and a fondness for light music. The percentage among them with blood and iron in their souls is probably not so very great. Supporting the Government against the Nazis are many different elements: the Catholics, the Jews, the ex-Social Democrats, the ex-Communists; and, last but not least, the Legitimists.

Once upon a time this part of Europe was united against the Turks. Indeed, unity is nearly always against something rather than for something. In Austria this is the case. The many discordant elements in Austria which constitute the Patriotic Front on the whole seem to be effectively cemented by their opposition to the Nazis. In consequence, the danger of a successful Nazi eruption from within seems remote. Intervention from without would have to be based on either the acquiescence of France or Italy (despite the axis), or both, or run the risk of war.

If Germany had maintained a constitutional form of government and the identity of the constituent states of the Reich, Austria, in my opinion, would never have been able successfully to resist the gravitational pull of Berlin. In other words, Hitler and National Socialism have retarded Anschluss. It is not impossible that Italy will be the prime factor in its future postponement.

From a military point of view, the position of Germany is not believed to be quite as strong as one might think. If Germany were to march, it is foreseen that France might not attack. Nevertheless, if the French manned the Maginot line, the major part of the German army would be glued to the West. Some optimists believe that if Czechoslovakia were to receive aviation assistance from outside, it would be anything but a parademarsch for the Germans.

The Germans have been much concerned over alleged manoeuvres for the federation of Austria, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. It is true that great progress has been made in developing solidarity and community of interest as between Austria and Czechoslovakia and Austria and Hungary. The differences and antipathy between Czechoslovakia and Hungary have been too great to permit of any real progress in closing the triangle. However, if the Czech Government can devise some scheme to appease the question of minorities, it is not impossible that a fairly substantial improvement in relations can be effected between Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

I do not believe that the question is one of immediate significance. My thesis is that the situation in general has been developing along the following lines:

The idea of either restoration in Austria or a triple federation under Otto has been definitely put to one side. Both Hitler and Goering have made it perfectly clear that in an attempt to restore the Hapsburgs, the Germans would reach Vienna before Otto. Moreover, Yugoslavia would also march, since it is clear that with a Hapsburg on the throne in Austria, Yugoslavia would have great trouble in holding Catholic Croatia. In other words, an attempt at restoration would probably involve a general European conflict.

Also, Austria has embarked on an earnest effort at rapprochement with the Little Entente, which implies that Austria will follow a conciliatory policy regarding restoration. Moreover, it is not impossible that in the pursuit of his own policy vis-a-vis the Little Entente, Mussolini has made his political collaboration with Austria, which I am sure goes much further than is generally known, conditional on Schuschnigg's definite relegation of the Legitimist cause to the remote and academic future.

It seems probable that both Mussolini and the Catholic Church view with positive but discreet favor an eventual federation of Austria, Czecho-

slovakia and Hungary along the lines of the Swiss Confederation. To bring about agreement therefor among the three states involved would be a long and difficult process (probably impossible) and the attitude of Germany would probably be as hostile and impulsive as in the event of restoration.

What seems more likely is that solidarity between the three countries will develop for the present along less obvious and provocative lines. The Belgian example in respect of neutrality has been studied here with significant interest. And it may be that the interests of these three countries will gradually and unobtrusively become so identified politically that without an overt act some of the foreign political advantages of confederation can be achieved without crossing the t's or dotting the i's. Cohesion with the Balkan Entente, which is an effective organization, will probably be the keystone.

In connection with the Monarchist movement there is, of course, some risk that there might be a hair-brained coup. Reliable reports have it that von Papen is concentrating on this. Apparently he assures the Legitimists that he is ardently monarchist and that if Otto goes on the throne without French or British support or entanglement, Hitler will acquiesce. The obvious explanation is that von Papen is acting as agent provocateur in an endeavor to furnish Germany with a pretext for intervention. In any event, he is a dubious and surreptitious citizen. It is to be hoped that Otto has sufficiently good advice not to be inveigled into something foolish by von Papen's guile.

There is a report from a most knowledgeable source that Goering is attempting to take Guido Schmidt into camp by obvious and direct means. And, of course, Vespasian hit upon a great but somber truth when he said "money don't stink".

Yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'John', written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.