

**DOCUMENTS  
ON GERMAN  
FOREIGN POLICY**

**1918-1945**

*FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE  
GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTRY*

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**Series D Volume II**

**GERMANY AND CZECHO-SLOVAKIA**

**1937-1938**

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*LONDON*

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

The documents covering the period from July 1936 to the outbreak of War in September 1939 have now been selected jointly by the three Allied Editorial Staffs. They comprise seven volumes, and form the first and larger portion of Series D, which will carry the history of German foreign relations to the end of the Second World War.

Volume II, the present volume, deals with Germany's relations with Czechoslovakia from October 1937 to the Munich Agreement of September 1938.

Volume III, which is in active preparation, will cover the Spanish Civil War from July 1936 to July 1939.

Series A to C are designed to cover the period from 1918 to 1937.



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GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY  
1918-1945

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**DOCUMENTS ON GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY  
1918-1945**

**SERIES D (1937-1945)  
VOLUME II  
GERMANY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA  
1937-1938**

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

### II

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

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<sup>1</sup> It was in accordance with this provision that the Department of State, in January 1948, published the volume of documents entitled *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1933-1941*.

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

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

### III

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

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

NOTE : The gap in the files on Anglo-German relations from the spring of 1938 to the spring of 1939, mentioned on p. ix, line 18 from bottom, has now been filled. The State Secretary file on the Halifax visit, November 1937—April 1939, has been identified as the file thought to be missing and is identical with film serial No. 375 (cf. Volume I, Appendix III, p. 1200) and was used in the preparation of Volume I of this series.

that these transfers were not entirely completed before the arrival of Soviet troops. Only in the early months of 1945, therefore, were the Foreign Ministry archives concentrated in the west.

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

#### IV

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

An analysis of the files in Anglo-American custody is appended to this volume. Summarizing this analysis, the situation is roughly as follows: For the years from 1867 to 1920 the collection seems complete; there are gaps in the files dealing with 1920-1936, but they appear to be relatively unimportant. Thereafter, the gaps become increasingly a problem. For instance, the obviously important files concerned with Anglo-German relations from the spring of 1938 to the spring of 1939 are missing. Fortunately many copies were made of most documents, and it is possible to find enough papers in other files to fill in the significant lines of the picture. This or that document may be lost completely, but other documents give the essential material. That is not always true, but until 1940 it is usually true. After 1940, and until 1943, one is continually reminded of a half-finished picture: the outlines are obvious; some parts are completed with minute detail; other parts are only sketched in; there are blank spaces. From 1943 the materials are fragmentary, but peculiarly valuable because there is so little other evidence on these years.

The most important defect of the captured archives for the period from 1936 is the absence of the registers and journals in which were recorded the departmental file number and the distribution of each paper, with a summary of its contents. The captured Foreign Ministry archives are not a single, coherently organized file of the Ministry as a whole. They are the working files of officials, such as the



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

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

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

## V

The editors learned only by trial and error the limitations of the available material and the difficulties inherent in exploiting disordered and incomplete archives. The filming of the Foreign Ministry archives, begun in 1945 by American and British experts for intelligence purposes, and continued by historians representing the three Governments participating in the publication of these records, will facilitate scholarly investigation in the future. More than a million pages of the most important documents for the years from 1914 to 1945 have by now been preserved on microfilm.

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

- VI

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

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

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

Even after excluding all but a few examples from this material, the sheer mass of evidence presents baffling problems. In this age of shorthand and the typewriter, documents grow in number and length.

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

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

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

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<sup>2</sup> For an explanation of these terms, see Appendix III.

## VII

After the joint selection of documents to be included in a volume is completed, the task of preparing the editorial notes is entrusted to the editors in one of the three capitals, subject to review by the other editors. Similarly, the task of preparing the English translation is divided by volumes, or sections of a volume. Each volume will contain a statement on responsibility for the preparation of notes and translations. The translations prepared in London are made by a staff recruited by the Foreign Office expressly for this purpose. The translations made in Washington are made by the Division of Language Services of the Department of State. In both capitals the translations are reviewed by the editors.

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

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

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

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

## PREFACE TO VOLUME II, SERIES D

The General Introduction to the series explains the methods adopted in selecting and editing these documents. The responsibility for the selection of the documents printed in this volume rests with the British and American editors acting jointly, although they have had the advice of the French editors in the later stages. The translation and editorial work of the present volume have been undertaken by British translating and editorial staffs, and the responsibility for this part of the work rests with the British editors-in-chief. They wish to record their gratitude to Mr. E. J. Passant, Librarian and Director of Research at the Foreign Office, and to his staff, especially to Miss A. C. Johnston, for their assistance at every stage of the work.

The aim of this volume is to present the most important documents from the archives of the German Foreign Ministry and the Reich Chancellery on German-Czechoslovak relations between October 1937 and September 1938, and their international ramifications. The editors have tried to arrange this material in such a way that it provides a continuous narrative. It is with this end in view that they have included documents which have already been printed elsewhere, notably several military directives and notes on conferences at the Führer's headquarters preserved by his Adjutant, Major Schmundt. For it is important that the details of the diplomatic story are set against the background of Hitler's general strategic and political plan. The documents show that some German diplomats believed as honestly in a negotiated solution of the problems of the German minority within the State of Czechoslovakia as did the British and French Governments; any such good intentions among the subordinates of Hitler and Ribbentrop were belied by the real purposes revealed in documents such as the Hossbach Memorandum printed in volume I, or in the directives for "Operation Green" included in this volume. For this reason the editors have felt justified in reproducing material which has already been printed in connection with the trials of the major war criminals at Nuremberg, where this helps to give a clearer and more balanced picture of the conception and execution of German policy toward Czechoslovakia.

Some explanation is perhaps needed of the reasons which have led the editors to start the selection on October 8, 1937, and to end it with the signing of the Munich Agreement on September 29, 1938. The

first document printed, a despatch from Eisenlohr, the German Minister in Prague, reveals the growing tension between the Sudeten German Party and the Czechoslovak Government, with the German Foreign Ministry and the Nazi Party organizations actively supporting the former. Growing unrest as the communal elections draw near marks the start of a period where the Sudeten German Party increase their demands and the Czechoslovak Government their efforts for a settlement.<sup>1</sup> At the same time the quarrel becomes one of international concern (cf. documents Nos. 10, 13, 33, etc.) until, after the *Anschluss* with Austria in March 1938, it becomes the main preoccupation of the Foreign Offices of all the Great Powers. This phase ends naturally with the Munich Agreement, the end of the Czechoslovakia of Masaryk and Beneš, and the satisfaction of the most extreme demands of the Sudeten German Party. The absorption of the rump State of Czechoslovakia will be covered in a later volume.

Even when the selection has been limited by dates which must to a certain extent be arbitrarily chosen, and confined to documents relevant to German-Czechoslovak relations, much has had to be omitted. However, the editors believe that they have included all the documents of real importance for an understanding of the development of German policy, and hope that they have maintained a balance between documents concerning the attempts at an internal settlement in Czechoslovakia, and those dealing with the international consequences of the situation. Moreover, since the isolation of single topics, inevitable in making a selection of diplomatic documents, leads to a certain distortion of the whole, it is important that these documents should be read in connection with the documents of a more general kind on Germany's relations with other powers, especially Great Britain, France, and Italy, published in volume I.

Since this volume was printed in the United States, American spelling has been adopted, but as far as possible normal British usage has been followed in phrasing the translation.

An analysis of the Foreign Ministry archives and their classification is printed as Appendix I; a translation of the German list showing the division of responsibility among Foreign Ministry officials in June 1938 is printed as Appendix II; and a table of German files used in this volume and their corresponding film serial numbers as Appendix III.

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<sup>1</sup> For an account of the policy of President Beneš in this matter after he succeeded President Masaryk in December 1935, see E. Wiskemann, *Czechs and Germans* (Oxford, 1938).

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# ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

## CHAPTER I. GERMANY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA, OCTOBER 1937 TO MARCH 1938

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1937		
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Oct. 9 2	<i>Statement Drawn Up in the German Foreign Ministry on the Obligation of Assistance of France to Czechoslovakia Under the Franco-Czechoslovak Treaty of Alliance of January 1924 and Other Treaties.</i>	10
Oct. 11 3	<i>The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with Krofta; Eisenlohr points out disadvantages suffered by Reich-Germans in Czechoslovakia and calls for a change in administrative policy.	11
Oct. 11 4	<i>The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with Krofta; the Hodza-Schuschnigg meeting; Krofta's visit to Paris; negotiations between the Little Entente and Hungary.	18
Oct. 22 5	<i>The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry</i> The effects of the incident at Teplitz-Schönau on the policy of the Sudeten German Party.	20
Oct. 24 6	<i>The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry</i> Mastny's visit to Prague; Government endeavoring to modify administrative procedure toward Reich-Germans.	24
Oct. 28 7	<i>The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry</i> Hodza's protest against foreign interference in minority policy; request that German press should abstain from attacks on Hodza.	25
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Nov. 9 14	<i>The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Woermann) to the German Foreign Ministry</i> In conversation with Henlein, Vansittart is said to have supported Sudeten German desire for autonomy and to have admitted the inevitability of a union of Austria with Germany.	31
Nov. 9 15	<i>The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry</i> Beneš promises to take measures against émigré press and to restrict expulsion of Reich nationals.	32
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Nov. 9 17	<i>Memorandum</i> Conversation with the Czechoslovak Minister; the émigré press in Czechoslovakia; prospects for recognition of the <i>Auslandsorganisation</i> ; press relations; Russian-Czech relations.	33
Nov. 11 18	<i>The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with President Beneš; Beneš' attitude to Germany; émigré press; expulsion of Reich-Germans; legalization of N.S.D.A.P.; censorship policy; minority policy.	36
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Continued

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CHAPTER I  
GERMANY AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA FROM  
OCTOBER 1937 TO MARCH 1938

No. 1

2369/494316-25

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

A. III. 2. f. 2.

PRAGUE, October 8, 1937.  
(Pol. IV 5154)

Subject: Conversation between Konrad Henlein and Hodza.

On September 16, 1937, personal contact was established for the first time between the leader of the Sudeten German Party<sup>1</sup> and the Czechoslovak Prime Minister.<sup>2</sup> Information on the bringing about of the conversation and its substance is given in the attached memorandum, which I request should be treated as strictly confidential. It appears from it that Hodza persisted in his view that only a gradual development of the minority problem was politically possible, while Henlein, on the other hand, demanded the legal assurance of Sudeten German rights within the framework of the present constitution. Apart from this there is special interest in Hodza's remark revealing his hope to see, after a *détente* between the Little Entente and Hungary, the four countries together emerge as partners in negotiations vis-à-vis Germany, because otherwise Czechoslovakia might be "swallowed up."

The actual importance of the conversation lies in the fact that it took place, and that now, in addition to regular contact between the members of the Directive Council of the Sudeten German Party and the Prime Minister, Henlein himself is now in a position to exert direct influence on the most important personality in the Government. This may have been intended by Hodza as a maneuver for pacification or dissimulation, or may have been designed to frighten the Czech Left Wing parties, and thereby to make them again display an accommodating attitude to Slovak Agrarians in the shattered government

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<sup>1</sup> Konrad Henlein.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Milan Hodza.

coalition.<sup>3</sup> I prefer to assume, however, that Hodza sought the contact in order to get to know his opponent and to keep open all channels for future political development. The fact that Henlein is beginning to emerge from his former isolation appears to me at all events to be a welcome development.

EISENLOHR

[Enclosure]

*Conversation Between Henlein and Prime Minister Hodza*

Time: Thursday, September 16, 1937, 2 p.m.—5:15 p.m.

Location: Prime Minister's private villa at Prague-Smichow.

*Antecedents.*

1. At the meeting of Sudeten German ex-servicemen at Karlsbad on September 20 [*September 2?*], 1937, Prince Max Hohenlohe<sup>4</sup> of Schloss Rothenhaus, near Komotau, informed Konrad Henlein's representative, Ap. [*sic*] Architect Rutha that, in the course of the next few days, he was meeting Prime Minister Hodza privately. He asked if he could do anything at the interview for the Sudeten German Party, say arrange a talk between Hodza and Konrad Henlein. Rutha declared that in view of the increasingly bad treatment which the Sudeten German Party was experiencing from administrative and police authorities, and of the Government's policy of isolation toward the Sudeten German Party, Konrad Henlein would, in his opinion, hardly have any reason to seek a conversation with Hodza. All the more so, as Hodza had several times said that he could not receive Henlein because he was not a Member of Parliament. In view of the ever increasing tension of the political situation, the Prime Minister's attitude was indeed incomprehensible, but it could only strengthen Henlein's aloofness. Rutha told Prince Hohenlohe that in his opinion a conference between the Prime Minister and Konrad Henlein could only take place if *an express invitation from Hodza to Konrad Henlein were forthcoming.*

2. At 5 p.m. on Tuesday, September 7, 1937, Konrad Henlein's representative, Deputy K. H. Frank, accompanied by Deputy Kundt,<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Hodza formed his third Cabinet on July 21, 1937, as a coalition government which included representatives of the following Czechoslovak parties—Agrarians, Social Democrats (Czechoslovak), National Socialists (Beneš' Party), and Traders Party—and also the three German "Activist" parties ("Activist" signifying parties disposed to cooperate with the Czechoslovak Government)—the Christian Socialists, Social Democrats, and Agrarians.

<sup>4</sup> One of the old Austrian family resident in the German frontier district of northwestern Bohemia. He was of Pan-German sentiment and acted at this time as an unofficial go-between for the Sudeten German Party.

<sup>5</sup> Karl Hermann Frank was deputy leader of the Sudeten German Party and Dr. Ernst Kundt was secretary of the Party.

chairman of the Parliamentary Club, called on Hodza at the Premier's office to inform him of the intention of the Sudeten German Party leaders to take part in the N.S.D.A.P. Reich Party Rally at Nuremberg in compliance with invitations from the Reich Chancellor. Dr. Hodza took cognizance of this and said "that to a citizen of the free democratic republic this visit abroad could not be refused." When asked by the two gentlemen whether the fact of this visit could be published in the press, Dr. Hodza stated that he had no objection, but insisted that he had *only spoken with a deputation from the Parliamentary Club of the Sudeten German Party*. When the two gentlemen left, Dr. Hodza next received Prince Max Hohenlohe, whose visit, however, was quite independent of that of the two Sudeten German deputies.

3. On Wednesday morning, September 8, 1937, Prince Hohenlohe called at Architect Rutha's office and informed him that "Hodza was seriously interested in having an exhaustive political discussion with Konrad Henlein within the shortest possible space of time." Architect Rutha and Deputy Frank told Prince Hohenlohe that, in their view, this necessitated an express personal invitation from the Prime Minister to Konrad Henlein, in order to avoid giving the impression that, after 2½ years of artificial isolation of the Sudeten German Party, Konrad Henlein was pressing for an interview. Moreover, *only Konrad Henlein personally could decide this*. Prince Hohenlohe, Frank and Rutha went at once to Konrad Henlein, whom Prince Hohenlohe, first of all in private, informed of his talk with Hodza. Konrad Henlein then summoned Frank and Rutha also and informed them that:

(a) he had taken cognizance of Prince Hohenlohe's statement and was prepared in principle to call on the Prime Minister as soon as he received an express invitation to do so;

(b) he had requested Prince Hohenlohe to convey this information to the Prime Minister and that he could foresee results from the interview for both sides only if it was not intended merely as a chat involving no obligations, but if the Sudeten German-Czech problem could be discussed fundamentally and frankly.

4. This attitude of Konrad Henlein was notified that same evening to Dr. Hodza, who stated to Prince Hohenlohe that:

(a) Herr Henlein could regard the suggestion to hold the discussion as his—Hodza's—express personal invitation to this discussion;

(b) Hodza proposed as the time Thursday, September 16, at 2 p.m., the place being his private residence in Prague;

(c) he, on his part, was also prepared for a fundamental and candid discussion with Herr Henlein;

(d) the discussion was not to remain a secret, but was not to be made public until after it had taken place. In this connection Hodza emphasized that he was experiencing great difficulties in the coalition, and it would very much facilitate his *rapprochement* with Henlein if the Czech Left Wing were deprived of any material for agitation against him (Hodza) and against Henlein through Henlein's not participating at Nuremberg. He desired a *détente* with the Sudeten German Party and a positive outcome of the talk.

On being consulted, Konrad Henlein, in view of his great responsibility for the situation of the Party, and out of understanding for the personal position of the Prime Minister, expressed his readiness to undertake this great sacrifice too.

It is significant for Hodza's sudden change of attitude that only a short time previously he had stated definitely that he could not speak with Konrad Henlein because he was not a Member of Parliament, and now, obviously under the pressure of the political situation, he has abandoned this attitude and has broken the isolation policy of the Government toward the Sudeten German Party, that has lasted nearly two and a half years.

#### *The conversation.*

Present: Prime Minister Hodza, Konrad Henlein, Prince Max Hohenlohe.

At the beginning of the visit Konrad Henlein presented his condolences to the Prime Minister on the death of the late President Masaryk.<sup>7</sup> Following on a conversation on Masaryk, K. H. said that today at the heart of the political development of Europe stood the awakened nations. Already during the war the peoples' national consciousness had burst forth in the call for free self-determination of each nation, and it was Masaryk who had been the pioneer of this. Without estimating how it was that the right of self-determination had been granted to some nations but denied to others, he (K. H.) adhered firmly to the principle that for civilized peoples the right of self-determination should not be restricted to anything less than autonomy. "We defend this vital right of our nation, because it is also a vital right of the European nations and their future."

Coming to the Sudeten German Party, Henlein stated:

1. All hopes which are based on a splitting of the Sudeten German Party are false; there will be no split, for the movement for unity is constantly growing today, because *the people* want unity.

2. I know that opposition to us is financed and supported from the Czech side. I could quickly silence the whole opposition if I made

<sup>7</sup>Thomas Masaryk, President of the Czech Republic from its foundation until his resignation in December 1935, died on September 14, 1937.

slight concessions. But this is not my intention at all, for I need the opposition to keep my movement awake and alive, as the German parties in the Government no longer represent a serious opposition for me.

3. Even a possible splitting-up of my followers would not mean any increase of votes for the German parties in the Government, but would only strengthen the Communists. This would entail fresh dangers for the State and relations with Germany might deteriorate.

4. Chicanery by the authorities against the Sudeten German Party does not, in my opinion, endanger the final result, for each banned meeting brings us new members and adherents. The same is also true of all injustices and coercive measures on the part of the authorities. They harm, not the Sudeten German cause, but the State, and widen the gulf between Sudeten Germans and State. The people no longer know what is right and what is wrong in the State, for the decision on these matters is placed in the hands of despotic minor officials. As these act as representatives of the State, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the population to reconcile their natural loyalty to the nation with their loyalty to the State, and to believe in a *State based on Law* [*Rechtsstaat*]. There is always the danger that sooner or later there will be explosions, which no responsible person wants but which can, it is true, be suppressed, or the blame can be laid in the eyes of the world at the door of the Sudeten German Party, whereby the European situation as a whole would, however, only be aggravated. Konrad Henlein said: "For 4 years I have striven honestly for an understanding; since October 1, 1933, until today I have pursued my unequivocal political course, but in these 4 years hardly any practical contribution toward pacification, except talk, has come from the Czech side."

Hodza stated that he did not count on a split in the Sudeten German Party, and this was also not part of his political plan. Further, he denied the fact that circles opposed to the Sudeten German Party were financed by the Government. He had previously tried to bring about a *rapprochement* with the Sudeten German Party through talks with some deputies. The first mistake made by the Czechs was after the election,<sup>8</sup> when the Government ignored the Sudeten German Party. Already at that time he had spoken *in favor of* the Sudeten German Party, but had been outvoted in the coalition. The second *faux pas*, however, had been Konrad Henlein's utterance in his speech at Eger:<sup>9</sup> "I would rather be hated with Germany than make capital out of the hatred for Germany."

Konrad Henlein declared that this was not an attack on the Government, but only a necessary clarification vis-à-vis certain parties, who regarded as loyal Czechoslovak citizens only those Sudeten Germans who incited *against Germany* and opposed her.

<sup>8</sup> Presumably that of May 1935.

<sup>9</sup> June 26, 1936.

*Bills proposed by the Sudeten German Party.*

K.H. passed to the bills<sup>10</sup> introduced by the Sudeten German Party and said that these had been introduced in Parliament by no means for reasons of propaganda, but from the full and honest conviction that the bases of German life and existence and therewith the future of Sudeten Germans in the State must be *legally* assured against attacks by subordinate authorities.

Hodza: "The laws have not been drawn up by practical men, but by theorists; moreover, the constitution may not be infringed."

K. Henlein: "That is also my opinion. I could equally well have *denied the constitution*, as the Sudeten German Party had no hand in voting it in 1920; I could have demanded the right of self-determination. I did *not* do so, but accepted the State and the constitution as established facts. The bills do not alter the constitution, but represent a supplement thereto; they were already to some extent promised in the constitution only they have hitherto not been enacted."

*The case of Dr. Suchy.*

K. H. mentioned the arrest of Dr. Suchy, member of the Directive Council [*Führungsrat*] and stated that this was intolerable to the Sudeten German Party and himself. He and all his collaborators were convinced of Dr. Suchy's innocence. The offenses attributed to him could not hold good in his case by any means as each member of the Directive Council had the strictest instructions to refrain from every illegal activity.

Hodza answered that he had made inquiries, but unfortunately, according to his information, the case was not so favorable, although he did not attach credence to the press campaign carried on by certain Czech circles, and promised to examine the Suchy case with Konrad Henlein personally or with an agent appointed by

<sup>10</sup> These were the bills laid by the Sudeten German Party before the Czechoslovak Parliament on April 27, 1937, as the first expression of the new demand of Henlein earlier in the year for "complete Sudeten autonomy." They proposed (1) the enrollment (on a national Register—*Kataster*) of all members of each nationality in the State in national organizations, each of which should constitute a legal personality; the Senators and Deputies of each such organization were to hold no office in the Chamber or Senate of the State, but should elect a Speaker (*Sprecher*) who was to be regarded as the official representative of his nationality; (2) the guarantee of compensation for the infraction of minority rights; (3) penalties against anyone leaving or enticing another to leave his national organization, or compel another to use a language other than his own in official dealings, except where provided for by law; (4) the obligation on all citizens of 18 years of age or over to enroll in their national organization without the right to change same; (5) the right of appeal of these national organizations to a Special Court of Appeal (*Verfassungsgericht*) which was to decide whether any law was an infringement of the constitution.



him, without thereby interfering with ordinary judicial procedure. He promised that the latter would be carried out properly.

*Prague-Berlin.*

On his own initiative Hodza referred to the relations between Prague and Berlin which he characterized as the crux of the matter. In his view the Sudeten German question was not the primary factor; but the relationship of Prague to Berlin. He could not admit that the Sudeten German question should be brought up in debate by *Berlin* or *London* (!) as a condition for an understanding.

Konrad Henlein stated that he could give no answer to this as it was not *his* business.

Hodza went on to say: "I can, of course, understand that the Reich-Germans desire to see their brethren well treated, but I cannot allow direct intervention on account of the Sudeten Germans." He then asked K. H. no longer to bring this actual problem up at *meetings* and in the *press*, as it was only an obstacle to German-Czech understanding. He would like to continue on the course started on February 18, 1937.<sup>11</sup>

Konrad Henlein: ["]While recognizing the personal good will of the Prime Minister, I must state that the course of February 18 is not practicable for him as it cannot bring about any reconciliation between State and Sudeten Germans, but only *simulates* a reconciliation through the preference shown by the Government to the unimportant German coalition parties.["]

Hodza did not enter into this in detail, but asked K. H. to acquaint him with an agent not too much in the public eye who would give him (Hodza) the names of those Henlein people whom he could "smuggle" into civil service posts. "At all events I want to try a big break-through."

*Communal elections.*

K. H. demanded the long overdue communal elections.

<sup>11</sup> A list of demands on the Czech Government was put forward by Henlein on February 18, 1937, including as principal items the establishment of a federal form of state with full autonomy for the German minority, the abandonment of the Czech pacts with France and Soviet Russia, the harmonizing of Czech foreign policy with that of Germany, participation of members of the Sudeten German Party in the Government, and their appointment to official positions. Some measure of agreement was reached and was promulgated merely as a Government statement of concessions (on February 19), a method which caused annoyance to the Sudeten German Party. These covered principally the distribution of public expenditure throughout the country on a regional basis, the appointment of officials in relation to the percentage of the minority population, the allocation of a proportion of public expenditure in German districts to German welfare and cultural purposes, placing of Government contracts with German firms in German districts, and the joint use of the Czech and German languages in official political and financial communications (though not in legal proceedings) in communities of under 3,000 inhabitants.

Hodza: "I will not issue writs for communal elections in *isolated* instances; you must achieve autonomy *de facto*, not merely in theory. You must have *your* people everywhere."

K. H.: "But I must remind you that at the district council elections the clear result in favor of my party was falsified and modified by means of nominated appointments, not only for reasons of party politics but also in order to eliminate national considerations."

Hodza: "I should like to select a few larger communes, for example, Reichenberg or Karlsbad, and hold elections there in order to prove that Sudeten German representatives are not only good administrators but can also cooperate with the other parties, and in no case would proclaim an *Anschluss* with the Reich. Look here, if I can say to the Czechs, here you have your Henlein people who do their work well, administer the commune correctly, do not carry on campaigns against the Czechs or demonstrations against the State, then the State will not be destroyed if Johnny Czech becomes Johnny German [*wenn aus einem Postwenzel ein Posthansel wird*] and if I put Henlein officials into the service of the State."

K. H. approved Hodza's intentions but emphasized that it was not a question of small, individual privileges, but of an attempt to reach a fundamental and legal solution of Sudeten German-Czech relations within the State.

Hodza: "The break-through must be attempted, and for this such preliminaries are necessary. Remember that I too have enormous difficulties to contend with on the Czech side. *There must be agreement on a generous scale, otherwise armed conflict threatens.*"

Hodza then passed on to his *Danube Plan*.

The negotiations between Prague and Berlin became much more difficult if Czechoslovakia stood *alone* as a party in negotiations, than if a great bloc, namely, the *Little Entente, plus Hungary*, faced Germany as a negotiating party. "Otherwise Czechoslovakia could be swallowed up." Apart from this, preparations for agreement were progressing favorably in the economic field (deliveries of wheat).

### *Summary.*

It was Hodza's wish that no difficulties should be put in his way by the Sudeten German Party; he was honestly desirous of reaching full understanding with the Sudeten German element. In spite of the Jubilee Year<sup>13</sup> he intended to issue writs for all elections in 1938. Furthermore Henlein men were in future to be admitted to the service of the State.

<sup>13</sup> i.e., the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic.

Konrad Henlein demanded first immediate instructions to the administration to secure more decent treatment of the Movement in the future (bans on assembly and on wearing of jack boots and stockings).

Hodza promised to work for a *détente*. Further he requested K. H., whom he considered to be a good democrat, to continue the discussion on democracy once begun in *Volk und Führung*<sup>14</sup> but unfortunately interrupted, and to make known his (K. Henlein's) views on democracy in a fresh speech. Hodza did not wish us to adopt the "totalitarian point of view" but to concede also to other parties in this democracy the right to existence.

Konrad Henlein said that a distinction must be made between ideology and propaganda. In the field of propaganda it must be each party's aim to reach as many people as possible or all, and no obstacle ought to be put in its way. Ideologically it was different.

Hodza asked that everything be avoided which might give the impression that the Sudeten German Party was a branch of Hitlerism, and then went on to speak of the tone of *Die Zeit*<sup>15</sup> which was disagreeable to the Government and disturbing for foreign policy. As a former opposition and minority politician, he knew the minority struggle very well, and it was also clear to him that the Czechs would have to reduce their demands to the measure due to them. He would like to continue the conversation with Konrad Henlein at a suitable opportunity, but he would also have further talks with the Sudeten German Members of Parliament before the beginning of the next session of Parliament.

Konrad Henlein: "The discussion was conducted by me with energy and decision, but at the same time politely. I repeatedly stressed the necessity not only for a tactical but also for a fundamental solution of the Sudeten German-Czech problem. Hodza was courteous and friendly even in heated and ticklish passages."

Immediately after the interview Konrad Henlein informed his colleagues, Deputy K. H. Frank and Architect Rutha, of its substance, for the purpose of drawing up the present minutes.

<sup>14</sup> A Sudeten German Party review.

<sup>15</sup> The principal daily paper of the Sudeten German Party.

## No. 2

120/68043-44

*Statement Drawn Up in the German Foreign Ministry on the Obligation of Assistance of France to Czechoslovakia Under the Franco-Czechoslovak Treaty of Alliance of January 1924 and Other Treaties*

OCTOBER 9, 1937.

## OBLIGATION OF ASSISTANCE BETWEEN FRANCE AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA

(1) In accordance with the treaty of alliance and friendship of January 25, 1924, between France and Czechoslovakia both States have undertaken to proceed jointly in all matters of foreign policy which may endanger their security or destroy the situation created by the peace treaties signed by both parties. (article 1)

They further undertake to agree on the appropriate measures to be taken for the protection of their common interests, if these are threatened. (article 2)

(2) Under the treaty of mutual guarantee concluded on October 16, 1925, between France and Czechoslovakia within the framework of the Locarno treaties, both States undertake mutually to render immediate help and support in the event of an unprovoked attack by Germany. The treaty will be valid as long as the Locarno treaties are in force.

In the event of Czechoslovakia or France falling victim to an infringement of the agreements concluded this day between them and Germany for the preservation of general peace, France and Czechoslovakia, acting in application of article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, undertake mutually to render immediate help and support should this infringement be accompanied by an unprovoked armed attack.

In the event of the Council of the League of Nations, in deciding a question submitted to it in virtue of the above-mentioned engagements, not succeeding in obtaining the acceptance of its report by all its members, insofar as they are not representatives of the parties to the dispute, and of Czechoslovakia or France being attacked without cause, France would, in application of article 15, paragraph 7, of the League of Nations Covenant, immediately render help and support to Czechoslovakia and conversely Czechoslovakia to France.

(3) Finally, the Franco-Soviet alliance of May 2, 1935, and the Czechoslovak-Soviet alliance of May 16, 1935, which together represent one political and military unit, are of special importance. According to No. 2, page 2, of the protocol of signature to the

Czechoslovak-Soviet treaty of alliance, the obligation of assistance agreed upon between both States is only to become effective for both partners if, in the given case, France proceeds to render assistance. According to the terms of the Franco-Soviet treaty (cf. No. 1 of the protocol of signature) the decision as to the aggressor in the case of a German-Russian conflict lies in practice within the arbitrary judgment of the French Government.

BERLIN, October 9, 1937.

### No. 3

1941/434887-95

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 1. b. 8.

PRAGUE, October 11, 1937.  
(Pol. IV 5191)

Subject: German-Czechoslovak relations.

At the end of last week I had an exhaustive conversation with Krofta, the Foreign Minister, at which the following subjects were discussed:

- (1) Administrative procedure toward Reich-Germans, in particular:
  - Expulsions;
  - Refusal of labor permit;
  - Administration of the National Defense Law with regard to Reich-German landed property.
- (2) Language question;
- (3) Question of flag to be flown on the Elbe;
- (4) Alleged plan of the German Military Attaché's chauffeur to kidnap Otto Strasser;
- (5) Legalization of the Party;
- (6) Admission of book *Mein Kampf*;
- (7) Change in censorship policy;
- (8) Making each other's acquaintance.

I enclose a memorandum on the tenor of the conversation and copies of the two *vides-mémoire* handed to M. Krofta on this occasion. Regarding the results of the talk—should such mature—I shall report later.

I am sending separate reports on certain of Krofta's statements on foreign policy and on the Military Attaché's driver.<sup>17</sup>

EISENLOHR

<sup>17</sup> See document No. 4, p. 18, for report on foreign policy. The report on the Military Attaché's driver is not printed.

[Enclosure 1]

## MEMORANDUM

On Saturday, October 9, I called on Krofta, the Foreign Minister, and handed to him the two *aides-mémoire* of October 7 and 9. In doing so I pointed out that in my opinion the aggravated hostile administrative measures meted out by the authorities to Reich-Germans, as also the period of arrests and ill-treatment, now brought to an end after 18 months of effort on the part of the Legation, represented in fact a Czech reaction against the resurgence of Germany. It was high time to stop this reaction. I begged him to address the Cabinet in the light of our *aide-mémoire* and to secure the issue of general instructions to all authorities to treat Reich-Germans in a specially considerate fashion and that cases of prejudice and hardship must cease.

On the application of the National Defense Law<sup>18</sup> to Reich-German landed property and in regard to expulsions I observed that I did not entertain the hope of being able, through diplomatic means, to prevent measures which the Czechoslovak Government rightly or wrongly considered indispensable for the military defense and self-assertion of the country. I must, however, press that such measures be kept within the bounds of what was really deemed absolutely necessary and that their form and mode of execution should spare Reich-Germans as much as ever possible. A check must be placed on military despotism. I suggested that, for all such measures on the part of the Ministry of National Defense, a capable and energetic man might be called in from the Foreign Ministry for the double purpose of keeping the Foreign Ministry informed of what happens in this field, and giving them an opportunity of asserting the foreign policy viewpoint and preventing excesses by soldiers run wild.

When Krofta then gave as his opinion that it was not possible to issue a general administrative order in favor only of Reich nationals, I answered that he would also certainly have heard similar complaints from Hungarian and Austrian quarters (at this he nodded); I was only entitled to intervene for Reich-German interests, but he

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<sup>18</sup> The Czechoslovak National Defense Act became law on May 13, 1936. By it, the Government acquired extensive powers over essential industries even in peacetime, the right to dismiss all persons "unreliable in the eyes of the State," appeal from which was only to a special court whose president was appointed by the Minister of the Interior and containing two members appointed by the Ministers of National Defense and Commerce, respectively. On the rejection of an appeal an employer had to dismiss the person in question. "Unreliable" employers were equally included under the act.

At the end of June 1937 a further law was proposed by the Government and passed by the Chamber (only the Sudeten German Party and Hungarian Nationalists opposing) which made military training compulsory for all subjects of the State, and included appropriate training for women.

was at liberty to formulate his motion to the Cabinet in favor of other or of all foreigners. Krofta promised to submit the matter in the sense of my words to the Cabinet and to ask for a general instruction of the nature indicated by me. Further, with regard to the administration of the National Defense Law, the Foreign Minister agreed with my view and informed me that it was intended to set up for these purposes a special commission which should control the military in the exercise of the powers granted to them by the National Defense Law, and in particular aim at lenient treatment of landed property owned by foreigners.

On the language question—intercourse of Reich-Germans with the Czechoslovak authorities in the German language, in those cases in which the authorities are bound to use the German language toward the Sudeten German minority—Krofta stated that we were shortly to receive a written answer. It was not feasible for us to be granted a *legal* right. I replied that we had demanded a legal settlement only because the Government had declared that they were not in a position to deviate from the recent decision of the Supreme Administrative Courts.<sup>19</sup> We were not interested in the nature of the arrangement but in its practical outcome. Since the existence of the Republic Reich-Germans had been allowed to use the German language in those cases where the authorities were obliged in any case to be conversant with that language. The withdrawal of this possibility represented a severe practical disability and a definitely unfriendly act, which must be remedied. Thereupon Krofta stated his opinion that, if we wanted merely a friendly gesture and not a documented special right, the matter could be discussed and he would again give it his support. The authorities of his country always demanded reciprocity, but he admitted that in the present case this was meaningless, because there could in fact be no German authorities who were obliged, out of consideration for a nonexistent Czechoslovak minority, to conduct intercourse with the latter in the Czech language.

I further informed Krofta that Counselor of Embassy Hencke would shortly call on the competent head of department in the Foreign Ministry to discuss the question of flags flown on the Elbe.<sup>20</sup> I was quite aware that he, Krofta, shared our view, whereas the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior were causing difficulties. The

<sup>19</sup> A decision made apparently under the new language regulations of February 18.

<sup>20</sup> This dispute was concerned with German objections to Czechoslovak shipping on the German portions of the Elbe flying the Czechoslovak flag. Having in November 1936 denounced the provisions of the Versailles Treaty on international waterways, Germany claimed to regard the entire length of the Elbe as a special sphere of German influence.

question must now, however, be finally settled in our favor. We declined to negotiate on the matter, but a representative of the Czechoslovak Government might come to Berlin soon for contact and discussion. Krofta thought that the difference between "negotiations" [*Verhandlungen*] and "discussions" [*Besprechungen*] was not so important. He let it be understood that he too was prepared to advocate an early agreement as we favored it.

I then handed to Krofta the number of the *Baseler Nationalzeitung* of October 5 with the report on the alleged intention of the German Military Attaché's chauffeur, in conjunction with a Sudeten German, to capture Otto Strasser and abduct him to Germany in the Military Attaché's official car. I told Krofta, who knew nothing of the matter yet, that such a report could only have been put into the *Nationalzeitung* by sources here, as the Czechoslovak press contained no reference to it, that Lieutenant Colonel Toussaint was absent at present in order to take part in the Rumanian maneuvers, that the driver, Link, had given notice to his chief at the end of August or the beginning of September, and had left his service at the close of September, that the Military Attaché naturally knew nothing of the alleged intention, and, moreover, regarded Link as an unreliable chatterbox. I asked to be informed of everything that the police knew or might learn about this case. If there was anything in the matter I would not let this attempt to compromise the Legation or the Military Attaché by such a practice go unpunished. Krofta promised to take up the matter.

I then explained to Krofta that from the general attitude of Government and public toward National Socialist Germany, it appeared that they still adhered to the attitude toward the Third Reich adopted in instinctive self-defense and antipathy in January 1933. I wondered how long this would last and whither it would lead. In my opinion it was high time to bring it to an end, in spite of all restraints arising from a timorous minority policy or out of consideration for the Marxist coalition parties. I recalled the speeches of Reich Ministers von Neurath and Göring at the meeting in Stuttgart of the Germans living abroad,<sup>22</sup> and that of *Gauleiter* Bohle in London, on the natural right of all Reich-Germans to unite, even abroad, under the aegis of the National Socialist conception and to pursue their activities unhindered, and I reverted to the demands which I have continued to raise since taking over my post here:—

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<sup>22</sup> The meeting of the *Auslandsorganisation* at Stuttgart on August 16 at which the German Minister of the Interior (Frick) and the Foreign Minister, as well as Henlein, spoke.



(1) To legalize or, as a temporary measure at least, to tolerate the Reich-German organizations of the *Auslandsorganisation* of the N.S.D.A.P.;

(2) To allow the sale of the book *Mein Kampf*. It was ridiculous to ban the book, all the more so because a semiofficial publishing firm had to be prevented by a legal decision from putting on sale an unauthorized and probably distorted translation;

(3) To introduce a fundamental change in the former petty and narrow-minded censorship treatment of Reich-German books, newspapers and periodicals, excluding all *émigré* influence (*Kesten-berg!*). Herr XY, alias President Beneš, had demanded in the well-known series of articles in the *Prager Presse* a better acquaintance between the two peoples, and complained about our defective knowledge of the Czechs. How was it possible to get to know each other if every statement on what today is engrossing all Germany is nervously kept from the eyes of the Czechoslovak public?

(4) If demands 1-3 were fulfilled, then I was prepared to support invitations for Czechs to go to Germany and Germans to Czechoslovakia more frequently than hitherto for the furtherance of mutual understanding. The Czech war veterans, for example, and the Czech delegation to the Hamburg *Kraft durch Freude* Congress had returned with the best impressions. Up till now I had as far as possible kept Reich-German visitors away from Czechoslovakia, because their arrest had to be reckoned with. But it was to be hoped that this state of affairs had now ceased, and it was also urgently desirable that such things should not recur as the ban on Sudeten German children being provided with holiday accommodation in the Reich, the unpunished insults to the Führer on the one hand and the long prison sentences for every "Heil Hitler" on the other.

Krofta was distressed at my representations and appeared skeptical about the realization of my suggestions which, I told him expressly, had not been made on instructions from my Government but on my own initiative. But apart from emphatically denying any influence by *émigrés* on censorship here, he did not contest my statements on any point and he promised to support my wishes with Beneš, Hodza and his ministerial colleagues, and to inform me confidentially of the result in a week or two. I gave him as a motto to take with him that former experience showed that every political tension in Europe reacted, and that unfavorably, on German-Czechoslovak relations, and that it was better to take a decisive step forward and pursue preventive measures rather than that he and I, as hitherto, should only have to occupy ourselves with the sorry attempt to piece together badly broken porcelain.

EISENLOHR

PRAGUE, October 11, 1937.

[Enclosure 2]

## AIDE-MÉMOIRE

B. 17. b. gen.

## I

The German Legation have pointed out to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by repeated written and verbal representations the manifold measures directed against Reich nationals in Czechoslovakia by the Czechoslovak authorities. These representations covered a large number of individual cases and were supplemented by résumés of the various grievances and by general statements. As stated in particular in the German Legation's *note verbale* of March 4, 1937 (B. I. 7. b. gen.), the German Legation had hoped by this to prevent above all prejudice to Reich nationals, which it was feared would occur through the application of the Czechoslovak National Defense Law; they had based this hope on reassuring statements which had repeatedly been made by the Czechoslovak Government, and which in particular held out the prospect of a liberal application of the National Defense Law.

So far, however, no success has attended these efforts of the German Legation. The measures inflicted on Reich-Germans, the execution of which signifies in most cases the utter destruction of the economic existence of the persons affected, have rather in the last few months seriously increased in scope, in severity, and in lack of consideration for the human hardships connected therewith. The withdrawal of residential and labor permits as a result of the objections of the military authorities in virtue of the Czechoslovak National Defense Law, and the withdrawal of labor and residential permits in virtue of other legal provisions (law for the protection of the indigenous labor market dated March 13, 1938, and law on the residence of aliens dated March 28, 1935) have been followed by numerous cases in which Reich nationals in Czechoslovakia have, under §50 of the National Defense Law, been required to transfer their immovable property to a Czechoslovak national at the shortest notice. The cases so far known to the Legation in which §50 has been applied have always been notified to the Foreign Ministry with a request to take steps for the cancellation of the measures.

Insofar as decisions have hitherto been made at all by the competent domestic authorities on complaints raised by Reich nationals against measures taken in virtue of the National Defense Law, such decisions have without exception proved negative and have disregarded the representations made by the German Legation. In this

connection it is to be noted that, in virtue of the National Defense Law and the other laws, the Czechoslovak domestic authorities are proceeding, in increasing measure, not only to withdraw the residential and labor permits from Reich nationals who have lived in the territory of the Czechoslovak Republic since their birth or longer than 20-30 years and who are not politically incriminated at all, but also, by expressly excluding any appeal, to deny Reich-Germans from the outset every possibility of opposing such measures. If cases have occurred in which the Reich-German head of the family has indeed been left in provisional possession of the residential or labor permit, but expulsion is pronounced against the wife and children and no appeal allowed, then such an attitude cannot be understood either from a practical or a humane point of view.

The German Legation have the honor to express the expectation that the rising tide of such measures directed against Reich-Germans will be stemmed by the efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and that the decisions already taken in virtue of the National Defense Law and the other laws mentioned will be submitted to revision and canceled in every unjustified case. The German Legation would be specially grateful for an early reply to this request.

## II

The German Legation have the honor further to point out that the measures decreed by Czechoslovak authorities against Reich-German nationals in Czechoslovakia, and the representations made against these by the German Legation, are not limited to cases of enforcement of the Czechoslovak National Defense Law and other legal provisions mentioned above. In other walks of daily life a clearly visible tendency to aggravate the position of Reich nationals is noticeable. In this connection there may be mentioned among other matters the use of the German language, which forms the subject of special *démarches* by the German Legation, on the part of Reich-German nationals inside and outside Czechoslovakia to official Czech bodies, and as a further example the control and supervision of the associations of Reich-Germans in Czechoslovakia—a control which differs essentially from the treatment of Czechoslovak associations in Germany—further the demand by Czechoslovak authorities for caution-money in connection with the payment of taxes as a condition for the grant of residential permits, and finally, in the sphere of education, the recent demand by the Czechoslovak authorities that Reich-German parents should produce their residential permits before the admission of their children to a secondary school. The German Legation point out that the applications of

Reich-Germans for the grant of residential and labor permits often remain for years unsettled by the competent Czechoslovak authorities, and that therefore in many cases the permits of parents of children of school age cannot be produced at all, a fact which causes serious disadvantages for the education of the children, who in the meantime may not attend school.

The German Legation request the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take up these grievances as well and to bring pressure to bear on the competent Ministries, so that by speedy general directives to the administrative authorities a fundamental change in the practice hitherto prevailing is achieved, thus dissipating the great anxiety which at present exists among the Reich-Germans in Czechoslovakia on account of the measures directed against them.

PRAGUE, October 7, 1937.

#### No. 4

1895/426828-30

#### *The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 1. allg.

PRAGUE, October 11, 1937.  
(Pol. IV 5190)

Statements by Krofta on—

Hodza's meeting with Schuschnigg.

Krofta's visit to Paris.

The negotiations between the Little Entente and Hungary.

#### POLITICAL REPORT

At a meeting with Krofta, the Foreign Minister, on the 9th instant, I asked him about the meeting between Hodza and Schuschnigg in Vienna,<sup>24</sup> the Geneva negotiations with Kanya,<sup>25</sup> the Hungarian Foreign Minister, and about his, Krofta's, visit to Paris.<sup>26</sup> He made the following statements on these subjects:—

Schuschnigg had owed Hodza a return visit and also of course wanted to see him. Then the Mozart Festival had taken place in Prague, to which the Austrian Government had been invited. Vienna had promised to send a senior official as a representative, and had let it be understood that a leading political personality might perhaps also come. He had concluded from this that the personality might possibly be Schuschnigg himself, but in Vienna this had pre-

<sup>24</sup> September 27, 1937.

<sup>25</sup> Presumably during the meeting of the League of Nations Assembly in September 1937.

<sup>26</sup> Krofta visited Paris in October.

sumably been considered doubtful. Therefore the unobtrusive course had been chosen, so that Hodza went to Baden, where Schuschnigg called on him. In fact the visit had had no significance whatever, for, as a rule, meetings between Prime Ministers lead to nothing (an allusion to the last meeting of the Prime Ministers of the Little Entente).<sup>27</sup> The fuss made by the German press over the visit had probably been very agreeable to M. Hodza, because he is pleased when special significance is attributed to his journeys or utterances; but there could really be no question that Hodza's Vienna visit or his own visit to Paris had been conceived as a countermeasure to Mussolini's Berlin visit,<sup>28</sup> as a Czech opposition newspaper had maintained. He at least was not so conceited as to believe that such importance could be ascribed to his actions. He had planned his Paris visit months ago, in order to visit the Exhibition (in fact he had told me of this intention some time ago), and once he was in Paris, it had been only natural that he should visit the French statesmen. They had made a *tour d'horizon*, but nothing special had been discussed. Krofta added, in reply to a question of mine, that at these talks the horizon had seemed particularly dark to the French Ministers and to himself. On the subject of journalistic exaggeration Krofta said further that after the last conference of the Permanent Council of the Little Entente at Sinaia, the newspapers here had stated that he had saved the Little Entente. He himself had not been at all conscious of this great deed during the discussions at Sinaia and had wanted to tell the journalists not to write any more nonsense of this kind. Beneš, however, had told him that he was far too modest and he must let people talk.

The talks with Kanya had had no result for the time being because the Rumanian Government did not know if it was remaining in office, and therefore did not dare to undertake commitments with regard to the minority. In the coming month it would be decided whether this or another Rumanian Government would be entrusted by the King with the issuing of writs for the elections. If the Government remained, and if Antonescu<sup>29</sup> again felt more firmly established in the saddle, then the necessary concessions to the Hungarian minority could certainly be made. At the end of this month King Carol was coming to a hunt at Selowitz near Brünn (a hunting estate formerly belonging to Archduke Frederick and now State property). There Beneš would meet the King and intended to use his influence with him for concessions to the Hungarians. Moreover, in this matter it

<sup>27</sup> I.e., at Sinaia, August 31, 1937.

<sup>28</sup> September 25-28, 1937.

<sup>29</sup> Victor Antonescu, Rumanian Foreign Minister, September 1936-December 1937.

must also be borne in mind what the real issues at stake are:—to give the Hungarians the possibility of rearmament, “*en sauvant les apparences.*” If that succeeded, the political effect would at the best be a very slight easing of the tension.

I repeat these statements of Krofta’s in such detail, because I too have the impression that our foreign correspondents at times lack the right sense of proportion in their judgment of the importance of the journeys of Czechoslovak Ministers, thus giving them more prominence than they deserve.

EISENLOHR

### No. 5

2368/494326-29

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

PRAGUE, October 22, 1937.

A. III. 2. f. 2.

(Pol. IV 5442)

In continuation of the reports of the 19th instant (A. III. 2. f. 2.) and further reports of the 21st instant.<sup>30</sup>

Subject: Incident at Teplitz-Schönau and its consequences.

#### POLITICAL REPORT

The incidents at Teplitz-Schönau<sup>31</sup> and their consequences are still in undiminished form the focus of political interest here. The press, both Right and Left, unanimously represents the view that the Sudeten German Party, by their propaganda and especially through the press campaign started allegedly by them in the Reich, are trying primarily to divert international attention as well as their own followers from the “Rutha case,”<sup>32</sup> which in the eyes of the Czechs seriously compromises the Henlein movement and which also in their opinion might therefore have an unfavorable effect on the Sudeten German Party in the forthcoming communal elections, which are politically important. Moreover, the newspapers are en-

<sup>30</sup> None printed.

<sup>31</sup> The incident at Teplitz-Schönau (Teplice) occurred on October 17, when a truncheon attack was alleged by the German press to have been made by Czechoslovak police on members of the Sudeten German Party. Against this allegation a formal diplomatic protest was made in Berlin by the Czechoslovak Minister.

<sup>32</sup> Herr Rutha was arrested in the middle of October on charges of unnatural practices. The arrest was ascribed by the Sudeten German Party to the Czechoslovak Government’s desire to get rid of Rutha, who had made himself objectionable to them by his able advocacy of the Sudeten German cause abroad. He was later found hanged in his cell and the official verdict of suicide was not believed by the Sudeten German Party. The case also revealed dissensions in the Sudeten German Party itself, since it transpired that Rutha had been denounced to the police by a disgruntled Sudeten German Party member.

deavoring—even if not always with success—to display a certain imperturbability, stating that this German press storm will also pass over, and will only again show the world—meaning England—to what serious threats Czechoslovak democracy is exposed on the part of her great German neighbor.

The appreciation of the situation by Government circles does not, to be sure, completely agree with this attitude of the press. The apprehensions of influential personalities in Czechoslovakia go considerably deeper than they will admit to the public. Starting from the assumption that the events of the 17th instant and their effects were a prearranged game between Konrad Henlein and Berlin, there existed, for example, even among responsible officials of the Foreign Ministry, the fear that the "Teplitz-Schönau case" might form the starting point for a German-Czechoslovak conflict which would this time have serious consequences. Decisive for this line of thought were not only the scope of Henlein's demands and their peremptory formulation as well as the sharp reaction of the Reich Government and the German public, but almost even more the surprising rapidity with which the news of the Teplitz-Schönau incidents and the measures taken by the Sudeten German Party were spread in Germany by press and radio. In fact the German news organs were in a position to publish reports on the happenings before the Czechoslovak ones. In this connection the announcement on the German radio of Konrad Henlein's "open letter"<sup>33</sup> to the President of the Republic, at a moment when it was still in the post between Leitmeritz and Prague, has caused a special stir. The fact that the instantaneous starting up of the German news machine was mainly the result of exemplary technical cooperation between the Sudeten German press headquarters and the D.N.B. is at present hardly credited here. Nevertheless it is clear that the Czechoslovak State feels itself more seriously affected than ever by the course of recent events, and the conviction has been strengthened in the Government and in wide circles of the population that even more must be done than hitherto for the security of the Republic internally and externally. It is not to be wondered at that influential quarters decline to accept responsibility for the fact that excesses such as those at Teplitz-Schönau were possible at all. Otherwise they would have to admit that the chauvinism fanned and tolerated

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<sup>33</sup> This was addressed to President Beneš by Henlein after the Teplitz-Schönau incident; in it Henlein protested against the brutality of the police and demanded, "as the responsible and duly accredited spokesman of the Sudeten Germans," that immediate steps should be taken to realize Sudeten German autonomy, providing for "self-administration and the performance of State executive functions by Germans in the German areas." The letter was suppressed by the Czechoslovak censor.

throughout almost two decades is bearing fruit, and that—apart from all other errors of omission—it represents the antithesis of the attempted German-Czech working arrangement in the country if, as at Teplitz-Schönau, the police are composed only of typical Czechs and German Social Democrats, in other words the bitterest opponents of the Sudeten German Party, and that the officials are so badly trained that their instincts could get the better of an objective sense of duty. It is possible that the commission of inquiry working under the direction of a high Prague official will, to create elsewhere the impression of objectivity, admit misdemeanors by individual officials; but in the final analysis it is to be expected that it will be established that the police were the victims of “acts of provocation” by the Sudeten German Party.

It is in conformity with the high value usually attached here to the importance of foreign opinion for this country that intensive cultivation of the foreign press and obviously also of the Diplomatic Corps here has immediately begun. If the quotations from leading British and French papers published in the Prague newspapers are in some measure correct, this step has already met with considerable success. It appears from various conversations held in the last few days that at present among the diplomats accredited here, including some well disposed toward us, greater credence is assigned to the versions of the Teplitz incidents circulated by the Government and the construction put upon them by the Government as regards internal relationships, than to the arguments of the Sudeten German Party and the Reich-German press. More than once foreign colleagues have seriously asked whether this time it would not come to an armed conflict. Without wishing to overestimate the importance of these phenomena, they nevertheless afford an interesting criterion for Czech propaganda work.

Even more important is the fact that even leading personalities of the Sudeten German Party, at least as late as the 17th and 18th of this month, were of the opinion that the Teplitz incidents might afford the occasion to bring the Sudeten German question to a head with the help of the Reich. As was learned in strict confidence by the Legation—and unfortunately not only by them—Konrad Henlein made somewhat similar statements at a conference [*Führerbesprechung*] on the night of October 17th–18th, and at the same time also expressed the opinion, in virtue of his London talk with Vansittart,<sup>34</sup> that no serious intervention in favor of the Czechs was to be

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<sup>34</sup> Henlein visited London in October, arriving about the 10th and leaving on the 15th. Sir Robert Vansittart was then Chief Diplomatic Adviser to the British Government.



feared from Great Britain and probably also from France. Acting under this impression the "open letter" to the President, with its clearly defined demand for autonomy, had been composed, a letter which in its original draft was couched in essentially sharper terms. It can hardly be doubted that the Prague Government became aware of this estimation of the situation on the part of the leaders of the Sudeten German Party, thus making the harmony between Sudeten German and Reich-German propaganda even more suspect to the Government. Meanwhile in the last few days a change of opinion seems to have set in among the leaders of the Sudeten German Party. At any rate members of the council of leaders have issued a confidential directive that the Party must now readjust themselves more to actual domestic political conditions. Obviously Konrad Henlein has come to realize that the time for the decisive struggle for power has not yet arrived, and that a too vigorously emphasized policy modeled on the Reich might involve the Party, and particularly their leaders, in dangers with which at present they feel unable to cope.

It cannot at the moment be foreseen what tactics the Government here will employ toward the Sudeten German Party in the immediate future. It will depend whether their fear of Germany or their hope of support from the Western Powers is the greater. If the latter is the case, they will pursue to an even greater extent the course already begun in the treatment of the "Rutha case," that is, to try wherever possible to compromise the Sudeten German Party. This will make it necessary for the Henlein movement, without prejudice to its militant principles, to avoid exposing itself to situations which the Government might exploit politically against it. In any case the Government will utilize the existing atmosphere to eliminate in the country itself the difficulties still in the way of the preparation of the measures necessary for arming, and to intensify abroad their efforts to secure a loan by emphasizing the acute danger from Germany.

EISENLOHR

## No. 6

1941/434899

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 167 of October 24

PRAGUE, October 24, 1937—2:20 p.m.

Received October 24, 1937—3:35 p.m.

(Pol. IV 5412)

Mastny,<sup>35</sup> here to report verbally, told me of his talks with Krofta and Beneš. He asked the latter for recall or transfer on account of German press attacks directed against him, but Beneš refused. Government view situation calmly, but uneasiness is widespread among population over possibility of serious conflict with Germany. His visit to the President is therefore being kept secret, in order not to give rise to fresh rumors.

Government do not wish severer administrative measures against Sudeten German Party to be inferred from Teplitz incidents but on the contrary to pacify and come to terms. Proof of this is given in attitude of police during Henlein's visit to Karlsbad, as also postponement of communal elections, published today, and *general* ban on assembly, first applied to German democratic Activists.<sup>36</sup> Mastny further said that Beneš and Krofta are earnestly endeavoring to carry out my suggestions of October 9, that is in particular to modify administrative procedure in regard to Reich-Germans, to amend censorship policy and to legalize Party organization (see report of October 11, A. III. 1. b. 8).<sup>37</sup> Yet it is feared that a speedy change of tone in our press might be construed as result of press campaign.

EISENLOHR

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<sup>35</sup> Czechoslovak Minister in Berlin, 1932-39.

<sup>36</sup> See footnote 3, p. 2.

<sup>37</sup> Document No. 3, p. 11.

## No. 7

2369/494335

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 170 of October 28

PRAGUE, October 28, 1937—noon.

Received October 28, 1937—1:55 p.m.

(Pol. IV 5544)

On the occasion of a Slovak commemoration festival,<sup>38</sup> at which Hlinka<sup>39</sup> also spoke, Prime Minister Hodza discussed among other things problem of German minorities, protested against any foreign attempt to interfere in minority policy, and stated that this rejection would gain in moral weight the more minority policy became consistent and reasonable. Also mentioned interest which France and all factors in world politics had in an independent Czechoslovakia and in strong independent states in the Danube basin. In spite of all determination, tone calm and conciliatory in manner.

I request urgently that German press abstain from attacks on Hodza, who is just now making persevering efforts to settle conflict with Sudeten German Party, and out of excitement over Teplitz incident to find a way back to peaceful development. Further details verbally tomorrow. Text of speech follows by post.

EISENLOHR

[Longhand note:]

Press.

Immediate.

Submitted to Herr Wolf in accordance with yesterday's discussion. ALTENBURG, October 28.  
The necessary steps have been taken.

W[OLF], October 29.

## No. 8

2369/494336-37

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain to the German Foreign Ministry*

A 4651

LONDON, October 28, 1937.

(Pol. IV 5686)

In continuation of report of the 14th instant (A 4411).<sup>40</sup>

Subject: Remarks of Minister Jan Masaryk about the Sudeten German Party.

<sup>38</sup> The 20th anniversary celebration of the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic.

<sup>39</sup> Msgr. Andrej Hlinka, leader of the Slovak People's Party.

<sup>40</sup> Not printed.

Jan Masaryk, the Czechoslovak Minister here and, as is well known, a son of the late President of Czechoslovakia, has repeatedly made the attempt to get into conversation with me on the subject of German-Czechoslovak relations. I have always avoided fundamental discussions, as I could foresee no results of any kind from them. M. Masaryk has always given me to understand on these occasions that, at least in his father's lifetime, he exercised great influence in Prague.

M. Masaryk recently made the following statements to me. He said that in Prague he had always striven to secure reasonable treatment for Henlein and the Sudeten German Party. After his last visit to London<sup>41</sup> Henlein had now made the well-known statement in *Die Zeit*,<sup>42</sup> which was in very sharp contradiction to the utterances made to British personalities during his last visit here in London. He, Masaryk, was accurately informed about these utterances. If he were to divulge them this would be positively devastating for Henlein. The Minister did not, however, say what Henlein is supposed to have said here to the Englishmen. Masaryk continued that the Czechoslovak Government had not instigated the arrest of Rutha.<sup>43</sup> On the contrary, the denunciation had come from the German side. He only wanted to emphasize this point in order that the impression should not arise that this was a part of the political struggle.

As I learn from a reliable source, Herr Henlein had an unofficial discussion lasting several hours with Sir Robert Vansittart at a third party's house here. According to this informant, he submitted to Vansittart his draft of an autonomy law. Vansittart is said to have discussed the subject with him down to the most minute details.

Henlein did not go to the Foreign Office. During his visit he did not see the Czechoslovak Minister in person. On the contrary he was received by a Secretary at the Legation for a very short conversation.

For the Ambassador:

WOERMANN

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<sup>41</sup> See footnote 34, p. 22.

<sup>42</sup> The principal daily paper of the Sudeten German Party.

<sup>43</sup> See footnote 32, p. 20.

## No. 9

1941/434909

*Memorandum*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

(Pol. IV 5565)

Yesterday Herr Kinzel<sup>44</sup> called on me on instructions from Konrad Henlein, in order to put me in the picture confidentially regarding the events at Teplitz-Schönau. He remarked in this connection that Deputy Carl Hermann Frank's nerves had in fact given way. It was true that the first blow had been struck by a Czech policeman, but after that Herr Frank was no longer able to control himself and had then struck out at the policemen, from one of whom he had snatched a rubber truncheon, whereupon he was dragged into the guardroom. Both in the Czech and Sudeten German camps instructions had been issued by Beneš and Henlein that the affair should be settled peaceably, this being regarded as essential by both sides for the avoidance of further incidents, in view of the excited mood prevailing at the time. In these circumstances the sharp tone which the German press had continued to adopt was not entirely in accordance with the line desired by Konrad Henlein.

Frank's encounter with the Czech police would be further dealt with by the Czechoslovak Government, but the Sudeten German Party still hoped to be able to bring influence to bear so that settlement of the affair would result in lenient treatment for him. Moreover, the impending debates on the State budget would give the Party representatives the desired opportunity of criticizing in Parliament the treatment of the Sudeten Germans.

ALTENBURG

BERLIN, October 28, 1937.

## No. 10

664/257162, 1941/434910-11

*The German Foreign Ministry to Certain German Missions Abroad*

BERLIN, November 5, 1937.

(Pol. IV 5623)

Copies to:

The German Embassy, London  
 " " " Rome (Qu.)  
 " " " Warsaw  
 " " Legation, Belgrade

<sup>44</sup> Kinzel, one of Henlein's officials in the Sudeten German Party, is presumably meant.

The German Legation, Budapest  
 “ “ “ Bucharest

forwarded for confidential information.

The German Embassy in Paris is requested to ascertain further information about the alleged assurances of the French Government.

For the Minister:

ALTENBURG

[Enclosure]

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

CONFIDENTIAL

PRAGUE, October 29, 1937.

A. III. 1. b. 8.

(Pol. IV 5623)

In the course of a lengthy conversation Wettstein, the Hungarian Minister here, communicated the following to me today:

Authoritative Czechoslovak circles and the Diplomatic Corps in Prague were of the opinion that Germany intended to stage among the Sudeten Germans a rising on the Spanish pattern which would eventually lead to a voluntary union of the Sudeten German territory with the Reich. The Czechoslovak Government had asked Blum, the deputy French Prime Minister, during his stay in Prague on the occasion of the funeral ceremonies of the late President Masaryk,<sup>45</sup> whether France would regard such a move as a *casus foederis*. Blum's answer had been evasive. Krofta, the Foreign Minister, had therefore again broached this problem on the occasion of his journey to Paris in connection with the last Geneva meeting, and had this time received positive assurances from the French Government. The Prague Government had now taken the events at Teplitz-Schönau as an opportunity to assure themselves once again of French assistance in the event of a rising in the Sudeten German area.

How far the information of Wettstein is correct as regards details cannot be ascertained. Naturally I strongly disputed the conception of alleged German intentions. It can scarcely be doubted, however, that the Hungarian Minister has accurately reproduced the ideas—partly subjectively honest and partly tendentiously circulated—of influential Czech circles and the views of the majority of the diplomats accredited here.

HENCKE

<sup>45</sup> September 21.

## No. 11

85/472174

*Minute*

BERLIN, November 3, 1937.

As Herr Funk,<sup>46</sup> the State Secretary, informs me by telephone, Dr. Goebbels has now ordered that the press campaign against Czechoslovakia is to cease.

MACKENSEN

## No. 12

2369/494338-39

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

## Telegram

URGENT

No. 177 of November 4

PRAGUE, November 4, 1937—8:45 p.m.

Received November 4, 1937—11:30 p.m.

(zu Pol, IV 5687)

I have today informed Krofta, on behalf of the Reich Foreign Minister, that it must not be concluded, as has frequently been the case here, from the profound state of agitation of German public opinion to which our press has given expression, that Germany's intentions toward Czechoslovakia are aggressive. On the contrary, our policy was now as previously based on the maintenance of peace.

I further stated on behalf of the Reich Minister for Propaganda,<sup>47</sup> that we would no longer tolerate the fact that, under the protection of the Czechoslovak Government, numerous *émigré* newspapers were inciting opinion against the Third Reich and insulting members of the German Government. How the Czechoslovak Government stopped this was their own affair, but if such press activity were put an end to, for example by means of a strict censorship, Dr. Goebbels would guarantee that the attitude of the German press would be brought completely into line with that of the Czechoslovak press. Only then would the atmosphere be created in which efforts could be made toward a political *détente*. So as to avoid any appearance of interference, I did not wish to touch on minority questions in this connection, but I was working on the assumption that, after the Feplitz incident, things would once more develop on tranquil lines and give no occasion for fresh excitement on the part of our public opinion. In this connection I outlined the following program:

<sup>46</sup> State Secretary in the Reich Propaganda Ministry.

<sup>47</sup> Dr. Josef Goebbels.

- (1) For immediate action:
  - (a) Suppression of the *émigré* incitement campaign.
  - (b) Reduction in the numbers of Reich-Germans expelled from the frontier area to the minimum indispensable for military reasons.
- (2) For December: Legalizing of the Party organization.
- (3) For January: Reorganization of the censorship, press discussion on German newspapers and publications, admission of *Mein Kampf*.

On the subject of the expulsion of Reich-Germans, Krofta stated that his Ministry was now entirely occupied with the administration of the National Defense Law, that moreover ( . . . two groups missing) the President of the Defense Council reserved for himself the final decision in all cases, "in order to avoid the danger of war." I mentioned that we were ready with reprisals, but hoped to limit the extent of these, if the other side also kept within bounds. Krofta acknowledged that my proposals signified no political sacrifices for Czechoslovakia and were useful for further developments. He emphasized, however, the great difficulty involved in realizing them; for this he required the assistance of the President of the State whom he would therefore ask to receive me as soon as Beneš returned from Seelowitz.

Please inform Dr. Goebbels of the foregoing and influence Mastny in the same direction.

EISENLOHR

No. 13

1618/886612

*Memorandum*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

(Pol. I 6286)  
(Pol. IV 5726)

Herr Eisenlohr communicated the following to me during his last visit to Berlin:

1) According to information received by him, the obligation between Paris and Prague to render mutual assistance had been extended; in that the French were also bound to give military support to Czechoslovakia if Germany, on the ground of internal unrest in Czechoslovakia, were to seize the opportunity of marching into the latter country.

2) During Henlein's visit to London in October this year,<sup>48</sup> Vansittart informed him that Britain would work with the Czechoslovak

<sup>48</sup> See footnote 34, p. 22.



Government to secure the most far-reaching autonomy for the Sudeten Germans, but that Britain would be found at the side of France "if the Germans marched into Czechoslovakia."

ALTENBURG

BERLIN, November 6, 1937.

No. 14

2369/404340

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Woermann) to the German Foreign Ministry*

CONFIDENTIAL

LONDON, November 9, 1937.

A 4790

(Pol. IV 5870)

In continuation of report of October 14, 1937 (A 4411).<sup>49</sup>

Subject: Henlein's visit to London.

- Concerning Henlein's London talks with Sir Robert Vansittart, I hear further confidentially that Vansittart is supposed to have shown himself extremely ready to support Sudeten German wishes for autonomy. This is in accordance with the British policy of eliminating points of friction in Europe in such a way as to avoid raising the major problems which lie behind them.

A further subject of the conversations is said to have been the Austrian question. According to my informant's statement, Vansittart wished in this matter to hear from Henlein what further developments were expected in Germany. He gave him to understand that Britain considered a union of Germany and Austria inevitable in the long run, but pointed out the dangers which would arise if the union were attempted by means of a *Putsch*. In so doing he is alleged to have stated that it seemed to him to be a better solution if one day Austria were to be militarily occupied by Germany,<sup>50</sup> rather than if a *Putsch* were attempted. My authority claims to know that Henlein has seen in this an attempt at provocation, which is very probable if Vansittart really made this statement.

I am still making efforts to learn elsewhere without attracting attention more about the conversation between Vansittart and Henlein.

WOERMANN

<sup>49</sup> Not printed.

<sup>50</sup> Marginal note by Neurath: "Henlein has told me the same. November 15."

## No. 15

1941/434917

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 182 of November 9

PRAGUE, November 9, 1937—10:20 p.m.

Received November 9, 1937—11:35 p.m.

(Pol. IV 5803)

In continuation of telegram No. 177 of November 4.<sup>51</sup>

Had long conversation today with President Beneš. He was in complete agreement with my proposals. He stressed legal difficulty of taking measures against *émigré* press, but stated that he would find ways and means and would commence his efforts at once. It would of course require some time to carry them into effect.

He promised furthermore to limit the removal of Reich nationals\* from frontier areas to the indispensable minimum demanded by military requirements. He had already requested list of expulsions and removals from War Minister.

Written report follows immediately. Please inform Reich Minister Goebbels.

EISENLOHR

[Longhand note:] Minister Eisenlohr has promised by telephone a detailed written report.

1) For the attention of Minister Aschmann, Press Department, it is expected that the informing of the Ministry of Propaganda, as in the case of telegram 177, will be undertaken by the Press Department.

2) File. A[LITENBURG,] November 11.

## No. 16

1977/438943

*Minute*

(Pol. 9544)

The Czechoslovak Minister visited me today and asked for a few friendly words to be published in the German press about relations with Prague when the new economic agreements with Czechoslo-

\* Document No. 12, p. 29.

vakia<sup>52</sup> are announced. He was sure that the Czech Prime Minister would speak on Thursday in the same sense.

He was glad that both sides intend to revert to a moderate tone in the press and was optimistic concerning his Government's measures in regard to the *émigré* press. For the first time, however, he drew a parallel here with the Czechoslovak *émigrés* in Germany.<sup>53</sup> He referred to Viererbl (V.B.),<sup>54</sup> who considered himself to be an expert on Czechoslovak politics and always wrote the most caustic and rudest articles against Czechoslovakia. I denied the parallel with the *émigrés* living in Czechoslovakia, as the latter only wrote out of hatred while men like Viererbl believed they were carrying out a political task, in doing which they overstepped the limits now and again.

The Minister mentioned in conclusion that yesterday's conversation had restored his optimism as regards the development of mutual relations.

ASCHMANN

BERLIN, November 9, 1937.

### No. 17

1941/434913-16

#### *Memorandum*

BERLIN, November 9, 1937.

(Pol. IV 5802)

M. Mastny, the Czechoslovak Minister, came to see me yesterday evening at my request. I took advantage of the conversation, which lasted over an hour, to discuss thoroughly with the Minister pending questions, both in virtue of telegram No. 177 of November 4 and of the report No. A. III. 1. b. 8. of October 11.<sup>55</sup> It transpired that M. Mastny was also fully informed of the last conversation between Herr Eisenlohr and the Czech Foreign Minister. I was therefore able to limit myself substantially to explaining to him our views on the individual points.

<sup>52</sup> Presumably those concluded at Hamburg in November, constituting merely supplementary agreements for the coming year to the main Economic Treaty of 1920, on which Czechoslovak-German economic relations were based; these supplementary agreements provided for a slight increase in the total volume of trade, and for Germany's taking more finished goods from Czechoslovakia in exchange for receiving a corresponding increase of Czechoslovak raw materials and foodstuffs.

<sup>53</sup> Marginal longhand note: "V. emphasizes that he became a Reich citizen by legal means, for he was *legally released* from C.S. allegiance."

<sup>54</sup> Dr. Karl Viererbl, a Sudeten German journalist, and editor of the Sudeten German Party organ *Die Zeit*.

<sup>55</sup> Documents Nos. 12 and 3, pp. 29 and 11, respectively.

The following appear worthy of note:

1) The Minister frankly recognized the importance of a satisfactory settlement of the *émigré* question for the normalization of our relations with Czechoslovakia. He stressed the fact that Czechoslovakia could already show certain positive achievements in this field inasmuch as she had withdrawn the right of street sale from the *émigré* newspapers some months ago pursuant to talks he had had, first with Reich Minister Goebbels and later twice with State Secretary Funk.<sup>56</sup> The Government realized, however, that this was only a step toward the goal aimed at, and was considering further measures in which the idea of restricting the activities of the *émigrés* played a part. The Minister acknowledged that uncontrolled *émigré* activity in Czechoslovakia was an abuse of the laws of hospitality and a heavy burden for the Czechoslovak Republic. He seemed to expect that the necessary measures would be taken shortly, presumably after the talks contemplated between Herr Eisenlohr, the Minister, and the President of the State.

2) The prospects of permission being granted for the *Auslandsorganisation* seemed to him quite favorable. He emphasized the fact that both *Gauleiter* Bohle's speech at Stuttgart and, not least, what had appeared about his talks in the British press, had been very conducive to explaining the true nature of the A.O. even in Czechoslovak circles. I took this opportunity to suggest to him that he should get into personal touch with *Gauleiter* Bohle and perhaps incidentally pay a visit to the *Auslandsorganisation* here, which would certainly afford him much further useful information. M. Mastny was obviously pleased with this idea and thought that it would undoubtedly assist his efforts in this direction with the Prague Government if he could speak from personal knowledge of the matter in virtue of such a visit, and not from information gained from third parties. I put it to him that he should discuss the question with *Gauleiter* Bohle after the latter's return from Munich.

3) The Minister also believes that he will be able to make progress before long in the struggle for authorization of the book *Mein Kampf*. He himself had always advocated making the book available, to be sure for reasons essentially different from ours. He had

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<sup>56</sup> See footnote 46, p. 29.

in fact emphasized that, in a democratic state like Czechoslovakia, it was not fitting to withhold from the public a book such as this which reveals the ideology of another nation.

4) In the matter of the press the Minister described what he had hitherto attempted here in this field in order to achieve a normalization of relations. A long conversation months ago with the Reich Propaganda Minister had proved useful, especially as a further conversation took place with State Secretary Funk in the middle of August. A certain calm lasting for weeks was in fact to be recorded; then, however, in connection with the Weigel<sup>57</sup> case, and only more recently because of the incidents at Teplitz,<sup>58</sup> the contest had burst out afresh all along the line. It was clear to him that it was to a certain extent a vicious circle, as a normal political atmosphere between both countries was the hypothesis of a real press peace. To normalize this atmosphere was, however, extraordinarily difficult, on account of the perpetual press polemics. Finally, deliberations were going on within his Government as to how the press regulations could be tightened up by the Czechs, thus providing the Government with an effective weapon for intervention.

5) The conversation brought to light no fresh views on the question of the administration of the National Defense Law. M. Mastny himself, however, seemed to be of opinion that a considerable advance on the part of the Czechs was still necessary here, but pointed out the difficulties of putting this into practice.

6) The talk on the relations of Czechoslovakia with Moscow covered a relatively wide field. I attempted to explain to the Minister that these relations, of whose harmless nature as asserted by him we could not be convinced, were visibly having a specially disturbing influence on German-Czechoslovak relations in many spheres. I tried to point out to him that his repeated efforts to represent Czechoslovakia's strict discrimination between the Russian Government of the day and the Third International were a useless play upon words. My observations on this question finally led him to remark that he too was one of those Czechs who were earnestly deliberating whether the special relations with Russia, born of emergency, would, the longer they lasted, be a greater burden to Czechoslovakia's political position in foreign matters. The Minister, however, hastened to add to this somewhat melancholy observation that no modification or

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<sup>57</sup> Bruno Weigel was a German citizen arrested in Prague by the Czechoslovak Government in November 1936 on suspicion of espionage and released in May 1937. It was alleged by Germany that he was tortured, and the incident raised a storm of indignation in the German press. The Czechoslovak Government denied the allegations.

<sup>58</sup> See footnote 31, p. 20.

severance of these relations could be contemplated. Moreover, the bonds between Prague and Moscow were by no means so close as we frequently appeared to think.

7) M. Mastny mentioned finally—not without reference to the question of Prague-Moscow relations—that, in his efforts to demonstrate willingness to cooperate with us, he had some months ago advocated compliance with a suggestion from us to the effect that Czechoslovak police authorities should make contact with police officials here for defensive measures against Communism. Two senior Czechoslovak police officials had actually appeared here and had received a friendly reception. He had not, however, heard that anything in the nature of cooperation had developed from this visit, but would shortly make inquiries in the proper quarter here.

M. Mastny concluded his statements with the remark that after a state of affairs lasting weeks, which he must frankly describe as one of mental depression, he had now again become optimistic in regard to his activities here. As soon as the talk between Herr Eisenlohr and the President of the State had taken place he would take the opportunity of visiting the latter again.

MACKENSEN

### No. 18

1941/434919-30

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 1. b. 8.

PRAGUE, November 11, 1937.  
(Pol. IV 5884)

With reference to telegraphic reports Nos. 177, 180, and 182.<sup>59</sup>  
Conversation with President Beneš.

#### POLITICAL REPORT

I have the honor to submit herewith a memorandum on the conversation which I had with President Beneš on November 9. In order not to make it too long I have limited myself to reproducing M. Beneš' statements and have only mentioned my own part in the conversation to the extent that it seems necessary for understanding the context. I would wish to draw special attention to the first-mentioned topic among the subjects discussed which were as follows:—

- Beneš' attitude to Germany;
- Emigré press;*

<sup>59</sup> For reports Nos. 177 and 182, see pp. 29 and 32. Report No. 180 not printed.

Expulsion of Reich-Germans from frontier area;  
Legalization of N.S.D.A.P. organization;  
Censorship policy in regard to Reich-German newspapers and publications;  
Arrests;  
Minority policy.

Even if Beneš' statements were not intended in good faith but rather he only wished to give the appearance of an accommodating attitude under the pressure of the foreign political situation, they would still be of practical importance inasmuch as the solution of each individual question of interest to us depends on his attitude. I consider, however, his statements to be really true, for the simple reason that a politician of his experience must long since have realized that the most important condition for the maintenance of the State which he helped to create must be a permanent good relationship to the German people outside and inside the borders of the Czechoslovak State. For this reason I am also inclined to assume that he really wishes to improve the position of the German minority. From his point of view, of course, he doubtless pictures the relationship to the German Reich and the legal position of the German racial group within Czechoslovakia differently from us. He said to me once on an earlier occasion that he could not renounce his alliances with France and Russia, as he would otherwise be facing us alone and would have to become our vassal. If I understood him correctly, he was also indicating the necessity of using third parties as a prop when he used the word "assurance" this time. On the other hand, however, he emphasized that he would never play a game with third parties behind our backs if a permanent relationship to Germany could be achieved. There is possibly a contradiction here. I did not attempt to voice this doubt, nor did I ask what he understands by *modus vivendi*, which he constantly mentioned as his immediate aim. On the contrary, I merely listened to these remarks of Beneš on the temporary or final political differences between the German Reich and Czechoslovakia, because I am neither empowered to speak thereon nor do I consider the time is ripe to do so. Meanwhile, all I was concerned with was to obtain the President's support for the realization of those German demands which had given rise to the conversation. It looks as though he wished to lend his assistance and thereby to demonstrate a further proof of his good will. The practical result, however, remains to be seen.

If the view is correct which I have expressed above, namely, that Beneš wishes to improve the position of the German minority from the point of view of well-understood State interests and that there-

fore his efforts, even if they do not go all the way with ours, at least run parallel part of the way, the further question arises as to whether he is in a position to awaken in the Czech people the understanding necessary to carry out his intention. This question remains completely open. At the present time only this much can be said, that every manifest intensification of the German pressure on Czechoslovakia and every attitude on our part which can be construed, even remotely, by the perpetually watchful suspicious elements on the other side as a desire for aggression, will unite the Czech people in fear and hatred not only of us but of their own Sudeten German fellow citizens as well. I could only imagine a change in the attitude of the Czechs toward the Sudeten Germans if, in addition to the silent pressure which the growing power of the Reich exercises on the Czechs, there could be added the confidence that we have no wish to touch the Czech nation and the Czechoslovak frontiers.

EISENLOHR

[Enclosure]

MEMORANDUM

A. III. 1. b. 8.

PRAGUE, November 10, 1937.

At the reception of the Heads of Missions by the President on the day of the State Festival (October 28)<sup>60</sup> I had mentioned to M. Beneš that I intended going to Berlin for a few days and he had expressed the wish to see me soon after that. A few days after the President's return from Seelowitz in Moravia, where he had met King Carol of Rumania,<sup>61</sup> I received an invitation to breakfast with him on the 9th of this month. Apart from myself no one was present. During the meal, which was soon over, Beneš talked about the State budget to be submitted to Parliament the next day. After the meal, when the servants had withdrawn and we had proceeded to the President's study, the conversation turned to German-Czechoslovak relations and especially the proposals and wishes which I had put before Foreign Minister Krofta on the 4th of this month. Beneš used the German language, which he always does with me, although he has only an imperfect command of it and frequently has to seek for the correct expression. His manner was natural, friendly, and thoroughly dignified. The conversation lasted a very long time, 4 hours in all, because Beneš, as is his custom, expanded the topics, reverted frequently to the past and based his attitude to individual

<sup>60</sup> The anniversary of the founding of the Republic, October 28, 1918.

<sup>61</sup> King Carol visited Czechoslovakia with Prince Michael on November 3, ostensibly on a hunting visit, and had political conversations with President Beneš.



questions on general principles or considerations. As on similar occasions in the past, the President laid special stress on representing his own objective and respectful attitude toward Germany, obviously because he knows that a deep-rooted suspicion of him exists among us. On this subject, his manner of speech, otherwise quite quiet, rose to almost solemn emphasis.

Beneš introduced this theme at the very beginning of the talk; during the course of the conversation he constantly reverted to it. He said he was striving in every case to achieve a rational and lasting relationship with Germany, a *modus vivendi*, if one could go no further at present. In doing so he cherished no ulterior motive of any kind and he was playing no tactics against Germany. He would always do everything in his power to improve relations between the Reich and Czechoslovakia, regardless of whether his gestures were returned or not, even though he had frequently found it hard that his wish for an attitude of accommodation evoked no echo in Berlin, and this or that done by him had not been appreciated. Between Prague and Berlin, he said with strong emphasis, only one relationship was possible, "an open position" (he meant thereby a clear open relationship). In such a case he would never, like the Poles, engage in a game with others behind Germany's back, because he needed durable relations with us. We must understand that Czechoslovakia wanted "assurances" [*Versicherungen*]<sup>1</sup>—it remained uncertain here whether by this word he meant German promises [*Zusicherungen*] or his country's alliances with France and Russia, probably the latter—but Czechoslovakia would never allow herself to be used as an instrument of a policy directed against Germany or to be made to serve Russian, French, or British policy to such an end. He had always been too independent for such things. He could not do everything he pleased in his State, but this much he could say, that Czechoslovakia could not pursue any policy with which he was not in agreement. He had been the leader of this policy for 17 years. In the postwar years, when it had been the fashion to decry Germany, and everybody else, our present friends included, had indulged in terrible language against Germany, he had never spoken an unfriendly or disrespectful word about us, not out of calculating or cautious motives but because of his deepest convictions, for he had never lost respect for the Germans. Neither was it true that he was unfamiliar with the German mode of life; previous to completing his studies in France he had drunk from the fountains of German knowledge and German philosophy in Prague, for, owing to their centuries-old cultural fellowship, Czechs and Germans understood one another much better than, for instance, Czechs and French. He

had also recognized the strength of National Socialism earlier than other people; after the great victory at the Reichstag elections<sup>62</sup> he had in Geneva told the then Foreign Minister Curtius, who refused to believe him, that Herr Hitler would very soon finally come to power.

In evidence of his good will toward Germany Beneš cited the following examples:—

After the amount of reparations had been fixed at 132 milliard gold marks<sup>63</sup> by the victorious Powers, the German Government, through their then Minister Saenger, put five questions to him. They asked him what he thought would happen if Germany refused to sign a commitment which she would never be able to meet, and what would presumably be the attitude of the United States and the neutrals. He then replied that he was convinced that a German refusal to undertake the impossible obligations would lead to a renewal of hostilities, and that neither the United States nor the neutrals would lift a finger against that course. He therefore advised signature and further negotiations immediately afterward. But a few days later, and without being asked to do so by the German Government, he had come to the decision on his own account to get Czechoslovakia to renounce her right under the peace treaties to seize German property and German rights. Had he not so acted, added Beneš, we should not be in a position today to complain about expropriation of German property and expulsion of German workers from the frontier areas, for then there would no longer be either German property or German workers.

As a proof of his good will he had removed Colonel Hajek<sup>64</sup> from the General Staff despite opposition from the Army, although he was unconvinced of Hajek's guilt in the particular case (Weigel),<sup>65</sup> even if the colonel had behaved incorrectly otherwise. He had done this because he had promised me to do so.

Last spring when he heard of the *émigrés'* assassination plans he immediately arranged for the Czechoslovak police to collaborate with the German police, and believed he had thereby given a proof that he had entered into no engagement whatever with Communism but had rejected it in the most decisive manner.

In addition to this he had on his own initiative caused the *émigrés* to be removed from the frontier areas and concentrated in small

<sup>62</sup> Presumably those of September 1930.

<sup>63</sup> By the Reparations Commission at Paris in 1921.

<sup>64</sup> Czechoslovak Military Attaché in Belgrade in the early thirties; dismissed from the Czechoslovak General Staff in 1937.

<sup>65</sup> See footnote 57, p. 35.

localities within the interior, because the case of Hirsch,<sup>66</sup> who was convicted in Germany, had taught him that groups of terrorist conspirators might be formed among the *émigrés*. The transplanting of the *émigrés* had been carried out with the utmost rigor. He had not allowed individual consideration to be shown in single cases, with regard to possibilities of livelihood, until the uncontrollable mass had been removed from the frontier areas.

All this had not been appreciated in Berlin. From time to time he had even got the impression that Germany did not really desire an improvement in relations, for every time things had calmed down a fresh disturbance had arisen. He admitted that from Czechoslovakia, too, there had repeatedly been cause for such disturbances, but over the frontier they had made mountains out of molehills. Whenever he wanted to find out what was the real attitude of another country toward his own he always tried to imagine himself in the other's position and see its point of view. The conviction that Germany was really interested in achieving "rational relations" with Czechoslovakia enabled him to overcome those transient impressions and to continue to believe in the possibility of an improvement in our mutual relations. Feeling in Czechoslovakia was not aroused, as I had thought; there was in principle no hostile attitude among the people and none at all in himself. But opinion had "stiffened," and one was now prepared for anything. The Right was not inimical to us, as I must know. He himself did not find it necessary to have any regard to parties when conducting his foreign policy. If a *modus vivendi* could be achieved with us it might put the Left "in such a position that it would have to behave itself." In this connection Beneš quoted, as an example of his influence on the Left parties, the fact that his Government had not been successful a fortnight ago in calming the Left parties' newspapers in a question of foreign and domestic policy (he obviously meant the German press campaign on the occasion of the Teplitz incident and the incident itself). Thereupon he summoned twenty-five journalists and dealt with the matter himself by pointing out what expediency demanded from the point of view of foreign policy.

M. Beneš expressed himself as follows as regards the program I had developed to Foreign Minister Krofta, with which Beneš was fully acquainted. He agreed in principle. In cases where that would not be possible, I was to learn the reasons.

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<sup>66</sup> A Reich-German fugitive in Czechoslovakia, kidnaped and taken back to Germany by the Germans and sentenced there.

1) *Emigré press.*

Up to the present he had been obliged by domestic political conditions to tolerate this press so far as it was legal, but he fully agreed with me that the matter must now be cleared up. He knew what *émigrés* could and could not do, for he himself had been an *émigré*, albeit of another kind. He gave me his word of honor that since 1933 he had never had contact with these people, had conducted no discussion and had never spoken about Germany or against Germany with them. His foreign policy had never conducted a campaign against our regime.

I handed M. Beneš a list (cf. enclosure)<sup>67</sup> which not only specifies the *émigré* newspapers appearing in Czechoslovakia, but also those published elsewhere and sold here, as well as the *émigré* correspondence, including the mechanically reproduced reports on Germany of the Sopade<sup>68</sup> and the Graphia publishing firm.<sup>69</sup> In doing so I especially pointed out the dangerous nature of this publishing house and of the Sopade reports. Beneš kept the list to examine it. He said, what is certainly true, that it would be difficult to find ways and means of getting at these undertakings and that it would take time. In addition it must not look as though he were intervening under German pressure. But he would make no difficulties in principle and would get to work at once.

2) *Expulsion of Reich-Germans from frontier areas under the National Defense Law,<sup>70</sup> etc.*

He had instructed Machnik, the Minister of Defense, to hand him the list of all cases of expulsion. He would proceed in accordance with the following principles:

(a) No superfluous measures, but only those indispensable for reasons of national defense.

(b) No mass ejections; every case to be examined individually.

(c) In those cases in which expulsion could not be avoided, considerate treatment in the form of procedure, grant of adequate periods of grace, decent treatment.

A commission had been formed to decide on all cases of expulsion and expropriation. This commission consisted of one representative each of the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Defense and the Foreign Ministry. The outcome of the consultations had been that the second and third members insisted on their mutually conflicting views, and the representative of the Prime Minister's Office did not

<sup>67</sup> Enclosure not printed.

<sup>68</sup> Abbreviation of *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, a group of *émigré* Socialists in Prague who produced illegal reports in Czechoslovakia for smuggling into Germany.

<sup>69</sup> A Czechoslovak trade-union printing house in Prague.

<sup>70</sup> See footnote 18, p. 12.

know with which of the two to agree. He himself would now have to lay down the standards.

3) *Authorization of Party organizations.*

There were difficulties here; this was not, however, his last word and in any case he was in agreement that a compromise solution must be found. The difficulties lay in the fact that every time a foreign Government put forward a unilateral demand he had to raise the questions of reciprocity, and what Czechoslovakia should do if third states came along with similar wishes. Both objections seemed to me to be somewhat pointless. In regard to the first I answered M. Beneš that he should ask his Minister Mastny to report how matters stood as regards the freedom of movement and of association of Czechoslovak nationals in Germany; he would then be convinced that reciprocity, so far as it could be spoken of at all in this case, was fully accorded. The second objection I took for the time being all the less seriously, as the statement in the *Ceské Slovo*<sup>11</sup> about our application, regarding which I have reported, was obviously released by the Government as a *ballon d'essai* in order to ascertain whether strong domestic political réactions are to be feared. Since then, however, the press had been silent on the subject. Perhaps Beneš also intends to wait and see whether Moscow will exert any counter-pressure here.

4) *Fundamental change of the censorship policy in regard to German printed matter.*

Regarding this point in my program Beneš stated that no difficulties would be made in respect of National Socialist theory, racial doctrine, and the "ideology of the regime" generally, and that he must only make reservations in the case of publications touching on irredentism, frontier revision, and similar things. However, even in this last respect a liberal practice might prevail if a *modus vivendi* with us could be achieved.

I availed myself of the opportunity of this conversation to say to M. Beneš that all efforts to arrive at a *détente* in the atmosphere must be in vain if the arrest psychosis, against which I had fought so long, were to gain ground afresh. Since the middle of the month of September cases of arrest had again occurred which we considered totally unwarranted. I had already made urgent representations to his Foreign Ministry, but I also asked for his intervention so that the persons arrested should be released at the earliest moment and that this injustice should cease. Beneš made a note of the foregoing and promised to help.

<sup>11</sup> The organ of the Czechoslovak National Socialist (Beneš') Party.

The minority question was also mentioned. Beneš broached it himself by referring to his speech before the Heads of Missions on the 28th of last month. I replied that I was aware from previous conversations with him of his efforts to ensure that each nationality's share in the State budget should be considered proportionately according to the ratio of the number of persons, and that a gradually corresponding participation should be realized in regard to all State appointments also. Doubtless this was important but was not the chief thing. It was far more essential that the attempts at Czechization of the State organizations should not only cease, but also that a stop should be put to the senseless drive for expansion of the Czech population toward the Sudeten German area, supported and carried out by influential associations and individuals. I was fully aware that this was extremely difficult. But so long as the Sudeten Germans felt themselves threatened on their own native territory and in their racial culture, a peaceful evolution, as envisaged by him, was not to be thought of. Beneš admitted this; he was only of opinion that the Sudeten Germans did not know their own country, inasmuch as they did not notice that after a period of depression they were now stronger and about to mount upward again. Finally, I mentioned my fear that a fresh and perhaps sanguinary incident with the police might let loose disastrous effects. I had heard of very serious statements made by a certain police commandant in the Sudeten German territory. He could not, of course, change the whole police force all at once; it would, however, suffice if he saw that the agitators among the police officers were removed to the interior of the country. Beneš received this request in a very friendly manner and was of opinion that it coincided exactly with his view that the State authorities should not merely face the population as unwelcome tax collectors and incumbents of police power but should also endeavor to gain their confidence. I said on my part that I had invited Konrad Henlein to meet me on one of the next few days, and intended to indicate to him that he should especially recommend his adherents to avoid incidents. In reply to my question whether and to what extent a direct contact could be made between the President and the Sudeten German Party if the occasion arose, Beneš stated he was prepared at any time to receive the delegates of the Sudeten German Party. On the other hand he could only receive Konrad Henlein, whom he did not know personally, if the Prime Minister recommended him to do so.

EISENLOHR

## No. 19

1941/435004-07

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the Head of the Political Department in the German Foreign Ministry (Weizsäcker)*

PRAGUE, November 12, 1937.  
(Pol. IV 41)

DEAR WEIZSÄCKER: From what I brought back from Berlin—you yourself know whether it was much or little—I have with the aid of a few accessories drawn up the program for a lessening of the tension which you know from my reports. It was high time, for the unrest here goes much deeper than M. Beneš is willing to admit to me. If we succeed in carrying out this program, and for the moment it looks as if we shall, we have 3 months of calm which will have a beneficial effect here and elsewhere, we gain various points of importance to us without giving anything in return, and, above all, we have synchronized our foreign policy with our press policy, as far as Czechoslovakia is concerned. Actually, disturbances are only to be apprehended from possible Sudeten German incidents and from the continuing efforts of the Sudeten German Press Center to use our newspapers as mouthpieces for their excitement (cf. the Rutha episode).<sup>72</sup> I hope that we shall preserve an unshakeable calm there.

The question, however, which is already engaging my attention is what the position will be after the 3 months have expired. If, for instance, a vacuum should ensue, I fear that calm would not last long and that then there might again be a schism between foreign policy and press policy. On the other hand, it would be mere prudence not to embark prematurely on political discussions with Czechoslovakia which do appear to be the aim of M. Beneš' ardent endeavors, as you will have gathered from my report on the last conversation with the State President. I should, therefore, like to submit the following suggestions for your consideration:

(a) Foreign Ministry might keep close contact with Promi<sup>73</sup> and pay heed to the proverb, "As is the cry, so is the echo" ["*Wie es in den Wald schallt, schallt es heraus*"] a fulfillment of the condition, namely, that the *émigré* press here should be reduced to impotence within a reasonable space of time (there is no question of this before December 1; but it is important to make a serious beginning soon).

(b) Foreign Ministry might advise the Führer to receive M. Mastny now, who has for a long time been making vain efforts in

<sup>72</sup> See footnote 32, p. 20.

<sup>73</sup> The German abbreviation for the Reich Propaganda Ministry.

that direction—and recognize in a few friendly words that M. Beneš is making some effort to show good will. Such a reception would be interpreted here as a gesture and would, moreover, have a very favorable effect on the speedy fulfillment of our demands.<sup>74</sup>

(c) In addition to the change in the censorship policy here contemplated for the month of January, negotiations might be set on foot for a so-called cultural agreement.

(d) From March onward there might begin a fuller exchange of visitors from both countries (athletes, businessmen, professors).

(e) Later, perhaps in agreement with Konrad Henlein, we might consider giving M. Beneš a kind of trial period, to see what he achieves in the minority question.

We must, of course, be clear that the Czechs will use any breathing space to complete their fortification system; but this they will do in any case, particularly as they seem to be getting their finances in order.

I would ask that my report on the conversation with Beneš may be transmitted to Reich Minister Goebbels, as I had arranged with him. Further, I should be grateful if the report, notwithstanding the size of the memorandum attached to it, might be submitted to the Führer.

Hearty greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours,

EISENLOHR

### No. 20

1941/434934-35

*The German Ambassador in Italy (Hassell) to the German Foreign Ministry*

4879/37

ROME, November 16, 1937.

(Pol. IV 6005)

Subject: Political situation in the Danube Basin.

#### POLITICAL REPORT

Today I informed Ciano in confidence in the sense of the instruction of 27 ultimo (Pol. IV 5436)<sup>75</sup> and asked him to pass the information to the Head of the Government. At the same time, I discussed with him the contents of the instruction of the 5th instant (Pol. IV 5623).<sup>76</sup> Ciano said that, as far as Austrian policy was concerned, he could hardly imagine a closer union, such as Schuschnigg apparently envisaged, between that country and the other Succession

<sup>74</sup> Marginal note by Weizsäcker: "This can only be considered when there is more proof than we have today of this frequently affirmed good will of M. Beneš."

<sup>75</sup> Not printed.

<sup>76</sup> Document No. 10, p. 27.



States. Moreover, he would suspect Herr Schmidt<sup>77</sup> even more than Schuschnigg of pursuing such a policy. Mussolini, for his part, had left Schuschnigg in no doubt that he would unconditionally repudiate any Austrian policy which aimed at dependence of this country, which lay on the Berlin-Rome Axis, on any democratic power or on a state with the foreign political tendencies of Czechoslovakia. In the end it was the affair of the Austrians to decide their own fate; if, however, they could only maintain their independence by supporting themselves on an alliance with states of the above-mentioned type, then this independence was worth nothing. Neither did he believe that Austria could carry out a policy such as that mentioned, for the reason that the Little Entente was no longer an effective factor. Rumania was in rather a bad state. From the Czechoslovak point of view, Yugoslavia could today be regarded as completely unreliable. If Stoyadinovich<sup>78</sup> had explained to him that Yugoslavia never could or would fight in favor of a Czechoslovakia attacked by Germany, he thought this could be believed. In face of this I tried to depict to Ciano the psychology of the men in power in Austria, and to show him that anything might be expected of such men who lived in fear of their very existence, so that it would be well to be on one's guard (see my report of the 5th instant—4696/37).<sup>79</sup>

As for France's alleged assurances to Czechoslovakia in the event of a revolt of the Sudeten Germans, Ciano doubted whether France had really committed herself in this respect; in any case, he did not believe that in such a case France would still be capable of taking the decision to undertake a war with Germany for this question which did not directly concern France.

HASSELL

## No. 21

1941/434931-32

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Forster) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A 4094

PARIS, November 16, 1937.

(Pol. IV 5942)

Referring to the instructions of the 5th instant (Pol. IV 5623).<sup>80</sup>

Regarding Franco-Czech relations.

According to information which has reached me I have no doubt that the Hungarian Minister in Prague, M. Wettstein, has correctly

<sup>77</sup> The Austrian Foreign Minister.

<sup>78</sup> The Yugoslav Prime Minister.

<sup>79</sup> Not printed.

<sup>80</sup> Document No. 10, p. 27.

represented to our Legation there the ideas prevailing in influential Czech circles. Also, his communications regarding the French assurances given to Czechoslovakia correspond with what I have heard here.

According to this the position is as follows: during his stay in Prague on the occasion of the funeral ceremonies for President Masaryk,<sup>81</sup> M. Blum was asked whether France would regard an indirect or direct attack by Germany against Czechoslovakia as a *casus foederis*. Blum answered this in the affirmative as his personal conviction, and in so doing he expressly included the case of an armed insurrection on the part of Henlein, but at the same time he stated that he naturally could not bind the French Government. The Czech Government should bring the question up officially for discussion in Paris.

This M. Krofta has done on the occasion of his recent visit in Paris.<sup>82</sup> M. Delbos has confirmed M. Blum's answer.

Following upon this the rumor circulated among the initiated that the French Foreign Minister would on the first opportunity make a sharp, sensational pronouncement in public on Franco-Czech relations. In fact at the end of October at the Radical Socialist Congress at Lille, M. Delbos dealt with the problem, as already reported, in the following manner: "La France ainsi liée sous des modalités diverses à un certain nombre de pays, entend donner l'exemple de la loyauté la plus scrupuleuse. En toutes circonstances, quelle que soit la forme de l'agression, si l'agression est certaine, elle tiendra ses engagements envers eux. Elle les a tenus aussi, elle les tiendra avec tous dans le domaine des accords limités dont je parlais tout à l'heure, comme elle les tiendra envers la Société des Nations." The formulation was thus not so sensational as had been forecast. M. Delbos did not mention Czechoslovakia by name, although there could be no doubt that it was principally her that he had in mind. Nor did he state unequivocally what must be the nature of the attack to bring into operation the obligations entailed upon France by her alliances. The statement speaks on the one hand of every form of attack, on the other it asserts that the attack must be clear. I was, however, further assured that the precise wording originated with M. Beneš himself.

Afterward the French journalists are said to have been instructed by the press department of the Quai d'Orsay not to treat the statement in a way likely to attract attention. In fact, as far as I can see, it was not commented upon by the press, the semiofficial organ of

<sup>81</sup> On September 21.

<sup>82</sup> See footnote 26, p. 18.

the Foreign Ministry, the *Petit Parisien*, not even reproducing its text. On the other hand, according to the account in the French press, M. Krofta referred to it expressly in his last speech. Whether considerations of foreign or internal politics were decisive for this treatment in the French press I should prefer to leave unanswered.

FORSTER

### No. 22

1941/434933

*The German Ambassador in Italy (Hassell) to the German Foreign Ministry*

4936/37

ROME, November 19, 1937.

(Pol. IV 6004)

Referring to the instruction of the 5th instant, (Pol. IV 5623).<sup>83</sup>

Regarding alleged promise of military aid by France to Czechoslovakia.

The statements of Count Ciano (report of the 16th instant—4879/37)<sup>84</sup> are supplemented by the communication of an agent, according to which a report has been received by the Palazzo Chigi<sup>85</sup> to the effect that Hodza has received formal confirmation that, in the event of a crossing of the frontier into Czechoslovak territory by SS or SA formations, France will intervene against Germany by force of arms; on the other hand, the French Government expressed itself in considerably less definite terms for the case of an insurrection of the Sudeten Germans.

HASELL

### No. 23

1941/434970-96

*The Leader of the Sudeten German Party (Henlein) to the German Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, November 19, 1937.

(Pol. IV 6717)

YOUR EXCELLENCY: I submit to you the carbon copy of a report for the Führer and Reich Chancellor which I have delivered to State Secretary Dr. Lammers,<sup>86</sup> to be transmitted personally to the Führer.

I felt myself obliged to have a comprehensive survey prepared of a number of political questions in Czechoslovakia which have become

<sup>83</sup> Document No. 10, p. 27.

<sup>84</sup> Document No. 20, p. 46.

<sup>85</sup> The Italian Foreign Ministry.

<sup>86</sup> Chief of the Reich Chancellery.

vital, and to submit it to the supreme authority of the Reich. I would also ask Your Excellency to receive this report and to support me in my efforts to secure a discussion involving the whole question of principle.<sup>87</sup>

Heil Hitler!

Your obedient servant

KONRAD HENLEIN

[Enclosure]

*Report for the Führer and Reich Chancellor Dealing With Questions of Immediate Interest to German Policy in the Czechoslovak Republic*

SECRET

I

*The notorious incidents in Teplitz-Schönau,<sup>88</sup> where deputies of the Sudeten German Party were insulted and taken into custody by the Czechoslovak police, the measures which were then adopted by the Czech Government against the Sudeten Germans, the sharp protest which was raised by the Sudeten German Party against the Teplitz-Schönau incidents and against these measures, the treatment of the Teplitz-Schönau incidents on the radio and in the press of the Reich, and the echo of the events throughout world opinion are grounds for depicting the Sudeten German question as it now stands.*

In order to be able to make the incidents in Teplitz-Schönau intelligible, both as symptoms and in their immediate significance, it is necessary to describe (1) *that process of evolution on the Czech side* which, in response to the anti-German disposition and policy of Czechoslovakia, aims at the political emasculation and material destruction of the Sudeten German element, and (2) *that process of evolution on the Sudeten German side* which culminates in a general realization that an understanding between Germans and Czechs in Czechoslovakia is practically impossible and that a settlement of the Sudeten German question is only conceivable on a German basis.

*The conception prevalent in Czechoslovakia, anti-German in theory and in practice, and the essentially anti-German attitude of the Czechoslovak people are conditioned—*

1) by the prewar development of the Czech people and its inhibiting effect upon their political education;

<sup>87</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "is taking place in any case."

Another marginal note: "Visit of K. Henlein to the RM will have to await events. W[ERZACKER]?"

<sup>88</sup> See footnote 31, p. 20.

2) by the anti-German activities of their leaders, Masaryk and Beneš, during the war;

3) by assigning to Czechoslovakia within the framework of the Treaty of Versailles and St. Germain the role of stronghold and base of operations for the Western Powers in the very heart of the German *Lebensraum*;

4) by concluding the Soviet Pact;

5) by allying themselves with those powers and elements which are above the State and which are opposed to the Reich and National Socialism—political Catholicism and the Vatican, Jewry and Freemasonry, Bolshevism and Refugee Emigration.

By the pitiless struggle of the Sudeten German Party for the rights of Sudeten Germans, by their battle against these lies of the Czech National State, by their planned propaganda at home and abroad, and in that connection particularly by disseminating information about the lying memoirs of Beneš, the anti-German character and policy of Czechoslovakia and her true nature as a French vassal state are established before the whole world.

*The incidents of Teplitz-Schönau and the reaction to them in the Czech camp have exhibited with especial clarity this Czech internal policy, the final aims of which bear the following character:*

1) To enable it to fulfill its mission, and in view of the fact that the Czech people only constitute a bare majority of the population in the State, the Czech Government must try either to "Czechoslovakize" [*vertschechoslowakisieren*] on the Swiss model the so-called "minorities," above all the German racial group, or to root them out altogether. If, prior to the assumption of power by the Führer, both paths have been trodden by the Czechs, since that date Czech internal policy has been unequivocally and systematically directed toward the denationalization and annihilation of the Sudeten Germans.

2) *The demand of the Czech Fighting Unions, "advancement of Czech People's frontier to the limits of the State frontier"* is fully approved and adopted by the Czech Government and legalized in its realization by a series of laws. For example by the *Lex Uhlir*,<sup>89</sup> the supplement to §6 of the Law for the Protection of the Republic (Military Treason), the "Machnik Decree,"<sup>90</sup> the "National Defense

<sup>89</sup> This law, named after a Czech Deputy who proposed it, was passed in 1935 and came into force in 1936; it compelled all children to attend school unless a specific exception was made, and its execution caused dissatisfaction owing to a decision empowering the Ministry of Education to appoint suitable candidates as teachers in minority districts without regard to their race or ability to speak the language.

<sup>90</sup> By this Decree of the Minister of Defense (Dr. Machnik) in 1936 the Government had taken powers to limit the number of Sudeten German employees in firms applying for Government contracts. A Sudeten German petition against this Decree was submitted to the League of Nations Minority Committee in January 1937. The matter was deferred to the League Council meeting in May 1937, when it was decided to reject the petition since the Czechoslovak Government had satisfied the Council that the Decree "had not been enforced."

Law," the "Law for Premilitary Education" and the "Universities Law."

3) Since the establishment of Czechoslovakia, and above all in recent times, the Czech regime has aimed by all methods at systematically *destroying the economic and social foundation of the existence of the Sudeten Germans*. For example, by failure to redeem the war loan, by the land reform which has brought nearly 600,000 hectares of German land into Czech hands, by the policy regarding officials, which means the loss of more than 40,000 opportunities of livelihood for the Sudeten Germans, the fiscal policy, the State policy of investment and commissions, the policy of export, the destruction or removal of industries on strategical grounds, etc.

4) *The cultural and school policy* of Czechoslovakia in granting or promising material or ideal advantages, and the brutal exploitation of professional or economic dependence, forces 16,000 German children into Czech schools. The educational schemes and books, conceived exclusively by Jewish, Marxist, and Christian Socialist school inspectors, misrepresent the German race and Germany's past and present, systematically incite the pupils against the German mother-race, its Reich and its Führer, and aim at bringing up the German youth to be men without character and roots. These efforts are supported by a policy directed toward the same end of using State influence and subventions for cultural establishments, the theater, the cinema, libraries and the book trade, the radio, etc. To this category also belongs the monstrous practice of prohibition directed against genuinely German literature, art, and music, and the systematic endeavor to stifle or falsify the essentially German expressions of life of the Sudeten Germans, above all, of its youth. The aiding and abetting by the refugee emigrants, political Catholicism, and Marxism may be mentioned in the same connection.

5) Today there is hardly any longer a single Sudeten German family in which some member has not been prosecuted on account of some political offense, subjected to criminal investigation, or actually been imprisoned. *Czech justice* has become entirely an *instrument of the anti-German annihilation policy* of the regime and obeys the requirements of the Czech Government and the Czech General Staff. The sentences pronounced against citizens of the German Reich also afford proof of the completeness with which the administration of justice has become political. To legalize the misuse of justice for political ends and to simplify this practice a supplement has been added to §6 of the Law for the Protection of the Republic, thus giving the dictators the opportunity to deal with any Sudeten German, while excluding all possibility of control; this method is above all employed to the fullest extent against the administrative machinery of the Sudeten German Party.

6) Whereas at the time of the foundation of Czechoslovakia a *compact area of German settlement* existed in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, *since 1918 this region has been systematically infiltrated by members of the Czech race*, with the result that today in every Sudeten German town and commune a Czech racial cell and nucleus is to be found. This has to provide a supplementary foundation for

that fiction of a "mixed frontier region with a Germanized population" which, on the basis of the mendacious memoranda of Beneš, formed the basis for the treaty structure of St. Germain.

The system of Czech penetration policy is as follows: In all offices of the State and offices subject to State influence, administrations, institutions, and enterprises in Sudeten German territory—administration, justice, inland revenue, post, railways, *gendarmérie*, police, customs guards, administration of State forests and properties, tobacco monopoly, etc.—Czechs with the largest possible families were and are being installed. Through the agency of the land reform measures whole Czech villages have been established on territory settled by Sudeten Germans. This Czech element, supported by Czech garrisons, attracts in its wake Czech laborers and traders. Elementary, secondary, and technical schools must be built for their children, the teachers and professors of which are the instructors and leaders in the Czech acquisitive associations and constitute in the local Vybors (Czech national combat committees) those para-governments [*Nebenregierungen*] which dominate the local State authorities, receive their instructions from the Prague central authorities and receive full cover and encouragement from them in their anti-German tendencies and activities.

7) After the Führer's seizure of power *the police administration in all Sudeten German towns was taken over by the State, the personnel strengthened and the gendarmerie posts increased throughout the whole Sudeten German territory.* Great numbers of secret agents with a perfect mastery of the German language were associated with the political administrative officials. Stores of arms were established in all local command posts. The Czech element in Sudeten German territory is organized, either in Sokols,<sup>93</sup> in the National Guard, in Workers' Gymnastic and Sport Associations or in other Czech Chauvinistic or Marxist defense formations, which are all trained on a uniform military basis and cooperate closely with the *gendarmérie* and police. When there is any question of attacking the Sudeten German Party the Communist defense organizations and the German Social Democratic Red Defense Force [*Rote Wehr*] make common cause with them. It is significant for the situation that on the Sunday of the Teplitz incidents the Czech defense formations were mobilized in Aussig, and stood ready equipped with arms in military formation.

This system implies an unheard-of possibility of control directed against any and every Sudeten German expression of life. It permeates all political, economic, and social relations of the Sudeten Germans, reaching to the heart of family life, and is intended to break down the last German will to resistance. This system of the Prague dictatorship produces in the Sudeten German a psychological situation of dangerous import.

8) *The National Defense Law*,<sup>94</sup> dating from the year 1936, gives the Government legal covering in its annihilation policy directed

<sup>93</sup> Youth organizations, mainly of an athletic character, of strong nationalist sentiments.

<sup>94</sup> See footnote 18, p. 12.

against the Sudeten Germans and in its building up of a Czech National State as a firmly established base of operations against the Reich. It practically abolishes the constitution of the State, and in the final issue transfers all power to the "Supreme Council for the Defense of the State," thereby placing it in the hands of its President, Beneš. By the creation of a so-called "*Frontier Zone*," which is practically co-extensive with the Sudeten German region, an area is created on the territory of the State under the permanent sway of exceptional legislation. In addition, the National Defense Law creates the category of "*politically unreliable persons*," whereby the assessment of political unreliability is left to the unfettered judgment of political officials. This provides a further opportunity for the political and economic liquidation of any Sudeten German.

The construction of the so-called *National Defense Works*, beginning with simple barbed-wire obstacles and systems of concrete emplacements and extending to a chain of heavily fortified positions, is in the first place a specific burden laid upon the Sudeten German frontier region. In carrying out these fortification works, land and property are ruthlessly expropriated or, alternatively, transferred to German communes and private proprietors to finance the prescribed undertakings *out of their own resources*. Latterly, however, fortification works and concrete machine-gun and artillery emplacements have also been erected against the "enemy within," against German towns and villages!

Teplitz-Schönau was neither an isolated action planned by the Czech police, nor one originating with the Sudeten German Party. It was rather one of those incidents which occur more or less openly every day and everywhere in the territory inhabited by Sudeten Germans as a product of that internal and external situation already characterized of a system existing in Czechoslovakia. Only, in Teplitz-Schönau, in place of simple members of the movement, party leaders and deputies were struck at. Yet further, Teplitz-Schönau derived its significance from the fact that the occurrences were known in their importance as symptoms and because they found an echo throughout the whole German world, a fact registered with gratitude by every single Sudeten German.

We avail ourselves of the opportunity of the Teplitz-Schönau incidents to record the fact that today the broad masses of the Sudeten Germans themselves no longer believe in a compromise with the Czech people within the Czech State. This fact is a political reality no less than the will for destruction on the Czech side. *The following utterances of recent date are significant for the development of events:*

The chairman of the second largest Czech party, the Czech Social Democratic *Deputy Hampel*, stated that "the fate neither of the Czechs nor of the Sudeten Germans will be decided within the Czechoslovak State."



The chief of the President's Chancery, *Dr. Josef Schiessl*, stated on November 8, 1937, to a deputation of Sudeten German lawyers that "the consequence of today's political situation would be a struggle to the uttermost between the two camps." "The two camps face one another, brow to brow; it will be war to the knife." "The heroic spirit of German youth, however, must be utterly broken."

The education and formation of political opinion among the Czechs, the systematic agitation carried out against the Reich and National Socialism, have had the result that even the common man in the Czech camp does not believe in the possibility of any understanding with the Sudeten Germans. But every Czech who has settled in Sudeten German territory and is employed there regards himself, not as the representative of the democratic principle of his democratic State, but as representing the Czech people, and as executive organ of the Czech hatred of the Germans and of the Czech will to destroy them. In every administrative official, nay in every member of the Sudeten German Party, he beholds the representative of National Socialism and an executive organ of the policy of the Reich.

## II

The political outlook of the Czech dictators, and also of the Czech people, is determined by their recognition of the fact that since the Führer's seizure of power the political development of Central Europe, too, has entered upon a new stage. Reliable information proves that Beneš is resolved to settle the Sudeten German question in terms of the policy of the Czech people and State by the complete destruction of the Sudeten Germans. The foregoing account of the policy of Czechoslovakia against the Sudeten Germans does not by any means give an exhaustive picture of all the possibilities contemplated in the plan of Beneš.

The responsible leaders of the Sudeten German Party are of the opinion that the Sudeten German Party has also reached a stage which makes it necessary to subject the foundations of their policy to a thorough examination of all its principles and to bring their future political attitude into harmony with the policy of the Reich and of its constituent elements. In the following pages certain immediate questions affecting the policy of the Sudeten German racial groups or of the Sudeten German Party are exhibited before the background of the situation as shown in the first chapter.

1) The Sudeten German racial group is neither a "minority," in the sense of the "minorities" of the treaty structure of Versailles and

St. Germain, nor a "racial group" [*Volksgruppe*] in the sense, for instance, of the German racial group in Hungary or Rumania.

(a) The Sudeten Germans constitute in *Czechoslovakia*, which comprises six races, a quarter of the whole population, and among these races they hold the first place on the score of cultural, economic, and political achievements and capacities.

(b) The Sudeten Germans are established in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, broadly depending upon the mother people in the Reich and in immediate relationship with it.

(c) The Sudeten Germans are today imbued with National Socialist principles and organized in a comprehensive, unitary, National Socialist Party, based on the Führer concept.

(d) The Sudeten Germans are conscious of their particular political duty toward the anti-German mission and the policy of *Czechoslovakia* as ordained by the West and the Bolshevik East, and are resolved to be a factor in the National Socialist policy of the Reich.

2) The policy hitherto pursued by the Sudeten German Party has made the following contribution to *the new order of Europe in the spirit of National Socialism* and of the policy of the Reich:

(a) The Sudeten German Party, which today numbers more than 600,000 organized members, and which at the elections of May 19, 1935, was able to unite within its ranks actually more than 70 percent of the Sudeten German voters, and is thus the legitimate spokesman of the Sudeten Germans, has become in its struggles the unequivocal proof of the injustice of the Versailles Treaty structure.

(b) By the mere fact of coming forward as the strongest party in *Czechoslovakia*, and at the same time as a party of opposition to the system of government and by its planned propaganda within the country and abroad, the Sudeten German Party has destroyed the fiction of the Czech National State; by its evolution it has refuted the claim of the Czech State to be politically consolidated on national, social, and economic foundations and has materially weakened the political and military value of *Czechoslovakia* as an ally.

(c) As opposed to the attitude of the Sudeten German splinter parties, the Sudeten German Party has enlisted the strength of the Sudeten Germans *against* the anti-German foreign policy of *Czechoslovakia*. It has combated the one-sided policy of alliance alike with France and with Russia, and so deprived the Prague Government of the opportunity created by the Activist Movement of 1926<sup>95</sup> of playing off the Sudeten Germans against the policy of the Reich.

<sup>95</sup> Prior to 1926 the Czech parties had been united in one coalition, and the remaining parties of other nationalities were ranged against them in opposition; the cleavage after 1926 changed and developed along mainly political lines, and parties of different nationalities (e.g., Czech and German Agrarians or Socialists) went into the lobby side by side. This change was shown in the composition of Svehla's Cabinet of October 1926, which contained for the first time two German Ministers.

(d) Above all the Sudeten German Party has, by means of its struggles within the State and by its propaganda, drawn the attention of the interested States to Czechoslovakia as a State tainted with Bolshevism and as providing a basis for Bolshevik operations in Central Europe. On the other hand, however, it has been at pains to keep in check among the Sudeten Germans, and so in a region on the margin of the German world, the Bolshevik fungoid growth in its possibilities of development. Today the Sudeten German Party represents the third greatest anti-Bolshevist fighting party in Europe.

(e) The Sudeten German Party has by its work of political education and organization exorcised the danger of any "Czechoslovakizing" of the Sudeten Germans, that is of treating them in accordance with the Swiss model [*Verschweizerung*], and has imbued the racial group and their sphere of life with National Socialist principles.

In the face of "democratic" world opinion the Sudeten German Party has given proof that the National Socialist order of leadership and following corresponds with the law of the inner life of the German people, for not only has it been called into existence among the Sudeten Germans by their own free will, but in the face of pressure by the Czech State.

3) The Sudeten German Party must camouflage its profession of National Socialism as an ideology of life and as a political principle. As a party in the democratic parliamentary system of Czechoslovakia, it must, outwardly, alike in writing and by word of mouth, in its manifestoes and in the press, in Parliament, in its own structure, and in the organization of the Sudeten German element, employ democratic terminology and democratic parliamentary methods. In consequence, it may appear to uninitiated German circles of the Reich to be disunited and unreliable. This disunion, however, cannot be avoided so long as there still exists the necessity of a legal party, and the existence of such a party in Czechoslovakia presupposes the profession of democratic principles.

The apparent lack of unity of the Sudeten German Party is intensified by the circumstance that at heart it desires nothing more ardently than the incorporation of Sudeten German territory, nay of the whole Bohemian, Moravian, and Silesian area, within the Reich, but that outwardly it must stand for the preservation of Czechoslovakia and for the integrity of its frontiers, and must try to display some apparently genuine aim in the sphere of internal politics to justify its political struggle.

Although the leaders of the Sudeten German Party were from the outset clear, as a result of their profound political experience, that an understanding between Germans and Czechs in Czechoslovakia is not possible, it was necessary at the first great political demonstration of the Party at Böhmisches-Leipa in 1934<sup>96</sup> to put for-

<sup>96</sup> The first big public meeting at Böhmisches-Leipa (Česka Lipa) in October 1934, of the new party—the *Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront (S.H.F.)*—which Henlein founded at the end of 1933 and which became the Sudeten German Party in 1935. The meeting, attended by 20,000 persons, was the first such Sudeten German demonstration, and was addressed by Henlein with his first statement of party policy.

ward an *understanding* as the aim of practical politics and to introduce in 1937 the so-called "laws for racial minority protection" ["*Volksschutzgesetze*"]<sup>97</sup> to satisfy the demand for Sudeten German *autonomy*. Only thus was it possible to put the Czechs in the wrong before the world and to undertake the presentation by means of propaganda of the Sudeten German question before the Guarantee Powers of the Minority Protection Treaty of St. Germain, but above all in the eyes of the British.

To the same order of ideas belongs the submission of the "*Sudeten German grievances*" regarding the *Machnik Decree* to the League of Nations,<sup>98</sup> whereby evidence was to be adduced of the inadequacy of the League of Nations for the settlement of the minority problem.

Today, however, the Sudeten German Party knows that, in view of the developments indicated in the first part of our survey, it will become increasingly difficult to put forward an aim in internal politics which can be represented as a *practical political* aim even with the bare resemblance of a possibility of achievement in the eyes of serious foreign observers, to say nothing of the Sudeten German following. *From the standpoint of practical politics it has become senseless to advocate autonomy of the Sudeten German territory, since it is this very region that has been made the concrete wall and fortified belt of the Czechoslovak State.* It goes without saying that, if this concrete wall in the German region is known by public opinion throughout Europe to exist, the continued representation by propagandist means of the autonomy aim must become increasingly difficult for the Party.

After putting this on record it might seem as though it would have been better tactics—this is also the opinion of certain Reich-German circles—if the Sudeten German Party had supported the policy of the so-called *compromise* of February 18, 1937. It must be recorded that this compromise came into existence under the pressure of the Sudeten German Party development in the Sudeten German camp; that from the outset it was conceived entirely without the cooperation of the Sudeten German Party and exclusively against that Party; that from the outset the promises were not meant seriously on the Czech side, a fact which has in the meantime been demonstrated and confirmed by the Sudeten German partners to the compromise themselves; that with the compromise the Prague regime wished to put forward before the world evidence of its active and just policy toward the minorities and of the internal consolidation of the State; that the compromise was addressed to the baseness and opportunism existing in the midst of the Sudeten Germans, thus to bring new recruits to the cadres of the Sudeten German rump parties, the Agrarians, the German Catholic Clerical Party, and the German Social Democrats, who had already shown themselves and who still continue to show themselves to be willing tools for use against the Reich and against National Socialism.

The compromise was an attack on the inner powers of resistance of the Sudeten Germans. It was supported by the kind of argument

<sup>97</sup> See footnote 10, p. 6.

<sup>98</sup> See footnote 90, p. 51.

of certain German circles in the Reich that recommended the Sudeten Germans, in view of the speedily approaching solution of the Sudeten German question from within the Reich, to pursue a policy of pure opportunism, a line of development which must lead to the utter demoralization of the Sudeten German racial group, or to serious moral confusion in the firmly knit framework of the racially militant Sudeten Germans.

4) As already set forth it will become increasingly difficult for the Sudeten German Party to put forward an internal political aim as the objective for the struggle and endeavor of the movement with even the semblance of a possibility of achievement.

This development entails: a strengthening of that outlook among the Sudeten Germans which starts from the conviction that in the conditions cited it will be increasingly senseless to assume the burdens of petty drudgery, the difficulties of internal construction work among the Sudeten Germans and the dangers of the everyday political struggle; and a strengthening in their attitude of those sections which are trying to establish the conviction that the time has come for illegal action.

This development receives encouragement from the Reich, as may be illustrated from two examples:

(a) by the fact that among the wide masses of the population of the Reich sympathy with the fate of the Sudeten Germans has become general. The Sudeten Germans, particularly in the frontier districts, are in respect of the manifold relations arising out of ties of blood and economic and social activities, strengthened in their belief that the whole German people stands behind them in their struggle for existence. Over and above this the opinion is stated generally and in plain language that the military liquidation of Czechoslovakia is only a question of months. As this view, however, is openly expressed alike by the lower and higher executive officials of the Party, of the fighting associations, and of the Reich, in dealing with Sudeten Germans without regard to their position in the Sudeten German Party or the racial group, wide sections of the membership of the Party are already invoking "guarantors" among Reich-Germans. In this connection the fact should not be underestimated that for the Sudeten German in his faith in the Reich the humblest customs official, SA or SS man, appears in the character of a representative of the Reich and of the Führer's will.

(b) The comments upon the Teplitz-Schönau episodes in the press and on the radio have also confirmed the Sudeten Germans in their view of the definite interest felt by the Reich in their fate. It has, however, also given rise to the idea that the press campaign on the part of the Reich will be followed by definite action against Czechoslovakia. In this connection we may observe that the attunement of the press and radio activity to the party line of the Sudeten German Party seems defective alike in form and content, and would point out that the sudden interruption of the press campaign on the one hand deprived the

activity of its value and, on the other, lent color to the Czech argument that the Sudeten Germans are only an incidental object of National Socialist propaganda, with which the serious foreign policy of the Reich has nothing to do. This view was, in fact, systematically and successfully expounded by Czech circles when in contact with the foreign Legations in Prague.

5) Every form of Sudeten German policy presupposes the unity of the movement for political combat in the form of the Sudeten German Party, and the subordination of the whole system of Sudeten German association (associations for education and defense, professional organizations, trade-unions, etc.) under the political leadership of the racial group.

The unity of the racial group can *only* be assured by the Sudeten German Party and only under the leadership of Konrad Henlein.

The Prague Government is clear that a unified Sudeten German racial leadership decidedly obstructs its internal political aims and impedes its propaganda for foreign policy. Above all, it sees in the Sudeten German Party the upholder of the militant spirit of the Sudeten Germans and the bulwark of active resistance. With the extension into every sphere of life of the predominance of the State and with the increasingly rapid progress of State influence over all forms of life, the existence of a multiplicity of parties and the coalition system hitherto prevalent has had to be modified in Czechoslovakia as well. Accordingly, the creation of a *single* State party as the only authorized political representative of the will of the whole population is being considered in Czech Right Wing and Left Wing circles. Hence, Beneš is trying systematically to smash, or at least to minimize, the Sudeten German Party.

(a) The German Government parties and every newly founded party in the Sudeten German camp receive systematic material and political support. This support has been conferred in turn upon the "Labor Party" of a certain Kopatschek; the "Labor Party" of the former deputy of the German National Socialist Labor Party, Simm; the small group of Zientek, who had been expelled from the Sudeten German Party; and other parties, either already founded or in contemplation, which have in the meantime been liquidated by the Sudeten German Party.

(b) The Government quite obviously tolerates every "radical" tendency among the Sudeten Germans outside the Sudeten German Party, and also those group formations of individuals within the Sudeten German Party which desire to come forward as agitators, wearing a special National Socialist emblem, and thus trying to exploit Sudeten German mentality, because it assumes that the structure of leadership in the Sudeten German Party will be thrown into disorder, that the leadership of the Sudeten German Party will be weakened by disputes within the Party in its capacity for external action, and that thereby the Sudeten German Party will be compelled of its own initiative to advocate more radical tendencies. More radical tendencies, however, would again place the Government in a position to

justify measures against the Sudeten Germans in the eyes of the outside world and of persons of moderate views.

(c) Further, by the exertion of direct official pressure or by encouraging the opportunism of certain Sudeten German circles, the Government encourages all efforts forcing the Sudeten German educational associations, the defense unions, the professional organizations, the trade-unions, and other organizations to play into the hands of the enemies of the Sudeten German leaders, and thus to entrench itself against the Sudeten German Party, or at least to diminish the influence of the Party among the Sudeten Germans, or, on the other hand, to attract these organizations in virtue of their statutory, allegedly "nonpolitical" character out of the political front altogether, and to keep them out of the great political dispute with our Czech enemy (reception of the leaders of racial unions by Beneš in 1936).

That these are the intentions of the Czech Government is borne out by the following facts:

Opposition elements, inside and outside the ranks of the Sudeten German Party, openly assert or allow it to appear by means of a systematic whispering campaign that they have "relations" with elements in the Reich or that they have received instructions to carry out a task involving a definite outlook upon life and politics among the Sudeten Germans, and above all in their dealings with the Party—assertions by which they seek to legitimize their activities in opposition to the Sudeten German Party.

In the face of such methods the leaders of the Sudeten German Party are powerless, because, in view of the delicate and confidential nature of the affair, and also from a sense of responsibility toward the Reich, they cannot take part in the conflict with counterarguments without putting it in the power of the Czech Government to lay hands upon all concerned.

In this connection it may be put on record that the assimilation process of more than 1,200,000 supporters and more than 600,000 organized members, who have been brought together from the most varied camps during 4 years of conflict and constructive labor, is by no means so complete that critically minded persons in the Reich could not perhaps point to shortcomings in the National Socialist attitude of individual Party members. Against this admission, however, there stands the incontrovertible fact that the effecting of this process of assimilation under the watchword of "Union of all Sudeten Germans under the leadership of Konrad Henlein" was necessary, and that the leaders and administrators of the Sudeten German Party were answerable for the National Socialist outcome of this process.

## III

This review of the situation of the Sudeten Germans and of the Sudeten German Party, and of the political problems facing them, has been undertaken in order to show:

1. The urgency of the Sudeten German question.
2. The need for detaching the Sudeten German question as an urgent political issue from the so-called sphere of racial German questions, or from the questions arising in connection with the German racial groups in Europe.
3. The urgent need for a discussion of fundamental principles between the leaders of the Reich and the leaders of the German racial groups, in regard to the further conduct of the policy of the Sudeten German Party.

The report submitted above will be constantly supplemented by special reports.

## No. 24

1941/434936

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy in France*

BERLIN, November 30, 1937.  
(Pol. IV 6005)

With reference to report A 4094 of November 16, 1937.<sup>99</sup>

Information from Rome was confirmed by a report from the Embassy, inasmuch as an account is available, based on a communication from a confidential agent in the Palazzo Chigi,<sup>1</sup> that Hodza has received official confirmation that France would take military action against Germany if units of the SS or the SA were to cross the frontier into Czechoslovak territory. As against this, the French Government had expressed a much less decisive attitude toward an insurrection of the Sudeten Germans.

However, in a conversation which he had on the 16th of this month with Ambassador von Hassell<sup>2</sup> on the same subject, the Italian Foreign Minister doubted whether France was really wedded to this view. In any case, he did not think that France in such an event would be able to decide on war with Germany for a cause which did not directly affect French interests.

The opinion of Count Ciano as to the inability of the French Government to reach a decision is not subscribed to here without question. It would be risky to prophesy today what factors and

<sup>99</sup> Document No. 21, p. 47.

<sup>1</sup> The Italian Foreign Ministry.

<sup>2</sup> German Ambassador in Rome (Quirinal).



considerations will, in the last resort, influence the decision of the French Government.

For the Minister:  
VON WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 25

1532/374290-92

*The German Ambassador in Austria (Papen) to the Führer and Chancellor*

A 7605

VIENNA, December 1, 1937.

Subject: Prime Minister Beneš on the future of Czechoslovakia.

Secretary of State Dr. Schmidt informed me today, with a request for secrecy, of a report by the Austrian Minister in Prague, Marek, on a long conversation with President Beneš.

Beneš commenced by saying that he would never yield to pressure from abroad. He was, however, ready of his own free will to go as far as he possibly could to clear up the situation in Central Europe. Only a few days ago he had received a letter from Henlein in which it was proposed to him that the principle of the National State should be abandoned and that Czechoslovakia should be turned into a Nationalities State. He would not answer this letter. Herr Henlein had forgotten that he, Beneš, had never spoken of a National State but that it had been Kramarsch<sup>3</sup> rather who, at the time of the birth of Czechoslovakia, had wished to embody the expressions "National State" and "national language" in the new constitution. In the end it had been he, Beneš, who had prevented this formulation. He considered himself a real expert in political science and, as such, realized that everyone understood differently the word "autonomy." It was the same with the conception "National State" or "Nationalities State." In the long run, it was not a question of terminology but of arriving at concrete results. If Herr Henlein maintains that Germans constitute 21 percent of the population of Czechoslovakia, then it was a matter for discussion whether they should receive a 21-percent share in all State responsibilities. The treaty concluded at Pittsburgh<sup>4</sup> by his predecessor, Masaryk, had obviously been a mistake. (Masaryk had then entered into an agree-

<sup>3</sup> Karel Kramář, joint leader with Masaryk of the Czechoslovaks prior to 1918, and one of the representatives of the new Republic at the Paris Conference in 1919.

<sup>4</sup> The treaty or convention between the Czechs and Slovaks of America, sponsored by the United States Government under President Wilson and signed at Pittsburgh (U.S.A.) on June 30, 1918, by Thomas Masaryk and the representatives of the Slovak League and other Czechoslovak societies in America. The treaty expressed itself in favor of Czechoslovak unity, together with a considerable degree of autonomy for Slovakia within the future Republic.

ment, after a discussion with Wilson, that, in the establishment of the new State, Slovakia should enjoy a special cultural position.)

In its foreign policy, Czechoslovakia would also strive in the future for the greatest integrity toward Germany. Her close relations to Russia, which were always being thrown in his teeth, had nothing whatsoever to do with any similarity of ideologies; they arose from the necessity of the balance of power in Europe and from the realization that Russia represented a political reality, regardless of the regime which was in the saddle there. He hoped that no agreement between Germany and Russia would materialize for a very long time, since such an understanding would be the worst possible thing that could happen to Europe, for it would mean neither more nor less than a division of Europe into spheres of interest.

Comments then followed on the negotiations which are taking place at the moment between Vienna and Prague on the question of the treatment of Austrians in the Czech frontier areas.

In the opinion of State Secretary Dr. Schmidt, the conversation described above provides a proof that Beneš has grasped the necessity of finding a workable solution to the minorities question. It is significant that he now makes Kramars<sup>5</sup> responsible for the "National State" and terms Masaryk's Pittsburgh Treaty a failure.

The State Secretary added that Beneš always talked very openly with Minister Marek, as he regarded him as half Czech.

PAPEN

## No. 26

2369/494345-46

### *Memorandum*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

(e. o. Pol. IV 6544)

For the office of the Reich Minister.

I had a conversation this morning with Herr Konrad Henlein at his request. Herr Henlein remarked that he regretted most keenly the measures which he had recently been forced to take against members of the old D.N.S.A.P.,<sup>6</sup> but that he had been compelled to this course in order to maintain discipline, and the way of reconciliation had no longer stood open to him after the recent events. He had already discussed this matter with *Obergruppenführer* Lorenz<sup>7</sup> and had reached an agreement of views with him. He hoped, however,

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 3, p. 63.

<sup>6</sup> The *Deutsche Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei*—the name of the early National Socialist Party in the German part of Bohemia and Austria prior to 1920.

<sup>7</sup> Head of the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*.

that his measures would not lead to any wider schism within the Party. Peace and order would perhaps very quickly be restored if the competent authorities in the Reich would vouchsafe to him, as formerly, their trust and support. To this end he considered the settlement of two problems to be necessary:

(1) The recall of Herr von Chamier, press adviser at the German Legation in Prague.<sup>8</sup> Herr v. Chamier had been in touch for years with circles in opposition to Henlein and strengthened them by his own hostile attitude, which was recently proved by sharply critical remarks. Chamier's further stay injured Henlein's relations with the Legation, in themselves good, and, in particular those with Minister Eisenlohr, with whom he, Henlein, had hitherto always maintained good relations.

(2) The prohibition in Germany of the opposition paper *Der Aufbruch*.<sup>9</sup> He, Henlein, had put this point to *Obergruppenführer* Lorenz, who was willing to act in conformity with his wish.

I replied to Herr Henlein that it had been keenly regretted in Germany also that a break with such personalities as Kaspar and Haider<sup>10</sup> could not have been avoided, especially as they were people who, in the past, had rendered services to the movement. I expressed at the same time the hope that perhaps at a later period matters might be adjusted. For the moment it was essential, according to what had been told me as the general opinion of the responsible Party authorities, to strengthen Henlein's authority in order to obviate any deepening of the schism. As regards the two special requests put forward by Henlein, I pointed out to him that primarily the Reich Ministry of Propaganda was competent to deal with them. Herr von Chamier of course belongs to the above Ministry. I observed further that, as matters were, Herr von Chamier himself might be anxious for a change of post.

Should SS-*Obergruppenführer* Lorenz, head of the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*, concur in Henlein's ideas, then the latter's two wishes for contact with the Legation could be recommended to the Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda.

Herr Henlein showed great confidence in future developments. I informed him that we had no intention of interfering in the internal disputes of the Sudeten German Party, that our desire was that

<sup>8</sup> Marginal note by Neurath: "This request was also submitted to me by H."

<sup>9</sup> The organ of the extreme radical National Socialist faction of the Sudeten German Party, led by Kaspar. Between this faction, the Henleinist group, and the *Kameradschaftsbund* (of which Rutha was formerly the leader) there was a long-standing feud.

<sup>10</sup> Both were members of the extreme Nazi wing of the Sudeten German Party. Kaspar was a deputy in the Czechoslovak Parliament and leader of the *Aufbruch*. The feud between this group and the Henleinist majority led to the expulsion from the party of Kaspar and Dr. Jonak, another leader of the group, and their trial before a party Court of Honor at the beginning of December.

unity and order should be maintained and that naturally the responsibility must remain with him as leader.

ALTENBURG

BERLIN, December 9, 1937.

No. 27

664/257174

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 193 of December 10

PRAGUE, December 10, 1937—1:55 p.m.

Received December 10, 1937—4:40 p.m.

With reference to your telegram 123 of December 4.<sup>11</sup>

Krofta, with whom I spoke yesterday regarding the coming visit of Delbos,<sup>12</sup> denied that any further treaty obligations, other than those already existing, were contemplated. The plan of a general pact of assistance between the Little Entente and France was torpedoed, whatever journalists might chatter about it. Beneš had already told King Carol during the latter's visit to Seelowitz<sup>13</sup> that Czechoslovakia no longer pursued this plan. The other members of the Little Entente would assist Czechoslovakia in case of war, even without a pact, if they considered such action to be necessary in their own interest; conversely, they would undertake nothing in spite of a pact. Between Czechoslovakia and France, too, nothing new had been agreed upon, nor would there be in the future. Written report on last point follows.

EISENLOHR

No. 28

1941/484967-68

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 1. b. 8.

PRAGUE, December 10, 1937.

(Pol. IV 6530)

With reference to the instruction of November 30, 1937 (Pol. IV 6005)<sup>14</sup> and to the further telegram of today.<sup>15</sup>

Subject: Franco-Czech relations.

<sup>11</sup> Not printed.

<sup>12</sup> French Foreign Minister.

<sup>13</sup> See footnote 61, p. 38.

<sup>14</sup> Document No. 24, p. 62.

<sup>15</sup> Presumably document No. 27, *supra*.

## POLITICAL REPORT

I had the opportunity yesterday of asking Foreign Minister Krofta whether there really was anything in the rumors that Czechoslovakia and France had given a broader interpretation to the existing treaty to cover other contingencies than those previously envisaged. Krofta in reply gave me the following information, with the urgent request for the strictest secrecy on all matters which concerned his Prime Minister:

Hodza, who wavered between the desire to reach an understanding with Germany at any price and sudden attacks of panic because of Germany, in September had been terrified by reports which seemed to come from all quarters and were to the effect that some sort of a "Czechoslovak Legion" was standing ready in Germany to march into Bohemia. Hodza had discussed this with the French Prime Minister, who had come to Prague for the funeral of Masaryk, and had then telephoned to Krofta, in Geneva at the time, with the request that he should arrange with the French statesmen in Paris an expansion of the existing treaty in case Germany committed such an act of aggression. He himself had not shared the anxiety of Hodza but had not wished to contradict him, and had therefore prepared a "note," on the lines of his telephone conversation with Hodza, to be exchanged with the French Government with the object of widening the treaty. He had discussed the affair in Paris with Blum and Delbos, and had in so doing given expression both to Hodza's view and to his own divergence from it. He had not even presented the draft of the note but had agreed with Delbos that he, Delbos, should make a public statement calculated to dispel the anxiety which reigned among the Czechoslovak public. Delbos had at first had the intention of submitting to be questioned in the Chamber for this purpose, but had later abandoned this idea, and, instead, had made the speech at Lille at the end of October,<sup>16</sup> to which Krofta had referred in his exposé of foreign policy before the Parliamentary Committee of Foreign Affairs. Delbos, in his speech at Lille, had expressed himself in very general terms and had not mentioned Czechoslovakia by name, which had much pleased Krofta. Beneš, too, who had not at first wished to prevent Hodza's excitable activities, as he could not always be putting the brake on him, had been extremely satisfied that the affair had taken this peaceful course.

With this account of Krofta's, the truth of which cannot, according to all our own information, be doubted, this question ought now be cleared up and finally settled.

EISENLOHR

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<sup>16</sup> On October 29 at the Radical Socialist Party Congress.

## No. 29

2379/498000

*Minute*

BERLIN, December 10, 1937.

The Czechoslovak Minister told me today that Herr Eisenlohr will shortly be handed a memorandum in Prague in which those measures are enumerated which were now being adopted for the immediate or progressive tranquilization of German-Czechoslovak press relations. Three stages are contemplated:

1. Immediate suppression of from 2 to 3 *émigré* organs, to be followed by further suppression of similar publications.
2. Suppression of the *Neue Vorwärts*<sup>17</sup> within a few weeks.
3. Sobering influence on the language of the Czechoslovak press.

The Minister believed that he had fulfilled the wishes of Funk, the former State Secretary and present Reich Minister,<sup>18</sup> with these measures. He wished to repeat directly and in person to Herr Funk and, if the latter considered it opportune, in the presence of Dr. Dietrich,<sup>19</sup> the communication he had made to me. He requested that Herr Funk should be informed accordingly and be asked to name an early date on which he would receive M. Mastny.

M. Mastny added that all these measures had naturally been adopted on the condition of reciprocity. He hoped that, as a result of this press truce, a further tidying up and relaxation of our general relations would take place, and that the further measures contemplated might follow step by step.

M. Mastny claims to have observed a decline in Czechoslovak chauvinism during his last visit to Prague.

WEIZSÄCKER

[Note by Aschman:] I assume that the Press Department will pursue the matter further with Reich Minister Funk.

<sup>17</sup> The *Neue Vorwärts*, a weekly published in Prague, was the official organ of the Executive of the Social Democratic Party of Germany in exile. The offices of the paper were transferred from Prague to Paris early in 1938.

<sup>18</sup> Funk succeeded Schacht as Reich Minister for Economics on November 26.

<sup>19</sup> Of the Press Department of the Reich Propaganda Ministry.

## No. 30

2369/494347-48

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 1. b. 10.

PRAGUE, December 17, 1937.  
(zu Pol. IV 6779)

Subject: Delbos' visit to Prague.

Conversation with Hodza about German minority.

The Czechoslovak Prime Minister mentioned during a conversation yesterday that it had been stated in the foreign press that the Czechoslovak Government would hand the French Foreign Minister<sup>20</sup> a memorandum on the minority question on the occasion of his visit to Prague. He apparently had in mind here a report similar to that of the Paris correspondent of the *DAZ* in its Reich edition of the 17th instant. Hodza characterized this report as inaccurate and declared that it was not intended to hand M. Delbos any written material on the Sudeten German question; neither had anything of the kind been prepared.

In this connection Hodza signified also the intention to resume contact with the Sudeten German Party soon after Christmas. With reference to this he reminded me that once recently he had expressed regret to me that Konrad Henlein stayed mostly at Asch and came so rarely to Prague; he (Hodza) was prepared to continue the contact established with Henlein through the conversation in the month of September and to have a thorough discussion with him at least once a month.

I took the opportunity to say to M. Hodza that a contact of that kind, however useful it might be *per se*, could, after all, only prove really fruitful if the Czechoslovak Government should decide to go very considerably further in their concessions to the Sudeten German section of the population than would appear to accord with their present attitude. Upon this Hodza made the very interesting remark that the Government in their concessions to the minority could only go so far as they felt able in view of the internal cohesion of the State and its external security. Should things in Europe become more peaceful and the way cleared for a *détente* between the Reich and Czechoslovakia, the concessions to the minority could be adjusted according to the measure of external security, which would

<sup>20</sup> Yvon Delbos. He made a tour of Eastern European capitals in December, having political conversations in each. He visited Warsaw (December 7), Bucharest (December 8), Belgrade (December 12), and Prague (December 15-18), in the last named having conversations with President Beneš, Hodza, the Prime Minister, and Krofta, the Foreign Minister.

be revealed by diplomatic soundings regarding our relationship to his country.

While, therefore, our thesis is: "Put your house in order, satisfy your minority, then we can get on together," and while up till now the Czechoslovak thesis has demanded, first, external security through a stable relationship with the Reich before decisive concessions could be granted to the minorities, Hodza is now thinking of a middle path in which both conceptions might be united. The possibility is not to be excluded that this line of thought might play a certain part in the conversations with Delbos.

EISENLOHR

### No. 31

1940/434586-87

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 199 of December 17

PRAGUE, December 17, 1937—2:35 p.m.

Received December 17, 1937—4:25 p.m.

(Pol. IV 6643)

Reply to telegraphic instruction No. 127 of December 16 and in continuation of telegram of the 15th (No. 196).<sup>22</sup>

Met Hodza yesterday evening at Foreign Minister's dinner in honor of Delbos and carried out instructions. Hodza informed me confidentially that draft law on dissolution of parties was buried in subcommission. Consideration by Parliament would be continued at earliest in January, by which time poison fangs would be extracted from draft. In this matter, as in Jägerndorf question,<sup>23</sup> nothing would happen which would in any way imperil future *détente* vis-à-vis the Reich. In Jägerndorf matter he gave assurance of the swiftest settlement and repeated promise to satisfy us almost 100 percent.

Conversation which followed with Foreign Ministry expert revealed that the latter had not succeeded in the effort to achieve immediate actual reinstatement of the discharged persons through the

<sup>22</sup> Neither printed.

<sup>23</sup> These incidents at Jägerndorf in northeastern Moravia were cases of the expropriation of tenants and owners of land for purposes connected with defense, which the General Staff were empowered to carry out under the Czech National Defense Law. Property could also be pulled down or be prohibited from being built under the same law, whose application particularly affected those frontier districts where fortifications were being constructed, and naturally also principally affected Sudeten Germans as persons suspected of being politically unreliable.



interministerial commission, because legal rules of procedure rendered this impossible. Alteration of law itself, too, was not attainable now; therefore way of favorable judgment must be adopted and an appeal should be lodged. Besides this, employer must be induced to reinstate ousted [employees]. Requisite steps will be taken by me to influence employers and lodge appeal. As nevertheless it is possible that this category of discharged workers are already in Germany and not disposed to return, or are economically not in a position to await settlement of appeal, I have no objection to reprisals, as thereby places will be made free with us for these displaced people. Other reprisals, perhaps with the object of influencing will of Czechoslovak Government, would therefore be to no purpose and even harmful, because Czechoslovak Government are in any case willing to compensate as far as possible harm caused by military authorities.

EISENLOHR

### No. 32

664/257177-78

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

PRAGUE, December 17, 1937.

(Pol. II 3344)

The toasts exchanged at the Foreign Minister's dinner yesterday by Krofta and Delbos did not rise above the level of customary conventional utterances. Pointing more into the future was an address of Hodza's given yesterday morning at a celebration of the twentieth anniversary of France's recognition of the Czechoslovak Army. Hodza emphasized among other things that Czechoslovakia lay at the point of contact between Germans and Slavs, at a point, therefore, where there was a possibility of conflict, as well as a possibility of bringing about the friendly life of these great races side by side. The Czechoslovaks had understood how to fight, but they also understood how to come to terms, and they wished to number themselves among those who had a right to assist in establishing a new peace in this part of the world.

After the dinner Delbos held a lengthy conversation with three deputies of the Sudeten German Party who were presented to him by the head of the German Department of the Foreign Ministry, who had been appointed to accompany the French Foreign Minister.

Delbos did not discuss German-Czechoslovak relations with me but rather his wish to bring about a *détente* between France and Germany. The ex-servicemen of both sides must be made use of in this. The idea of promoting peace by beginning a reduction of armaments, together with the abolition of bombing, obtained his full agreement. The Reich Foreign Minister's gesture toward him had made a deep impression in France where people were responsive to such things. France wanted collective negotiations; we, however, bilateral ones. These two viewpoints need not clash with one another; the result and not the method was the main point. Differences of regime, however, could and should not prevent a *détente*. Frenchmen and Germans were the best soldiers in the world; if they agreed with one another, that would make the greatest impression on everyone else. Today a French official was coming to Berlin in order to discuss the possibilities of countering the pernicious influence of the press.

The decisive political discussion between Delbos and Beneš is taking place today at a private luncheon party at Lany, where presumably no one besides Hodza and Krofta will be present. Hodza has promised to inform me confidentially next week of the result, as far as he is able.

EISENLOHR

No. 33

2369/494349-52

*The German Foreign Ministry to Certain German Missions Abroad*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, December 18, 1937.

(Pol. II 3285)

To the German Embassy: London, Paris, Salamanca, Moscow, Warsaw, Washington.

To the German Legation: Belgrade, Bucharest, Budapest, Brussels, Prague, Vienna, Lisbon.

Enclosed herewith is a memorandum by a usually well informed agent, submitted by the Rome (Quirinal) Embassy, on the subject matter of the conversation which Count Grandi, the Italian Ambassador in London, had with Mr. Eden, the Foreign Secretary, on December 1<sup>24</sup> after the visit of the French Ministers on December 1.<sup>25</sup>

For the Minister:

VON RINTELEN

<sup>24</sup> The conversation took place, according to British sources, December 2. See the documents relevant to this in vol. I, chap. I.

<sup>25</sup> The French Ministers, Camille Chautemps (Prime Minister) and Yvon Delbos (Foreign Minister), visited London on November 29 and 30 to discuss foreign policy, particularly in the light of Lord Halifax's recent conversations in Germany.

[Enclosure]

(Annex to Pol. II 3285/37)

## MEMORANDUM

During the Grandi-Eden conversation, which took place as a result of British initiative, the British Foreign Secretary began by saying that he assumed the Italian Government had been informed direct from Berlin about the Halifax-Hitler conversation.<sup>26</sup> Grandi confirmed this and said that the Italian Government had been informed in detail.

Eden then proceeded as follows:

The object of the Anglo-French conversations of November 29/30 had not been to break up the Rome-Berlin Axis, but rather to seek the bases for an understanding between Great Britain and France on the one hand and Germany and Italy on the other. To attain this goal Britain and France preferred to keep to the methods of Geneva, but were prepared to consider any other way which Berlin and Rome might have to propose. Moreover, the British and French Governments were prepared to make colonial sacrifices as well, but under a very definite assumption, to wit, that Germany on her part should collaborate with a "positive and demonstrative contribution" toward the achievement of a general understanding, which would have to be of such a nature that peace in Europe would be assured for at least a generation. The colonial problem affected not only British and French interests but also those of other states. Britain would also have to consult the Dominions on this question. The preparatory negotiations would, therefore, not exactly be of brief duration. He thought, however, that in the course of a month proposals could be drawn up which Britain and France would jointly submit to Germany.

Grandi raised the question as to what were in fact the demands of Great Britain and France on Germany. Eden replied evasively that nothing final had yet been envisaged; London would first have to agree with Paris regarding precise proposals. Hitler for his part had already declared himself ready to examine afresh the armaments question, and first and foremost that of air armaments.

Eden then continued that Chautemps and Delbos had shown themselves very reasonable regarding the Central European situation. They were ready, as were the responsible leaders of British policy, to examine any revision and any arrangement which could be reached

<sup>26</sup> At Berchtesgaden on November 19, during the visit of Lord Halifax (Lord President of the Council) to Germany, when he also had conversations with other German leaders. Reference should also be made to the relevant documents in vol. 1, chap. 1 on the conversation.

without war. Britain, however, found herself in this matter in a different position from France, who was bound by definite obligations. In the British view the German-Austrian Agreement of July 11, 1936,<sup>27</sup> was satisfactory, as was its functioning. Britain's obligations continued to be limited, as in the past, to the western frontiers. That did not mean, however, that the British Government disinterested themselves in Central European questions. They reserved the right to examine these within the framework of Geneva, but were of the opinion that they did not present any insurmountable difficulties. As regards the German minority in Czechoslovakia, the British Government were prepared to support a solution in conformity with German wishes, namely, on the basis of autonomy. Chautemps and Delbos also adopted the same attitude, and Delbos would endeavor to further a solution on these lines; that would be his main task in Prague.<sup>28</sup>

Passing to Italy, Eden declared that both Chamberlain and he, as well as Chautemps and Delbos, were ready to bring about a clarification of relations with Italy. Paris, however, held the view that the first steps toward a *rapprochement* should be made by London. The British Government for their part were determined to undertake these direct negotiations and wished them to begin at once. A prerequisite for this was, however, in both French and British opinion, that the atmosphere between the three countries should experience a lessening of tension and should improve, as otherwise no clarification could supervene. The French complained of Italian press attacks. The British considered it necessary that Italian propaganda in the Near East against Great Britain should be stopped. If this tension were relaxed, Britain and Italy would immediately be able to examine the questions which appeared to be separating the two countries, and to do this on the basis of the points indicated by the British Government on October 2,<sup>29</sup> including among others the Italian volunteers in Spain, the new troop formations in Libya, as well as the situation in the Near East and the Red Sea. The question of the recognition of the Empire, which was not yet ripe for discussion, must for the moment be put aside.

Grandi asked if that were all he was to tell his Government and added that the question of recognition of Italian sovereignty over Ethiopia was the main one for his Government, whereas all the other points chiefly interested the British Government. He, therefore, did

<sup>27</sup> The Austro-German "Gentlemen's Agreement" of July 11, 1936. See the relevant documents in vol. I, chap. II.

<sup>28</sup> See footnote 20, p. 69.

<sup>29</sup> The British *aide-mémoire* handed to the Italian Government on October 2, dealing with the withdrawal of Italian volunteers from Spain and other outstanding questions between Italy and Great Britain.

not see how, in view of this difference, there was any possibility of initiating useful conversations, since everything was to be discussed except Ethiopia. On this remark by Grandi, Eden repeated his above-mentioned statement and emphasized that an improvement in the atmosphere must first of all take place. Then the negotiations could begin in conformity with the points of October 2. The British Government were, however, not disinclined to examine then any other aspects of the situation which the Italian Government might deem opportune to bring forward.

## No. 34

664/257179-80

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

PRAGUE, December 18, 1937.

(Pol. II 3372)

Delbos lunched with Beneš yesterday.<sup>30</sup> Only Mme. Beneš present, who withdrew after 20 minutes. Then conversation tête-à-tête until 5 o'clock. In the evening dinner at French Legation, Beneš present with his wife. This followed by reception, to which Heads of Missions invited. Beneš called me to him as soon as he noticed me. He stated he attached importance to informing me personally at once that Delbos' visit had passed off satisfactorily, France desired *détente* with us and desired likewise that Czechoslovaks might achieve good relations with the Reich. This was fully in accordance with his own view. He also agreed with Delbos that it did not depend on methods; multilateral or bilateral, both led to the desired result, namely, peaceful settlement. Action by France and Czechoslovakia should be taken on parallel lines. Neither Britain nor France interfered in internal affairs of Czechoslovakia; they were too far away to understand these things. Czechoslovaks would not tolerate such interference either, but would insist on settling their own affairs independently. Problem was very difficult psychologically, therefore could not be solved all at once, but only in stages. His aim was to obtain for the Germans the status of full equality of rights and contentment within the State. Though he would not tolerate any interference, which the Reich had certainly never attempted, still, in view of Germany's natural interest in minority, and on account of common concern that no disturbing factor in our relations should arise from

<sup>30</sup> M. Delbos, the French Foreign Minister, arrived in Prague on December 15 and remained until December 18.

this source, he was always prepared to discuss minority question with us in a friendly fashion. Nothing could be said for the present regarding extent of concessions to minority, only regarding aims and methods for gradual attainment of same. Regarding Czechoslovaks' relations with France, Beneš thought that they were misunderstood in Germany. It was not a question of an offensive or defensive alliance but by its very nature of the guaranteeing by France of the agreements concluded between himself and Stresemann at the time (Locarno).<sup>32</sup>

With regard to psychological difficulties in settlement of minority conditions, I pointed out that Czech officials were behaving like domineering tyrants in the Sudeten German region, which could not possibly inspire minority with confidence. He admitted the need for a fundamental change. As I had the impression that he wished "to be in on" any possible Franco-German *détente*, I warned against approaching us prematurely with request for political negotiations. Atmosphere must be cleared beforehand and confidence return. Beneš agreed and gave the assurance that he would do everything to improve relations and would first of all comply with the requests I had made at the time. On press questions Krofta had of course handed me a memorandum. I replied that I had felt the counterdemands in the memorandum to be disagreeable. It looked as though Czechoslovakia was making her contribution dependent upon certain conditions, although Krofta had toned this down in verbal communication. Beneš stated that my anxiety was without foundation; he had already begun to comply with my requests and would continue to do so without regard to fulfillment of counterdemands.

EISENLOHR

No. 35

1940/434581

*Minute*

(zu Pol. IV 6590)

(Pol. IV 6763)

On the assumption that the State Secretary will not raise any objections to the measures proposed in the present memorandum, a conference with the Gestapo will take place today at noon to dis-

<sup>32</sup> Stresemann, German Chancellor in 1923, was Foreign Minister at the time of the Locarno Agreements (November 1925) and until his death in 1929.

cuss details of the countermeasures. At this conference influence will be exerted to ensure that the German countermeasures conform as closely as possible to the Czech measures and that the Foreign Ministry are kept in constant touch with all phases of the action.

A[LTENBURG]

BERLIN, December 18, 1937.

No. 36

1940/434580

*Minute*

(zu Pol. IV 6590)

(Pol. IV 6643)

The following took part in the conference on the carrying out of countermeasures against Czechoslovak nationals in the Reich, and concerning the incidents at Jägerndorf:<sup>33</sup>

From the Foreign Ministry:

Heinburg (Counselor of Embassy).

Albrecht (Counselor of Embassy).

Altenburg (Counselor of Embassy).

von Hahn (Attaché).

From the *Auslandsorganisation*:

Spahn.

From the Gestapo:

Wetz (*Regierungsrat*).

It was agreed that 28 orders of expropriation should be issued along the same lines of procedure as was provided for in the Czechoslovak National Defense Law,<sup>34</sup> and that 120 summary dismissals should be ordered. The date limit for expropriations and dismissals to be February 1, 1938. The writs to be served by Christmas. The text of the writs will be submitted by the Gestapo to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs beforehand for approval.

ALTENBURG

BERLIN, December 18, 1937.

<sup>33</sup> See footnote 23, p. 70.

<sup>34</sup> See footnote 18, p. 12.

## No. 37

1220/333074

*The German Ambassador in Italy (Hassell) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 363 of December 20

ROME, December 20, 1937.

Received December 22, 1937—6:15 p.m.

(Pol. IV 6719)

Ciano<sup>35</sup> today gave me further information regarding Stoyadinovich visit,<sup>36</sup> namely, that it passed off very well and he had formed a very good impression of Stoyadinovich's determination to adhere to friendship with Italy and Germany. Stoyadinovich had stated quite clearly that Yugoslavia would on no account fight for Czechoslovakia; he had also depicted very vividly grotesque results of the complicated system of mutual ties and commitments desired by France; he, Stoyadinovich, would continue to oppose this just as he had, although in vain, striven for the postponement of Delbos' tour. Government in Belgrade had found eagerness of representative of the great France really embarrassing. Ciano considered that Prince Regent,<sup>37</sup> too, whom he described as a positive factor in Yugoslavia, did not desire any stronger ties with France, while, it must be admitted, he inclined toward Britain for various reasons; on the whole Yugoslav relations with Britain were obviously still close. Ciano added that Stoyadinovich manifestly had an aversion to warlike adventures because, as he said, he was convinced that a country like Serbia could completely collapse and rise again probably once in several thousand years of history, but one could not count on a repetition of this. Ciano believes that Stoyadinovich is inclining more and more toward authoritarian system in internal politics, too, even though realization could only come about slowly and in a specifically Yugoslav fashion. No new agreements of any kind had been concluded during visit.

HASSELL

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<sup>35</sup> Italian Foreign Minister.

<sup>36</sup> Stoyadinovich, Yugoslav Foreign Minister, visited Italy on December 3-8 for conversations resulting from the Italo-Yugoslav Treaty of March 1937.

<sup>37</sup> Prince Paul of Yugoslavia, Regent since the assassination of King Alexander in 1934 and during the minority of Alexander's son, King Peter.



## No. 38

664/257193-214

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

PRAGUE, December 21, 1937.

(Pol. II 3431)

The Delbos visit to Prague<sup>38</sup> with reference to current series of reports.

*Contents:*

Statement by Hodza on the visits to Warsaw, Bucharest, and Belgrade.

The Prague visit a complete success and that without any anti-German flavor.

Hodza's speech at the legionary festival.

Conciliatory tone of the after-dinner speeches.

The final communiqué recommends a *rapprochement* with all neighboring States.

No new treaty agreements with the Allies.

Very little discussed regarding Russia. Russian Minister's<sup>39</sup> reticence.

Germany was the principal theme.

Beneš wishes to come to an agreement with us.

France wishes to do the same.

Bilateral treaties, if possible with guarantee by third party.

Locarno the model.

Krofta has different views from Beneš, desires gradual evolution and at the outset no new treaty with us.

Hodza's chimerical conception.

Delbos has taken up the cause of the minority, despite official denials.

To what extent is the Czechoslovak Government prepared to make further concessions to the Sudeten Germans?

Statements by Beneš, Krofta, and Hodza in this connection.

## POLITICAL REPORT

The following description of the results of the French Foreign Minister's visit to the Czechoslovak capital is based principally on the speeches made and the toasts exchanged on this occasion, the text of which is already available in Berlin; on my conversations with Delbos and Beneš regarding which I have reported by telegram; and, finally, on interviews which I had with Krofta, the Foreign Minister, and Hodza, the Prime Minister. As I should like to emphasize at the outset, the latter described his statements during this

<sup>38</sup> See footnote 20, p. 69.

<sup>39</sup> Sergel Alexandrovsky.

as a "fireside chat," and as the giving of free play to his thoughts, which were in part still not fully developed.

The French Foreign Minister's tour with Prague as its terminus was, as Hodza confirmed to me, originally planned for other purposes. As a counterpart to and a consequence of Halifax's visit to Berlin<sup>42</sup> it had, he considered, assumed a new significance never dreamed of previously. Delbos had apparently not struck the right note in Warsaw. Policy was not shaped there nor in Bucharest. (Hodza used the English expression "shaping the policy".) In Belgrade they had defined and reinterpreted their relations with each other. In Prague on the other hand it had been possible to come down to actual policy. He himself had felt for some time that the moment had come for this; he had also noted a further evolution in Beneš' views and, finally, the situation in France had been of assistance. There can indeed be no doubt that, as Beneš also emphasized to me, from the way it passed off and its results, the visit was a complete success and a great and harmonious manifestation of Franco-Czechoslovak friendship. But what was unusual about it and completely novel for the visit of a French Minister to Prague was the fact that this demonstration of friendship and loyalty to the alliance was not accompanied by any anti-German note. This is evident, not only from the official statements and speeches and the attitude of the press and the public, but also from all the private information which I received regarding the inner proceedings. The occasion on which it was most likely that anti-German feeling might have been expected was the festival arranged by the legionary organizations for the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the autonomous Czechoslovak Army abroad by a decree of Poincaré's. The Heads of Missions were invited to this festival, at which Delbos was present. Like the other representatives of the former enemy Powers, I had been informed that it would be quite understood if we did not attend, which, however, did not prevent the Turkish Minister from appearing there. On this occasion Hodza made a speech which had received Delbos' approval beforehand. In it he welcomed the French Minister as the emissary of French democracy and also as the emissary of European accord, a turn of phrase which Delbos later adopted in his speech in reply to the toast at the Czernin Palace.<sup>43</sup> He (Hodza) went on to speak of Czechoslovakia as that spot in Europe where Germans and Slavs met, where therefore besides the opportunity for conflicts the opportunity was also provided "to prepare for and en-

<sup>42</sup> See footnote 26, p. 73.

<sup>43</sup> The Foreign Ministry building in Prague.

sure the amicable existence side by side of the outlying branches of these two great races." He named as Czechoslovakia's chief task the preparation for and the organizing of peace among the races and peoples in this part of Europe. He stressed his country's readiness for reconciliation, the desire to contribute with all her might toward the furthering of good relations with her neighbors, and to cooperate with all who were striving for a general settlement of international relations in Europe. Hodza told me later that he had made use of this occasion to give a definite turn to the political event from the outset, and to fix its ideology, as he himself expressed it.

In his toast at the banquet at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Krofta said that the efforts of Czechoslovakia were sincerely directed toward peace-with everybody, and in particular with her neighbors; he stressed the lively cultural contacts with these neighbors and the desire to draw as close as possible to the culture and civilization of the West (thus not that of Russia!). He pointed out that Delbos' tour was taking place directly after the Anglo-German conversations<sup>44</sup> and the French negotiations in London<sup>45</sup> regarding all questions of world politics, and expressed the desire that in future negotiations real agreement might be reached. In his reply Delbos emphasized that there was no state toward which France harbored any feelings of hatred or resentment. He was prepared to cooperate with all without any ulterior motives. He stated that the purpose of his tour was to augment the lasting value of France's pacts and friendships, and also to direct his efforts toward whatever might lessen international tension, pave the way to a settlement of questions on which they were divided, and lead to extensive and fruitful cooperation. He was able to establish with satisfaction the great extent to which the desires and efforts of France coincided with those of Czechoslovakia. The final communiqué contains, in addition to the usual requisite statements on complete agreement between the views of the two Governments, loyalty to the League of Nations and to fundamental and lasting common principles, the collective theory in the form of general cooperation for peace, emphasis on the solidarity of the Little Entente and an avowal on the extension of economic exchanges (a French concession!), the following sentence:

"During the conversations in Prague it was emphasized that in their concern for the preservation of peace in Europe both Governments are prepared to support any action which might facilitate a *rapprochement* with all neighboring countries. Both Governments are convinced that existing commitments are no obstacle to a *rap-*

<sup>44</sup> See footnote 26, p. 73.

<sup>45</sup> See footnote 25, p. 72.

*prochement* of this kind, which from the political and economic point of view would be advantageous for all interested states and for the whole of Europe."

So much for the public manifestations, to which should also be added the communications made by Delbos and Krofta to press correspondents, the statement issued by the Czechoslovak Press Office on Delbos' conversation with the representatives of the Sudeten German Party, and the interview which Krofta granted to the correspondent of the Agence Radio.

What were the actual contents and the results of the conversations, at which these manifestations of course merely hint, in particular the long conversation tête-à-tête which Beneš had with Delbos on the 17th instant?

No new treaty agreements between France and Czechoslovakia have either been concluded or envisaged. Delbos distinctly emphasized to the press correspondents that he had not come to Prague in order to sign any new treaty; the purpose of his tour had been a moral one, and this had been achieved.

Russia, as Krofta told me, was very little discussed. Alexandrovsky, the Russian Minister, who had left for Moscow not long before on receiving news of his father's illness, and of whom it was rumored in high Government circles that he had been abducted by the O.G.P.U. and would be executed, had returned to Prague for Delbos' visit. He was present at all the festivities, but kept completely in the background.

The theme which occupied the largest place in the statesmen's conversations, and on which public interest was also focused, was the question whether and how Czechoslovakia's relations with Germany could be improved and what repercussions this might have on Franco-Czechoslovak questions. Beneš had already told me some time ago that, whether developments in Europe would lead once more to the strengthening of the League of Nations, or whether the struggle between the Great Powers would remain the decisive factor in the development of Europe, would determine whether he could seek the security of his country, as hitherto, on a collective basis or would have to follow the example of, say Yugoslavia, and settle relations with his mighty neighbor by direct negotiations with her. Koch,<sup>48</sup> my predecessor, used to say that Beneš would be willing to come to an agreement with Germany 5 minutes before a Franco-German *rapprochement*. The Halifax visit and the political activity following upon this had brought the approach of this moment within

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<sup>48</sup> German Minister in Prague from October 1921 to June 1935.

the bounds of possibility. But Beneš would not like to approach us on his own, because in his view the inequality of forces would otherwise be bound to lead to a capitulation, or, as he had once expressed it, to vassalage to the Reich. He does not wish to be without the support which is afforded him by his alliances and, if only to a constantly diminishing extent, his allegiance to the League of Nations and adherence to the idea of collective security. In this he is in agreement with the view of the French Foreign Minister, to whom for his part the maintenance of the alliances as the façade of the crumbling French hegemony is bound to be of importance. Both desire a *détente* between France and the Reich, and also between the Reich and Czechoslovakia. The double move toward a *détente* is to be made on parallel lines, as Beneš has told me, so that thus Czechoslovakia will neither need to dispense with French protection nor be a charge on the French desire for a *détente*. Krofta stated this in his after-dinner speech when he said that it remained characteristic of the policy of the two countries that their efforts were directed toward a situation where they would not require mutual assistance against external attempts to threaten them.

However, in spite of repeated avowals of the idea of collective security, both Delbos and Beneš have stated that it did not depend on methods, and the way of bilateral negotiations with us could also turn out to be a suitable means of bringing about general appeasement. Now I know from an earlier conversation with Beneš that since the reoccupation of the Rhineland<sup>47</sup> he has pursued the plan of taking a hand if a new Western Pact should come into being, in much the same way as he succeeded in doing in the case of the old Locarno Treaty by means of the simultaneous signing of the German-Czechoslovak Treaty of Arbitration of October 16, 1925. That Beneš is still adhering to this idea of attaching a bilateral treaty to a system of treaties of a more general nature with third powers is hinted at by a remark in the conversation on the 18th instant, where he correctly characterizes the Franco-Czechoslovak Treaty as a guarantee of the German-Czechoslovak Treaty. Perhaps Beneš hopes even by this means to secure, in addition to the French, a British guarantee which would not otherwise be attainable for him. That is, however, only a surmise for the time being. In the leading article in the *Prager Presse*<sup>48</sup> of the 19th instant, which is obviously inspired, there occurs the following sentence: "If the Western Powers reach a new agreement with Germany, which replaces the former Locarno Treaty in one form or another, Czechoslovakia could not but

<sup>47</sup> March 1936.

<sup>48</sup> A Czech Government daily published in German.

welcome such a development, convinced as she is that her relations with Germany, the formulation of which has found its place in the whole system of Locarno agreements by means of the German-Czechoslovak Arbitration Treaty, would certainly find suitable expression in any new agreement too."

Krofta, whom I asked about this, confirmed that Beneš still continues to think on the lines of Locarno. I told the Foreign Minister that I had already somewhat disillusioned M. Beneš about this [*Herrn Benesch bereits Wasser in diesen Wein gegossen*] and had warned him against approaching us prematurely with wishes for political negotiations and agreements. The particular prerequisite, which had led to the conclusion of the Treaty of Locarno and also of the Arbitration Treaties with Poland and Czechoslovakia<sup>49</sup> after simultaneous negotiations in the same place, did not exist today. I did not believe—he made a note of this statement—that Germany would enter into such a "bilateral multilateral system" today. By an attempt in this direction one merely ran the risk that any possible negotiations would break down at once over the question of form. Furthermore I was unable to see what Czechoslovakia stood to gain by this, for the Arbitration Treaty was still valid and the French Guarantee also. I could not imagine that a new piece of paper would go beyond this in content, or that Czechoslovakia would thereby obtain that feeling of security which she seemed to lack today in spite of the afore-mentioned Treaties. It should be added that, like himself, Beneš did not believe in a quick solution of the Sudeten German question, which was indeed above all the obstacle to a German-Czechoslovak understanding. If, however, in the Czechoslovak view only a solution of the Sudeten German problem in stages could enter into the question, then a German-Czechoslovak *détente* or *rapprochement* too could only be realized over a similar period of time. What was therefore the purpose of treaties beforehand? Krofta agreed with me entirely. He was of the opinion that the President, in keeping with his temperament, was somewhat impatient to arrive at a speedy settlement. The correct procedure, however, was doubtless this, namely, to remove the obstacles existing between us one at a time. Then perhaps they could one day later on conclude a new treaty; at present there was no question of this. The French must not feel that they were being abandoned—this view was held at the French Legation here before the Delbos visit—the Czechs did not wish to betray the French and must not do so; but it was clear to him that in the course of a natural process of evolution our influence

\* Those of January 1934 and 1925 respectively.

in Czechoslovakia was bound to become stronger. This evolution would be accomplished all the more smoothly the less it was allowed to become apparent from without. Thus first of all a start on the *détente*, the solving of concrete questions, and no pact for the time being. In his "fireside chat" Hodza gave his views on this question in his own peculiar chimerical fashion. He spoke also of a "Paris-Berlin-Prague triangle," in which London must not be forgotten. Now it was imperative to make use of the present moment. He believed that Delbos' visit to Prague was regarded in London as a positive contribution, and he must for this reason set to work at once. No matter what conversations took place between London, Paris, and Berlin, Prague wished to have a say in them. It was merely a question of technicalities whether Locarno was to serve as the model for the settlement or whether preference should be given to some other form. He was more concerned with actual facts. I brought M. Hodza down from his clouds to earth and caused him to bear in mind that, according to his own exposition—which I shall reproduce further on—the solution of the Sudeten German question would take years. A formal treaty with Germany could not come at the beginning, it must come at the end of this process of evolution, in the event of its still being necessary at all by then. He admitted this but expressed the view that, if only we had progressed thus far, some sort of declaration on paper would nevertheless be very nice for the public. It did not depend so much upon the contents, if once the practical difficulties between us had been eliminated.

Apart from the agreement in principle reached by France and Czechoslovakia to bring about a *détente* in their relations with Germany on both sides, the most important questions, which are being raised apropos of the Delbos visit, are whether the French Minister has exerted influence on the Czechoslovak Government, on instructions from both London and Paris, to the effect that it might display a more conciliatory attitude in the Sudeten German question than hitherto, and the further question to what extent the Czechoslovak Government is prepared to act on such advice. The official version of the reply to the first question is found everywhere in the press and was put forward by Beneš to me too. It is to the effect that neither Britain nor France—nor Germany either—were interfering in the internal affairs of this country, and that Czechoslovakia as a sovereign State would also not permit such interference, but would settle her affairs independently, of her own authority and moreover according to a fixed program. Indeed Beneš' position vis-à-vis both the Czechs and the Sudeten Germans is bound to become even more difficult than it is already, if it were to be publicly admitted that he

is acting under pressure from three Great Powers in this matter. Yet this is undeniably the case. Krofta told me after Delbo's visit that he was aware that Britain was continually demanding a "contribution" in this question, which was, of course, always done in a friendly fashion. Britain herself, it must be admitted, did not know what would really have to be done to satisfy the Sudeten Germans. Delbos had not given any "advice," but, when the subject was broached from the Czechoslovak side, he had expressed the "desire" that this obstacle to a *détente* might be removed. Czechoslovakia was not prepared to negotiate with foreign governments on this matter but she was always very willing to discuss it with us all in a friendly manner, as, for example, had always been the case with me. Delbos had not, as the press had maintained, brought a memorandum; nor had one been handed to him, but only information concerning individual questions. Furthermore, Osusky, the Minister in Paris, could always provide him with any information he desired. Apart from this communication of Krofta's I know also from another reliable source that Delbos raised the Sudeten German question. It is the first time for 18 years that France as a cosignatory to the Letter of Guarantee for the minority has shown any interest in the latter. That this was the case was also revealed by the fact that at the reception at the Czernin Palace Delbos had a long conversation with Deputy Kundt and Senator Pfrogner,<sup>51</sup> and that the French Legation recently suggested to the Sudeten German Party that it should continue to maintain the contacts established with it. If France had hitherto an interest in maintaining the point on which Germany and Czechoslovakia differ, this has now been changed.

The second question touched on above was, to what extent Czechoslovakia was really prepared to make a "contribution" toward pacification in Europe and to effect a definite improvement in the conditions of the Sudeten Germans. The answer to this question is still obscure and unsatisfactory. Beneš, the most cautious and at the same time the toughest of the three leading Czechoslovak statesmen, without doubt the one who will eventually make the final decision, has expressed himself in the most vague and reticent manner. I am quite certain that he will make concessions under pressure from the foreign political situation and that he alone is capable of realizing them. On the other hand he will bargain most tenaciously over the extent and price. He has made the internal appeasement of the country the aim of his Presidency, and that not just from today; however, he wishes to carry it into effect independently and according to his own scheme

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<sup>51</sup> A Sudeten German member of the Czechoslovak Senate who had a conversation with Delbos during the latter's visit to Prague.



and will allow as little interference as possible by others. This scheme will hardly satisfy us or the minority as to details. For the time being all he says regarding the matter is that he wishes to secure for the Sudeten Germans the full enjoyment of their constitutional rights and their full participation in the State. On this and also a previous occasion I pointed out to him that this did not suffice in the prevailing circumstances, that the Sudeten Germans must not be menaced any more in their national property rights [*in ihrem nationalen Besitzstand*] and that confidence in the State was impossible when Czech officials were ruling as arbitrary overlords in the Sudeten German region.

Krofta thereupon drew my attention to the fact that the chain of fortifications now under construction is situated in the Sudeten German frontier region, and that therefore the Prague Government could relax the exercise of their authority in this region only to the extent that the external political threat from the Reich diminished. If progress was made in the *détente* between Berlin and Prague, then it would be possible to have more confidence in the Sudeten Germans. We ought not to talk much on this question, and not exert any pressure recognizable as such from outside, because any such pressure would make it more difficult from the internal political point of view for the Prague Government to make concessions. The *détente* between Prague and Berlin on the one hand and between the Czechoslovak Government and the Sudeten German element on the other would have to be accomplished on parallel lines. Neither could be settled in advance of the other. I told him that Hodza had expressed the same view to me in a different form. He replied that he had not discussed this with Hodza recently; thus they had both arrived at the same view independently of each other.

Hodza's statements were essentially of a more concrete nature than those of Beneš or Krofta in his conversation with me yesterday regarding the concessions which he deemed possible at present. First and foremost he stated quite clearly what he will not concede. He rejects autonomy; it would never be accepted by public opinion. The country was too small to allow itself to be "atomized." Regarding this it must be stated that the granting of "territorial autonomy" to the Sudeten Germans must naturally have the result that, in addition to the Carpatho-Russians,<sup>52</sup> the Slovaks and Magyars will also secure the same. While, therefore, at present the Czechs, together with the Slovaks and Carpatho-Russians, form about two-thirds of the population of the State and are faced, with minorities which constitute

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<sup>52</sup> The inhabitants of Ruthenia, otherwise called Sub-Carpatho Ukraine.

one-third altogether, with the granting of autonomous rule, seven and a half million Czechs would be faced with a group of autonomous minorities who together would be just as strong. In critical times the State would disintegrate: the fortifications would be situated exclusively in the autonomous frontier regions. This is the Czech attitude toward the question, namely, that autonomy is tantamount to suicide for this State. It is necessary to be acquainted with this point of view to realize that autonomy will never be secured here by peaceful means. Beneš informed me that he once told Hlinka, the leader of the Slovak Autonomist Party, that he did not understand what autonomy was, but he could probably understand what was meant when they demanded that the Provincial Governor in Bratislava should appoint officials in Slovakia of his own accord. The Sudeten Germans would, therefore, in my opinion, do better to delete from their vocabulary the ambiguous expressions "autonomy" and "National State," about which everybody has a different opinion and which arouse mistrust and discord, and to discuss the matter with which they are really concerned. Furthermore, according to his own statement, Hodza will not allow the communal elections, which fell due long ago,<sup>53</sup> to be held so long as they might develop into markedly violent contests, that is, therefore, until further progress in the Sudeten German question has produced a certain degree of pacification. Finally, he rejects the acceptance of the Sudeten German Party's legislation proposals,<sup>54</sup> because these were not compatible with the constitution, which did not recognize either a separate legal personality for the different sections of the people or a "spokesman" for them. He did not feel strong enough himself to secure an amendment to the constitution, and there was also no other political personage available who would be willing and able to do so. What he would and could do, however, was to obtain self-administration for the Sudeten Germans in all spheres by making full use of all opportunities afforded by the constitution, and furthermore to transfer, with a few exceptions, all the German officials in the country to the Sudeten German region. The existing number was not sufficient to fill one-half of the posts available. This was nevertheless of advantage too, because he was obliged to take into account the suspicions of the Czechs. What he wished to do applied to all categories, from administrative officials and judges down to postmen, road guardsmen, and minor railway employees. The next generation of officials, not

<sup>53</sup> These elections, due to be held every 4 years under the constitution, had been last held in September 1931, and thus fell due again in 1935. They were to have taken place on November 14, but on October 24 they were again postponed by the Government after the Teplitz incident.

<sup>54</sup> i.e., the Sudeten German Party bills of April 1937. See footnote 10, p. 6.

yet available today, would be ready trained in a few years' time. What now still seemed to be a difficult problem would by then have become a matter of course and all officials in the Sudeten German region would be Germans. I asked M. Hodza whether he believed he could put an end to the disastrous Czechization and provocative activities of the *Národní jednota*,<sup>55</sup> the frontier associations. He replied, with what was probably exaggerated optimism, that it was gratifying that these associations were at loggerheads with each other; he would soon deal with them and direct them to "internal missionary work" within the Czech region. When I went on to say that if M. Hodza did not believe he could assist the Sudeten Germans toward either autonomy or the realization of their proposals for legislation, he would then only dissuade them from these demands if he offered them a substitute, which they would appreciate as such; in this connection I mentioned the language question. Hodza took up the suggestion and was of the opinion that there was a better chance of achieving some result in this sphere. In addition, he stated that he hopes to make further progress in February or March, "a new February 18,"<sup>56</sup> as he expressed it, but this time not only with the Activist parties but also with the Sudeten German Party. Much will depend on Konrad Henlein's timely intervention in future developments.

EISENLOHR

## No. 39

1613/386613-15

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

VERY URGENT

PRAGUE, December 21, 1937.

SECRET

(Pol. I 6911 g)

A. III. 2. f. 2.

Subject: Conversation with K. H. Frank.

I beg to submit the enclosed memorandum by Counselor of Legation Hencke on a conversation with Senator K. H. Frank, Konrad Henlein's deputy.

I request instructions, as speedily as possible, for the further line of action to be followed by the Sudeten German Party administration. The Austrian suggestions, which certainly in the present state of affairs cannot still be denied by Vienna, represent in my opinion an attempt to secure greater influence over the Sudeten

<sup>55</sup> The Czech anti-Nazi organization in the Sudetenland.

<sup>56</sup> See footnote 11, p. 7.

German element for the future. The choice of the present time for this move can be accounted for by the fact that the Austrian Government probably subscribes to the curious opinion that any form of German-Czechoslovak *détente* might be expected to disturb relations between the Sudeten German Party and the Reich.

EISENLOHR

P.S. The Sudeten German Party would be especially grateful if this report could also be brought to the notice of Herr Keppler, the Führer's economic adviser.<sup>58</sup>

[Longhand note initialed by von Neurath:] Reserve seems to me advisable on the part of the Sudeten German Party.

[Enclosure]

MEMORANDUM

SECRET

A. III. 2. f. 2.

Senator K.H. Frank, Henlein's deputy, today gave me the following information in strict confidence:

Count Westphalen,<sup>59</sup> who has an academic appointment in Vienna and therefore resides from time to time in the Austrian capital, was approached about 4 weeks ago by Count Thurn, leader of the Austrian Federal Youth Movement [*Oesterreichische Bundesjugend*]<sup>60</sup> with the proposal that a direct link should be formed between the Sudeten German Athletic Associations [*Turnverbände*] and the Austrian Federal Youth Movement. To begin with, there should be a meeting of the leading personalities of both associations for the purpose of establishing general contacts.

About 5 days ago Count Westphalen was suddenly invited to attend a luncheon arranged by State Secretary Zernatto, Secretary-General of the Fatherland Front.<sup>61</sup> Count Westphalen accepted this invitation and also met Guido Schmidt, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs,<sup>62</sup> at the luncheon. On this occasion Zernatto, in agreement with Schmidt, proposed to Count Westphalen that a meeting should be arranged for the beginning of January between Herr Frank and

<sup>58</sup> Keppler was also particularly concerned with policy toward Austria on behalf of the Nazi Party.

<sup>59</sup> Probably Count Ferdinand Westphalen, a German, and lecturer in the University of Vienna.

<sup>60</sup> The Government-sponsored youth organization in Austria.

<sup>61</sup> This was the Austrian Government Party (Christian Socialist) organization. Zernatto (whose name is normally spelled thus) was Secretary-General; he was State Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the Federal Chancellor's Office.

<sup>62</sup> i.e., in the Austrian Government.

two leading personalities in the Sudeten German Party on the one hand, and State Secretaries Zernato and Schmidt and Count Thurn on the other. A ski hut was envisaged as the rendezvous, in point of fact one belonging to Schmidt or Zernato in the Tyrol mountains. The following points were to be discussed at the meeting:

1) A form of press agreement between the Sudeten German Party, in respect of newspapers coming within its sphere of influence, and the Austrian Government, in respect of the Austrian Government press. The Austrian press, which had hitherto adopted a consistently hostile attitude toward the Henlein movement, would from now on present the Sudeten German Party in a favorable light. In return, the Austrian Government asked that the Sudeten German Party press should in the future adopt a friendly attitude toward Austria. This change-over was to be introduced on the part of the Sudeten German Party by means of an article personally signed by Konrad Henlein or a speech by the leader of the Sudeten German Party.

2) A joint appearance of the Sudeten German and Austrian Athletic Associations at the great German Athletic Rally in Breslau.

3) Austrian proposal that a central bureau should be set up in Vienna to deal with questions concerning Germans abroad, which would work in cooperation with the Berlin offices and the *Auslandsinstitut* in Stuttgart. There was no thought of joining with the Schiemann Organization in this connection. The Austrian gentlemen had advocated the view that racial German questions could be much more effectively represented in the outside world if dealt with in Vienna rather than in the Reich.

4) Request to the Sudeten German Party leaders to use their influence on the Sudeten German Homeland League [*Sudetendeutsches Heimatbund*] in Vienna, with a view to the League's modifying its anti-Government policy.

5) Establishment of close cultural political relations between the Sudeten German Party and Austria (organization of concerts, exhibitions, displays by the Asch School of Gymnastics, etc.).

Herr Schmidt further stated in connection with these proposals that, in the event of agreement and willingness on the part of the Sudeten German Party to take some initiative in matters connected with Austria, he would be in a position to exert pressure on the whole Austrian press—not only the Government organs—so that henceforth their anti-German and pro-Czech policy would cease. At this Schmidt expressed the opinion that criticism of the Czech situation and a demonstration of the unsolved German problems in Czechoslovakia, if dealt with systematically from Vienna, would have a more powerful effect abroad than if this criticism emanated from the Reich.

Herr Frank stated that he had hitherto avoided forming any definite opinion concerning these suggestions or giving any answer

to the invitation. He did not wish to take any action without reference to the Berlin authorities, and requested to know their attitude as soon as possible. He would adhere strictly to the instructions which he requested from Berlin.

PRAGUE, December 21, 1937.

No. 40

1940/434592-93

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation in  
Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

No. 133 of December 22

BERLIN, December 22, 1937.  
(zu Pol. IV 6643)

Reference telegram No. 199.<sup>65</sup>

Reprisals have today been ordered following the incidents at Jägerndorf.<sup>66</sup> One hundred and twenty cases of dismissal from employment by February 1, and thirty orders to sell landed property within three months have been decreed in respect of the Czechoslovak subjects concerned. Ultimate extent to which this is carried out will later depend on the number of actions finally put into force by the Czechoslovaks in Jägerndorf. Publication of this in the press is not intended. We are waiting to see what action the Czechoslovak Government takes in regard to the complaints which are certainly to be expected from those concerned. To any diplomatic inquiry the reply will be given here that we can no longer tolerate the threat to the existence of the Reich-Germans concerned in Jägerndorf, which has hung over them for several weeks, and have decided to create the same state of suspense for a number of Czechoslovak nationals in Germany. It lies within the power of the Czechoslovak Government to enable us to suspend our measures by the immediate cancellation of their own.

Please answer any inquiry by the Czechoslovak Government to the same effect.

MACKENSEN

<sup>65</sup> Document No. 31, p. 70.

<sup>66</sup> See footnote 23, p. 70.

## No. 41

1940/434594-95

*Minute*

(zu Pol. IV 6643 (III))

At the conclusion of the Jägerndorf conference on the 20th instant,<sup>67</sup> *Gauleiter* Bohle gave me the following information by telephone:

The Führer's deputy,<sup>68</sup> who had on the morning of the 20th expressed his own agreement with the reprisals, had meanwhile reported on the matter to the Führer. The Führer had declared himself to be in complete agreement with the measures, which should be carried out in the strictest manner, and the ratio proposed at present of 1:1 be increased to the ratio of 2:1, i.e., two Czechoslovak nationals were to suffer for each Reich-German. *Gauleiter* Bohle added that he would make further inquiries concerning this increase in ratio, that I was to take no action in this connection and that I would be informed of the result. On the morning of the 21st I telephoned Dr. Wetz of the Gestapo, who is controlling the execution of the reprisals, and asked him about the increase in number; he replied that he had understood, from information that had also reached him, that for the immediate future the proposed figure was to remain, but that if further measures by us perhaps became necessary later, the ratio of 2:1 should be adopted.

Up till now no further communication has reached me from *Gauleiter* Bohle about raising the number. I spoke to Dr. Wetz again today about the matter, and he told me it had not been practicable on purely technical grounds to make arrangements for an extension, doubling the number of Czechoslovak nationals involved, quickly enough to be able to issue the necessary regulations for the increased number before Christmas. As swift action had been envisaged it had not been possible to consider a doubling of the number as part of the plan to be executed immediately. He would await special instructions in the event of reprisals against further Czechoslovak nationals being considered necessary by the Foreign Ministry. He did not regard the communication which had reached him from Herr Spahn (head of the A.O.)<sup>69</sup> concerning the Führer and Reich Chancellor's views on the matter, as an order to prepare further reprisals.

HEINBURG

BERLIN, December 22, 1937.

<sup>67</sup> Presumably a further meeting to discuss the reprisals for the Jägerndorf incidents referred to in document No. 40, *supra*.

<sup>68</sup> Rudolf Hess.

<sup>69</sup> Actually Spahn was personal assistant to Bohle as head of the A.O., and his "chief of staff" at the A.O. headquarters.

## No. 42

1940/434596-97

*Minute*(zu Pol. IV 6643 (IV))  
(Pol. IV 6656)

Concerning the Jägerndorf affair,<sup>70</sup> I have today spoken to Herr Fischer (head of the A.O.)<sup>71</sup> about the order issued by the Führer and Reich Chancellor,<sup>72</sup> and asked him to obtain from *Gauleiter* Bohle an assurance that Political Division IV would receive notification in writing of the Führer's decision, thus avoiding any misunderstandings which might arise from a verbal communication. Herr Fischer assured me that he would deal further with the matter.

Shortly afterward, Herr Spahn of the A.O. told me on the telephone that Herr Fischer had informed him of my request, and gave me the following further information:

The Führer and Reich Chancellor had made his decision that the reprisals were to be carried out in the ratio 2:1, dependent on the fact that the proportionate strength of Reich-Germans in Czechoslovakia and Czech nationals in Germany permitted is to be increased to 2:1. The A.O. would institute surveys on this matter of proportionate numbers, so that the distribution of landed property and, if possible, classes of employment could be assessed. It has not yet been possible to collate results of the questionnaire survey organized at the time, because the authorities concerned lacked the staff necessary for this undertaking. He, Spahn, had consulted with Herr Wetz and Herr Wedelstedt of the Reich Ministry for Economic Affairs about the surveys which were now to be instituted. He hoped that toward the middle of January a summary could be produced. Political Division IV would receive the memorandum promised by Herr Fischer about the beginning of January, and a communication dealing with the result of these surveys as soon as they were definitely concluded.

HEINBURG

BERLIN, December 23, 1937.

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<sup>70</sup> See footnote 23, p. 70.

<sup>71</sup> Actually of the A.O. staff of Bohle.

<sup>72</sup> The specific order is not available; the substance of it is presumably indicated in document No. 36, p. 77.



## No. 43

1941/435008-09

*The Head of the Political Department of the German Foreign Ministry (Weizsäcker) to the German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr)*

BERLIN, December 30, 1937.  
(Pol. IV 41/38)

DEAR EISENLOHR: I still owe you an answer to one point in your letter of December 2.<sup>73</sup> In that letter, as also in your previous one of November 12,<sup>73a</sup> you suggested that Mastny's reception by the Führer, long desired by him, should be considered. We have thoroughly examined the matter and have come to the conclusion that the time does not yet seem ripe for such a reception. Before approaching the Führer with such a proposal, we must be in possession of still more evidence of a real improvement in German-Czech relations.

As to your further suggestion respecting a visit by *Gauleiter* Bohle to Prague, I am certainly not qualified to give you a definite answer. I can, however, say that, from what I gather, it would still be considered premature to pursue this idea further.

With most cordial good wishes for the New Year and Heil Hitler!  
W[EIZSÄCKER]

## No. 44

1613/386616

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

No. 2

BERLIN, January 5, 1938.  
Dispatched January 5—8:25 p.m.  
(zu Pol. I 6911 g)

Reference to report of December 21, A. III. 2. f. 2.<sup>74</sup>

Please inform Senator Frank that reserve on the part of the Sudeten German Party concerning the Austrian Government's suggestion seems to us to be indicated.

MACKENSEN

<sup>73</sup> Not printed.

<sup>73a</sup> Document No. 19, p. 45.

<sup>74</sup> Document No. 39, p. 89.

## No. 45

1613/386621

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 4 of January 11

PRAGUE, January 11, 1938—6:55 p.m.  
Received January 11, 1938—8:30 p.m.  
(Pol. I 91 g (IV))

With reference to telegram of the 5th, No. 2.<sup>75</sup>

Deputy Frank requests information whether at present moment meeting with Austrian Secretary of State Schmidt and Secretary of State Zernatto considered at all expedient by competent Reich authorities. If so, attitude toward points set down by the Austrian side welcomed. (Cf. memorandum sent with report of December 21, A. III. 2. f. 2.)<sup>76</sup> Should this not be possible in detail, Frank nevertheless requests further instructions as to attitude to be taken.

HENCKE

## No. 46

1613/386622

*Draft of Telegram<sup>77</sup> From the Head of the Political Department in the German Foreign Ministry (Weizsäcker) to the German Legation in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, January 12, 1938.  
(Pol. I 91 g)

To the German Legation in Prague, No. 6.

Referring to No. 4 of January 11,<sup>78</sup> meeting appears inexpedient considering reserve recommended in telegram No. 2 of January 5.<sup>79</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>75</sup> Document No. 44, *supra*.

<sup>76</sup> Document No. 39, p. 89.

<sup>77</sup> The original is in longhand, but is initialed by Weizsäcker, Bismarck, and Altenburg.

<sup>78</sup> Document No. 45, *supra*.

<sup>79</sup> Document No. 44, p. 95.

## No. 47

1938/434451-64

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 1. allg.

PRAGUE, January 12, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 254)

## CZECHOSLOVAK FOREIGN POLICY IN 1937

## POLITICAL REPORT

In the autumn of 1936 doubts as to whether the foreign policy, initiated since the rise of Czechoslovakia and since then systematically developed and based on membership of the League of Nations and the Little Entente, as well as on the alliances with France and Soviet Russia, were still adequate for the safety of the State in view of the rising strength of the German Reich, found public expression for the first time in a parliamentary discussion caused by the rapid progress of the Agrarian Party.<sup>80</sup> Although at the time the Government won, insofar as the Agrarian Party did not pursue further their criticism of foreign policy, uneasiness was not dispelled. In order to allay it a number of measures were undertaken or continued, some of which came to naught right at the beginning, while others led to certain results.

*Military Armaments.*

In the first place must be mentioned the stupendous efforts of the State toward strengthening and improving the equipment of the Army, as well as toward the construction of a belt of defensive works. Work on the latter, for which the financial resources of the country are being strained to the uttermost, has certainly by no means been completed during 1937, but has been pushed forward with feverish haste.

*Britain; United States.*

A certain degree of success had, moreover, attended endeavors to gain moral and, if possible, political support from Britain. These endeavors, the beginnings of which may go further back, held promise of better prospects since, in consequence of increased antagonism between Germany and Britain, the latter had resumed closer relations with France. For, until then, British interest in Czechoslovakia was only discernible insofar as Great Britain had

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<sup>80</sup> This refers evidently to the growing criticism by the Agrarian Party of the Government foreign policy of alliance with Soviet Russia, with whom the Mutual Assistance Pact had been concluded in May 1935.

perforce to try to lessen or eliminate the dangers for European peace which might conceivably arise out of the Sudeten German question as a potential cause of conflict between the Reich and Czechoslovakia. Hence, Britain's interest in Czechoslovakia was, as it were, negative, and found expression in the British Government keeping themselves continuously and directly informed and, in order to remove the danger, by repeatedly advising Czechoslovakia to treat the German minority with more consideration than heretofore. With the restoration in practice of the Entente Cordiale late in 1936, however, to this negative interest was added a positive one for Britain, namely, to help her French ally to maintain her position of predominance in Central Europe, in which respect, however, immediate commitments on her own account were not undertaken by Great Britain beyond those common to the Western States. Conversely, there was an improvement in Czechoslovakia's hopes of being able to count on British help indirectly through France, in the event of a conflict with the Reich, and endeavors to win over British sympathies began at once. They found their earliest expression in Beneš' Christmas message of 1936, were carried on untiringly during 1937, and, on the basis of common democratic ideals and by exploiting anti-German feeling, were extended to the United States of America (cf. the radio message to the American people by the Minister, Jan Masaryk, on the occasion of the 80th birthday of his father, the former President.<sup>82</sup>) The methods by which the Czechoslovak Government wooed and still woos Anglo-Saxon sympathies are not confined to demonstrations and speeches, nor to the official activities of diplomats. Every journalist and every political personage who came here was received with the greatest friendliness and intensively canvassed, frequently by Beneš himself, and over and above this, numerous threads were spun in political and business circles, above all in Britain and with the press of that country. Czechoslovakia, whose name was formerly almost unknown in Great Britain, where hardly anybody was inclined to bother about Prague's difficulties, today commands a solid block of supporters in the newspaper world, the Liberal and Socialist Parties and their Members of Parliament, as well as in financial circles of the City of London. Moreover, at the close of the year just ended, in the Commons debate of December 21, Eden, the Foreign Secretary, declared that, besides the friendship of France, Britain possessed the friendship of many nations extending from Turkey to the Czechoslovak Republic; there was therefore no

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<sup>82</sup> This was on March 7, 1930, but it seems more likely that his 85th birthday (i.e., 1935) is meant.

grounds for a defeatist mood (Wickham Steed<sup>83</sup> in the *Prager Presse*, December 28, 1937). Verily a proud step forward for Czechoslovakia from the role of a humble seeker after notice to that of the friend who was being remembered in order to comfort and tranquilize the British people. We cannot be careful enough in following up such a development in Anglo-Czechoslovak relations, to which decisive significance attaches for this country as regards all important questions.

#### *Vatican.*

Relations with the Vatican, too, which Beneš had established in preparation for his presidential election, have continued to develop favorably. In the past year the Curia had promulgated the Bull<sup>84</sup> provided for in the *modus vivendi* for the alignment of the diocesan with the national boundaries. Nevertheless, as a result of German representations, no such alteration to the boundary of Silesia had been effected, so that the Archbishop of Breslau exercises ecclesiastical jurisdiction as heretofore over hundreds of thousands of Czechoslovak citizens of German race, and the implementation of the agreement entered into by him at the time regarding the cession of his mensal properties situated in the Czechoslovak Republic could be abandoned. In this way the probabilities for a successful policy of "Czechization" in this part of the Sudeten German frontier territory are eliminated, it is to be hoped for ever.

#### *Soviet Russia.*

The treaty relationship with Soviet Russia has not mellowed; on the contrary it has paled. Mutual endeavors for cultural exchanges have produced no practical results of any kind. Anti-Bolshevist propaganda put out by Germany and Italy has resulted in a disinclination to appear arm-in-arm with such a compromising ally. The internal events in Russia, which appeared puzzling to Czechoslovakia also, the removal of prominent Bolshevist Party officials, as well as the execution of almost all the high officers of the Red Army,<sup>85</sup> lastly, the danger that Russia might be drawn into the Far East conflict, have created the belief in Prague that Russian help cannot be reckoned upon for a long time. This, too, became apparent

<sup>83</sup> A former editor of *The Times*.

<sup>84</sup> The Apostolic Constitution of September 2, 1937, which implemented articles I and II of the *modus vivendi* concluded between the Vatican and the new Czechoslovak Republic in 1928. These articles provided for the ultimate delimitation of the diocesan boundaries to accord with the new political frontiers, and for the return by the Republic of sequestered ecclesiastical properties.

<sup>85</sup> The Red Army purges in June 1937, in which Marshal Tukhachevsky and seven other generals were shot after trial for treason on charges of espionage on behalf of a foreign power.

during the visit of the French Foreign Minister Delbos,<sup>86</sup> and was all the more striking in comparison with Barthou's visit of but a few years previously.<sup>87</sup> Now the Russian friendship is not spoken of in public at all and, according to Krofta, "only very little" mention of it was made in the conversations between the two statesmen.

*France.*

The relationship with France has remained unaltered; unaltered insofar as the treaty obligation is still taken seriously by both sides, but also insofar as an extension of the obligation has not come about, either in the form of a reshuffling of the Little Entente to constitute a treaty relationship together with France, covering all cases of an attack against one of the partners, or in the form of more widely extended possibilities for the application of the Franco-Czech alliance in the event of internal disturbances. But Czechoslovakia has her troubles vis-à-vis France too. It is not only the old complaint that the ally shows so little readiness to make economic sacrifices for her political friends, a complaint which Delbos had to assuage by all kinds of promises on his journeys, not only to the other allied capitals, but also to Prague. There is above all the alarming uncertainty whether, in consequence of German rearmament and German defensive works on the Western frontier, French military assistance, if it came, would not come too late. And in connection with France's shaken authority as a Great Power and her domestic difficulties, the question is already being raised in frank conversations whether from the point of view of French policy the alliance with Czechoslovakia should no longer be regarded as a source of strength, but rather as a burden.

*Little Entente; Hungary.*

The Little Entente lives on, but it, too, is a source of anxiety. At each of the many meetings—in 1937, in addition to the meetings of the Foreign Ministers in Belgrade<sup>88</sup> and Sinaia<sup>89</sup> came the visits of Tatarescu to Prague,<sup>90</sup> of Beneš to Belgrade,<sup>91</sup> of King Carol to Seelowitz,<sup>92</sup> as well as the meeting of the three Prime Ministers in June on board a Danube steamer<sup>93</sup>—the official publications are able to report [*wissen . . . zu berichten*] unshakable unanimity within this alliance. But not only has the conversion of this anti-Hungarian alliance into a general defensive pact, as urged by Paris and Prague,

<sup>86</sup> See footnote 20, p. 69.

<sup>87</sup> In April 1934.

<sup>88</sup> April 1-2, 1937.

<sup>89</sup> August 31, 1937.

<sup>90</sup> An unofficial visit in early 1937.

<sup>91</sup> On April 4, 1937.

<sup>92</sup> On November 3, 1937.

<sup>93</sup> On June 17, 1937, near Kladovo.

failed, not only is there no longer any mention of individual pacts by Rumania or even Yugoslavia with Soviet Russia, such as Titulescu<sup>94</sup> was still urging in the autumn of 1936, but Yugoslavia's relationship with France, and that of Rumania to France, seem to have lost a good deal of their significance. The end of the Little Entente's common line of foreign policy came when Count Ciano paid his visit to Belgrade in the spring of 1937<sup>95</sup> and thereby initiated friendly relationship between Yugoslavia and her powerful neighbor. And now in Rumania, after Tatarescu's defeat at the polls, a new Government is at the helm whose general political trend both Prague and Paris appear to mistrust intensely, and about whom there prevails doubt as to whether they will make the concessions to the Hungarian minority in Transylvania, which would constitute the chief prerequisite for the *détente* between Hungary on the one hand and the countries of the Little Entente on the other, so earnestly desired by Czechoslovakia. Thus, as to the Little Entente's being an asset brought forward from the preceding year, there remains for Prague but the faith that Italy no longer works, as formerly, to wreck this alliance, but favors agreement between her and Hungary.

#### *Italy.*

Czechoslovakia's relationship with Italy has remained correct but cool, and has now become almost without importance. The tendency is, more or less convincingly, to make the best of the new friendship between Rome and Belgrade, the Rome-Berlin Axis, and especially of the fact that hardly a hope remains of playing off Italy against Germany in Austria. What cannot be altered must be put up with.

#### *Poland.*

Relations with Poland have not improved; Warsaw has always shown cool reserve toward Czech wooing. Certain concessions made to the Polish minority in the area of Mährisch-Ostrau<sup>96</sup> toward the end of the year have for the time being remained politically ineffective.

#### *Portugal.*

The rupture of diplomatic relations with Portugal in the month of August, on account of preferential treatment of Red Spain in the matter of purchases of war material, was, for propaganda reasons,

<sup>94</sup> Rumanian Foreign Minister; excluded on the formation of the Tatarescu Cabinet in August 1936.

<sup>95</sup> March 26, 1937, when the Italo-Yugoslav political and trade treaties were signed, establishing relations between the two countries on a basis of friendship.

<sup>96</sup> Czech: Moravska Ostrava in northeastern Moravia, the principal area of the Polish minority.

very unpleasant for the Czechoslovak Government. However, no consequences of any importance have resulted from this.

*League of Nations; Danube Basin; Hodza Plan.*

Against this the further weakening of the League of Nations by Italy's withdrawal,<sup>97</sup> and Germany's announcement that she would on no condition reenter it,<sup>98</sup> were heavy blows for Czechoslovakia, insofar as thereby the hope was finally wrecked that, under the aegis of the League of Nations, a new balance of power might evolve in Europe, within which this country too might find its secure place. The League of Nations, now so one-sided and weakened, could hardly continue to offer any stay and support to its members, and above all was less in a position than formerly to carry through a peaceful settlement in cases of international conflict. The thought may therefore suggest itself to the Governments of the Danubian countries, including Bulgaria, to create a kind of substitute through closer union between themselves. There is no doubt that this idea plays a certain<sup>99</sup> part in Beneš' deliberations and it represents, as it were, the foreign policy side of the, originally, purely politico-economic plan drawn up by Hodza. Here, it is true, there is no longer, as a year ago, any question of erecting a dam against German need for expansion toward the Southeast, even though this aspect may be presented in Paris and London. The primary condition for the realization of such ideas, however, was the bridging over of the antagonism between Hungary and the countries of the Little Entente, which has been attempted, but so far could not be brought to fruition; the next equally important condition was approval by Germany and Italy.

As regards the "Hodza plan"<sup>1</sup> itself, i.e., the concept of a politico-economic linking together of the Danubian States by means of a kind of preferential system, its originator had tried to promote the idea on the occasion of his visit to the British coronation celebrations<sup>2</sup> that he had received French approval, and apparently in London too, had confirmed a certain interest which, it must be added, does not appear to have crystallized itself into a promise. According to a remark by the American Minister in Vienna<sup>3</sup> and reported at the time in the press here, the United States also would be satisfied with

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<sup>97</sup> On December 11, 1937.

<sup>98</sup> The German official press agency (D.N.B.) statement to this effect issued on December 12, 1937.

<sup>99</sup> The word "certain" is crossed out by hand in the original.

<sup>1</sup> The plan evolved and pursued by Hodza since 1936 for the economic federation of the Danube area.

<sup>2</sup> May 1937.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. G. T. Emmett.



preferential tariffs, provided these remained strictly confined to the Danubian States. The same theme was taken up by Hodza in June last year at the meeting of the Prime Ministers of the Little Entente, and it then became a subject of negotiations at the conferences of the three Foreign Ministers. It was decided first of all to get the views of the German and Italian Governments before going further. Since that time, however, no official inquiries have, to my knowledge, been addressed either to Berlin or Rome. Moreover, it is known that both Beneš and Krofta look very skeptically on Hodza's politico-economic plan. Nor was it mentioned by either at the visit of the French Foreign Minister to Prague, as Krofta has assured me. As, however, there was in Hodza's speech on the 20th anniversary of the recognition of the Legionaries a sentence regarding the desired cooperation of the Danubian States which, although not very clear, might still refer to the "Plan," I also asked the Prime Minister about it. The latter confirmed my supposition, and remarked besides that he touched upon these things with Delbos only in order to remind him of the assent given by his predecessor in office. In this connection Hodza pointed out to me, what is certainly correct, that all six Danubian States without exception would cooperate with us very willingly, but that no one of them felt inclined to place itself exclusively under German political influence. He thought, moreover, that the time had come to take up the question of cooperation. In whatever way this question is going to be interpreted by the German Government, it is advisable to watch carefully the further development of the economic or political *rapprochement* of the Danubian States in order, as heretofore, to discourage such efforts by standing aloof or else by guiding them into the desired channels. If the principle is adhered to, which was once expressed last year by a high German authority, that in regulating relations in the Danube Basin the participating countries should feel themselves as the subjects, and should not be allowed to become the objects, there would hardly be any fear, in case of cooperation of these countries with us and Italy, that such a relationship might be felt to be a crushing burden. Of course if this were the case it would perforce change into open hostility toward us at the first favorable opportunity. Because of geographical position, racial and historical reasons, the relationship to us, both of Austria and Czechoslovakia, must always be different from that of the other Danubian States.

*Austria.*

As regards Austria, the efforts initiated by Hodza at the beginning of 1936 toward the establishment of a certain community of

interests have not been resumed in the past year. The significance of Hodza's journey to Baden near Vienna, where Schuschnigg paid the return visit,<sup>5</sup> for which he did not want to come to Prague, was overrated by the German press at the time. Nothing came of it and nothing could come of it, because the Berlin-Rome Axis is too important for Austria, and too weighty to allow of digressions with the Czechs, even if this were desired; and furthermore, because the Czechoslovak Government wish to and must avoid everything that would arouse mistrust in Berlin, and render an improvement in the relations with Germany still more difficult than is anyhow the case already. Austria continues to be nursed by Prague, but the idea of finding any backing there against Germany has been written off. The *Anschluss* is still feared in Prague now as before; if it happened, not a finger could be raised to prevent it by their own efforts. The Restoration<sup>6</sup> is not being promoted by Prague; that iron is too hot.

#### *Germany.*

The establishment of permanently good relations with the German Reich has become for Czechoslovakia the most important and vital question. No matter how greatly the feelings of the Czechoslovak people, who have achieved national independence by a revolution against Germanism after many centuries of struggle, may be opposed to this idea, and even if the Left Wing elements in Czechoslovakia and all that come under Jewish or Masonic influence persist in passionate rejection of National Socialism, everyone in this land knows today that a friendly relationship with Germany can alone guarantee state and national self-determination. For neither the League of Nations nor a far-reaching treaty system any longer offers adequate protection vis-à-vis the potential dangers which a dark future may hold concealed in her womb, and her internal resources, even if strained to the uttermost, are insufficient to defend the country longer than a few weeks at best. The foreign policy problem of a *rapprochement* with Germany is further complicated by its connection with internal questions, i.e., the necessity to purchase improvement of relations with us by concessions to the Sudeten German element, hence with the renunciation of the heretofore privileged position of the Czech element within the State. The heavy charges on the debit side of German-Czech relations during the year just concluded originated from these three roots: fear of the predominance of the German Reich and of an attack considered possible at any time;

<sup>5</sup> On September 27, 1937. See document No. 4, p. 18 for contemporary report on this.

<sup>6</sup> I.e., the restoration of the Habsburg dynasty in Austria.

ideological hostility to National Socialism, personified first and foremost in the press of the Left and the *émigrés*; and, lastly, hatred of the Sudeten German Party for its fight against Czech hegemony and for its ideological association with the guiding principle of the Third Reich. Out of the misuse of the counterespionage service by military and police authorities, as well as by the judiciary, out of the attempted application of the laws of National Defense to the expropriation of Reich-German landed property and the ousting of Reich-Germans of the frontier areas, where the new fortification belt is rising, a number of grave incidents have ensued, the clearing up of which has not yet been completed. Numerous improprieties of the press and the notorious affair of the Manes exhibition<sup>7</sup> have stirred up German public opinion still further. The bitterness caused in the Reich by the deprivation of Sudeten Germans of their civil rights found its sharpest expression on the occasion of the ill-treatment of the Sudeten German Party Deputy K. H. Frank by police officials in Teplitz-Schönau.

All these things are symptoms which reveal deeper seated causes. President Beneš; Hodza, the Prime Minister; and Krofta, the Foreign Minister, i.e., the men who in virtue of their official position and intellectual standing can be considered as the leading personalities in the body politic, are endeavoring to remove these causes wherever possible in order to pave the way to a secure future. A certain measure of success has not been denied them. The mass of the *émigrés* have been removed from the frontier areas and larger towns and taken to smaller places in the interior of the country. A beginning has been made to muzzle or suppress the *émigré* press. As a result of sustained persuasion by the highest authorities, the tone of the other papers toward Germany has become considerably more guarded and correct. Relaxation of censorship policy toward Reich-German publications, especially those which serve the spreading of National Socialist thought, was under consideration, and recognition of the Party organization may be expected. The civil authorities have plucked up courage and put a check on the military authorities, who until now have been doing as they pleased, with the result that proceedings under the notorious Defense Law against Reich-Germans—of whom there are more than 30,000 in Czechoslovakia, the greater number of whom live in the frontier area—can be taken, if at all, only in exceptional cases. The idea that, in order to render possible better relations with the Reich, concessions must be made to the

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<sup>7</sup> An exhibition of anti-Fascist cartoons in the Manes café in Prague in the summer of 1937, which occasioned a protest by the German Minister as insulting to the German State.

Sudeten Germans looked like heresy even 1½ years ago; now it is being discussed daily, either approvingly or disapprovingly, thanks to pressure from abroad and the influence of their own Government. It is true that there is nothing definite as to the measure of such concessions. It is, however, a good sign that just now, at the turn of the year, the chairman of the Czech Agrarian Party, Beran, should, in his Party newspaper *Venkov*, appeal for an amicable settlement with the German minority, and what is more, even with the Sudeten German Party which so far had been forced into the opposition, an appeal which has attracted great attention among the public here and for the time being, it is true, is meeting with strong opposition.

In the past year official intercourse between Czechoslovakia and the Reich has gone on undisturbed in spite of tension and agitation, as was also recognized by Krofta in his latest exposé before the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee. Treaties were ratified and new agreements concluded; the commercial intercourse, important to both sides, was regulated for a further year after short negotiations. In spite of internal opposition, the Czechoslovak Government has placed thousands of Sudeten German agricultural seasonal workers at our disposal. The reestablishment of our complete sovereignty over the German rivers was accepted without opposition, and, in consequence of Beneš' personal intervention, the Prague Government have declared their readiness to join in a preliminary technical study of the Oder-Danube Canal project.<sup>8</sup> The question of flags in steamer traffic on the Elbe was decided in accordance with the German proposal.<sup>9</sup>

The most important event for Czechoslovak foreign policy in general, and for German-Czechoslovak relations in particular, was the visit of Lord Halifax to Berlin and, as its first consequence, Delbos' visit to Prague. For, on the one hand, the danger, feared above all else by Czechoslovakia, of being left alone in the wilderness in the eventuality, however remote, of an Anglo-German *rapprochement*, or of a *détente* between the Western Powers and Germany and Italy, was disposed of; and, on the other hand, the moment long and patiently awaited by Beneš seemed to be approaching when he can alter his foreign policy without appearing to alter it, when he, by participating in the conciliatory move by France and Britain, could keep their sympathy or assistance, and simultaneously transfer the center of gravity of his policy to the good relationship with Germany which was to be hoped for. Assuming that he wants to

<sup>8</sup> The project originated by Czechoslovakia for such a canal to protect their coal export trade to Southeastern Europe against German competition, facilitated by the Rhine-Danube Canal under construction by Germany.

<sup>9</sup> See footnote 20, p. 13.

execute this veering movement, it is a help to him that at the moment his Russian alliance, so offensive to us, has become practically unimportant. There remains, therefore, at present only the Sudeten German question as main obstacle to the desired *rapprochement* with Germany. I consider it probable that in this matter he will make any concessions which do not jeopardize the unity of his Government in order to take advantage of a propitious moment which may perhaps never recur.

We should encourage him in this but not make it too easy for him. For, some time or other, the willingness to improve the position of the Sudeten Germans will decrease in proportion as the pressure which the enhanced power of the Reich and its noncompliant attitude toward Czechoslovakia exercises on the latter diminishes. Added to which we cannot be concerned only with supporting the Sudeten Germans, but it must also be the aim of German policy to eliminate Czechoslovakia as a potential enemy in case of war. That, however, would not be possible if M. Beneš succeeded by a new "Locarno," to attach himself to the Western Powers, or even to achieve a British guarantee in addition to the French alliance. Rather he must depend mainly on us for the security of his country. German policy should therefore be directed toward isolating Czechoslovakia in any future potential negotiations, but then to handle her so considerately that her French alliance gradually loses its intrinsic value, in the same and even greater measure than is the case with the Franco-Polish alliance.

But what if there is no *détente* between Germany Italy and Britain/France, or if such a *détente* is still a long way off? For such an eventuality I think I can draw conclusions from the, in general, exceedingly unsatisfactory development of Czechoslovak foreign policy in the past year, that Beneš will nevertheless seek a gradual *rapprochement* to us, provided we make this in the slightest degree possible. After the Halifax visit to Berlin, but before Delbos' arrival in Prague, a very highly placed personality of this State made a remark which appeared to me to throw a spotlight on present trends of thought: the natural relationship of Czechoslovakia to the Reich should become the same as it was in the Middle Ages; it is true we must not try to lead the Czechs against the French. In the Middle Ages, the great era of the Czech people, they were independent in internal affairs, but dependent on the Holy Roman Empire in foreign affairs. The Czechoslovak problem is important enough for us and yet it is only a part of the problem of the Central European area. It would be a great and tempting goal for German policy, by the exercise of

moderate force and patience, to guide this problem along peaceful paths to ultimate solution.

EISENLOHR

No. 48

1613/386624

*Memorandum*

(Pol. I 187 g (IV))

Herr Künzel informed us that the invitation by the Austrian Federal Government to the Sudeten German Party for negotiations over certain questions<sup>10</sup> was repeated recently, and to be precise, in the form of an invitation to the Semmering<sup>11</sup> for a conversation. At the same time it was intimated that the Federal Chancellor<sup>12</sup> would take part in the conversation. Herr Künzel added that, even despite this renewed invitation, the Sudeten German Party would maintain their noncompliant attitude. As for the rest, Konrad Henlein would be in Berlin in the course of the coming week and opportunity would occur for discussion of outstanding questions.

ALTENBURG

BERLIN, January 18, 1938.

[Marginal note initialed by Weizsäcker on the 18th:] To Altenburg. Request telephone call.

No. 49

1613/386625

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

PRAGUE, January 20, 1938.

A. III. 2. f. 2.

(Pol. I 214 g (IV))

In reply to directive of 14th instant, Pol. I 6911 g (III).<sup>13</sup>

Enclosed herewith I have the honor to submit the text of your telegram No. 2 of January 5,<sup>14</sup> decoded here, which differs from the text of the copy sent with the directive indicated above.

According to the wording of the telegraphic directive received here at the time it was to be assumed that, while a certain reserve as regards the presentation of the German viewpoint through the

<sup>10</sup> See document No. 39, p. 89.

<sup>11</sup> Fifty miles southwest of Vienna.

<sup>12</sup> Herr von Schuschnigg.

<sup>13</sup> Not printed.

<sup>14</sup> Document No. 44, p. 95.

Sudeten German Party seemed indicated by the competent Reich authorities, reserve vis-à-vis the Austrian proposal<sup>15</sup> generally did not. In the meantime Deputy Frank has been informed in accordance with telegram No. 4 of 11th instant.<sup>16</sup>

EISENLOHR

### No. 50

1940/434627-28

*Aide-Mémoire From the Czechoslovak Legation in Berlin to the German Foreign Ministry*

AIDE-MÉMOIRE

URGENT

Nr. 62b/38

JANUARY 22, 1938.

(Pol. IV 746)

(Pol. IV 428)

Recently the Czechoslovak authorities have been approached by Czechoslovak citizens, who, by virtue of the law of March 9, 1937 (*Reichsgesetzblatt*, part I, page 281),<sup>17</sup> concerning the safeguarding of the Reich frontier and retaliatory measures, had been summoned to transfer their immovable property situated in Germany to a Reich citizen within a short time limit (3 months).

Up to the present, the following cases have been recorded:—

Josef Lhota, house property in Oberullersdorf 123, Sachsen,  
Josef Peš, house property in Ostritz, Bernstädterstr. 229,  
Johann Valečka, house property in Ostritz,  
Wenzel Cervenka, house property in Pethan,  
Franz Curda, house property in Vogelsdorf,  
Emil Korner, landed property in Schreiberhau, Silesia,  
Sophie Eisler, landed property in Glogau.

These orders were all the more surprising to the Czechoslovak authorities as the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs had succeeded, in all cases which had been adversely settled, in suspending execution of the compulsory alienation of real rights owned by German nationals in the Czechoslovak Republic. Furthermore, that Ministry had held out a prospect of the revision of all cases previously settled, and had given an assurance that the Czechoslovak authorities, in agreement with the Ministry, would act with good will

<sup>15</sup> See document No. 39, p. 89.

<sup>16</sup> Document No. 45, p. 96.

<sup>17</sup> This Reich Law of March 9, 1937, "concerning the protection of the Reich frontier and retaliatory measures," empowered the Minister of the Interior to take all measures necessary for the protection of the frontiers, and to take any suitable retaliatory measures, in accordance with the laws of the Reich, against the persons or property of citizens of a foreign state according as similar measures were taken by the latter against any Reich citizen.

in order to avoid altogether, or as far as possible, the application of item (c) of paragraph 50 of the Czechoslovak law of May 13, 1936, on the defense of the State<sup>18</sup> (i.e., the compulsory transfer of real rights).

The Legation of the Czechoslovak Republic is instructed to inform the Foreign Ministry that only an immediate revocation of the measures hitherto taken, with regard to the compulsory alienation of Czechoslovak real rights in Germany, would make it possible to exercise the above-mentioned Czechoslovak good will toward Reich-German owners of property.

BERLIN, January 22, 1938.

[Longhand note by Weizsäcker:] I have told M. Mastny that this would imply exactly parallel behavior, i.e., terror against terror [*Schreckzustand gegen Schreckzustand*].

### No. 51

1940/434623-25

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*

Draft

BERLIN, January 24, 1938.  
(zu Pol. IV 377-388 (I))

Your telegrams Nos. 12 and 14 of January 19, 1938.<sup>19</sup>

Please inform Czechoslovak Government, with reference to the settlement of the applications for reinstatement in the Jägerndorf case, that we are ready, having regard to the promise given to reinstate the dismissed Reich-Germans, to postpone for a month, until March 1, 1938, the date envisaged for countermeasures. At the same time, please hint that we, of course, shall be forced finally to make available as many jobs of Czechoslovak nationals in Germany as Reich-Germans have lost posts at Jägerndorf through the action of the Czechoslovak administrative authorities. For the above purpose, submission of the data necessary for decision should be requested prior to expiry of time limit.

As regards the demands for the transfer of landed property, I am in agreement with your proposal that the Czechoslovak Government should be informed of our readiness to cancel the German transfer measures as soon as we have been informed by the Legation of the formal withdrawal of the corresponding Czechoslovak provisions. Please point out, in support of the observations already made by

<sup>18</sup> The National Defense Law; see footnote 18, p. 12.

<sup>19</sup> Neither printed.



the Legation, that we, moreover, expect the withdrawal of the Czechoslovak expropriation measures, not only in respect of Jägerndorf, but generally to cover all such measures which have been enacted in Czechoslovakia at all to the prejudice of Reich-Germans. So far as is known, this has taken place hitherto in 18 cases apart from Jägerndorf. If cases arise, the Legation should be in possession of further material on the subject. Finally, you should add to your communication that the 6 demands for transfer already known to the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry are but a part of the total of 25 decrees issued during the course of the German countermeasures, and concerning which the Czechoslovak Government should obtain full information through their Legation in the Reich in the course of the next few days.

MACKENSEN

[Longhand note:] N.B. The draft represents the outcome of the conversations between the *Reichsführer-SS*,<sup>20</sup> the A.O., and the AA.,<sup>21</sup> held on January 21, 1938.

### No. 52

1940/434610-15

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*

Draft

VERY URGENT

BERLIN, January 26, 1938.

(zu Pol. IV 240 (II))

Subject: Effects on Reich-Germans in Czechoslovakia of the National Defense Law.

Your report of November 18, 1937 (Consular Division B. I. 7. b. gen.).<sup>22</sup>

The large number of measures taken against Reich-Germans in virtue of the Czechoslovak National Defense Law,<sup>23</sup> notices of dismissal, expulsions, demands for the transfer of landed property, obstacles put in the way of owners of concerns of military importance in the management of their undertakings, etc., have forced the Legation to press for the annulment of these measures. The report of November 18, 1937, threw light on the effects of the National Defense Law and on the steps taken by the Legation.

All the more are doubts evoked by the evasive attitude of the Czechoslovak Government which, by promising amicable examina-

<sup>20</sup> Himmler.

<sup>21</sup> The German abbreviation for the Foreign Ministry (*Auswärtiges Amt*).

<sup>22</sup> Not printed.

<sup>23</sup> See footnote 18, p. 12.

tion and presumably complete annulment of the various measures by the competent administrative and national defense authorities, have avoided giving a decision of their own on the totality of these measures. The behavior of the Prague Foreign Ministry in particular, therefore, often seems merely a cloak for the deliberate action of the authorized officials under the National Defense Law against the Reich-German element in Czechoslovakia. The efforts of the Legation to achieve through normal diplomatic channels the annulment of the measures taken against Reich-Germans in Czechoslovakia have so far, unfortunately, not met with any accommodating attitude on the part of Czechoslovakia.

An exception is provided by the Jägerndorf case,<sup>24</sup> the apparently favorable evolution of which would seem to be attributable to the impression created by the reciprocal German measures against Czechoslovak citizens and their landed property in Germany.<sup>25</sup>

This incident indicates that effective intercession on behalf of the Reich-Germans concerned will only be possible if all cases of the application to Reich-Germans of the National Defense Law are grouped together to form the subject of the complaints and the countermeasures of the Reich. In view of the manner in which the National Defense Law is being carried out against Reich-Germans, its application is for us absolutely intolerable. The latest development of the Jägerndorf case seems to show that the Government of Czechoslovakia, under pressure of the retaliatory measures undertaken, is beginning to respect this point of view. In this connection, therefore, the further suggestions advanced by the Legation can be applied and carried out as follows:

The treatment of so many Reich-Germans as enemy aliens would exacerbate public opinion in the Reich against the Czechs to an extraordinary degree. The discussion initiated to clarify relations between Prague and Berlin would be gravely prejudiced. Moreover, it must not be overlooked that we are in a position to retort to such treatment of Reich nationals in Czechoslovakia with countermeasures difficult for that State to tolerate. In the event of an abnormal development of relations between Czechoslovakia and the Reich, thousands of workmen, and in particular thousands of Czechoslovak traders, would incur the danger of having to leave Germany. The legislation of the Reich would have to take into consideration the mood of the German people, unfavorably impressed by the measures of the Czechoslovak authorities, and enact special legislation regarding the legal position of Czechoslovak nationals in the Reich (known

<sup>24</sup> See footnote 23, p. 70.

<sup>25</sup> See documents Nos. 35, 36, 40, and 42, pp. 76, 77, 92, and 94.

to be some 200,000). The considerable influence of Reich-German firms well provided with capital on the Czechoslovak economic system might, under the impression of unfavorable relations between the two States, be subjected to direct restraints which would have a very disastrous effect on the employment figures of Czechoslovak industry.

Should the Czechoslovak Government, contrary to expectation, not acquiesce in this point of view and not abandon their previous proceedings, even when the Legation brings to their knowledge once more the total number of measures taken against Reich-Germans, then the German Government will be forced in that case to draw conclusions of the above-mentioned kind. The object would then be, by means of retaliatory measures, to force the Government of Czechoslovakia to suspend the application of the National Defense Law against Reich-Germans.

In order to judge the extent of the consequential measures which the German Government will have to put into force, you are requested to report further and comprehensively on the extent of the measures against Reich-Germans, based on the National Defense Law. The report of November 18, 1937, enclosed lists of evictions, withdrawals of residence permits, refusals of work permits, and dismissals, and demands for the compulsory assignment of landed property, and from the further continuation of these lists supplementary information is available, which you are requested to forward as soon as possible. This does not affect the request already made for information on the Jägerndorf incidents. Kindly send forward also a report on any other measures carried out by Czechoslovak officials on the basis of the National Defense Law. Please also notify any cases which have been settled by the departure of the Reich-Germans concerned. I am informed by the Administration of the A.O., which is particularly concerned with the restoration of secure living conditions for Reich-Germans in Czechoslovakia, that the following measures against Reich-Germans by Czechoslovak authorities under the National Defense Law have been reported to it:

*Withdrawal of residence permit:*

- |                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Jesussek, Emil   | } Antoschowitz. |
| 2. Skowronnek, Karl |                 |
| 3. Kremser, Josef   |                 |

*Refusal of work permit or dismissal:*

- |                    |                               |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| 4. Schinner, Fritz | Neudorf near Mährisch-Trübau. |
| 5. Marinek, Karl   | Brünn (subsequently left).    |
| 6. Buchner, Franz  | Falkenau/Elbe.                |
| 7. Schmidt, Adolf  | Jägerndorf.                   |

*Notice to hand over landed property:*

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| 8. Müller, Oskar | Falkenau/Elbe.  |
| 9. Essbach, W.   | Schwaderbach (in this case, it is not quite clear whether the demand has actually been made or has merely been threatened). |

You are requested also to pay special attention to these cases.

To sum up, I welcome the fact that the Legation, seeing the distress which the National Defense Law has caused to our Reich-German fellow countrymen in Czechoslovakia and the burden imposed on the whole course of German-Czechoslovak relations by this treatment of Reich-German citizens, has acted with the utmost energy to protect the Reich-Germans. You are requested, in carrying out this instruction, to report as soon as possible on the outcome of the proposed representations to the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry.

B[ISMARCK]

A[LTENBURG]

H[EINBURG]

No. 53

2379/497742-52

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 2. allg.

PRAGUE, February 4, 1938.

(Pol. IV 800)

Subjects:

- Tension in domestic politics and reasons therefor.
- Tendency of the Coalition Government and its disadvantages.
- Social Democrats and Activists afraid of being dropped.
- The Sudeten German Party in opposition to the parliamentary system parties.
- The danger of its radicalization.
- Beneš' speech at Reichenberg.
- February 18, 1937.
- Konrad Henlein's speech of February 28.
- The Sudeten German Party's motion for a national defense law.
- The sabotaging of the February resolutions.
- The decline of the Activists.
- Today the Sudeten German Party alone is a partner in negotiations with the Government.
- The President's Christmas message and Hodza's plans.
- Conversation with Konrad Henlein.
- His wish to have his rear covered by Germany.

## CONFIDENTIAL

In domestic politics in Czechoslovakia excitement prevails at present, as is otherwise only normal before an election campaign. The parties are sending their Ministers out to make speeches in the provinces and their newspapers are attacking each other vehemently. Rumors are rife of an impending transformation of the Government,<sup>28</sup> but at the same time semiofficial assurances are being given that there is no intention of a fundamental change in coalition policy, and that perhaps only one or two Ministers will be replaced by younger blood. The usual huckstering for a reshuffle of offices seems also to be in progress again. In itself all this would be very uninteresting. Yet the deep-seated uneasiness, especially of the Czech Social Democrats and the German Activist parties,<sup>29</sup> indicates that fundamentally something else is involved, or rather is beginning to be involved, namely, the creation of the domestic political conditions for the revision of relations with the German Reich, considered necessary by the leaders of the State, and thus also of the relations between Czechs and Slovaks on the one hand and the Sudeten Germans on the other.

<sup>28</sup> For the constitution of the Coalition Government, see footnote 3, p. 2. The threatened break-up of the coalition was brought on by the New Year article of Dr. Beran (leader of the Czech Agrarian Party) advocating the inclusion of the Slovak People's Party and the National Alliance in the Government, and the conclusion of "an honorable agreement with the Sudeten Germans" which aroused the anger of the Left-Wing elements in the country and Government.

<sup>29</sup> The principal parties in the Republic were the Czech Agrarian Party led by Hodza, Right Wing, the largest Czechoslovak party, and represented in the Coalition Government of Dr. Hodza; the National Democrat Party, strongly nationalist, Right Wing and anti-Beneš and in alliance since 1934 with the Fascist group led by Stribrny, joined Hodza's coalition in 1938; the Social Democrat, the second largest party, dating back to the prewar era, Left Wing, and the second strongest party in the Hodza Coalition Government; the Czechoslovak National Socialist Party (Beneš' party), a socialist party but more nationalist and less socialist than the Social Democrats, represented in Hodza's coalition as the third strongest party; the People's Party led by Msgr. Sramek, a Catholic moderate party represented in the Cabinet since 1921 and in Hodza's coalition; the Slovak Autonomist (or People's) Party led by Msgr. Hlinka (the Hlinka Party), a Slovak and Catholic Party, supporters of a large measure of Slovak autonomy, the largest opposition party after the 1935 elections, opponents of Beneš, entered into negotiations with the Henleinists at the beginning of 1938; the Communist Party, the second largest opposition party after the 1935 elections and fourth largest in the Republic, and common to all nationalities in it; the Sudeten German (Henlein) Party, founded by Henlein in October 1933 on the dissolution of the German National Socialist and German National Parties as the *Sudetendeutsche Heimatsfront* and changed to the *Sudetendeutsche Partei* in 1934, emerged as the largest single party in the Republic at the 1935 elections (1,200,000 votes and 44 Deputies in Parliament, one less than the Czechoslovak Agrarian Party); the Activists—a name given to the three German parties in the Republic, the German Social Democrats, German Agrarians, and German Christian Socialists, which collaborated with the Czechoslovak Government until after the Austrian *Anschluss* (March 1938), when the two latter broke away and joined forces with Henlein, thereafter the German Social Democrats, led by Jaksch, being the only German party to support the Czechoslovak Government.

For years Czechoslovak domestic politics have been based on a coalition of all parties of the two dominant peoples in the State, with the exception of the Communists and Monsignor Hlinka's Slovak Autonomist Party, which has remained in opposition, and also of the Czech National Democrats led, until his death, by Kramař, but including the three "Activist" Sudeten German parties. The latter are the *Landbund*, the Christian Social Party and the German Social Democrats. The German Democratic Party is not represented in the Government.

Only one German Minister, the Jewish Social Democrat, Czech, holds a portfolio, that of Public Health. The German Ministers, in the Government since 1926,<sup>30</sup> had up to last year achieved nothing at all for the Sudeten Germans. They only served the Government as a fig leaf to cover up chastely their anti-German policy, and one can only say that they did justice to a task anything but honorable. Moreover, the tendency and purpose of the Coalition Government was—and still is—to govern without the minorities, that is, against them. Only this negative factor as the core of the State structure united all these parties, from the Czech Social Democrats on the Left, through the Traders' Party [*Gewerbepartei*], the Czech National Socialists and the Clericals, to the Agrarians on the Right. It is obvious that the leadership of a Government with such heterogeneous elements, which of necessity adopt a different attitude to each question from their own peculiar angle, was not exactly a simple matter. It was helped by the fact that the leaders of the coalition parties sometimes agreed among themselves beforehand, and that, therefore, decisions were made by quite a small circle of persons. The debates and divisions in Parliament are therefore sometimes preconcerted and only serve to keep up the façade of parliamentary democracy. In spite of this such an instrument of government is naturally very unwieldy, and proves impracticable when it is a question of being able to maneuver in the tempests of the times, or if necessary suddenly to steer the ship of state on a fresh course.

The start of the present unrest was the well-known New Year article by Beran, leader of the Czech Agrarian Party, in which he adopted toward the Sudeten German Party a more friendly tone than was previously considered compatible with Czech patriotism.

<sup>30</sup> Prior to 1926 all the German parties had remained in opposition, but in that year the German Agrarians and German Christian Socialists joined the Government, and in 1929 the German Social Democrats did likewise; they also had Ministers in the Cabinet. After the 1935 election the German Christian Socialists remained outside the Government, but in October all three German "Activist" parties were in the Government. All these parties had seats in the Cabinet, but only one of their members, Czech, had a portfolio (as Minister of Health).

As the speaker at a Party meeting Beran adhered to his attitude, and obtained the approval of his followers. Immediately the fear arose among Social Democrats and German Activists that they might be dropped from the Government. Even if it may not come to this for the moment, and Prime Minister Hodza's intentions only seem directed in the first instance to bringing the Slovak Autonomists and the Czech National Democrats into the Government, a gradual gravitation toward the Right can be considered as not impossible because it corresponds to the needs of the foreign political situation. For a measurable time to come there can indeed be no serious talk of the participation of the Sudeten German Party in the Government, which Henlein's opponents are already holding up as a bogey. In the course of future development, it is, however, not excluded that this question will also arise and that in consequence Henlein will one day be forced to make weighty and rapid decisions.

The Sudeten German problem is the focus of things here; it has assumed the proportions of a European question as a result of the interest evinced in it by Germany, Great Britain, and lately also by France. On its solution depend peace within the country and perhaps its external security also. The Czechs refused to admit this so long as everything went smoothly and so long as they could hope that the protagonists of Sudeten Germanism, the Sudeten German Party, might be liquidated by struggle or as the result of inner decay.

Today this hope is buried. What seemed so terrible to the Czechs in the Sudeten German Party—and not wrongly so from their point of view—was not only its numerical strength, the ideological similarity with National Socialism, the “undemocratic” Führer principle, and the totalitarian claim, which, in accordance with the conditions here prevailing, naturally extends only to the German minority and thus does not threaten the existence of the Czechs but only of the German Activist parties amenable to them, but it was above all the fact that this party does not claim to represent material or religious interests but the entire German section as such, by emphasizing the racial ideal. While, therefore, all other parties divide the population of the State into horizontal strata, according to their material or religious interests, so that for example German and Czech Social Democrats, German Czech and Slovak Agrarians find themselves in the same camp to represent their interests, the Sudeten German Party took it upon itself to cut straight across these special interests, to split the population vertically and to gather together all Germans regardless of profession, station, or religion in a common defense against attacks on their national individuality. This is an example which must find adherents in the multinational State and may lead

to the dismemberment of the State. This is the real reason why, after its rise to power, the Sudeten German Party was not admitted into the Government, but forced into the opposition and immediately outlawed as undemocratic. Intelligent Czech politicians have since regretted this as a serious mistake. The Sudeten German Party, too, has had to suffer from being in opposition, although this certainly has given it advantages, above all that of being hardened by severe combat. Condemned to being practically without influence, it could offer its adherents—not composed of idealists only—little more than inflammatory speeches. As a rising against the overwhelming power of the Government was pointless and the idea of a seizure of power like that of the N.S.D.A.P. in the Reich was an impossible goal for a minority, there remained for the increasingly agitated and radicalized masses, who saw no tangible successes and no prospect of coming to power, only the hope of armed intervention by Germany. This hope, fed by a whispering campaign, was no secret to the Government and is in contravention of the official party declarations of loyalty. There is great danger in this, especially at moments of excitement such as followed the Teplitz incident.<sup>32</sup> This gives the Czechs the welcome argument that one cannot come to an understanding with Henlein, either because his statements are not honestly meant, or because his supporters do not regard them as binding on themselves. This is the "double track system" of Sudeten German politics so decried by the Czechs.

In his Reichenberg speech of August 1936,<sup>33</sup> that is in the first year of his Presidency, President Beneš tried to direct the Sudeten German problem into positive channels. His remarks were intended not only to inspire confidence in the Germans, but also as an exhortation to the Czechs. He satisfied neither. The Czechs, because they did not then understand the necessity of concessions; today they do understand, but cannot yet bring themselves to act. The Germans, because Beneš offered too little; he was trying to achieve a *rapprochement* between the minority and the State by granting the former consideration, in proportion to their number, in the budget of the various departments and by a gradual decentralization of the administration, while keeping the direction of affairs firmly in the hands of the State authorities. Proportional representation in the sphere of the civil service, however, would mean that the German minority, which

<sup>32</sup> See footnote 31, p. 20.

<sup>33</sup> Made on August 19, 1936, at Reichenberg (Liberec)—an important speech in which he outlined his conception of the roles of the Czechs and Germans in the Republic, called for collaboration in political and economic spheres and the cessation of the exaggeration of racial differences, and dwelt at length on the minority problems in Czechoslovakia in a tone of conciliation.



constitutes little more than a fifth of the population of the State as a whole, would at the *end* of the promised measures of pacification provide one-fifth of the civil servants in, say Slovakia or Carpathian Ruthenia, a matter in which the Sudeten Germans have no interest at all, but likewise only one-fifth in the Sudeten German area. They would thus perpetually be under the rod of Czech officials, and this, of course, is only one sphere out of many, although one of the most important.

At the beginning of 1937 Prime Minister Hodza went a step further. He negotiated with the three Activist parties in the Government on the basis of a program put forward by them (cf. report of February 22, 1937—A. III. 2. f. 2.).<sup>34</sup> The result of the 3 weeks of negotiation, which ended on February 18, 1937, was not laid down in any treaty or even law, but only by an official announcement by the Government as their unilateral decision.<sup>35</sup> Its substance was inadequate; it amounted substantially to this, that the German minority, and all others as well, could enter into the enjoyment of their constitutional rights. Nevertheless, this was only meant as a beginning. Apart from the good intention, perceptible in spite of all caution, the Government were certainly also pursuing the secondary aim of giving fresh impetus to the Activist parties, who take the credit among their supporters and also abroad for what has been achieved, and thus of prejudicing the Sudeten German Party. The latter got into a difficult position. If the Government carried out their intentions, if the situation of the Sudeten Germans substantially improved as a result of the Activist negotiations, and the threatening pressure of the Czech State authorities were appreciably relaxed in the Sudeten German area, then the Sudeten German Party voters would not be indebted to their own party leaders for all that. Konrad Henlein therefore stated in his speech at Aussig [Usti] on February 28, last year, that the Government's attitude to the memorial of the German "splinter parties" could not be regarded as a serious effort, the results being only meager promises. He demanded protection of the homeland and safeguarding of the racial frontier, recognition of the principle of racial self-administration and its realization for all nationalities and national groups, and compensation to the Sudeten Germans for the injustices done to them since 1918. He further announced draft laws on the institution of a national register of racial membership,<sup>36</sup> the comprehension of a racial group as a corporation under public law with uniform representation, as

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<sup>34</sup> Not printed.

<sup>35</sup> See footnote 11, p. 7.

<sup>36</sup> See footnote 10, p. 6.

well as the realization "of self-determination and codetermination within the settlement area and also in all central State organizations." The drafts announced were prepared in great haste, and presented to Parliament by the Sudeten German Party on April 27, last year (enclosures to report of April 30, 1937—A. III. 2. f. 2.).<sup>37</sup> Immediately rejected unanimously by the Czech press as unworthy of discussion, these proposals are now, after the lapse of almost a year, to come up before the Constitutional Committee of the Chamber of Deputies for debate. The discussion may be fruitful if it is well conducted; it may above all be of use in clearing up the opposing views and reconciling them in many cases. But the rejection of the proposed laws is certain, for how can it be expected that a majority could be obtained in this Parliament for canceling, by a vote on one law, all the victories achieved by the Czechs in the Sudeten German areas in 20 years of tenacious penetration since the revolution? At a critical moment last year the draft laws succeeded in weakening the impression of February 18 among the Sudeten German people. This was their primary object. Moreover, they are not the last word in wisdom, for it is impossible to delimit from one another the races in the Bohemian region by means of a hedge of legal paragraphs, or to bring to a stop the eternal conflict between Germans and Czechs in all spheres of cultural, economic, and political life by threatening so many weeks or months of imprisonment in each individual case. The draft laws breathe the spirit of self-defense; the minority tried to take refuge from the majority under the cloak of the law-giver. This is no longer a necessity for the Sudeten German Party; today it is on the offensive. February 18 did not have the dreaded unfavorable effect on the electorate. If last summer the Government's intention was to hold the overdue communal elections, at least in certain districts, in the hope that these would show a decline in the strength of the Sudeten German Party, and if the latter then regarded such elections with doubt and misgiving, the hopes of the one and the fears of the other were soon dissipated; the Government have postponed the elections indefinitely, because they had to admit that they would lead to another great success for the Sudeten German Party. The reason for this lay chiefly in the fact that the Czechoslovak civil servants and Czech public opinion did not pursue the prominority initiative introduced by the Government, but, as Beneš publicly stated in his speech at Krumau, sabotaged the Government's intentions. It is not so easy to exorcise the spirits of chauvinism and racial hatred once they have been conjured up, and

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<sup>37</sup> Not printed.

to change the temper of a people and induce in them an attitude of reasonable conciliation, when for 20 years they have been drunk with victory and have continually been incited against everything German. Prime Minister Hodza was constantly kept informed by a number of Sudeten German deputies, such as Kundt, Peters, Rosche, and Neuwirth, about what was going on in the provinces; how the influence of the Czech frontier-dwellers' unions was being exerted in undiminished measure on State and communal officials in the German area; how the Germans were put at a disadvantage by State decrees, German schools closed and superfluous new Czech schools set up; how posts and official positions were given to Czechs instead of Germans, and how the police, courts, and military authorities applied the National Defense Law to the unfortunate German population, thousands of whom went to prison on the pretext of suspected espionage. The Prime Minister, however, proved to be powerless in face of these happenings, which were disclosed in their full extent by the Sudeten German Party deputies, as well as by the Activists in the budget debate in Parliament at the end of the year. Today, after having been excluded from the public life of the State for two decades, the Sudeten Germans hold 40,000 fewer official posts than are due to them under the population quota. Recently a young Activist deputy, Schütz, of the Christian Social People's Party, and certainly a reliable witness from the Czech point of view, stated in a speech at Aussig [Usti] that, so far, as a result of February 18, only 750 German candidates for official posts and 4,800 workers had been admitted to the service of the State, and he characterized the ideology of the "Czech National State" as the greatest danger for pacification. It was impossible, he continued, to lay down in Prague a policy on the lines of February 18, and pursue one in the provinces dictated by frontier-dwellers' interests.

The minority, however, no longer looks for its salvation to the Activists, whose negotiations have always been so unsuccessful, and with whom the Government have dealt only because the Sudeten German element had found determined representatives in the Sudeten German Party. These Activist parties, together representing a third of the German electorate, are played out; they have even become burdensome to the Government, to which they are no longer of use, for they have proved incompetent as an instrument with which to fight the Sudeten German Party, incompetent also as a mediator for the pacification of the minority, and finally useless as a tool to hoodwink the outside world and cover up the internal conditions of this country. Even if, last summer, there was talk in Government circles of banning the Sudeten German Party or suppressing its press

organs, and if, after the Teplitz incident, a Government bill to cripple the Sudeten German Party was drafted and smuggled into Parliament between the budget debate and the Christmas recess, developments have now already gone beyond such possibilities and plans. Today the Government need the Sudeten German Party because, for reasons of foreign policy, the serious approach to the minority problem can no longer be shelved, and because the administration needs for this a partner capable of negotiating, and one whose word carries weight with the Sudeten German people. As things stand, this partner can only be Konrad Henlein. He has automatically become, even in the eyes of the Government, the "mouthpiece" of the Sudeten German people, as demanded in the most important of the Racial Protection Bills.<sup>40</sup> The reason that it came to this lies, in addition to the Czech public's inability up to the present to learn wisdom, in the growing power of the German Reich as well as in the unfavorable development of the foreign political situation of Czechoslovakia. In this connection I would venture to refer to my report on the occasion of the Delbos visit and to the annual report on foreign policy dated January 12, of this year (A. III. 1. allg.).<sup>41</sup>

In consequence, Beneš dealt with the minority problem again in his last Christmas message (cf. report of December 25, 1937—No. A. III. 1.)<sup>42</sup> and last December Hodza spoke to me of his intention to transfer almost all existing German officials, and, subsequently, new German recruits as they arrived, to the Sudeten German area and to create a new "February 18," out of which perhaps a "March 18" might develop, but this not with the Activists, but also with the Sudeten German Party.

In view of this state of affairs, and having regard to the vagueness and fragility of the general internal political situation, mentioned at the beginning of this report, the question arises for the Sudeten German Party whether to persevere under the slogan "all or nothing" in its hitherto unswerving, but also fruitless, position of opposition, or whether the moment has come for it to grasp the proffered hand, take its place at the conference table, and attempt to work for the gradual solution of a problem which, according to Beneš, is not only a political but also a psychological one, and which, therefore, can only be attacked and settled by degrees. And possibly the further questions may arise whether the Sudeten German Party

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\* I.e., the laws proposed by the Sudeten German Party in Parliament in April 1937; see footnote 10, p. 6.

<sup>40</sup> Document No. 47, p. 97.

<sup>41</sup> Not printed; the message referred to his conversations with the French Foreign Minister Delbos on the policy of conciliation, and in the same conciliatory terms to the settlement of the minority problem and its international implications.

will be willing to negotiate alongside the Activists and whether it will later be inclined to enter the Government. I have had a long talk with Konrad Henlein on these points, and when I realized that he was not clear in his mind on any of these issues, I advised him to reflect on them so that he might be prepared and resolute for any eventuality which might arise. Henlein expressed to me his conviction that the Sudeten German people would follow him willingly, whatever his attitude in this or that case. But he needed support in the rear from the Reich and therefore must be certain that his decisions harmonized with those of the Reich Government. Above all he must know whether we were still interested in maintaining the fissure between Germans and Czechs, or whether we concurred in the attempt at gradual conciliatory settlement. I answered Henlein that he would probably always have sufficient time before taking any decisions of principle to address the necessary inquiry to Berlin, either through his representatives there or through myself. In general it might be said that all governments envisage at least two different types of policy for the attainment of their political aims, one based on peaceful means and the other as a last resort. As long as Reich policy could achieve its vital objectives by peaceful means, and so far there was no cause to doubt this, he might reckon only with a peaceful policy on Germany's part, as proclaimed often enough by the Führer and Reich Chancellor. Therefore he need only adjust his own policy to meet this eventuality. The negotiations with the Czechoslovak Government on Sudeten German affairs must, when the time came, be conducted by him or his mandatory; they could not be conducted by us. We would advise, support, and privately help him, but this did not signify *carte blanche* to cry for the moon. It would be necessary to maintain close contact and keep each other informed about current developments and the ideas of both sides. If it ever came to the point of the Sudeten German Party's being in the Government, we would expect it to play its part in bringing Czechoslovakia out of the French into the German camp.

Henlein promised to come to Prague every week, and, apart from the contact already existing between the Legation and his deputy, K. H. Frank, and the fraction of the Sudeten German Party, also to maintain regular personal contact with me. For his part, he expressed the wish that I should inform the Reich Government of the present situation, and the possibilities which might sooner or later arise from it, so as to prepare and facilitate attitudes and decisions which might become necessary. The foregoing exposition pursues this purpose.

EISENLOHR

## No. 54

2004/442442-43

*Report From a Deputy of the Sudeten German Party (Künzel)*<sup>43</sup>

SECRET

[Undated.]

REPORT ON THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN DEPUTY K. H. FRANK AS KONRAD HENLEIN'S DEPUTY, DEPUTY KÜNZEL, DEPUTY KARMASIN AND DR. KREISEL FOR THE SUDETEN GERMAN PARTY, AND DEPUTY MONSIGNOR HLINKA FOR THE "SLOVAK PEOPLE'S PARTY" AT ROSENBERG ON FEBRUARY 8, 1938

The conversation came about on the occasion of a visit by the above-mentioned comrades to Hlinka at Rosenberg. Hlinka gave us a very cordial reception and repeatedly stated how pleased he was that it was now possible for him to make the acquaintance of leading personalities in the Sudeten German Party. After Frank had drawn attention to the necessity for cooperation between the dissatisfied nationalities in the State, Hlinka stated emphatically that he favored cooperation and mutual support and that he would nominate a man from his party for us as soon as possible, whose task it would be to maintain constant contact with us. Hlinka then discussed in detail his political and economic work in Slovakia, and emphasized here in particular the necessity for political training and education. He bluntly advocated the idea of an independent Slovak nation, which must demand autonomy for itself within the State. He referred passionately to the Treaty of Pittsburgh, the original of which the delegation of American Slovaks would be bringing to the Catholic Congress in Budapest, and which he wished to submit to Beneš so as to establish the authenticity of Masaryk's signature.<sup>44</sup> He held out the prospect of a great demonstration on behalf of Slovak autonomy which would take place in Pressburg at the beginning of June on the occasion of the 20th anniversary celebrations of the "Treaty of Pittsburgh," in connection with which the possibility of the Germans and Hungarians taking part would be discussed. On the subject of Germany, Hlinka was very reserved in his statements, above all from the point of view of cultural politics, and referred to information which he had received from Reich-German visitors only just recently. After the necessity for support through the press had also been discussed, at which Hlinka stressed the assistance given by *Die Zeit*,<sup>45</sup> which was arousing the world's interest in the Slovak

<sup>43</sup> This and the subsequent reports by Künzel were found in the files of the Budapest Legation. Presumably copies were sent to the Foreign Ministry and circulated by it.

<sup>44</sup> See footnote 4, p. 63. The Hlinka Party and many Slovaks challenged the authenticity of Thomas Masaryk's signature of the treaty.

<sup>45</sup> The Sudeten German Party daily.

question, and after we had drunk several times to the prosperity of the German and Slovak peoples and to successful cooperation, Hlinka showed us a number of institutions belonging to the "Slovak People's Party," the Ludova Banka,<sup>46</sup> a printing works, etc.

Afterward a communication to the press that the conversation had taken place was rejected by Sidor<sup>47</sup> because the wing of the Slovak People's Party grouped around Deputy Tiso,<sup>48</sup> which is close to the Government, might be alarmed by this.

KÜNZEL

No. 55

1940/434643-50

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

B. I. 7. b.

PRAGUE, February 11, 1938.

(Pol. IV 964)

In reply to your letter of 26 ultimo (Pol. IV 240) and with reference to that of 17 ultimo (Pol. IV 194) and my reports of October 11, 1937 (A. III. 1. b. 8) and February 3, 1938 (B. I. 7. b. gen.), the telegram of December 22, 1937 (No. 131), the telegraphic reports of November 4, 1937 (No. 177), November 9, 1937 (No. 182), December 15, 1937 (No. 196), January 19, 1938 (No. 14), January 27, 1938 (No. 20), and the memorandum of December 10, 1937, submitted to Counselor of Legation Altenburg by Counselor of Legation Hencke on December 13, 1937.<sup>49</sup>

Subject: Effects of the National Defense Law<sup>50</sup> on Reich-Germans in Czechoslovakia.

I. In order to obtain a complete picture of the extent to which the Czechoslovak National Defense Law has been applied to Reich-

<sup>46</sup> A Slovak People's bank.

<sup>47</sup> A Slovak People's (Hlinka) Party deputy in the Czechoslovak Parliament, representative of the extremist wing of that party.

<sup>48</sup> Msgr. Tiso, deputy leader of the Slovak People's (Hlinka) Party, who succeeded Hlinka as leader of it.

<sup>49</sup> These documents are as follows:

Letter of January 26, p. 111.

Despatch of January 17, not printed.

Report of October 11, p. 11.

Report of February 3, not printed.

Telegram of December 22, not printed.

Report of November 4, p. 29.

Report of November 9, p. 32.

Report of December 15, not printed.

Report of January 19, not printed.

Report of January 27, not printed.

Memorandum of December 10, not printed.

<sup>50</sup> See footnote 18, p. 12.

Germans in Czechoslovakia and of the success of the defensive measures, it is appropriate to preface the subsequent account with the following figures: At present there are pending, i. e., are not yet finally decided:

(1) 48 cases of the compulsory transfer of Reich-German landed property and other real estate rights to Czechoslovak citizens or corporate bodies (§50 of the Czechoslovak National Defense Law; so-called §50 cases). The individual cases are enumerated in List I attached to enclosure.<sup>51</sup> As can be seen from this list, only five cases have come to the knowledge of the Legation in which Reich-Germans have canceled their leases by October 1, 1937. As far as the Legation are aware, no rights of ownership have been transferred so far.

(2) 127 cases of the refusal of residential permits. These cases are given in detail in the enclosed List II.<sup>51</sup> As can be seen from the list, in 14 of these 127 cases the refusal of the residential permit took place under reference to the wish of the military authorities, i. e., in virtue of the National Defense Law.

(3) 104 cases of the withdrawal of labor permits or of the compulsory removal from concerns at the wish of the military authorities (§22 of the National Defense Law). In List III attached to the enclosure<sup>51</sup> 112 cases are given, which have, pursuant to a communication from the Czechoslovak Ministry for Foreign Affairs, been reduced to 104 cases since the list was compiled, by means of a positive settlement, i. e., by the fresh grant of a labor permit in 8 cases. These cases are thus not yet settled.

The most urgent group within the framework of all the 22 cases was the Jägerndorf complex. In the Jägerndorf district, i. e., in that northeastern corner of Bohemia where the military fortification works are being pushed forward at great pressure, the compulsory dismissal of Reich-Germans from a number of concerns threatened to become a mass expulsion. One hundred and twenty cases were reported to the Legation from this area; accordingly they concentrated their efforts first of all on Jägerndorf.

To date, from the whole of Czechoslovakia, a total of 237 cases of the application of §22 of the National Defense Law, i. e., of compulsory dismissals of Reich nationals, have come to the knowledge of the Legation. These are divided up as follows:

<sup>51</sup> Not printed.



Jägerndorf (as mentioned above) :	Cases in the <i>rest</i> of the country brought to the knowledge of the Legation <i>direct</i> :	Cases in the <i>rest</i> of the country <i>first</i> made known to the Lega- tion by the Foreign Ministry :
120	52	65
Of these :		
Settled favorably by de- cision of National De- fense Ministry .....106	12	64
Finally rejected ..... 5	—	1
Settled by death, depart- ure from the locality, and pensioning ..... 7	—	—
Not yet settled ..... 2	40	—

II. The following conclusions can be drawn from the figures quoted above:

(a) Of the entire 120 cases in Jägerndorf, 5 were finally decided in the negative, according to a communication from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is shown by the Legation's reports that the Czechoslovak Government justify these 5 negative decisions by stating that these cases involved undesirable aliens who would in any event have been forced to leave Czechoslovakia by administrative procedure. The Legation have meanwhile demanded from the Foreign Ministry further details regarding the charges brought against these 5 Reich-Germans.

From the proportion which the 5 negative Jägerndorf cases bear to the 106 cases so far settled favorably it is evident that the promise given me by the Czechoslovak Government, that almost 100 percent of the Jägerndorf cases would be settled favorably, can be regarded as having been fulfilled. I received this promise on December 15, 1937, and reported it the same day by telegram No. 196.<sup>52</sup> It is the result of the protracted attacks made via the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister right through to President Beneš, and of the diplomatic negotiations backed right from the start by the constantly repeated threat of appropriate countermeasures. The German countermeasures then actually inflicted in the ratio of 1:1 in the Jägerndorf case were decreed on December 22, last (cf. telegraphic directive No. 133 of December 22),<sup>53</sup> and thus could no longer have any influence on the Czechoslovak Government's promise. It may, however, be assumed that the fulfillment of this promise, which of course had still also to be achieved by a struggle, was assisted by the energetic attitude of the German Government. It is a welcome fact that these countermeasures were first limited to a definite group of cases and to the ratio of 1:1, because the start of a retaliatory struggle, with each side outdoing the other as time went on, was thereby avoided. In comparison with the 30,000 to 32,000 or so Reich-Germans settled in Czechoslovakia, actually 198,283 Czecho-

<sup>52</sup> Not printed.

<sup>53</sup> Document No. 40, p. 92.

slovak nationals are settled in Germany, according to the survey undertaken by the *Reichsführer-SS* in the summer of 1937, but of these only 28,218 belong to the Czech race. In this connection it should be borne in mind that the Reich-Germans living in Czechoslovakia occupy on the whole substantially more important positions in economic life than do the Czechoslovaks of Czech race in Germany, and that the Reich-Germans living in Czechoslovakia constitute an important bulwark in the Sudeten Germans' struggle for national existence, while the Czechs living in Germany are of no importance in the German-Czech nationality struggle. The Reich-German landed properties situated in the Czechoslovak frontier districts, which could be seized under the National Defense Law, above all in the course of a retaliatory struggle, are, as can be seen from the Legation's reports, put at roughly 4,000 by the Czechs, a figure which, to be sure, is incapable of being checked so long as the urgently desirable enumeration of all Reich-Germans in Czechoslovakia is not undertaken, as has been suggested by the Legation for a considerable time. First and foremost, however, there is no doubt that the Czechoslovak military authorities would be only too willing to put up with the burden on the native labor market which would result from the expulsion of Czechoslovak citizens from Reich territory, if on the other hand the opportunity arose to purge thoroughly their own frontier districts and concerns of importance for war purposes of the undesirable Reich-German aliens.

Also the demands issued to a number of Czechoslovak citizens to transfer their real estate to nationals of the German Reich under the "Law for the Security of the Reich Frontier and for Retaliatory Measures" of March 9, 1937, have no longer directly influenced the basic promise given by the Czechoslovak Government at the beginning of December 1937, that the provisions of a similar nature issued against Reich nationals in accordance with §50 of the National Defense Law were to be regarded "as canceled." The well-founded view is, however, held here that the German countermeasures will contribute toward hastening the still outstanding Czechoslovak declaration on the formal repeal of the measures issued against Reich-Germans. Apart from a few exceptions, further orders have not been issued to the Reich-Germans involved, even after the expiry of the time limits originally fixed for the transfers of ownership. In no instance has the transfer been executed compulsorily or a compulsory execution ordered. In those instances where the internal administrative authorities have approached, or will in future approach, Reich-Germans for the execution of the transfer after the basic promise by the Czechoslovak Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have held out the prospect of appropriate instructions to these administrative authorities.

(b) From the above table concerning the original dismissal of 237 Reich-German nationals without notice, it can be seen furthermore that 65 cases came to the knowledge of the Legation only via the Foreign Ministry, that is, cases which were not notified by the Reich-Germans concerned, either to the Legation or to one of the competent consulates or even to authorities in Germany. According to information from the Foreign Ministry, 64 of these 65 cases have been favor-

ably settled in the course of the general clarification, and only in one case has the decision been a negative one. According to the Foreign Ministry's statement, this single instance was a Reich-German who had previously been convicted judicially and would in any case have been obliged to leave Czechoslovakia by normal administrative procedure. The Legation have demanded an investigation of this allegation and for the time being have reserved the right to take further action in this matter also. It is thus clear that the Foreign Ministry are notifying the Legation, not merely of the settlement of those cases which are cited in the numerous *notes verbales* from the Legation, but in addition even of those cases which were not mentioned by the Legation. This proves that the Foreign Ministry, fully conscious of the burden on German-Czechoslovak relations which the German complaints represent, are striving to fight things out with the domestic departments in the State's understandable interests in the realm of foreign policy, so as to obtain justice for the German demands. This struggle is not easy (1) because the military authorities have desired to exploit their enormously increased authority under the National Defense Law to clean up the frontier fortification areas and the armaments industry of undesirable aliens, and (2) because the formal legal provisions in force also give them the right to do so.

III. In pursuance of instructions contained in your despatch of the 26th ultimo,<sup>55</sup> I have recently mentioned once more to the Foreign Ministry the totality of our complaints, using the arguments given in the despatch. In particular, attention has been drawn to the fact that the German Government would reply with countermeasures to any measures taken against a Reich-German under the National Defense Law. The competent expert at the Foreign Ministry, Counselor Cermak, head of the European Section of the Political Department, made the following statement in reply: The Foreign Ministry had taken up the German complaints so energetically, and also with success, because the military authorities had resorted to measures against Reich-Germans and other foreigners inconsistent with the true sense and purpose of the National Defense Law. This was the starting point for the efforts of the Foreign Ministry. In those cases, however, where in future imperative and well-founded requirements of national defense existed, even German countermeasures could not lead to these national defense requirements not being satisfied. This sort of thing would be intolerable for any state. It was absolutely impossible for a state, as a matter of principle, that aliens should hold important positions in its armament industry. Czechoslovakia was in an awkward position, inasmuch as she had previously allowed this state of affairs to arise and was now unable to remedy

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<sup>55</sup> Document No. 52, p. 111.

it for reasons of foreign policy, or else could only do so in isolated instances with special features. The Czechoslovak Government hoped that the German Government would not reply to such special isolated instances with reprisals against Czechoslovak citizens.

M. Cermak was informed in reply that the domestic justification for the measures taken against Reich-Germans under the National Defense Law was not regarded by the German Government as authoritative. So far as the German Government were concerned, it was merely a question of whether a Reich-German would or would not lose his employment through action of the authorities. Every loss of employment would straightway lead to corresponding measures against Czechoslovak citizens in Germany. This would apply, for example, also in the event of a labor permit being actually re-granted subsequently, the post having, however, been filled by a Czechoslovak citizen in the meantime, so that, in spite of a formally favorable settlement of the German complaint, a Reich-German would nevertheless in actual fact have been deprived of his livelihood.

IV. The afore-mentioned despatch finally raises the question whether, in addition to the information hitherto furnished, other measures adopted by the Czechoslovak authorities under the National Defense Law are also to be ascertained. It must be observed here that Reich-German owners of real estate situated in the fortification zone are subject in principle to the same impositions as Czechoslovak citizens themselves, i. e., the military authorities can demand from them the surrender of landed property for fortification purposes, acquiescence in the erection of fortification works, the closing of roads, etc. The Legation have not so far received any indication of the extent to which such measures have been executed in the case of Reich-German landed property. The Legation's file only reveals the case of the Reich-German landowner Arndt Frohberg, Richard Neumann, and other Reich-German property owners resident in the same district (cf. despatch of May 7, 1937—W. III. S. E. 3538)<sup>57</sup> and that of the Patschkau municipality (cf. your despatch of January 21, 1938—Pol. I 6134).<sup>57</sup> The reply from the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry, in which the complaint in the matter of Frohberg and his associates was rejected, was forwarded to you with our report of the 21st ultimo—B. I. 8. b. The intense anxiety which has arisen among all Reich-Germans in Czechoslovakia, to which the Legation have constantly drawn attention in their *démarches* to the Foreign Ministry, must be regarded as an indirect consequence of the National Defense Law.

<sup>57</sup> Not printed.

V. The afore-mentioned despatch finally cites nine complaints which have come directly to the knowledge of the *Auslandsorganisation* of the N.S.D.A.P. These nine cases, of which the Legation were already acquainted with four, will be dealt with in a special supplementary report. I would point out for the time being that two of these already known cases, namely, those of Josef Kremser and Oskar Müller, under serial Nos. 126 and 14, respectively, are specified in the lists II and I which were forwarded with the report of November 18, 1937. In the two other cases, Jesussek and Skowronek, it is not a question of measures in virtue of the National Defense Law, but of administrative expulsions in the narrower sense, concerning which you have already been informed by us. I shall raise the matter of the five remaining new cases with the Foreign Ministry here as soon as the names of the employers or, in the Essbach case, further details concerning the demand for the transfer of property have been communicated to me by you.

I am grateful when internal German authorities immediately communicate to the Legation via yourselves any complaints coming to their knowledge direct, and would venture to repeat the request, which I have already expressed previously, that all internal authorities concerned should be advised accordingly, provided that this has not already been done.

EISENLOHR

No. 56

1941/435016

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 27 of February 16

PRAGUE, February 16, 1938—9:30 p.m.

Received February 17, 1938—1:05 a.m.

(Pol. IV 1022)

I had a long conversation today with the President which resulted in nothing essentially new in the way of foreign policy. Whereas Krofta is extremely uneasy at the results of the Berchtesgaden discussion,<sup>58</sup> as I know from another source, Beneš is obviously anxious to show a calm front and demonstrate that he holds firmly to the line pursued up to the present, and, while maintaining his alliances, to win Germany's confidence by making practical concessions. He again stressed his wish to achieve a good, lasting, "manly, and direct" rela-

<sup>58</sup> The meeting of the Austrian Federal Chancellor, von Schuschnigg, with Hitler at Berchtesgaden on February 12, 1938. See also vol. I, chap. II.

tionship with us. Germany had the right to demand that no power should use Czechoslovakia as an instrument against Germany. He was striving to draw nearer to us gradually and clear the atmosphere until one day he could also publicly acknowledge good relations in agreement with other states. He emphasized that he would not allow others to draw him into matters which did not concern his country.

His pact with Russia was the relic of a former epoch, but he could not just throw it into the wastepaper basket. He did not permit Communist propaganda, and he was willing to allow regular collaboration between his Security Police and ours, in order to discover and suppress such propaganda. He hoped to be able to solve the minorities problem in the course of his period as President, that is to say, within 5 years. In this he would go as far as the unity and cohesion of the State permitted. But he would have no haggling [*Kuhhandel*] and no concessions, either with the Activists or the Sudeten German Party; on the contrary, it was the Government's duty to settle this question in favor of all Sudeten Germans without concessions or promises. He said the next points to be dealt with were the questions of German schools and the cessation of the system establishing schools devoted to Czechization, the question of officials in the Sudeten German area and at headquarters [*Zentrale*], and, finally, concessions on the administrative side in regard to the language question.

EISENLOHR

### No. 57

1977/439160

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

PRAGUE, February 17, 1938.

A. III. 2. h. 3.

(N. P. 104)

Subject: Slovak propaganda.

I enclose a report<sup>59</sup> of the 12th instant from von Druffel, the Consul at Pressburg, together with enclosure, without, however, sharing the opinion expressed therein that Jehlička's<sup>60</sup> propaganda could also be promoted further, though in a different way from heretofore. For not only has the former support given to Jehlička in no way remained a secret (see part II, paragraph 4 of enclosure to report of Decem-

<sup>59</sup> Not printed.

<sup>60</sup> A Slovak Nationalist, more extreme than any of the Slovak parties.

ber 10, last year—A III 1. b. 8),<sup>61</sup> and not only does the Sudeten German cause no longer need support of that kind, because it is on the upgrade and openly supported by us in the press, radio, and diplomatic conversations, but encouragement of Slovak Autonomists and *émigrés* touches the sorest point of this State, gives the impression that we wish to disintegrate and destroy the Czechoslovak State, and therefore of necessity strengthens Czech resistance to concessions to the Sudeten German element.

What was right in former times, and which was so until recently, namely, cooperation between the Sudeten German Party and Father Hlinka<sup>62</sup> in order to overthrow in December the draft law known to be aimed at the crippling of the national parties, today would be redundant and harmful. I can therefore only recommend that the *émigré* Jehlička be dropped completely.

EISENLOHR

## No. 58

2004/442446-47

*Report From a Deputy of the Sudeten German Party (Künzel)*<sup>63</sup>

SECRET

FEBRUARY 19, 1938.

REPORT ON CONFERENCE BETWEEN DEPUTY K. H. FRANK (REPRESENTATIVE OF KONRAD HENLEIN), DEPUTY FRANZ KÜNZEL, AND PATAKY (HUNGARIAN STATE SECRETARY FOR MINORITIES IN THE PREMIER'S OFFICE), WHICH TOOK PLACE IN PATAKY'S PRIVATE RESIDENCE IN BUDAPEST FROM 6:10 TO 7:10 P.M. ON FEBRUARY 11

Count Esterhazy<sup>64</sup> had brought the invitation to visit Pataky. In circles competent to judge, Pataky had been described to us as a wily Magyar minority politician, so that we displayed the utmost reserve, in spite of very great cordiality and repeated expressions of friendship on his part. In addition, Pataky had called in Dr. Flachbarth, the former Secretary of the Magyar Parties in Prague, a Magyarized Swabian, whom he uses in his minority policy even against German interests, but who, on the other hand, professed to be an expert on minority questions in Slovakia. After our wishes had been expressed, Pataky said he also was prepared to fulfill them and bring influence to bear through his agents on the attitude of the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, and to influence the Hungarian Government press to comment on the minority questions of Czechoslovakia in the manner

<sup>61</sup> Document No. 28, p. 66.

<sup>62</sup> Leader of the Slovak Autonomist Party.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. document No. 54, p. 124.

<sup>64</sup> A leader of the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia.

desired by us. On the occasion of our demands to the Hungarian press, Pataky stressed Hungarian dissatisfaction with the attitude of the Sudeten German Party press in judging Racial-German problems in Hungary, just as Bethlen<sup>65</sup> had done before him and as Daranyi<sup>66</sup> and Kanya<sup>67</sup> did subsequently. As we had the firm intention from the start not to discuss Hungarian domestic questions, and thus not even problems of Hungarians of German race, we only said that the Czech parties and the Czech press continued to reproach the allegedly anti-German policy of Hungary, the friend of Germany. Pataky took the line that we were not objective and were allowing ourselves to receive biased information from Budapest about Hungary's minority questions, in which connection he certainly recognized, in real Magyar fashion, the correct attitude of the leading men of the "Society of Racial-Germans" ["*Volksdeutsche Kameradschaft*"]—he mentioned Basch, Goldschmidt, and Huss—but stressed on the other hand that they were young people moved by romantic ideas. He would be very glad to give us an objective impression of the position of the Hungarian Germans. Pataky represented very openly to us their plans for revision, and made no secret of Hungary's efforts to contribute to Czechoslovakia's disappearance from the map of Europe. He maintained in this connection that *Gauleiter* Bohle's speech<sup>68</sup> had indeed done much to clarify the relations of the German Reich with Hungary, but on the other hand the idea of a trans-Danubian area, to be incorporated in the Reich some day, is prevalent in certain sections of the Party, especially the Hitler Youth.

At the conclusion of the talk, which was substantially carried on by him, he informed us that Prime Minister Daranyi and Foreign Minister Kanya would like us to visit them next day. The invitations were actually awaiting us in the hotel when we returned.

KÜ[NZEL]

<sup>65</sup> Hungarian Prime Minister 1921–30, and at this date, though holding no office, was unofficial adviser to Horthy, the Hungarian Regent.

<sup>66</sup> Hungarian Prime Minister October 12, 1936–November 16, 1938.

<sup>67</sup> Hungarian Foreign Minister October 12, 1936–November 16, 1938.

<sup>68</sup> Bohle, the *Gauleiter* of the Germans overseas and head of the *Auslandsorganisation*, visited Budapest and gave a lecture there on January 24, 1938, on the *Auslandsorganisation*, in which he referred particularly to the German minority in Hungary.



## No. 59

2004/442448-40

*Report by a Deputy of the Sudeten German Party (Künzel)*<sup>69</sup>

SECRET

FEBRUARY 19, 1938.

## REPORT ON CONFERENCE BETWEEN KONRAD HENLEIN'S REPRESENTATIVE, K. H. FRANK, DEPUTY FRANZ KÜNZEL, AND THE HUNGARIAN PRIME MINISTER DARANYI, ON FEBRUARY 12, 1938, FROM 11:30 TO 12 O'CLOCK, IN THE CABINET OFFICE IN BUDAPEST

The invitation to visit Daranyi and Kanya was unexpected and had not been sought by us. Pataky managed to get himself attached to us, which was obviously not intended by Daranyi and Kanya. We must assume that the invitations from Daranyi and Kanya were pressed for by Count Bethlen. We were very cordially received by Daranyi, after we had been shown various State rooms in the Cabinet Office by Counselor of Legation Szent-Ivany,<sup>70</sup> and had the opportunity of hearing a speech on the history of Hungary, with the portraits of the Hungarian Prime Ministers before us and overlooking Budapest. He proved to be already informed of our wishes and, on his own initiative, said very definitely that he would openly advocate their fulfillment. To our surprise he spoke first of all about his last visit to Berlin<sup>71</sup> and said in a decisive manner that he had decided, in a lengthy conversation with the Führer and Reich Chancellor, that the Hungarian Government's attitude to the fate of the Czechoslovak State was completely in accord with the Führer's. He then went on to speak of Budapest's relations with Prague, and assured us that talks between Budapest and Prague were taking place and would take place only because negotiations are necessary with Rumania and Belgrade, and because at the last meeting of the Little Entente<sup>72</sup> Beneš managed to commit the Little Entente States to a purely collective policy with Hungary. Daranyi declared as decisively as Bethlen the day before that there was no question of concluding a pact of friendship with Prague. After expressing hearty assurances of his pleasure in meeting representatives of the Sudeten German Party, he stressed the necessity of further collaboration and sent good wishes to Konrad Henlein together with an invitation to visit Budapest. In the presence of Daranyi, Pataky emphasized the im-

<sup>69</sup> Cf. document No. 54, p. 124.

<sup>70</sup> Secretary-General of the Hungarian Foreign Ministry.

<sup>71</sup> Daranyi visited Berlin on November 21-29, 1937, as a return visit to that of Neurath to Budapest earlier in the year.

<sup>72</sup> At Sinaia on August 31, 1937.

portance of our repeating the statements already made to him, to the effect that it was necessary for the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia to set about building up a real political organization and, beyond this, building up their economic organizations. To these assurances Daranyi added the request that we, on our part, should support the Hungarian minority by word and deed.

Kü[NZEL]

FEBRUARY 19, 1938.

No. 60

2004/442450-51

*Report by a Deputy of the Sudeten German Party (Künzel)*<sup>74</sup>

SECRET

FEBRUARY 19, 1938.

REPORT ON CONFERENCE BETWEEN KONRAD HENLEIN'S REPRESENTATIVE (K. N. FRANK), DEPUTY FRANZ KÜNZEL, AND THE HUNGARIAN FOREIGN MINISTER (KANYA), FROM 12:20 TO 1 P.M. ON FEBRUARY 12, 1938, IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IN BUDAPEST

Foreign Minister Kanya was somewhat reserved at first but very quickly became excited. He said he also was prepared to support our wishes and stressed the importance of collaboration with Sudeten German policy. He said that he intended on his part to issue definite instructions to the Hungarian Legation in Prague. Kanya's attitude to the Czechoslovak minorities problems revealed the same ideas as those of Daranyi and Bethlen, i.e., the same inability to understand the racial questions. He too could only see the problem of the revision of the peace treaties from the point of view of the rights of the Crown of St. Stephen. In the further course of his remarks he referred to his journey to Poland.<sup>75</sup> In expressions similar to those of Daranyi he said that his talks with Polish statesmen had shown that Budapest and Warsaw were of the same mind in regard to the political fate of Czechoslovakia. He made this remark in a very decisive way. He on his part likewise stated the impossibility of concluding a pact of friendship with Czechoslovakia, and gave his assurance that all plans of an anti-German nature based on Hungary's collaboration with Czechoslovakia and Austria would break-down in the face of Hungary's refusal.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. document No. 54, p. 124.

<sup>75</sup> Kanya visited Warsaw with Admiral Horthy (Hungarian Regent) about February 6-10, 1938, and, according to the official announcement, had conversations directed toward establishing a "close understanding and friendship" between the two countries.

In reply to a doubt which we expressed very cautiously as to the possible attitude of Chancellor Schuschnigg,<sup>76</sup> Kanya said that he was definitely convinced that Chancellor Schuschnigg would be no party to an anti-German plan. As we discovered later, Kanya must at the time of the discussion have been informed of the fact of the Chancellor's departure for Obersalzberg<sup>77</sup> and must have been told of his probable attitude with regard to this.

According to information which reached us in Vienna from the Polish Legation, Chancellor Schuschnigg had informed the Hungarian Minister, after the French Minister in Vienna,<sup>78</sup> of his decision to accept the Führer's invitation even before he had notified his own Cabinet.

We already had the impression at the time that the representations of the Hungarian statesmen were mostly given on the hypothesis that we would pass them on to Berlin. When we left, Daranyi was extremely cordial, and referred to the coming visit of State Secretary Pfundner, whereupon Kanya too requested that relations be maintained.

Kü[NZEL]

FEBRUARY 19, 1938.

## No. 61

2369/494371-75

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 2. f. 2.

PRAGUE, February 25, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 1329)

I have the honor to submit a memorandum on a conversation which I had with Prime Minister Hodza on the 23d instant regarding further developments in the Sudeten German question.

EISENLOHR

[Enclosure]

A. III. 2. f. 2

PRAGUE, February 25, 1938.

## MEMORANDUM

I called on Hodza, the Prime Minister, on 23d instant, having previously made an appointment. First I discussed the following in-

<sup>76</sup> Federal Chancellor of Austria.

<sup>77</sup> See footnote 58, p. 131. Schuschnigg had left Vienna for Berchtesgaden on the night of February 11.

<sup>78</sup> Gabriel Puaux, 1933-38.

dividual items with him and he assured me of his support for their favorable settlement:

- 1) *Elektrotechna*. Desire of the firm of Siemens and Halske<sup>81</sup> to maintain technical contact with this subsidiary firm of theirs and *Elektrotechna's* desire to receive Government orders again;
- 2) Request of the Sudeten German Athletic Club for permission to attend the Breslau Sport Festival;
- 3) Sending of seasonal agricultural workers to Germany;
- 4) Legalizing of the A.O.<sup>82</sup> in Czechoslovakia.

Special memoranda are with the relevant files.

We then passed to the external and internal political situation. Regarding the former, I stated, without encountering any disagreement, that Czechoslovakia would in the long run only be able to find security in close friendship with Germany. Hodza spoke of his anxiety that Germany might raise the minorities question in the form of official demands, and read out a passage from a report by Mastny, according to which the Führer had expressed the view to Mastny that the Reich might conclude a minorities agreement with Czechoslovakia on the model of that concluded with Poland. Did that imply similarity of content or did the Führer only mean the same method of bilateral pact? The first interpretation was discounted by the fact that the German minority here was incomparably better off than the one in Poland, and the Sudeten Germans had long been in possession of everything that was being striven for on behalf of the Germans there. Perhaps, however, the Führer was not acquainted in detail with the subject. Czechoslovakia wished for obvious reasons to avoid altogether bilateral agreements regarding minorities. In order to forestall such a demand on our part he had considered the possibility of either declaring to us that Czechoslovakia would grant us the same rights as the signatories of the Treaty for the Protection of Minorities (St. Germain, September 10, 1919), although the obligations established therein were placed under the guarantee of the League of Nations and we were no longer members of that body (this course, however, seems to me to be impracticable for us, as was evident from an examination of the text of this Treaty which I undertook afterward), or, instead, the exchange of *unilateral* Government declarations to the effect that, in the interests of mutual relations, they would do as much as possible for the minority.

<sup>81</sup> The big German electrical firm which had subsidiaries in Austria, Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere.

<sup>82</sup> The *Auslandsorganisation*, the organization of Germans abroad, the legalization of which in Czechoslovakia the Reich had long been striving to secure from the Czechoslovak Government.

Hodza then mentioned his intention, after a reshuffle of the new Government, possibly in the course of the coming week, of making a statement in regard to the Führer's speech of February 20,<sup>83</sup> in which he would (a) reject foreign interference in domestic affairs and (b) anticipate our probable requests by then announcing measures in favor of the Sudeten Germans.

On the subject of the Government reshuffle he informed me that he could not drop the Activists yet, but at least Czech,<sup>84</sup> the Jewish Social Democrat Minister of Health, would probably be replaced by Jaksch, the young Activist, of the same parliamentary group, whose person enjoyed a certain prestige even with the Sudeten German Party, as he was well aware. Furthermore, he hoped to gain the support of the Czech National Democrats for the Government, although these were still making certain reservations against his prominority policy. Finally, Hodza gave me to understand that his negotiations for the entry of the Slovak Autonomists (Hlinka) into the Government did not seem to be hopeless.

He would arrange for the communal elections to be held as soon as he could assume that cooperation with the Sudeten German Party, even if it remained in opposition, was a possibility, and thus scarcely this year. He had been obliged to postpone the communal elections after the Teplitz incident<sup>85</sup> last autumn, because otherwise the entire polling would have been accompanied by the noise of battle.

In reply to an inquiry as to what he would do for the minority at once, Hodza referred to his last conversation with me in December last year,<sup>86</sup> saying that what he had then described to me as a preliminary crystallization of ideas on the occasion of a "fireside chat" would now have to be carried into effect. He had not consulted the Activist Ministers concerning this and had not even informed them of his intentions.

He had notified the President of his view that the civil servants in the Sudeten German region must no longer behave in the chauvinistic spirit of, say, the *Ceské Slovo*.<sup>87</sup> He used for this the French expression *sévir* which would be somewhat too strongly translated

<sup>83</sup> The speech before the specially convened session of the Reichstag at the Kroll Opera House, Berlin, which consisted of a review of Germany's internal situation and an important statement of her foreign policy, including a renewed demand for the return of the Colonies, a declaration of Germany's intention not to return to the League of Nations, announcement of German recognition of Manchukuo, her attitude to Russia and the Far Eastern conflict, to the Spanish War, the Axis, Britain and France, and to Poland, Hitler's appreciation of the agreement with Schuschnigg at Berchtesgaden of February 12, and renewed demands concerning German minorities in Europe.

<sup>84</sup> See footnote 30, p. 116.

<sup>85</sup> See footnote 31, p. 20.

<sup>86</sup> See document No. 38, p. 79.

<sup>87</sup> The organ of the Czechoslovak National Socialist (Beneš) Party.

by "rage" ["*wüten*"]. The Sudeten Germans should be allowed to develop a maximum of autonomy *via facti* within the framework of the constitution, and the entire public opinion of the country would then regard this as a matter of course, especially if he succeeded in shifting the Government's center of gravity more toward the right by the inclusion of the Slovak Autonomists and the Czech National Democrats. Furthermore, nearly all the Sudeten German officials were now to be transferred to the Sudeten German region, for which measure instructions had already been issued; Sudeten German recruits were likewise to be embodied there. To my inquiry as to the manner in which the cessation of the policy of Czechization in the educational system, as promised me by Beneš, was to be effected, Hodza replied that he was considering the appointment of commissions which would consist of Czech and German "autonomous elements" and would reach agreement from time to time as to where and what sort of minority schools were to be established.

I pointed out to the Prime Minister that the root of the Sudeten German problem lay in the fact that the Sudeten Germans regarded themselves as being under foreign domination and must so regard themselves in present circumstances, with the constitution of the State and the application of the supreme power as they are. Hodza admitted this, but expressed the hope that the very measures he had planned in the spheres of the civil service, autonomy, and the stopping of the Czechization movement, would be calculated gradually to cure the malady and create confidence among the Sudeten Germans.

On the subject of confidence I pointed out to him that it would be necessary to establish lasting contact between the Government and the Sudeten German Party, and indeed to a much greater degree than at present, and also to organize this contact on a regular basis. For this purpose I suggested that the Government might appoint a small unofficial committee of suitable trustworthy persons, and Konrad Henlein a similar one; these gentlemen should meet regularly to discuss and explore the problem continuously, establish the points on which agreement could be reached, and propose means of realizing the same, and finally, in the case of the points on which no agreement could be reached, either effect compromises or else appeal to higher authority. In addition, he himself might well resume direct contact with Konrad Henlein and make this a regular practice. Henlein was the natural spokesman of the entire Sudeten German element, and for that reason, and because he was an upright and sincere man, he must be a very desirable partner for the Government in assuaging the thorny Sudeten German problem. I could well imagine

that by adopting such methods the confidence now lacking would be restored, and that the Sudeten German Party would at least develop into a very loyal opposition party.

Hodza took up this idea and promised to consider it.

EISENLOHR

## No. 62

1613/386646/52

### *The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

FEBRUARY 27, 1938.

A. III. 2. allg.

(zu Pol. I 574 g)

Effect of the Führer's speech<sup>88</sup> on Czechoslovak policy.

Talks with Beran and Hodza.

Czechoslovak Agrarian Party's pro-German and anti-Communist attitude.

Fight against the *émigré* press.

Prospect of new elections.

Sudeten German Party to enter the Government after the elections.

The reshuffle in the Government in the near future and Hodza's impending statement on the Führer's speech.

Desired German press reaction to this.

Yesterday, at his own request, I met Beran, the leader of the largest Czechoslovak Party, the Agrarian Party,<sup>89</sup> at the country house of a mutual acquaintance outside Prague, and later had a further talk last night with Prime Minister Hodza, for which he had invited me by telephone the previous day.

I. In the course of the conversation Beran stated the following:

The Agrarian Party was opposed to the idea of collective security and advocated *rapprochement* with Germany. It was his intention to spread the idea that a good relationship to the Reich must be striven for by means of large-scale peasant demonstrations starting in the near future. But it depended on how we, on our part, viewed this willingness for a *rapprochement*.

We could not demand that Czechoslovakia should give up her alliances before she knew how she stood with Germany. He, Beran, knew what I had discussed with Beneš and Hodza; he knew, for instance, that Hodza intended seeing me in the near future, and he was also aware that the President had already previously told me that Czechoslovakia had neither concluded, nor would she conclude,

<sup>88</sup> See footnote 83, p. 139.

<sup>89</sup> See footnote 29, p. 115. Beran was the leader of the Right Wing of the Agrarian Party, while Hodza was leader of the party as a whole.

any military agreement with Soviet Russia. The Agrarian Party was in principle an irreconcilable opponent of Communism, but it could not undertake the hazard of breaking off treaty relations with Soviet Russia before knowing whether its efforts were appreciated by us.

The Communists in Czechoslovakia already suspected that some action was going to be taken against them; they had distributed 5,000,000 leaflets and had arranged for 1,000 meetings in order to combat the intensified anti-Communist trend. The meetings which he, Beran, was going to hold, would be in the nature of a major anti-Communist and anti-*émigré* demonstration after the Communists' action had proved a fiasco.

Both Hodza and Cerny, the Agrarian Minister of the Interior, shared his opinion that the agitation of the *émigrés* against Germany must be prevented. After the suppression of their press the *émigrés* had lately attempted, as a new measure, to publish their papers by the agency of Czechoslovak nationals. This was being counteracted by demanding a ban on publication, on pain of expulsion of 20 *émigrés*. It had further been decided to supplement the former inadequate legal machinery by a law making the vilification of Heads of foreign Governments or statesmen a punishable offense (automatically), and confiscating the publications. There were people in every country who acted out of motives of opportunism and others who were prompted by their convictions. He could assure me that his Party's attitude toward Communists and *émigrés* was firm and uncompromising, without heeding opportunist considerations. It would perhaps interest me to know that Soviet Russia was endeavoring to compromise Czechoslovakia as a "leading Communist State." Alexandrovsky, the Russian Minister, had recently invited him to dinner but he had not accepted the invitation.

The fact that in the last budget debate the Communists had voted for the Foreign Ministry credits and the estimates for the Presidential Chancery, as likewise the recent distribution of a photograph showing Beneš and Voroshilov<sup>90</sup> together, was all done to prejudice an agreement between Czechoslovakia and Germany. But the fight against Communist agitation would be harder if the neighboring countries showed no understanding for it.

Beran did not consider the minorities question insoluble. On the contrary, the unanimity of opinion on the subject had increased to such an extent that the solution might come much sooner than had

<sup>90</sup> Marshal Voroshilov, Commissar for Defense in the Soviet Union, Chief of the Armed Forces and member of the Politburo and Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.



quite recently been believed. Hodza had Beneš' full support here. He himself had pointed out in his New Year message that 1,000,000 Sudeten German voters must no longer be ignored in the political life of the country. The atmosphere would have to be created gradually in order to enable the Sudeten German Party to enter the Government and take part in the administration of the State.

When I brought up the matter of the release of Sudeten Germans imprisoned for offenses or held in custody for examination, the number of which, as I have in the meantime learned from the Sudeten German Party, may incidentally be considerably less than reports in the German press had led me to believe, he said he had already suggested that this should not wait until October 28, the national holiday,<sup>91</sup> but that something should be done still sooner in this field, even if only to a limited extent, as evidence of good will. With regard to the impending reshuffle in the Czechoslovak Government, Beran asked me to influence Hodza so that the post of Minister for War, at present occupied by Machnik, an Agrarian, be filled by a man he could trust, belonging to the Slovak People's Party (Hlinka Party).<sup>92</sup> The Left Wing parties were on the decline and very willing to negotiate. As a condition of their remaining in the Government the Agrarians demanded that they should not obstruct the fight against Communism and should for the rest remain more in the background than had hitherto been the case.

In regard to Chancellor Schuschnigg's speech,<sup>93</sup> Beran said it was true enough that its effect was exaggerated in many quarters, but he himself and his Party considered it reasonable, calm, and correct.

In conclusion, Beran expressed the wish that our conversation might contribute toward the achievement in time of a good and reasonable relationship between our countries.

I would like to add here that Beran is one of the most influential men in the country and will become Prime Minister should Hodza's health ever break down. Unlike the latter, who is a man of the world, of Slovak origin and Magyar stamp, Beran is both outwardly and inwardly of the Czech peasant type. He is as strong as he is shrewd and is generally considered reliable.

II. Hodza, whom I had last seen 3 days previously—I have submitted a memorandum about that talk<sup>94</sup>—told me that the funda-

<sup>91</sup> The anniversary of the founding of the Republic.

<sup>92</sup> See footnote 29, p. 115.

<sup>93</sup> Presumably the Austrian Chancellor's speech on February 24 to the Austrian Federal Council in Vienna, made after the reconstruction of the Government following his conversation with Hitler at Berchtesgaden on February 12. The speech dealt mainly with Austria's independence and her relations with Germany. See the relevant documents in vol. I, chap. II.

<sup>94</sup> Document No. 61, p. 137.

mental opposition in Government circles to collaboration with the Sudeten German Party had now been removed. However, it was not a question of bringing the Sudeten German Party into the Government at once, but taking steps with that end in view. Diverging from his former intention, he proposed issuing a writ for elections, general or municipal, and forming the future Government in accordance with the result of these elections in both cases. He seemed to be perfectly certain that the Activists would either disappear or at least cease to be of importance.

He said he would organize the immediate unofficial contact with the Sudeten German Party suggested by me so that he himself and his Party should establish close relations with them, in order that the latter might be informed beforehand of any move which might interest them; further, that a Sudeten German Party committee should remain in touch with his own intimates, whom he named as Beran, the Agrarian leader, Cerny, Minister of the Interior, or one of his officials; and that finally, social and cultural contacts between the Henlein Party and the Agrarian or other parties, should be fostered within the Agrarian or other clubs.

In order not to interfere too obviously in the domestic affairs of the country, I disguised my reaction to Beran's suggestion regarding the appointment of a Minister of War in the forthcoming Cabinet reshuffle by requesting Hodza; when filling the Cabinet appointments, to insure that those departments should not fall into anti-German hands, with which we had a constant fight for the settlement of the pernicious effects caused to our relations by the National Defense Law.<sup>95</sup> I at all events presumed that Krofta would remain Foreign Minister, and Cerny, Minister for Internal Affairs, which he confirmed. But what was the position with regard to the Ministry for National Defense? It seemed to me that here it was important that the Minister should know how to get his own way with the Generals. Hodza replied that the latter had not been the case with the present Minister, his party friend Machnik, who, moreover, had the well-known Machnik Decree<sup>96</sup> on his conscience (which the Sudeten German Party had made the reason for a League of Nations complaint, and which had to be withdrawn). He would probably have to give this appointment to the Social Democrats, for reasons of coalition policy and not on political grounds. But not just any Social Democrat should become Defense Minister; this post would be given to the former Minister of Justice, the Slovak Dérer, whom I must know as a reasonable, quiet man (which indeed he is, apart from specifically

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<sup>95</sup> See footnote 18, p. 12.

<sup>96</sup> See footnote 90, p. 51.

Slovak Party questions) and who was anything but a Marxist, had a good share of German blood in his veins, and who recently proved at a public meeting of the Sudeten German Party that their ranks were by no means only composed of enemies of the State. Further, since the 15th of the month, he himself had had a Colonel attached as liaison officer with the Permanent Defense Committee, of which he was chairman when the President himself did not assume this role, with the object of being always informed of what went on among the Generals.

Continuing, Hodza let it be sensed that he is fairly certain of persuading the old Kramař Party of the Czech National Democrats, not only Hlinka's Slovak Autonomists, to take part in the Government. I would consider the latter in particular a great advantage. For a consolidation of the Slav majority of the country, which represents together 10,000,000 people as against 5,000,000 representatives of other races, makes it easier for the Czechs to make concessions to the minorities, because it is then less dangerous for them. Besides, the Slovak Autonomists will not enter the Government without having previously obtained special rights for the Slovaks, which in turn facilitates the success of similar claims on behalf of other sections of the population.

In conclusion, Hodza spoke about the Government announcement he intends to make in respect of the references to Czechoslovakia in the Führer's speech of February 20.<sup>97</sup> He said we must understand if he clearly represented the sovereign right of his country and the principle of nonintervention in the internal affairs of other countries in this declaration, which would prevent otherwise unavoidable parliamentary speeches by the various party leaders. For the rest, he would say that it was not just today that he had started work on a solution of the minority problem; he would not say anything new about his actual plans in this field, already known to me, and would finally refer to us in as positive a manner as possible.

This declaration from Hodza may be expected in the course of next week. It will partly depend on the reception accorded to it by the German press whether things here will develop with the pleasing rapidity shown up to the present. I should therefore be grateful if it could be taken into account, when judging the declaration, what the Prime Minister of a country must say under such circumstances to the public at home and abroad, and if the positive side could be stressed in any criticism. It is surely obvious that Hodza will not only wait for the Schuschnigg speech,<sup>98</sup> but also for the development

<sup>97</sup> See footnote 83, p. 139.

<sup>98</sup> This presumably refers to Schuschnigg's speech of the 24th (see footnote 93, p. 143), the sense of the passage apparently being that Hodza would await the development of the ministerial crises, as well as Schuschnigg's speech, which had already occurred at the time of writing of the despatch.

of the British and French ministerial crises,<sup>99</sup> and presumably model his tone to a certain extent on that of political statements from abroad, and also praise the durability of the alliances in which he no longer believes. He cannot tear aside the veil until something new has been put behind it.

About the Austrian Chancellor's speech Hodza only said the following: Schuschnigg could either speak softly or loudly; he has preferred to speak loudly.

EISENLOHR

### No. 63

269/175075-80

*The Head of the Legal Department of the "Auslands-Organisation" (Kraneck) to the State Secretary and Head of the "Auslands-Organisation" in the German Foreign Ministry (Bohle)*

FEBRUARY 28, 1938.

Headquarters of the *Auslands-Organisation*

Legal Office

TS-11/38 Spn./RO.

Subject: Recognition of the *Auslands-Organisation* in Czechoslovakia.

The German Minister in Prague, the Czech Minister in Berlin, and the Delbos communiqué<sup>1</sup> from Prague having already described the recognition of the *Auslands-Organisation* in Czechoslovakia as a particular contribution by the Czechoslovak Government toward the settlement of German-Czechoslovak relations, numerous articles in the same sense are now appearing in the Czechoslovak newspapers and also in the Swiss press. It, therefore, seems to me necessary to specify to the German Minister in Prague the principles which must be followed in the negotiations regarding the recognition of the *Auslands-Organisation*; and all the more as press articles have reproduced versions of the bases of recognition which are incompatible with the views of the *Auslands-Organisation*. Thus it has been indicated as an argument against recognition that the *Auslands-Organisation* is a political association, whereas membership of political associations is prohibited for foreigners in Czechoslovakia. As against this it must be emphasized in Prague that the task of the *Auslands-Organisation* is to bring together, in a spirit of comradeship, Party members abroad, and to take care in a social and charitable sense of all Reich-Germans

<sup>99</sup> Mr. Eden resigned as Foreign Secretary and was succeeded by Lord Halifax on February 20.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed.

living abroad. Conscious that they are enjoying the right of hospitality, it is the obvious duty of the *Auslands-Organisation* and its members to observe strictly the laws of the country and to refrain from any interference in its internal affairs. The fulfilment of this duty is carefully watched over by all departments of the *Auslands-Organisation* and by the Reich Missions abroad. The *Auslands-Organisation* is thus not political in character within the meaning of legislation governing associations in Czechoslovakia.

Above all it is not, however, to be regarded as an association or even as a party, and the legislation on associations is therefore not applicable to it. The *Auslands-Organisation* is rather a part of the N.S.D.A.P., which, as a public corporation of the Reich, has to maintain the internal unity of the population of the German State. As such a part, neither it nor its regional groups possess a legal personality of their own. Membership of the N.S.D.A.P. involves membership of the *Auslands-Organisation* for all Reich nationals living abroad; this cannot be acquired otherwise. A member of the N.S.D.A.P. pursues no other political aims than such as already result from his position as a citizen of the Reich. He has merely assumed increased duties by his membership. If it is generally recognized that foreigners may associate to form national colonies in their countries of residence for convivial, social, cultural, and charitable activities, then Reich-Germans abroad must be permitted to participate in the *Auslands-Organisation* in the same way. This comprises:

- Free adherence to the N.S.D.A.P.;
- Subordination to the leadership of the N.S.D.A.P.;
- Freedom of association and assembly for the N.S.D.A.P. and its branches [*Gliederungen*] insofar as these are active in the country of residence; and
- Freedom of contact with the N.S.D.A.P. in the Reich.

The German Minister has the same rights in regard to members of the *Auslands-Organisation* in the country of residence as toward all Reich nationals. They are subject to his political discipline. This right can, in order to facilitate negotiations with the Czechoslovak Government, be described as a right of control, although it does not derive from the constitution of the *Auslands-Organisation* but from the general political status of the Minister.

Free adherence to the N.S.D.A.P. for members of the *Auslands-Organisation* involves the right to attend the meetings of the N.S.D.A.P. and permission to wear uniform at them, the display of the Reich flag on Reich festivals, the flying of pennants with Reich colors on vehicles, and the wearing of the party badge on civilian clothing.

A member of the *Auslands-Organisation* may not only himself belong to the branches and affiliated associations of the N.S.D.A.P. in the country of residence or in the Reich, but may also invite other Reich nationals to join the N.S.D.A.P., its organizations and dependent associations.

Punishment of Reich-Germans because they are members of these bodies will have to be expressly excluded, in contrast to the legal practice hitherto prevailing. Before new members are received into the N.S.D.A.P. and its affiliated associations, the organs of the *Auslands-Organisation* may arrange for inquiries about their political reliability to be addressed to other Reich nationals, including those in the country of residence. There is no question of the SA, SS, N.S.K.K.,<sup>5</sup> N.S.F.K.,<sup>6</sup> and the National Socialist University Lecturers' League [*Nationalsozialistischer Dozentenbund*] functioning in Czechoslovakia. On the other hand, in order to bring Reich-German youth together, and also for charitable purposes, the establishment of the H.J.,<sup>7</sup> the National Socialist Students' Union [*Nationalsozialistischer Studentenbund*] and the Women's League [*Nationalsozialistische Frauenschaft*] is necessary.

As a result of the recognition of the rights of the N.S.D.A.P. vis-à-vis its members abroad, the local organs are recognized by the authorities of the country of residence as the responsible directors of the groupings of the N.S.D.A.P. subordinate to them.

They can determine in detail the rights and duties of party members abroad and fix the times of the meetings and assemblies of the *Auslands-Organisation*, so far as is necessary, in agreement with the Czechoslovak authorities. The discipline and integrity of the N.S.D.A.P., including the *Auslands-Organisation*, are safeguarded by the Party courts<sup>8</sup> in the Reich. Their proceedings and the information at their disposal only affect Reich-Germans who belong to the Party. Their penalties are degradations of status, the aim being to admonish or expel dishonorable members from the N.S.D.A.P. As the juridical activities of these courts of honor do not clash with the proceedings of the civil courts, criminal courts, courts of honor, and other organs of authority in the country of residence, whose jurisdiction is not open to question and take place within the Reich, objections can no more be raised to them under international law than, for instance, to the activities of the civil and criminal courts against Reich nationals living abroad. In order to

<sup>5</sup> *Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrerkorps*, the Nazi Motor Corps.

<sup>6</sup> *Nationalsozialistisches Fliegerkorps*, the Nazi Flying Corps.

<sup>7</sup> *Hitlerjugend*.

<sup>8</sup> The Court of Honor (*Ehrengericht*) of the Nazi Party, to which members were amenable in matters of discipline, and that in a wide sense.

facilitate the tasks of these Party courts, arbiters are appointed abroad to act in affairs of honor between Party members; these can report on such matters to the Party courts in the Reich with a view to preparing for proceedings in these courts.

The country of residence cannot interfere in any investigation regarding membership of the N.S.D.A.P., since the termination of this membership recognized by public law can only be effected by the decision of an organ of the Party. The statement that such membership exists can therefore be regarded by the authorities of the country of residence as sufficient and alone authoritative.

The *Auslands-Organisation* of the N.S.D.A.P. requires freedom to call meetings of Reich nationals and organize festivals in order to maintain *esprit de corps*, to train its members and to participate solemnly in national festivals and commemorations.

In view of the limited circle of participants, any supervision of such events by the authorities of the country of residence can only extend to the observance of security requirements and the checking of the nationality of the participants. The same applies to meetings and festivals of the affiliated associations of the N.S.D.A.P.

With regard to the particular conditions in Czechoslovakia, special importance will have to be attached to establishing that Reich-Germans living in Czechoslovakia, or staying there temporarily, have a right to unrestricted communication with the Reich. Reich-Germans may neither be prevented from attending meetings of the N.S.D.A.P. in the Reich, nor may they have to apprehend difficulties in attending training courses, youth camps, and compliance with summonses to appear before Reich authorities.

This outline of the activities of the *Auslands-Organisation* of the N.S.D.A.P. will have to be indicated to Czechoslovakia as the only possible basis for the recognition of the *Auslands-Organisation*. In view of the political conditions there it is necessary to create clear conditions from the outset. The N.S.D.A.P. must refuse to negotiate concerning restrictions to this definition of its activities abroad. Nor will it be possible, during the negotiations regarding the recognition of the *Auslands-Organisation*, to include in the discussions the program of the N.S.D.A.P., which is a purely internal political question. So far as we are concerned there can only be recognition or prohibition.

Heil Hitler!

DR. KRANECK

## No. 64

523/237672-75

*The German Foreign Ministry to Certain German Missions Abroad*<sup>11</sup>

BERLIN, February 28, 1938.

Drafting Officer: Counselor of Legation Schliep.

To German Embassy	{ London Paris	(zu Pol. I 584 g 585 g)
To German Legation		{ Brussels Prague

A member of the French Embassy here recently discussed with a member of the Foreign Ministry the necessity for France of adhering to the Russian alliance.<sup>12</sup> He said that the French had no illusions on certain objectionable aspects of this alliance, nor on the very problematical value which the alliance represented in fact.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, France had no other choice than to adhere to the pact with the Soviets, for they know that otherwise Germany would take France's place as the ally of the Soviets. The circumstances leading to the execution of Marshal Tukhachevsky<sup>14</sup> were well known in Paris and proved how close the relations still were between leading German circles and Soviet military authorities, and accordingly how great was their readiness to cooperate again with Russia, whether Soviet or not, at the right moment.

The French contention that France had entered into and maintained the alliance with the Soviet Government only to prevent a renewed Russo-German *rapprochement* is well known. In this connection, however, the surprising thing is the reference to the execution of the Generals as an alleged proof of Germany's willingness to cooperate with Russia. In actual fact all military links between Germany and the Soviet Union, apart from the maintaining of Military Attachés, ceased in 1933.<sup>15</sup> In particular, no military relations whatever with the shot Soviet Generals had existed since that time. It could almost be assumed that the Soviets had given the French falsified documents indicating that very close relations between leading German circles and Soviet Russian military authorities had been maintained up till recently. The German Embassy in Moscow reports, however, that no grounds for such an assumption have been found.

<sup>11</sup> This copy is a draft circulated to the officials concerned.

<sup>12</sup> See document No. 2, p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "Dg. Pol., Pol. II and IV agree. Contents have been discussed with Count von der Schulenburg."

<sup>14</sup> See footnote 85, p. 99.

<sup>15</sup> I.e., after the Nazi accession to power in Germany.



When asked by Coulongre, the French Ambassador, how the accusations brought against the Generals of espionage in favor of Germany should be assessed, Litvinov<sup>16</sup> is said to have given the evasive answer that it was the business of the Court to judge this. Moreover, no details beyond those published by the Court were known to him. But surely there was hardly any need for him to point out that, as a result of their training in Germany and their sympathies, the condemned Generals had represented a Germanophile element in the Command of the Red Army, the liquidation of which must logically also be to the advantage of Franco-Soviet relations. For further remarks of the Embassy, please refer to enclosure 1.<sup>17</sup>

On the other hand, the strictly confidential statements of our Ambassador in Moscow<sup>18</sup> given in enclosure 2<sup>17</sup> show that Litvinov sometimes uses the bogey of *rapprochement* with Germany to activate effectively relations with France. Moreover, according to our information, the delusion of a possible military alliance between National Socialist Germany and Bolshevik Russia is also worrying many British statesmen.

I ask you, therefore, should a suitable opportunity arise in conversations with politicians in your country, to refer to the Führer's words of 20th instant,<sup>19</sup> in which he again very decisively rejected a close alliance with the Soviet Union, and to say that, to everyone who knows the Führer's fundamental attitude toward Bolshevism, these words must appear natural and logical. Should the other party in the conversation make allusions to the shooting of the Generals, similar to those made by the member of the French Embassy here, I ask you to refute them emphatically by making use of the arguments contained in enclosure 1 (insofar as they are not confidential).

For the Minister:

W[EIZSÄCKER]

*Director, Political Department*

[Note in Schliep's handwriting:] Insert under address in enclosure 1. Copy with two enclosures to the German Embassy in Moscow. For information. SCHLIEP

<sup>16</sup> Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>17</sup> Not printed.

<sup>18</sup> Count von der Schulenburg.

<sup>19</sup> The Reichstag speech; see footnote 83, p. 130.

## No. 65

F18/327, 389-390

*Unsigned<sup>20</sup> Copy of Letter and Enclosed Memorandum From the Foreign Minister (Ribbentrop)<sup>21</sup> to the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces (Keitel)*

MARCH 4, 1938.

MY DEAR GENERAL: I am enclosing for your confidential information the record of a conversation with the Hungarian Minister here. As you will see from this, M. Sztójay suggested that arrangements should be made for the German and Hungarian Armies to discuss possible war aims vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia.

I cannot but feel some misgivings about discussions of this nature. If we have conversations with Hungary on possible war aims vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia, there is the danger that other authorities will obtain information about them.

I should be very grateful if you would inform me briefly whether any kind of commitments have been entered into here.

Kind regards and Heil Hitler!

Yours very sincerely,

[Enclosure]

RM 139

Sztójay, the Hungarian Minister, called on me at 12:30 p.m. today. With regard to the Austrian question I informed him that we were hoping for a peaceful solution. It was extremely regrettable that certain circles in the Western democracies seemed to be opposed to a normal development of the situation. I hoped, moreover, that during his visit to Vienna M. Kanya<sup>22</sup> had also advised the Austrians to adopt such a reasonable policy.

<sup>20</sup> Though unsigned, it is clear from the succeeding document which also follows this one in the film, that this document is the copy of the letter of Ribbentrop to which No. 66 is the reply.

<sup>21</sup> Neurath, the Foreign Minister, was appointed President of the Reich Secret Cabinet Council (*Geheimer Kabinettsrat*) and Ribbentrop (hitherto Ambassador in London) was appointed to succeed him as Foreign Minister on February 4, 1938. Ribbentrop returned to London to wind up his affairs, subsequently, and was there between March 10 and 14.

Dr. Herbert von Dirksen (hitherto Ambassador in Tokyo) arrived in London on May 3 to succeed Ribbentrop as Ambassador. In the interval Woermann (Minister Plenipotentiary at the London Embassy) was Chargé d'Affaires there until taking up his post of head of the Political Department in the Foreign Ministry in succession to Weizsäcker, with the new rank of Under State Secretary, to which he had been appointed on February 4. He was followed as Chargé d'Affaires in London by Theo Kordt until Dirksen's taking up his post in May.

<sup>22</sup> Kanya, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, visited Schuschnigg in Vienna semi-secretly after the Berchtesgaden meeting, probably late in February.

On my inquiring whether M. Kanya had gone to Vienna on his own initiative, or whether an invitation had been received, M. Sztójay explained that he had unfortunately not been informed of this, but he was still awaiting an informatory telegram from his Government. He only knew that M. Kanya had spoken with both Schuschnigg, the Federal Chancellor, and Schmidt, the Foreign Minister. Moreover, he held the view that an *Anschluss* represented the most reasonable solution of the Austrian question.

M. Sztójay then informed me that a German-Hungarian discussion on possible war aims to be pursued vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia had previously been agreed upon between the armies on both sides. These discussions had lapsed somewhat recently. He had, however, now approached General Keitel with a view to the discussions being resumed. Moreover, he hoped that Germany would continue to adhere to the policy, of which Herr von Neurath had informed him at the time, namely, of not concluding any nonaggression pact with Czechoslovakia without reaching a friendship agreement with Hungary at the same time.

I replied that our policy in this direction had undergone no change, but was reticent regarding the question of discussions on possible aims vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia between the German and Hungarian Armies.

R[IBBENTROP]

BERLIN, March 4, 1938.

No. 66

F18/385-386

*The Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces (Keitel) to the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, W. 35.

Tirpitzufer 72-76.

March 7, 1938.

MY DEAR MINISTER: I have received the minutes of your conversation with the Hungarian Minister.<sup>23</sup> After the departure of General Röder (Honved Minister)<sup>24</sup> and Ratz (Chief of the General Staff), who were invited to the armed forces maneuvers in 1937,<sup>25</sup> I was informed by Field Marshal von Blomberg<sup>26</sup> last autumn that it was planned to commence operational General Staff talks during the

<sup>23</sup> See document No. 65, *supra*.

<sup>24</sup> Minister of Defense.

<sup>25</sup> In the autumn of 1937.

<sup>26</sup> War Minister and Commander in Chief of the *Wehrmacht* from May 21, 1935, until February 4, 1938, when he was relieved by Hitler of his office.

winter of '37-'38. Field Marshal von Blomberg remarked at the same time that he was reserving the initiation of these to himself and that General Beck, the Chief of our Army General Staff, was not authorized to discuss such questions without these preparatory steps being taken.

Lieutenant Colonel Hardy, the Hungarian Military Attaché, reminded me of this previous agreement a fortnight ago at the house of the Hungarian Minister. I gave an evasive answer, spoke of natural delays as a result of Blomberg's retirement, and stated that I wished to make inquiries.

When I then asked the Führer whether he knew and approved of the agreement, the Führer expressed the same objections as you did and instructed me to continue to evade the issue, in any case until my return from the Führer's visit to Italy.<sup>28</sup> Thus there are no commitments apart from the conditional assurance given by Blomberg in the autumn, and, as I have ascertained, neither for General Beck.

We are thus still at liberty to evade the issue in accordance with the Führer's orders.

Kind regards and Heil Hitler.

Yours very sincerely,

KEITEL

No. 67

28/18417

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 48 of March 10

PRAGUE, March 10, 1938.

Prague press describes announcement of Austrian plebiscite<sup>29</sup> as great surprise; expresses hope at same time of victory for Austrian independence idea.

Foreign Minister Krofta told me today plebiscite also completely unexpected by Czechoslovak Government. Government regards it as by no means final solution, on contrary expects from result only certain encouragement for successful party. Foreign Minister promised measures discouraging interest of Czechoslovak press in impending events.

EISENLOHR

<sup>28</sup> May 3-9, 1938.

<sup>29</sup> i.e., the plebiscite in Austria on the issue of national independence announced by the Chancellor, Schuschnigg, on March 9, to take place on the 13th.

## No. 68

120/67801

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

STRICTLY SECRET

No. 49 of March 11

PRAGUE, March 11, 1938—9:20 p.m.

Received March 11, 1938—11:10 p.m.

For State Secretary:

Have today privately informed Deputy Frank of Sudeten German Party, Henlein's deputy, of assurances concerning elections, entry of Sudeten German Party into Government, amnesty, and establishing regular contact between Sudeten German Party and Prime Minister, given me by latter as consequence of Führer's speech.<sup>30</sup> Communication was necessary because there are signs in Sudeten German Party of a tendency instigated by Frank which, by intransigent attitude and raising unacceptable demands, would so hinder settlement and *détente* as to bring about eventual armed conflict with Reich.

Frank assured me he would adapt himself entirely to lines of Reich policy. As I have evidence, however, that he was not sincere, and as he, moreover, expressed intention after leaving Legation of "checking" my communication by making inquiries in Berlin, I therefore request that neither he nor Henlein should be received at Foreign Ministry or any other Ministry, but be referred to [*Volksdeutsche*] *Mittelstelle*, and that, if necessary, they be given there full instructions regarding policy.

EISENLOHR

## No. 69

120/67802

*Memorandum by the State Secretary in the German Foreign Ministry (Mackensen)*<sup>31</sup>

BERLIN, March 11, 1938—5:15 p.m.

Herr Eisenlohr, Minister in Prague, has communicated the following information by telephone:

"The Foreign Ministry here has received a report from its Minister in Berlin, to the effect that certain military measures had been taken in Munich, and rumors were said to be prevalent in Berlin itself that Germany was doing this so that Czech measures in Austria would

<sup>30</sup> See footnote 83, p. 139.

<sup>31</sup> Mackensen was designated Ambassador in Rome on March 10, but continued to act jointly as State Secretary with his successor Welzsäcker (hitherto head of the Political Department) until taking up the Rome post on April 1. (See also footnote 21, p. 152.)

be impossible. Krofta, the Foreign Minister, added that the Czech Government was not contemplating any kind of measures in Austria, and that the spreading of such rumors in Germany was not consistent with the policy of the Czech Government, which was directed toward a *détente* with Germany."

Herr Eisenlohr added that the Foreign Minister, Krofta, had also told him, when giving him this information, that it was actually only with hesitation that he mentioned this rumor, but yet he felt bound to bring it to our notice, so that he could ensure that in Berlin such rumors about the Czechs were avoided as far as possible. Herr Eisenlohr added that he personally was of the opinion that M. Krofta's statement reflected the real views of the Czech Government.

MACKENSEN

### No. 70

289/183017

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PRAGUE, March 12, 1938—12:10 a.m.

No. 50 of March 11

Received March 12, 1938—2:35 a.m.

Cabinet is meeting at the moment. Krofta, from whom I requested information, informed me from there by telephone shortly before midnight that there was absolutely no change in the attitude of the Czechoslovak Government, as previously reported by me by telephone, and that no one here contemplated intervening in Austrian affair.

According to other (group missing) from reliable source, Minister of the Interior has during the afternoon ordered frontier defense by nonmilitary formations.

EISENLOHR

### No. 71

120/67833

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Woermann) to the German Foreign Ministry*<sup>32</sup>

Telegram

URGENT

LONDON, March 12, 1938—10:36 a.m.

No. 122 of March 12

Received March 12, 1938—12:35 p.m.

The Czechoslovak Minister has just told me that he had been instructed to inform the British Government that all reports of

<sup>32</sup> See footnote 21, p. 152.

mobilization or troop movements in Czechoslovakia were false, and that Czechoslovakia had no intention of intervening on account of events in Austria.

WOERMANN

No. 72

289/183016

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 51 of March 12

PRAGUE, March 12, 1938—7:40 p.m.

Received March 12, 1938—9:15 p.m.

I. Foreign Minister's *Chef de Cabinet*<sup>33</sup> informed me (on the former's instruction) of statement made last night to Mastny by Göring,<sup>34</sup> and at the same time in the Führer's name, to the effect that the entry of German troops into Austria was nothing more than a family affair and that Germany was desirous of continuing policy toward Czechoslovakia of improving mutual relations; furthermore of the Field Marshal's telephone communication to Mastny today<sup>34</sup> that German troops have orders to remain at a distance of 15 kilometers from the Czechoslovak frontier.<sup>35</sup> Mastny had confirmed for his part that Czechoslovakia had not mobilized, but merely tightened up nonmilitary frontier security measures.

II. Military celebrations in memory of skirmish of the Legionaries at Bachmač are due to take place in Olmütz tomorrow and cannot be canceled. Aircraft are also taking part in celebrations. If one should inadvertently fly over German or Austrian frontier, Czechoslovak Government requests that it should not be regarded as a military action but as unpremeditated incident to be settled in usual manner. Please inform Ministry of War.

III. Austrian Legation states it has been instructed to hoist swastika flag. I have supplied it with one.

EISENLOHR

<sup>33</sup> Dr. Jina.

<sup>34</sup> See document No. 74, p. 158.

<sup>35</sup> Marginal longhand note: "Several military positions occupied; defense line held loosely."

## No. 73

1649/391803-04

*Minute by Weizsäcker on an Attached Note by the President of the Secret Cabinet Council (Neurath)*<sup>37</sup>

BERLIN, March 12, 1938.

The page attached hereto was intended to serve as a basis for a possible statement to the Czechoslovak Government on the 11th instant. It was not made use of on the 11th.

WEIZSÄCKER

[Enclosure]

[Longhand note by Neurath:] The Czechs: Formal commitment to the procedure laid down in the arbitration treaty of 1925. Infraction of the arbitration treaty is a *casus foederis*.

## No. 74

1939/434519-21

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 1. b. 8.

PRAGUE, March 13, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 1614)

Subject: Statements by Field Marshal Göring.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Yesterday I reported briefly by telegraph the information given me by the Foreign Ministry here on the verbal and telephonic statements which, according to this report, Field Marshal Göring made to M. Mastny, the Czech Minister, during the night of the 11th-12th instant. In view of the importance and the particularly solemn nature of these declarations, I submit herewith a memorandum which contains a detailed account of the information given to me.

EISENLOHR

[Enclosure]

A. III. 1. b. 8.

PRAGUE, March 12, 1938.

## MEMORANDUM

This afternoon between 4 and 5 o'clock M. Jina, the *Chef de Cabinet*, telephoned to me and apologized for M. Krofta, his chief,

<sup>37</sup> See footnote 21, p. 152.



being engaged, and on his own behalf because he must remain at his telephone. He asked if I could come to see him. I went at once to the Foreign Ministry and he informed me of Field Marshal Göring's statements to M. Mastny<sup>38</sup> and of the forthcoming Bachmač Festival at Olmütz.

At last night's reception by the Field Marshal, Mastny had thanked him for the invitation. Field Marshal Göring mentioned the march into Austria<sup>39</sup> and gave Mastny his word of honor that the entry of German troops into Austria had been "nothing more than a family affair" and that Germany was disposed to maintain her former policy of mutual improvement of relations with Czechoslovakia. Mastny thereupon hurried home and passed this news via the Foreign Ministry here to Krofta, who was at the meeting of the Cabinet. Then Mastny returned to the reception, spoke again with Field Marshal Göring and told him that he had conveyed his words to Krofta. In the presence of the Hungarian Minister<sup>40</sup> the Field Marshal then repeated his declaration to M. Mastny and added the following: "Yes, I have already given you my word; I repeat it and give you in addition the word of the Supreme Head of the State. I can give it to you and can give you a fully official declaration, because the Führer has entrusted me with the conduct of the highest affairs of state. He will retire for a short time [*Er wird sich auf kurze Zeit zurückziehen*]."

In connection with this conversation the rumors of a Czech mobilization were also mentioned. In regard to that Mastny said that Krofta had already denied these rumors to me.

Today at 12:30 p.m. Field Marshal Göring telephoned to M. Mastny, confirmed to him his declarations of yesterday and told him further that the German Army had received strict orders only to approach up to a distance of 15 kilometers from the Czechoslovak frontier. These measures were adopted as a proof of Göring's statement of yesterday. Thereupon Mastny on his part confirmed that Czechoslovakia had not mobilized, but had merely strengthened her frontier defense. Jina informed me further that no news of any kind was forthcoming from Britain or France.

M. Masaryk, whom I later greeted in passing, told me that Field Marshal Göring's statements would be used with a certain irony by the Foreign Ministry in reassuring those Ministers of foreign powers who were inquiring anxiously about the fate of Czechoslovakia.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. document No. 72, p. 137.

<sup>39</sup> The actual crossing of the Austrian frontier by German troops began at 10 p.m. on March 11.

<sup>40</sup> Döme Sztójay, 1935-44.

Jina promised to keep me informed about all important matters, in order to guard against the impression which might be caused by rumors or possible false reports.

EISENLOHR

No. 75

120/67865

*Minute*

BERLIN, March 13, 1938.

Eisenlohr, German Minister in Prague, telephoned at midday today saying that Krofta, the Foreign Minister, had just informed him that numerous violations of the Czech frontier by German military aircraft had occurred. Up till now six cases had occurred, in which German aircraft or German aircraft formations had penetrated Czech territory, in particular over Tabor, over the estate of the Czech President near Tabor, and even within the neighborhood of Prague.

Minister Eisenlohr informs us that he is doing everything to induce calm and that he referred to Field Marshal Göring's definite assurance<sup>41</sup> to the Czechoslovak Minister here, according to which our troops are to remain at a considerable distance from the Czechoslovak frontier and that Czechoslovakia is in no way affected by the whole action in Austria.

Herr Eisenlohr asked, however, that Field Marshal Göring or General Milch<sup>42</sup> should be informed with a view to their issuing stricter orders to respect the Czechoslovak frontier, and that everything should be done to prevent fresh crossings of the frontier. He also asked for a telegram saying that the necessary measures are being taken, and that an investigation is in progress. A telegraphic report from the Legation in Prague was said to be on the way. I told the Minister, Eisenlohr, that he could rely entirely on Field Marshal Göring's statements, and inform the Czechoslovak Government that absolutely categorical instructions had been issued to the *Wehrmacht* to respect the Czechoslovak frontier and to leave Czechoslovakia completely alone. The reported incidents could be accounted for only by mistakes on the part of the air crews or faulty observation from the ground.

Herr Altenburg has received instructions to take the necessary steps with the military authorities at once.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>41</sup> See document No. 74, *supra*.

<sup>42</sup> Representative of the Reich Air Minister and Commander in Chief of the *Luftwaffe*; State Secretary for Aviation.

## No. 76

120/67867

*Statement by the Intelligence Directorate of the German War Ministry*Information from F.A.<sup>43</sup>

The Czech Minister has been instructed to make the following representation to Field Marshal Göring:

German aircraft constantly violating Czech frontier. If these violations do not stop, Czechoslovak troops cannot be restrained.

ERICH KORDT

BERLIN, March 13, 1938—2:55 p.m.

## No. 77

120/67866

*Telephone Message From Weizsäcker to the German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) and Minute of the Reply*

Telephone Message .

To Legation, Prague, March 13 at 4:13 p.m.

For the Minister: Field Marshal Göring has just received the Czechoslovak Minister and given him pacifying assurances.

WEIZSÄCKER

The Minister, Eisenlohr, said: That is splendid; please convey many thanks from me.

## No. 78

120/67869-70

*Memorandum by the President of the Secret Cabinet Council (Neurath) for the Foreign Minister*

Präs. G. K. 61

MARCH 14, 1938.

In answer to a telephone call from me the Czechoslovak Minister called on me on the afternoon of March 12.<sup>44</sup> On behalf of the Führer I told him the following:—

- 1) The action at present in progress in Austria is in no way directed against Czechoslovakia.
- 2) The troops advancing into Austria have been instructed to remain at least 15-30 kilometers from the Czech frontier.

<sup>43</sup> *Fremden-Abteilung*, the Intelligence Directorate of the War Ministry.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. document No. 74, p. 158.

3) The Führer hopes that relations between Czechoslovakia and Germany will improve further, but a condition for this is that the Czech Government shows more understanding for the 3½ million Germans in Czechoslovakia.

In the conversation with M. Mastny which followed this communication he mentioned the earlier offer by the Führer to conclude long-term nonaggression pacts with his neighbors.<sup>46</sup> I told him that, in my opinion, such a pact was not necessary for the relationship between Germany and Czechoslovakia, as the arbitration treaty of 1925<sup>47</sup> was still in force between us, in which it was expressly stipulated that all questions at issue between Czechoslovakia and Germany should be dealt with first in a more closely specified procedure, and that, before such procedure were carried out, every act of force must be avoided. The guarantor for this was France. The Minister admitted that this treaty still existed. He seemed, however, to attach importance to the conclusion of a new agreement, if possible in the form of a nonaggression pact. In consequence, I repeatedly stressed that the conclusion of a nonaggression pact presupposed, too, that the Czechoslovak Government would satisfy the wishes of its Sudeten German subjects.

M. Mastny told me that, as was already known, the Prague Government was maintaining complete calm in face of events in Austria and was taking no measures for mobilization, although, of course, police precautions on the frontier were essential.

BARON VON NEURATH

BERLIN, March 14, 1938.

[Marginal note:] Discussed with Prince Bismarck.<sup>48</sup> M[ACK-ENSEN] March 14.

<sup>46</sup> Such offers had been made frequently by Hitler since his speech of May 17, 1933—in public speeches and private interviews on March 16, 1935; May 1935 (Reichstag speech and Price Bell interview), and March 1936 (Ward Price interview), offering in each specific nonaggression pacts with neighboring countries, but refusing multilateral assistance pacts with the eastern neighbors. A similar offer was made specifically to Czechoslovakia on October 11, 1936.

<sup>47</sup> The treaty of October 1925, which was part of the Locarno Agreements.

<sup>48</sup> Deputy head of the Political Department.

## No. 79

28/19247

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

SECRET

No. 30 of March 14

MARCH 14—7 p.m.

Received March 14.

In reply to telegram No. 49.<sup>49</sup>

Frank, who called today, was not received but directed to the *Mittelstelle*. He reported by telephone that he was not received there either and is returning to Prague this evening.

BISMARCK

[Marginal note initialed by Eisenlohr March 15:] Herr Hencke for confidential examination.

## No. 80

1941/435023-24

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

No. 31

BERLIN, March 14, 1938.  
(zu Pol. IV 1558)Reference telegram No. 51.<sup>50</sup>

Communication of the Foreign Minister's *Chef de Cabinet* on Field Marshal Göring's statement to M. Mastny gives correct account of conversation. The President of the Secret Cabinet Council<sup>51</sup> spoke with M. Mastny on behalf of the Führer on the same lines and added the following:

The Führer hopes that relations between Czechoslovakia and Germany will improve further. Condition for this, however, is that Czechoslovak Government should show more understanding for the 3½ million Germans in Czechoslovakia. M. Mastny referred to an earlier offer by the Führer to conclude long-term nonaggression pacts with neighbors.<sup>52</sup> President of Secret Cabinet Council answered; in his opinion such a nonaggression pact not necessary in relations between Germany and Czechoslovakia, as the arbitration treaty of 1925 still in force between us, in which it is expressly stipulated that all questions at issue between the two countries should be settled by a

<sup>49</sup> Document No. 68, p. 155.<sup>50</sup> Document No. 72, p. 157.<sup>51</sup> Neurath. See document No. 78, p. 161.<sup>52</sup> See footnote 46, p. 162.

more closely defined procedure, and that before such procedure were completed, every act of violence should cease; guarantor for this was France. Minister admitted that this treaty still existed, but seemed to attach importance to conclusion of a new agreement, if possible in the form of a nonaggression pact. President of Secret Cabinet Council therefore stressed again that the conclusion of a nonaggression pact also presupposed that the Czechoslovak Government would satisfy the wishes of its Sudeten German subjects.

MACKENSEN

No. 81

120/67891

*Memorandum by the President of the Secret Cabinet Council  
(Neurath) for the Foreign Minister*

Präs. G. K. 70

This morning the British Ambassador<sup>56</sup> called on me and asked, after he had already spoken with Prime Minister Göring by telephone, whether I had any objection to the British Government's making known in today's session of the House of Commons the statements which I, on behalf of the Führer, had made to the Czechoslovak Minister here.<sup>57</sup> If these statements were made known, as well as those of Prime Minister Göring<sup>58</sup> who had already given his consent, it would contribute considerably to calming British public opinion. I told the Ambassador that I had no objection to my statements to the Czechoslovak Minister also being made public.

BARON VON NEURATH

BERLIN, March 14, 1938.

[Longhand note<sup>59</sup> initialed by von Mackensen, March 15:] In this conversation Jews and Catholics were not referred to.

No. 82

397/212901-02

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy in the  
Soviet Union*

SECRET

MARCH 14, 1938.

(Pol. I 675 g)

The enclosed is the translation of a report on the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia which has been given to the German Legation in

<sup>56</sup> Sir Neville Henderson.

<sup>57</sup> See document No. 78, p. 161.

<sup>58</sup> See document No. 74, p. 158.

<sup>59</sup> For the significance of this note, see document No. 88, p. 171, and footnote 79 thereto.

Prague by a reliable Ukrainian source. As the Legation points out, the information about the doubts entertained by the Czechoslovak Army regarding the military reliability of their Soviet ally are also confirmed from another source.

For the Minister:  
SCHLIEF

[Enclosure]

*The Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia*

SECRET

After the shooting of Marshal Tukhachevsky<sup>60</sup> and other very high-ranking officers of the Soviet Army, the Czechoslovak General Staff lost its confidence in the Red Army Staff. On this account, mutual relations assumed an abnormal form, especially because the Government on their part adhered to their friendly treaty relations with Moscow. On January 22, 1938, the Czechoslovak General Staff for the last time and for various reasons turned down the proposal of the Red Army Staff for the appointment of a mixed commission to examine the defense plans of both States. The Czechoslovak General Staff did not wish to reveal certain secrets regarding the operational plans and armament of Czechoslovakia, as well as the plans for mobilization and their latest aircraft engines. The fears of the Czechoslovak General Staff are shown by the fact that, up to the present, it is not yet convinced that, as Moscow maintains, Tukhachevsky was not in contact with the German General Staff, and so might have betrayed to the latter all the Czechoslovak defense secrets, and because it is not sure that some representative of the Red Army General Staff might not again hand over such secrets to the German General Staff. The position of the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry had been weakened by the latest events in the Soviet Union,<sup>61</sup> because they reveal at the same time the Soviet regime's hopeless position and the possibility of Soviet policy turning its back on the West.

<sup>60</sup> See footnote 85, p. 99.

<sup>61</sup> Presumably this refers to the further recent purges in the Soviet Union of certain chiefs of the Navy (Admirals Orloff and Sirkoff) at the end of February, and the large-scale treason trials of prominent Soviet leaders in early March, including those of Yagoda, Rykoff, and Bukharin, on charges of espionage, etc.

## No. 83

1613/386681

*Minute of Telephone Instruction From the Wehrmacht Headquarters,  
Intelligence Directorate*

AUSL III a

MARCH 14, 1938—12:20 p.m.  
(Pol. I 806)Subject: Zone on the Austrian-Czech frontier not to be entered by  
German troops.According to telephonic information in Section 1, Army General  
Staff (Captain von Treskow), there has been ordered as a protected  
zone:

For <i>Luftwaffe</i>	30 km.
For Army formations	15 km.

[Signature illegible]

## No. 84

2370/495531

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Woermann) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 132 of March 15

LONDON, March 15, 1938—2:05 p.m.  
Received March 15, 1938—4:10 p.m.  
(Pol. IV 1684)In continuation of No. 130.<sup>64</sup>

In yesterday's House of Commons statement Chamberlain again refrained from defining the British attitude to Czechoslovakia. He only characterized the attitude in Czechoslovakia toward events in Austria as a matter of general interest. He further stated that the Czechoslovak Government had informed the British Government that they had followed events in Austria from July 1936<sup>65</sup> to the present with the greatest attention. He had also been informed that on March 11 Field Marshal Göring had given the Czech Minister in Berlin an assurance, renewed later expressly on behalf of the Führer, that it was the German Government's earnest desire to improve German-Czech relations.<sup>66</sup> The Minister had further been told that the German troops advancing into Austria had received orders to

<sup>64</sup> Not printed.<sup>65</sup> The date of the Austro-German "Gentlemen's Agreement," July 11; see relevant documents in vol. I, chap. II.<sup>66</sup> See documents Nos. 74 and 78, pp. 158 and 161.



remain at least 15 km. from the Czech frontier. On the same day Herr von Neurath had assured the Czech Minister that Germany still considered herself bound by the German-Czechoslovak arbitration agreement.

According to earlier statements, the British Government reserves the right to support Czechoslovakia in the event of attack, if this appears to be indicated under the provisions of the League of Nations Covenant. (Cf. Report A 1096 of March 4).<sup>67</sup>

WOERMANN

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<sup>67</sup> Not printed.

CHAPTER II  
FROM THE ANNEXATION OF AUSTRIA  
TO THE MAY CRISIS

No. 85

120/67960-62

*Memorandum by the State Secretary in the German Foreign  
Ministry (Mackensen)*

BERLIN, March 16, 1938.

I asked the Czech Minister to call on me at 7 p.m. and acquainted him with the contents of the enclosed memorandum of today's date by Prince Bismarck<sup>69</sup> on his telephone conversation with Embassy Counselor Hencke. I said I had spoken to the Reich Foreign Minister on the subject immediately after his arrival, in order to pacify the Czech Government once again by a direct statement from him. The Reich Foreign Minister had characterized the news of military preparations in Bavaria and Saxony as sheer nonsense, and instructed me to ask M. Mastny to pass this information on to Prague. M. Mastny thanked me heartily for my information and stated that the matter had not been broached to him by Czechoslovakia. Neither did he quite understand this fresh uneasiness, for on two occasions he had received statements from Field Marshal Göring<sup>70</sup> and a statement from the President of the Secret Cabinet Council,<sup>71</sup> which he regarded as a completely satisfactory assurance. Finally, what more could the Czechs demand than Field Marshal Göring's word of honor, and this had been given him. If someone were to wake him up at 12 o'clock at night with new alarming reports, he would merely mention this word of honor, turn over, and go to sleep again.

Moreover, M. Mastny pointed out that he was constantly provided with fresh alarming reports by his colleagues; as, for instance, only today he had been told of 200,000 German troops in Austria, who could only be intended for use against Czechoslovakia. In such cases he usually answered by referring to the word of honor given to him.

MACKENSEN

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<sup>69</sup> Deputy head of the Political Department.

<sup>70</sup> See document No. 74, p. 158.

<sup>71</sup> See document No. 78, p. 161.

[Enclosure]

*Memorandum by the Deputy Head of the Political Department in the German Foreign Ministry (Bismarck)*

BERLIN, March 16, 1938.

Herr Hencke, Counselor to the German Legation in Prague, telephoned me at 1 p.m. today and made the following communication:

The German Military Attaché<sup>71a</sup> was today requested to attend at the Czech General Staff Headquarters, where the following was communicated to him:

According to information available to the Czech General Staff, military preparations were taking place in Bavaria and Saxony which were causing anxiety to Czechoslovakia. To this the German Military Attaché replied that he knew nothing of such preparations and that there was no cause at all for anxiety in Czechoslovakia.

Herr Hencke further stated that Herr Eisenlohr was at the time having a discussion in the Czech Foreign Ministry with the Foreign Minister and had asked him [Hencke] to telephone him during the discussion after conversation with Berlin, in order to confirm that the above statement by the German Military Attaché could be endorsed as accurate.

I replied to Herr Hencke that he could do this without hesitation. There was no question of any kind of military preparations, and there was therefore no cause for anxiety in Czechoslovakia.

BISMARCK

## No. 86

2389/494381

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 57 of March 16

PRAGUE, March 16, 1938—3:42 p.m.

Received March 16, 1938—6:40 p.m.

(Pol. IV 1754)

With reference to your telegram No. 30 of March 14.<sup>72</sup>

Rejection of Frank's policy<sup>73</sup> has had salutary effect. Have had exhaustive discussions separately with Henlein, who has recently been avoiding me, and with Frank, and have received following assurances:

<sup>71a</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Toussaint.<sup>72</sup> Document No. 79, p. 163.<sup>73</sup> This apparently refers to the differences over policy between certain of the Sudeten German Party Leaders, referred to in document No. 68, p. 155.

1) Course of German foreign policy as communicated by Legation is to be sole determining factor for policy and tactical procedure of Sudeten German Party. My instructions are to be strictly observed.

2) Public speeches and press will be passed in agreement with me. Editorial staff of *Die Zeit*<sup>74</sup> to be improved.

3) Party leadership is abandoning former intransigent course, which might eventually lead to political complications, and will adopt policy of gradual furthering of Sudeten German interests. Aims are to be determined always jointly with me and supported by parallel diplomatic action. Racial Protection Law<sup>75</sup> and "territorial autonomy" are no longer to be in forefront.

4) If consultation with Berlin offices is necessary or desirable before any of Henlein's important propaganda declarations, this would be proposed and arranged through Legation.

5) All communications from Sudeten Germans to German offices are to pass through hands of Legation.

6) Henlein will have weekly contact with me and, if requested, come to Prague at any time.

Hope henceforth to keep Sudeten German Party under close control, which is more than ever necessary for coming developments in foreign policy. Please inform Ministries concerned and *Mittelstelle*, and request support for this unified steering of Sudeten German Party.

EISENLOHR

### No. 87

2370/495532

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 147 of March 16

PARIS, March 16, 1938.

Received March 16, 1938—10:30 p.m.

(Pol. IV 1786)

With reference to our telegrams 141 and 144.<sup>76</sup>

At yesterday's session of the National Defense Council the means of France rendering help to Czechoslovakia were discussed in detail. Soviet Ambassador is said to have stated yesterday that the Soviet Union stood by the Czechoslovak-Soviet Treaty of Mutual Assistance, and that the three Soviet Military Districts, White Russia, Kiev, and Odessa, were at any moment prepared to render aid regardless of the actual situation in the Far East. French Government pre-

<sup>74</sup> The principal daily organ of the Sudeten German Party.

<sup>75</sup> One of the laws proposed by the Sudeten German Party in April 1937. See footnote 10, p. 6.

<sup>76</sup> Telegram No. 141 is printed in vol. I, p. 603. Telegram No. 144 is not printed.

sumably wants concrete proof of this assurance from military quarters. Moreover, since yesterday the Spanish question<sup>77</sup> has become the main concern of French policy. The success of Franco's army and the intentions of Mussolini, which are credited here, of landing in Spain or the Balearic Islands, have given rise to the impression that French interests in the Mediterranean, above all the lines of communication with North Africa, are threatened, thus endangering vital French interests. Reaction to this is very strong in Government and Army, but aims are not yet very clear.

WELCZECK

[Longhand note initialed by Weizsäcker, March 18:] Has a request been made to London, Paris, and Prague for more detailed information on the French and British promises to Prague?

### No. 88

1939/434530-31

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Woermann) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 145 of March 17

LONDON, March 17, 1938.

Received March 18, 1938—9 a.m.

(Pol. IV 1775)

1) During yesterday's debate in the House of Lords, Lord Halifax said, in connection with the Austrian question, that the attitude of successive British Governments had been quite consistent. They had never supposed the *status quo* in Austria could be maintained for all time. They had been perfectly willing to recognize the special interest of the German Government in the relations between Germany and Austria. Therefore they had been perfectly willing to contemplate revision of the Peace Treaties.

He denied the rumor that he had encouraged Germany to use violence against Austria and said that, on the contrary, he had pointed out that changes should not be made in Europe by violence or by measures approaching violence.

Germany's attitude had administered a most rude and a most grave shock to European confidence.

<sup>77</sup> Presumably the rapid advance of the Nationalist forces on Barcelona on the 13th and 14th and their impending occupation of points on the Mediterranean coast.

Halifax further expressed the opinion that there was no point in bringing the Austrian question before the League of Nations. Only a war could bring about a change in the situation thus produced. Members of the League of Nations were, however, not prepared for this.

Concerning further remarks about the attitude of the British Government toward the new situation, attention is drawn to telegraphic report No. 144 of March 17.<sup>78</sup>

2) There followed then the moving of a resolution on statements made on March 14 in the House of Commons by Mr. Butler, Parliamentary Under Secretary, concerning alleged German assurances regarding treatment of Jews, Socialists, and Schuschnigg's supporters.<sup>79</sup> I refer you to the above-mentioned telegraphic report.

3) Halifax further stated that his Government would continue to stand by its policy of nonintervention in Spain.

4) On the Czechoslovak question he revealed that the British Government had received permission from the German Government to communicate to Parliament the assurances given by Germany to the Czechoslovak Government (cf. tel. report No. 132 of March 15).<sup>80</sup> In view of these assurances solemnly given and more than once repeated, he naturally expected the German Government to abide by them. The statements made by Churchill in the Commons on 14th and by Lord Cecil on March 16,<sup>81</sup> as well as other suggestions made in the House as to the political methods to employ in the present situation, would be most carefully considered by the Government. For the time being he could not express any opinion on them. Naturally

<sup>78</sup> Not printed.

<sup>79</sup> This was the promise given by Neurath to the British Ambassador, Sir Nevile Henderson, in telephone conversation on the morning of the 14th, to do what he could to ensure tolerant treatment of certain elements in Austria such as the Jews, Socialists, Catholics, and supporters of Schuschnigg. See also the longhand note to document No. 81, p. 164.

<sup>80</sup> Document No. 84, p. 166.

<sup>81</sup> These statements, both very critical of the British Government's action in the Austrian affair were as follows:—Mr. Churchill's statement in the House of Commons debate on the Austrian question on March 14 consisted mainly of a warning of the strategic significance and importance of the German occupation of Vienna, in giving her mastery over a large stretch of the Danube and of the principal communications of Southeastern Europe; he pointed to the consequent isolation of Czechoslovakia and the wedge thus inserted into the Little Entente countries, warned that Nazism would not stand still with the conquest of Austria and was moving toward complete control, and urged international discussion of the whole matter through diplomatic channels and ultimately at the League of Nations.

Lord Cecil's speech in the House of Lords on the 16th declared the events in Austria to be the result of deliberate preparation, and warned that the principle of German policy entailed the incorporation of all German minorities, and thus involved a threat to Czechoslovakia; France's and Russia's fulfilment of their obligations in this case was to be counted on, and hence threatened a European convulsion; he also urged that the matter be brought before the League of Nations.

the British Government was in close consultation with the French Government.

5) Halifax further remarked in general terms that, however difficult it might be of comprehension by German thought,<sup>82</sup> it was none the less the fact that the conscience of a great part of the civilized human race had been made suddenly aware of a naked contradiction<sup>83</sup> between those things which they valued and those things of which the methods of these last days seemed to be the outward sign and substance.

6) Finally, Halifax represented as the objective of British policy that it must be so conducted that it might command the support of the whole British Empire, and, further, that efforts must be made to reassert the claims of international law as opposed to the exercise of force in the settlement of international disputes, and, finally, that ways and means must be devised, whether through the machinery of the League of Nations or on lines in harmony with League principles, to direct the nations so that both injustice would be removed and peace maintained.

WOERMANN

### No. 89

F18/351, 348-349

*The Deputy (Friedrich Bürger) of the Leader of the Sudeten German Party (Henlein) to the State Secretary (Mackensen)*

BERLIN-ZEHELDORF, Spandauer Weg 162.

March 18, 1938.

MY DEAR STATE SECRETARY: I beg to submit herewith, on instructions from Konrad Henlein, a letter for the Reich Foreign Minister with the request that you will kindly forward it.

Heil Hitler!

FRIEDRICH BÜRGER

[Enclosure]

HOF IN BAVARIA, March 17, 1938.

MY DEAR FOREIGN MINISTER: In our heartfelt joy at the happy turn of events in Austria, we feel bound to express our thanks to all those who contributed to the success of this great new work of the Führer.

<sup>82</sup> This phrase "German thought" is quoted thus in English in parentheses in the original.

<sup>83</sup> This phrase "naked contradiction" is quoted thus in English in parentheses in the original.

Please accept, therefore, my dear Minister, the sincere thanks of all Sudeten Germans.

We shall render thanks to the Führer by redoubling our efforts in the service of the policy of Greater Germany.

The new situation demands an examination of Sudeten German policy. To this end I beg to request the opportunity of an early personal talk with you.

In view of this necessary clarification, I have postponed for 4 weeks the nation-wide Party Rally arranged for March 26 and 27, 1938.

I should be grateful if Herr Eisenlohr and two of my closest collaborators could be invited to the discussion requested.

Heil Hitler!

Faithfully yours,

KONRAD HENLEIN

[Manuscript note by Mackensen (?):]

Frank, headstrong      Kundt, no confidence      Sebekovsky  
 Künzel, Neuwirth. (Comrades' Association)      Span.  
 Kreisel, Caspar.      Brehm.

### No. 90

120/67968

*Memorandum by the Head of the Press Department in the German Foreign Ministry (Aschmann)*

MARCH 17, 1938.

The Czechoslovak Minister has just been to see me and pointed out that in the report of Chamberlain's speech<sup>86</sup> in the German press those passages had been omitted which contained the Reich Government's declaration in regard to Czechoslovakia. Neither had any news of the statements made to him by Prime Minister Göring and Reich Minister von Neurath<sup>87</sup> appeared previously in the German press.

In reply I told him that Chamberlain's speech had only been reported very briefly indeed, and that there was no other reason for the omission of this part of the speech than that the declarations of the Reich Government could not be communicated indirectly to the German public by means of a speech by the British Prime Minister. I would, however, submit to the appropriate department his desire to see a note published in the German press.

ASCHMANN

<sup>86</sup> The Prime Minister's speech in the House of Commons on March 14 on the events in Austria and H.M. Government's attitude.

<sup>87</sup> For these statements, see documents Nos. 74 and 78, pp. 158 and 161.



## No. 91

1613/386669-70

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

PRAGUE, March 17, 1938.

A. III. 1. b. 8.

(Pol. I 734 g (IV))

With reference to the telephonic report by Counselor of Legation Hencke, of March 16, 1938.

Subject: Alleged military measures in Bavaria and Saxony.

On the 16th of this month the Military Attaché of the Legation, Lieutenant Colonel Toussaint, was invited to come to the Czechoslovak General Staff, where the responsible official [*Referent*], Lieutenant Colonel Beneš, made to him the observations, appearing in the enclosure,<sup>87a</sup> as to alleged German military measures in Bavaria and Saxony. In doing so Lieutenant Colonel Beneš pointed out that these measures were causing anxiety to the Government of Czechoslovakia. On being asked what he knew of military preparations in Saxony and Bavaria, Lieutenant Colonel Toussaint replied that so far he had heard nothing about this. If, however, they had actually been made, of which as he said he was ignorant, they would certainly not be directed in any way against Czechoslovakia. In his opinion, the Government of Czechoslovakia had no cause whatever for uneasiness.

As I myself had an appointment at 1 p.m. with Foreign Minister Krofta, I instructed Counselor of Legation Hencke to telephone to the Foreign Ministry and request confirmation of the reply made by Lieutenant Colonel Toussaint to Lieutenant Colonel Beneš. The Minister, Prince Bismarck,<sup>88</sup> gave his sanction immediately by telephone. Having at once made inquiries from the responsible authorities, he repeated this confirmation in a second telephone call from Berlin. At the same time Minister Prince Bismarck stated that the German Government stood fast on the declarations which had been given to Minister Mastny,<sup>89</sup> and added that no special military measures had been taken on the Czechoslovak frontier.

I also took the opportunity during my visit to M. Krofta of bringing to his notice the communication from the Foreign Ministry. Lieutenant Colonel Toussaint has made a corresponding communication to the Czechoslovak Lieutenant Colonel Beneš.

<sup>87a</sup> Not printed (1613/3866671). The substance of this enclosure is given in the enclosure to document No. 85, p. 168.

<sup>88</sup> Deputy head of the Political Department in the German Foreign Ministry.

<sup>89</sup> See documents Nos. 74 and 78, pp. 158 and 161.

The enclosure already mentioned at the beginning is a memorandum which the Minister for Foreign Affairs personally handed to me during my visit on the 15th of this month.

EISENLOHR

No. 92

1650/392013

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union (Tippelskirch)  
to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 83 of March 17

Moscow, March 17, 1938—10:48 p.m.

Received March 18, 1938—2 a.m.

Litvinov<sup>92</sup> today made statement to press representatives which has already been circulated by D.N.B.<sup>93</sup> and Tass.<sup>94</sup> Declaration comprises three main points:

1) Soviet Government's willingness, now as ever, to take part in collective negotiations jointly agreed with her, with the object of preventing further aggressive developments and removing increased dangers of war.

2) Soviet Government's agreement to consult immediately with other powers, within or without the League of Nations, about practical measures demanded by the circumstances.

3) Challenge to be made to all states to adopt firm decisive attitude regarding problem of preserving collective peace, before it is too late.

Statement demonstrates intention of Soviet Government to take a hand in European politics once more. At the same time it deliberately avoids committing the Soviet Government, and makes everything further dependent on attitude of remaining powers.

Litvinov described statement to press representatives as proposal addressed to all peace-loving governments. In reply to questions Litvinov stated that Soviet Government took serious view of latest Polish-Lithuanian incident,<sup>95</sup> which was evidence of "prewar at-

<sup>92</sup> Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>93</sup> The German official news agency.

<sup>94</sup> The Soviet official news agency.

<sup>95</sup> The killing of a Polish soldier by a Lithuanian frontier patrol on March 10 had further inflamed the tension between the two States, which, together with the total rupture of all diplomatic relations, had persisted since the Polish seizure of the city of Vilna from Lithuania in 1920. On March 18 the Polish Government replied with a 48-hour ultimatum to the Lithuanian Government, demanding assurances and the immediate restoration of diplomatic relations, etc., under threat of military action. The Lithuanian Government accepted these terms on March 20.

For German documents on the Polish-Lithuanian crisis of March 1938, see vol. iv.

mosphere," and that in case of attack on Czechoslovakia Soviet Government would fulfill her obligation exactly as laid down for Czechoslovakia in her Pact of Mutual Aid with France. When asked whether Soviet Government would also act independently if occasion arose, Litvinov gave evasive answer and referred to efforts to achieve a collective action.

TIPPELSKIRCH

## No. 93

28/19248-49

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Minister  
in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr)*

Telegram

STRICTLY SECRET

No. 40 of March 17

MARCH 18, 1938—1:30 a.m.

Received March 18, 1938.

For Head of Mission personally.

With reference to telegram No. 49 of March 11.<sup>95a</sup>

Frank has given the following information on your interview with him to the War Ministry official in question: As representative of the Third Reich, you had to demand from the Sudeten German Party a complete reorientation of their policy. The Party must abandon its opposition and adopt a friendly attitude to State and Government. Previous conditions for joining the Government (equality of rights and compensation) must be abandoned. The Party must assume an Activist policy and attain its ends step by step. Frank declared that you presented these demands as an ultimatum, with the addition that, if the Sudeten German Party did not accept them, they would be disavowed by both you and the Reich. Since acceptance of this program would mean a total reversal of policy for the Sudeten German Party, it must on account of different currents of thought in Berlin (apparently several groups are missing here) dispel . . . get the consent of responsible Reich-German authorities that this policy was really desired by the Reich-Germans.

Frank's letter to me of March 14<sup>96</sup> develops the same line of thought, though by no means in so weighty a manner. I replied to Frank that naturally the German Minister merely repeated the policy of responsible Government circles.

Kindly report immediately what you actually did say to Frank. Frank apparently intends to visit you again together with Henlein in the course of the next few days.

MACKENSEN

<sup>95a</sup> Document No. 68, p. 155.

<sup>96</sup> Not printed.

## No. 94

397/212900

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy  
in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

No. 57

BERLIN, March 18, 1938—10:25 p.m.

Received March 19, 1938—2:30 a.m.

Ambassador in Paris telegraphs on March 16:

The Council for National Defense yesterday discussed exhaustively methods of making French help available to Czechoslovakia. The Soviet Ambassador is reported to have given the information yesterday, that the Soviet Union stood by the Czechoslovak-Soviet Treaty of Mutual Assistance and that three Soviet White-Russian Military Districts [*Wehrkreise*] and Odessa were ready to render assistance at any time, irrespective of the situation in the Far East.

Request telegraphic report.

WEIZSÄCKER

[Longhand note:<sup>96a</sup>] There is no Odessa Military District.

## No. 95

120/68053-54

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German  
Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST SECRET

PRAGUE, March 18, 1938—4:55 p.m.

No. 60 of March 18

Received March 18, 1938—6:45 p.m.

Reference to telegram No. 40 of the 17th.<sup>97</sup>

Following for State Secretary.

Henlein's and Frank's promises of March 15 have been reported in telegram No. 57 of March 16.<sup>98</sup> Both declared themselves, in separate conversations, to be in unreserved agreement. At Frank's wish discussion was at same time arranged for next week with three representatives of Sudeten German Party, so that details of tactical procedure could be agreed upon.

I have in no wise demanded that Sudeten German Party should abandon its role of opposition or become Activist or friendly to the State and Government. I have rather explicitly stressed that Party must, until entry into Government after elections, remain in opposi-

<sup>96a</sup> By an official of the Moscow Embassy from the files of which this document comes.

<sup>97</sup> Document No. 93, p. 177.

<sup>98</sup> Document No. 86, p. 169.

tion, and should in speeches voice no confidence in Government's promises, but should, however, induce in people a somewhat hopeful frame of mind with regard to German protection, in order to diminish danger of incidents.

I have indicated as next aim realization of Hodza's assurances, which are known to you, that is, as comprehensive an amnesty as possible, transfer of German officials and civil-service recruits to German area, development of self-administration to such extent that later on only State officials and those in the autonomous administration who are of German race are employed there; further, cessation of building of "Czechization schools" [*Tschechisierungsschulen*], holding of State or communal elections or both, and, finally, participation of Sudeten German Party in Government for purpose of obtaining further rights, and detachment of Czechoslovaks from pact system.<sup>99</sup> Disbandment of State police in frontier area and creation of opportunity for the free profession of the National Socialist ideology were mentioned as other most important aims. Conditions for entry into Government were not discussed, as eventuality not acute for months yet.

On the other hand I have not permitted that Party organization should seek to repudiate permanent contact with Hoff,<sup>1</sup> which I had brought about, or that any attempt should be made to play off against each other differences of opinion and tendencies in matters of foreign policy which are alleged to exist in Germany, or to contest my authority as that of the official representative of Reich policy. Insistence on hitherto demagogic demands of Sudeten German Party, that is on Racial Protection Law and "territorial autonomy,"<sup>2</sup> which are in practice unrealizable and are unacceptable to any Czechoslovak Government, involves danger that we must later either leave the Sudeten German Party in the lurch or be drawn into armed conflict.

Frank made the oral and written statements, which are in your possession, before his first conversation with me on evening of March 15, but their text corresponded in all essential details to first conversation. It remains to be seen whether he will now keep to his promise.

EISENLOHR

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<sup>99</sup> I.e., Czechoslovak foreign policy of maintaining the alliances with France and Soviet Russia.

<sup>1</sup> Sudeten German Deputy.

<sup>2</sup> Laws proposed by the Sudeten German Party in April 1937; see footnote 10, p. 6.

## No. 96

1650/392014-15

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union (Tippelskirch)  
to the German Foreign Ministry*

A/427

Moscow, March 18, 1938.  
(Pol. V 2172)

Subject: Litvinov's statement.

Continuation of telegram No. 83 of the 17th instant, Pol. V 2131.<sup>4</sup>

I enclose the English text of the statement made by Litvinov to the foreign press here on the 17th of this month.

As already stated in my above-mentioned telegraphic report, the object of the statement is to permit the Soviet Union to take a hand in European politics once again. To this end she is taking advantage of a moment which seems very favorable to her after her political influence had recently received a severe setback, both on account of political trends abroad as well as the well-known calamities at home. A move by the Soviet Government at the present time would coincide fully with French political aims, which, it is said here, have even taken the form of a direct approach to the Soviet Government. In this connection it is obvious that certain remarks in Blum's declaration of policy yesterday<sup>5</sup> are in striking agreement with Litvinov's statements. Litvinov's ideas and proposals are intended to influence certain political circles in the Western Powers, by the usual propaganda means, and, by no means least, to influence public opinion in America. The decisive factor here is that the Soviet Government is avoiding committing itself definitely and is leaving it to the other powers to decide upon practical measures, but at bottom is only concerned in strengthening its front against the aggressors, i. e., the opponents of the Soviet Union.

There is no doubt that the moment of Litvinov's return to the scene is closely connected with the Polish-Lithuanian tension.<sup>6</sup> In view of the special relationship existing between Moscow and Kovno, as well as the hopes which Lithuania might put in the Soviet Union, Litvinov will have considered it advisable to word his statement in a

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 92, p. 176. The file reference has been added in pencil.

<sup>5</sup> Statement in the Chamber of Deputies on March 17 on Government foreign policy, referring to the danger of war caused by disunion in France, to the possibility of the inclusion of Communists in the War Cabinet, and to countering the possible charge of the Communists taking orders from a foreign power by asserting that such a power would, in the event of war, be on the same side as France. He urged the strengthening of French military preparations and of her foreign alliances, and added that the honoring of French engagements to Czechoslovakia called for national unity at home.

<sup>6</sup> See footnote 95, p. 176.

manner especially relevant to Lithuania's situation. This is confirmed by the attitude of semiofficial Soviet circles. In addition, the Lithuanian Minister here paid an immediate visit to Litvinov an hour after his [the Minister's] return from a 3 days' official visit to Kovno.<sup>7</sup> As this occurred one day before Litvinov made his statement, the obvious conclusion can be drawn.

In face of the internal and military situation of the Soviet Union, Litvinov has obviously done the only thing immediately possible for him, namely, as mediator, raised his voice in a general appeal and warning to the "friends of peace."

VON TIPPELSKIRCH

No. 97

1939/434534

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Woermann) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 152 of March 19

LONDON, March 19, 1938—4:30 p.m.

Received March 19, 1938—6:45 p.m.

(Pol. IV 1824)

Cadogan<sup>8</sup> said to me today that the British Government naturally followed the situation in Czechoslovakia with interest and anxiety. I asked him whether the British attitude, as expressed in recent diplomatic conversations and in Parliamentary declarations, had altered at all. He was hesitant in denying this but said that it was not yet certain whether the British Government would make a statement on Czechoslovakia on the following Wednesday or not.

WOERMANN

[Longhand note:] The British Prime Minister is to make a statement on Thursday, the 24th of this month.

<sup>7</sup> M. Baltrusaitis; he visited his Government on March 13 to 16.

<sup>8</sup> Sir Alexander Cadogan was the British Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

## No. 98

1939/434527-29

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassies in Great Britain and Italy and the Legation in Czechoslovakia*

BERLIN, March 19, 1938.

(Pol. IV 1644, 1683, 1684, 1741)

(Pol. IV 2068, 1968/38)

Attention Prague: With reference to the telegraphic instruction No. 31, of March 14.<sup>10</sup>

The more the conviction grows in Paris that France can achieve nothing more in the Austrian question, the greater, according to all the available information, becomes now the anxiety of the French Government with regard to Czechoslovakia, which, after the union of Austria with Germany, is considered to be in especial danger and directly threatened. As the German Embassy in Paris reports, a firm promise appears to have been given to the Czechoslovak Minister in Paris that, in the event of a conflict with Germany, France, merely on the statement of the Czechoslovak Government that it has been the victim of an unprovoked assault, will consider herself in a state of war with Germany. Thus, should Germany attack Czechoslovakia, the time-wasting cooperation of the League of Nations would be unnecessary. In view of this situation the French Council for National Defense, in a session on March 15, exhaustively considered methods of implementing French assistance to Czechoslovakia. Further, as our Paris Embassy understands, the Soviet Ambassador there is said to have informed the French Government that the Soviet Union held fast to the Russo-Czech Treaty of Mutual Assistance and that three Soviet Military Districts [*Wehrkreise*], White Russia, Kiev, and Odessa, were ready to render assistance at any time, irrespective of the existing situation in the Far East.

At the moment, however, doubt prevails as to the attitude of the British Government toward the question of Czechoslovakia. The French Government is apparently trying to persuade Britain to a joint declaration, in which also the British interest in the territorial integrity of Czechoslovakia would be expressed, but there is no great confidence so far that England will agree to this suggestion of the French Government to the extent desired. In the view of our Embassy in London, the British Government is likely meanwhile to reserve the right according to its former declarations to guarantee assistance to Czechoslovakia if she is attacked, only when this appears

<sup>10</sup> Document No. 80, p. 163.



indicated in accordance with the provisions of the League of Nations Covenant.

I should be grateful if you would report as soon as possible, if necessary by telegram, anything you can learn at your post, as to the point of view of the British Government.

For the Minister:  
W[EIZSÄCKER]  
B[ISMARCK]

## No. 99

1798/409566-67

*Draft of Telegram From the German Foreign Minister to the German Minister in Hungary (Erdmannsdorff)*<sup>11</sup>

Telegram

URGENT  
No. 43

BERLIN, March 21, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 1976)

With reference to telegram No. 35 of March 19.<sup>12</sup>

No objections here to Kanya, the Foreign Minister, informing, as you say, Government Party on Tuesday afternoon of declaration you made to him, as well as in his exposé before Foreign Affairs Committee of both Houses of Parliament fixed for Wednesday and to be published later.

I assume that your reference in the diary to telegraphic directive No. 12 is an error and that telegraphic directive No. 39 is meant.<sup>13</sup>

The promise to Czechoslovakia by Field Marshal Göring<sup>13</sup> mentioned by Kanya has nothing to do with case in point. Czechoslovakia has not received promises from us as have Yugoslavia, Italy, and Switzerland.<sup>14</sup> The Field Marshal's assurances referred exclusively rather to *ad hoc* measures connected with carrying out action in Austria by which Czechoslovakia would not be affected.

RIBBENTROP

<sup>11</sup> The draft bears final longhand corrections and is initialed by Ribbentrop, Weizsäcker, Mackensen, and Bismarck.

<sup>12</sup> Not printed.

<sup>13</sup> See document No. 74, p. 158.

<sup>14</sup> Formal assurances of German respect for their frontiers were given by Germany to these States and to Hungary also immediately after the *Anschluss* with Austria. See the relevant documents in vol. I, chap. II.

## No. 100

397/212899

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union (Tippelskirch)  
to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

A 459

Moscow, March 21, 1938.

No. 86 of March 21

Dispatched March 21—4 p.m.

Reference telegram No. 57 of March 18.<sup>16</sup>Refer to our telegram No. 83 of March 17.<sup>17</sup>

No information here regarding preparation for action in "three Soviet Military Districts [*Wehrkreise*] of White Russia and Odessa." There is no military district of Odessa. If preparations are being made for increased military preparedness in the western military districts, the military districts of White Russia, Kiev, and Kharkov must be meant, with an extension of the measures to include the Moscow Military District as well. In Moscow, however, nothing of the kind has been observed.

TIPPELSKIRCH

## No. 101

1939/434538-39

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy  
in Great Britain*<sup>18</sup>Telegram<sup>19</sup>

No. 85

BERLIN, March 21, 1938.

(e. o. Pol. IV 1944)

The impression seems to have been created in official circles in various places abroad that during the conversations between leading German statesmen and the Czech Minister here on the occasion of the military action in Austria, assurances were given to the latter in respect of the integrity of Czechoslovakia. For instance, the London short-wave transmitter reports this morning that Lyons, the Australian Prime Minister, has stated Chamberlain has informed Australian Government to the effect that Germany has given assurances in respect of integrity of Czechoslovakia. Tension in Europe

<sup>16</sup> Document No. 94, p. 178.<sup>17</sup> Document No. 92, p. 176.<sup>18</sup> Woermann was in charge of the Embassy as Chargé d'Affaires at this date. See footnote 21, p. 152.<sup>19</sup> The substance of this telegram was also sent to the Ambassadors in Paris (as No. 108) and Warsaw, and to the Ministers in Prague (as No. 46), Budapest, Belgrade, and Bucharest. (Frames 434540-41)

has been considerably relaxed thereby. According to this information it was therefore not necessary to convene Australian Parliament earlier than arranged.

For your information and if necessary as directive for language to be held, I would mention that in the conversations of February 11 between the Czechoslovak Minister and Field Marshal Göring and Reich Minister von Neurath respectively,<sup>20</sup> nothing was said on German side other than assurance that on occasion of military action in Austria Czechoslovak frontier would be respected in every way, to which end detailed instructions had been issued. Beyond that only the active desire for an improvement in German-Czechoslovak relations was expressed, and in this connection reference was made by Herr von Neurath to the existence of the German-Czechoslovak Arbitration Treaty of 1925. Beyond this no fresh political assurances of any description were given to the Czechoslovak Minister. I refer in this connection also to the relevant declarations in Chamberlain's House of Commons speech of March 14, which give the real facts correctly.

MACKENSEN<sup>21</sup>

[Longhand notes:]

Should we not also advise Warsaw, Budapest, Belgrade, and Bucharest by telegram? M[ACKENSEN] March 21

Yes, certainly. W[EIZSÄCKER] March 23

## No. 102

1939/434551

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 68 of March 23

PRAGUE, March 23, 1938—2:55 p.m.

Received March 23, 1938—4:35 p.m.

(Pol. IV 1968)

Reference instructions of March 19, Pol. IV 1741.<sup>22</sup>

Hodza told me today that he had no illusions regarding British guarantee to Czechoslovakia. British foreign policy would still be guided by the same considerations as in the past.

EISENLOHR

<sup>20</sup> For these conversations, see documents Nos. 74 and 78, pp. 158 and 161.

<sup>21</sup> The name is written in Weizsäcker's hand; having already been appointed State Secretary in succession to Mackensen, he was at this time, until the latter's departure for the Rome Embassy, acting jointly with him. See footnote 31, p. 155.

<sup>22</sup> Document No. 98, p. 182.

## No. 103

2369/494382-88

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 2. allg.

PRAGUE, March 24, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 2120)

## SUDETEN GERMAN QUESTION

I have the honor to submit a memorandum on a conversation with Premier Hodza in the course of which the following topics were discussed: the pact with Russia, the Activist parties, the entry of the Sudeten German Party into the Government, the question of officials, the codification of the rights of minorities, the law concerning the State police<sup>25</sup> and the National Defense Law,<sup>26</sup> freedom to profess any ideology.

I have reported elsewhere upon Hodza's statements on the question of a British guarantee for Czechoslovakia.<sup>27</sup>

EISENLOHR

[Enclosure]

## MEMORANDUM

A. III. 2. allg.

PRAGUE, March 24, 1938.

On the 23d instant a further conversation with Premier Hodza took place, for which the latter had asked.

He began by mentioning the secession of the Activist *Landbund*<sup>28</sup> to the Sudeten German Party and expressed the opinion that in this way the Government had been relieved of troublesome ballast. In this connection he informed me, and his statement has in the meantime been confirmed, that within the ranks of the German Clerical Activist Party<sup>29</sup> a movement similar to that in the *Landbund* was in existence and would probably lead to similar results simultaneously. In regard to the third German Activist Government Party, the Social Democrats, the Premier said to me that on that very day he intended to send an ultimatum to the leader of the Party, the Min-

<sup>25</sup> Under which State police personnel of Czechoslovak nationality could be, and were, appointed in German minority districts.

<sup>26</sup> See footnote 18, p. 12.

<sup>27</sup> A reference to this by Eisenlohr occurs in document No. 102, p. 185. A full report on it was probably sent, but is not printed.

<sup>28</sup> The German Agrarian Party in Czechoslovakia; for the secession of the German Activist parties to the Sudeten German Party, see footnote 30, p. 116.

<sup>29</sup> The German Christian Socialist Party; see footnote 29, p. 115.

ister of Health, Czech, and that then M. Czech would take a few days leave and disappear from the political scene. His successor was probably to be Jaksch, whom he assumed would be more acceptable to us and to the Sudeten German Party than Czech.

In regard to the pact with Russia<sup>30</sup> Hodza said that, as was known, he had never been a friend of that pact and had made no secret of this attitude of his.

The more, however, treaty revision was spoken of elsewhere—the mentioned Mussolini's Milan speech<sup>31</sup>—and the more ominous the utterances from Berlin sounded, the more numerous were the voices that made themselves heard here to the effect that, after all, it is a good thing that we have the Soviet pact. His, Hodza's, view was that the less the pact was wanted the looser it would become, and that it would vanish altogether when it became no longer necessary.

For some months he had been discussing with the President of the Republic participation in the Government by the Sudeten German Party, in which connection the first task would be to prepare the Henlein Party to be fit to take part in the Government. He had now at length reached an agreement with M. Beneš that the Sudeten German Party was to be invited to enter the Government, but only after the next elections. They already, of course, had seats in Parliament, but not yet in the communal assemblies. For that reason communal elections were to be held first. These, however, would confer a new aspect upon the German position, which must automatically result in the holding of Parliamentary elections. Beneš was in agreement with the holding of communal elections, and the opposition hitherto existing in the two Activist parties of the *Landbund* and the German Clericals to the holding of communal elections was now removed. In reply to my question at what time M. Hodza intended to proceed with the communal elections, he answered that he would like to arrange for them after National Independence Day, that is October 28,<sup>32</sup> but admitted that the recent rapid development of events might make a considerably earlier date seem indicated.

As characteristic of the political situation prevailing at present among the Czech parties of the Left, which are actually the strongest opponents of any inclusion of the Sudeten German Party in the Government, Hodza mentioned the following incident: he occasionally comes into contact, unofficially, with party politicians, and thus recently had a conversation with some Agrarians and Czech Social Democrats, in the course of which one of the Social Democrats ob-

<sup>30</sup> See document No. 2, p. 10.

<sup>31</sup> Evidently that of November 1, 1936.

<sup>32</sup> The anniversary of the founding of the Republic in 1918.

served: "So we shall make such and such a concession to the Activists; but then this concession will, politically speaking, vanish into thin air [*politisch verpuffen*]." Another Czech Social Democrat on this occasion quoted a Czech proverb, which ran: "If I can speak with the smith in person, why should I talk to his apprentice?" He mentioned this detail as evidence that it was fully possible to discuss these matters with the Czech Socialists, who are not really Marxists in the old sense of the term, but are social reformers, and that he needed these Czech Socialists in order to overcome the opposition of the other Czech Left Wing parties, namely, of the Czech National Socialists,<sup>34</sup> and in particular too, of the Czech Clericals and their leader, Schramek. He, therefore, hoped that when the Sudeten German Party was ripe for [entry into the] Government they would not raise any objection to the continued presence in the Government of the Social Democrats, with whom the Sudeten German Party would be able to cooperate specifically in social questions far more readily than with his own party, the Agrarians, who were otherwise more friendly disposed toward the Germans.

In connection with the standing committee originally proposed by me for the discussion and development of Sudeten German affairs M. Hodza mentioned—as for that matter I already knew—that the names of three Sudeten German Party representatives had by now been given to him in a letter from Deputy Kundt. He would shortly invite the gentlemen to come to him.

In regard to the amnesty which I had urged, M. Hodza already knew that I had caused the Agrarian Party to be informed that the date contemplated for the amnesty, namely, the birthday of the President of the Republic on May 25, seemed to me too late. Hodza said he hoped to have the signature of the President for the amnesty by Easter, that is, in about four weeks, and he would to that extent anticipate Beneš' birthday. As to the scope of the amnesty I said to him that what was important was to avoid as far as possible dividing the amnesty into two parts, as originally contemplated, but instead to carry it into effect by means of a single act, so that the political calm needed among the Sudeten Germans might be restored. I therefore requested him to make its scope wide, so that all possible cases might be included, and indeed not only other political offenses, but also the so-called paragraph 6, referring to cases of espionage, and I therefore asked that not only those already sentenced, but also the numerous prisoners undergoing cross-examination, might be set at liberty. Hodza declared himself in principle in agreement with

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<sup>34</sup> i.e., Beneš' party, not to be confused with the German sense of National Socialist; see footnote 29, p. 115.

this view. I reminded him that he would have to overcome the opposition of the Minister for National Defense.<sup>35</sup> He mentioned in addition that by Monday next he was expecting the proposals from the Minister of Justice and that he had also asked the Sudeten German Deputy, the advocate Neuwirth, for an expression of opinion on the cases to be amnestied.

For the first time the Premier mentioned a condition for a subsequent entrance into the Government of the Sudeten German Party, when he said that he would wish to have a "security" [*Deckung*] for the Party, namely, their assent to the Sudeten German question being solved upon the basis of the existing constitution. In reply to my question what he meant by that, he stated that "territorial autonomy" should not be demanded. In answer to a further question he defined his conception of "territorial autonomy" to mean a state of affairs in which Sudeten German territory was to be administered not from Prague, but from some Sudeten German town, and that an administrative frontier was to be drawn between regions settled by Germans and those settled by Czechs. This must in all circumstances be rejected, the more so as, just to give an example, no one could say where any such frontier would run in the neighborhood of Leitmeritz,<sup>36</sup> which was partly German, partly Czech.

Hodza further told me he had convinced the President that a unifying act, having legislative force, must be promulgated to comprehend within a single closed instrument all the scattered provisions hitherto in force in the constitutional system, in the language law, in other laws, in decisions of the Supreme Court, or Government decrees dealing with the rights of minorities, so that by this means a clear survey might be provided of the status of minorities as existing up to the present. He wanted to discuss the details later with the Sudeten German Party and unofficially also with myself.

In the question of officials I observed in the first place that in the press announcement of an impending Government decree the mistake had been made of placing the future regulation of the status of officials for the Sudeten German region to the credit of the Activists. That could serve no useful purpose, any more than it could hinder the collapse of the Activist parties. It could not fail, however, to rob the conciliatory action of the Government of its value in the eyes of the Sudeten German population. Hodza answered that in the decree itself, of which a draft was locked up in his desk, there was not a word about the Activists. For the rest he confirmed to

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<sup>35</sup> Dr. Machnik, whose decree of 1936 under the National Defense Law had provoked Sudeten German hostility to him. See footnote 90, p. 51.

<sup>36</sup> Czech: Litomerice, in North Bohemian Sudetenland, 40 miles northwest of Prague.

me the contents of the decree to the effect that all Sudeten German officials actually in Czechoslovakia were to be transferred to Sudeten German territory, although of course at the moment barely half the available posts could be filled in this way. But, in addition, new officials were to proceed in a steady stream into Sudeten German territory. Where the German population amounted to 100 percent, all State officials were to be 100 percent German. In the local administration of Bohemia and Moravia, when the Sudeten Germans amounted to 33½ percent of the population, and in the central administration of the whole country, and therefore in the Ministries, the Sudeten Germans were to be represented by their officials in the ratio of the numbers of their population, respectively, 33½ percent for Bohemia and Moravia and 22 percent for the whole country. The aim, therefore, was to give an entirely German character to the officials in the districts inhabited by Germans, and in the regions of mixed population, and in like manner for the higher instances, to determine the appointments according to the proportions of the population.

He thought of putting an end to construction of "Czechization schools" [*Tschechisierungsschulen*]<sup>38</sup>—and on this issue, too, he was in agreement with the President—by means of commissions to be formed of local representatives of German and Czech interests, whose resolutions would be decisive. Where, therefore, there was an adequate German majority, this would be able to prevent the construction of new "Czechization schools."

I now, in my turn, pointed out that the developments up to the moment, since our reoccupation of the Rhineland,<sup>38</sup> had led to a general rearmament of the Czechs not only in the military, but also in the moral, judicial, and administrative spheres. In the course of this development, which now, indeed, seemed to be nearing its end, since it had led not to any strengthening, but rather to a diminution of the Czech feeling of security, the National Defense Law and the law dealing with the establishment of the State police in frontier regions had been enacted. Reich-Germans also had had to suffer gravely from the effect of these laws. These effects, however, had first been checked and then suspended by energetic countermeasures. But both laws continued now as before to produce their baleful effect upon Sudeten Germans. So long as Czech State police continued to function in Sudeten German territory, so long as Sudeten German property and land could without more ado be expropriated for military purposes in virtue of the Law of National Defense,<sup>39</sup> so

<sup>38</sup> March 1936.

<sup>39</sup> See footnote 18, p. 12.



long as espionage trials were rampant, and in the conduct of these trials the military appointed not only the judge, but also the prosecution and even the defense, there could be no question of any settlement of the Sudeten German problem. I wished to know from him, whether, in the event of continued peaceful development, particularly of the relations with the German Reich, we could rely upon it that the law for the introduction of State police into the frontier territory would be repealed and that the Law of National Defense would no longer be applied against the Sudeten Germans. Hodza answered this question in the affirmative.

Finally, I drew the Premier's attention to the fact that in according satisfaction to the German ideal it should be realized that one of the most important aims lay in not prohibiting the profession of the National Socialist ideology by the Sudeten Germans. It was just this from which they suffered most acutely, that every expression of solidarity with the resurgence of the great German people was regarded in this country as a crime dangerous to the State and to be punished as such. Hodza answered as follows: he would not have anyone punished for raising his right arm in the German salute, and he also had no objection to the long white stockings which the Sudeten Germans liked to wear as emblems. But when Czechs talked of democracy they meant it seriously, and the mistrust felt for the Sudeten German Party had its origins in this fundamental democratic ideology. The demand must be made that the Sudeten German Party should reconcile itself with the methods and responsibility of democracy. For the rest, subject to the provision that there was no infringement of the constitution, he had no objection to full liberty to express an ideology. Differently phrased, if unrestricted freedom of opinion were accorded to the Sudeten Germans, that must not imply any right of interference [*titulus immiscendi*] by us.

EISENLOHR

## No. 104

1939/434552-54

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Woermann) to the German Foreign Ministry*<sup>40</sup>

Telegram

No. 172 of March 25

LONDON, March 25, 1938—2:55 p.m.  
Received March 25, 1938—5:50 p.m.  
(Pol. IV 2045)

Beg to emphasize following points regarding Czechoslovakia in Chamberlain's House of Commons speech of March 24:

1) Chamberlain recognized that question is not only an internal Czechoslovak affair, but that difficulties exist which might create trouble between Germany and Czechoslovakia.

2) He has again drawn attention to definite assurances by the German Government,<sup>41</sup> but not in the clear form harmonizing with the facts, of his speech of March 14. Yesterday's speech gave rise to vague impression that more comprehensive assurances had been given. Will take this up on a suitable occasion with the Foreign Office in a circumspect manner in accordance with telegraphed directive No. 85 of March 21.<sup>42</sup>

3) Chamberlain declared on behalf of the British Government that for their part they were ready to do everything in their power to overcome difficulties.

4) The British Government have not undertaken any new engagements or given new assurances over and above hitherto existing engagements. Juridical obligations toward Czechoslovakia, therefore, as before, only within the framework of the provisions of the League of Nations, which, in accordance with British and now indeed general interpretation, contains no binding engagement involving military intervention. In addition, Chamberlain's well-known skeptical attitude toward present probability of League action, once more manifested at the beginning of the speech, should be borne in mind in this connection. Guarantee to France to render immediate military aid, if in event of a German attack upon Czechoslovakia she fulfills her treaty obligations toward that country, or any preliminary declarations of military action to meet the case of any forcible interference with Czechoslovakia's independence and integrity, is expressly refused.

5) Further, Chamberlain said more clearly than before in public that events might occur which would result in British intervention even without juridical obligation. In this connection he repeated a formula almost word for word with that which Halifax had employed in the London conversation of March 11, namely, that if

<sup>40</sup> Copies of this telegram were sent by the Foreign Ministry to the Missions in Moscow (on March 30), Paris (29th), Rome (28th), Warsaw (30th), and to Belgrade, Bucharest, and Prague (all on the 28th). (Frame 434555)

<sup>41</sup> See documents Nos. 74 and 78, pp. 158 and 161.

<sup>42</sup> Document No. 101, p. 184.

a war broke out it would be impossible to say where it would end and what governments might become involved. He went, however, one step further when he pointed out that it was well within the bounds of probability that in certain cases countries other than the originally disputing parties would be involved in war, and particularly emphasized this for the eventuality that France might take part.

6) These last statements continue to indicate as highly probable that Britain would in any event take part in a war arising over Czechoslovakia if France were to intervene in fulfillment of her treaty obligations toward Czechoslovakia. There is thus implied a kind of warning to Germany and an emphatic proffer of help to France. However, and with particular regard to the fact that British policy is conducted in the closest agreement with the Dominions, the possibility still remains now as before that, according to the circumstances of the moment, it might not in such a case come to a British intervention, or not to an immediate one.

WOERMANN

No. 105

2369/494389-93

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 1. allg.

PRAGUE, March 27, 1938.

A. III. 2. allg.

(Pol. IV 2195)

CONVERSATION WITH DEPUTY BERAN ABOUT THE POLITICAL POSITION  
OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

POLITICAL REPORT

I have the honor to forward a memorandum on a further conversation I had the opportunity of having yesterday with the head of the Czechoslovak Agrarian Party.<sup>43</sup> In addition to foreign affairs, questions of internal policy were also discussed, especially the question of a possible participation of the Sudeten German Party in the Government. M. Beran's remarks were obviously inspired by the wish "to create a favorable atmosphere." In spite of his obvious wish to put this complexion on the matter, the statements of this influential politician, which he wished to bring to the knowledge of the German Government through me at a turning point in the country's history, can also be accorded particular significance in assessing the state of opinion at present prevalent.

EISENLOHR

<sup>43</sup> Rudolf Beran.

[Enclosure]

## MEMORANDUM

A. III. 1. allg.

A. III. 2. allg.

On the 26th of this month I met M. Beran, the leader of the Czech Agrarian Party, at his request, at the home of the Secretary-General of his Party.<sup>44</sup>

I drew his attention to the following points, for which he promised me his support:

(1) When the regulation in regard to officials<sup>45</sup> in the Sudeten German area, as envisaged by Hodza, comes into force (see memorandum of the 23d [24th] instant on discussion with the Prime Minister),<sup>46</sup> for some years to come many more Sudeten German candidates for official positions must be admitted than corresponds to the German element in the population, due to the fact that for 10 years no Sudeten German applicants have been accepted for official positions. Otherwise it would take too long, half a lifetime in fact, before the object was attained of filling all official posts in the Sudeten German area with Germans.

(2) Vacant chairs at the German University and in the German Technical High Schools in the total area where German is spoken to be filled by nationally minded<sup>47</sup> teachers, in contrast to the present Government practice whereby preference is given to Jews and *émigrés*, and new blood taken entirely from the Czechoslovak area.

(3) Recall of the Jewish Social Democrat Press Attaché to the Czechoslovak Légation in Berlin.<sup>48</sup> Removal of M. Hajek<sup>49</sup> and M. Butter from the Press Department of the Foreign Ministry in Prague.

Beran desired to know on his part whether Berlin was really inclined toward an understanding with Czechoslovakia. He declared this to be the main question, and thought that, if it were possible within a reasonable time to discuss such an understanding, matters could "go forward," and mutual relations could be determined for a considerable period of time. The dissolution of the pact with Soviet Russia<sup>50</sup> could then also be considered. I replied that for the time being the declarations recently made to M. Mastny by Field Marshal

<sup>44</sup> Dr. Plujahr.

<sup>45</sup> The question of appointment of a due proportion of German officials to public offices in German minority districts. Some agreement on this was reached in principle between the Sudeten German Party and the Czechoslovak Government early in 1938.

<sup>46</sup> Document No. 103, p. 186.

<sup>47</sup> I.e., German nationalist.

<sup>48</sup> M. Hoffmann.

<sup>49</sup> Hajek was head of the Press Department of the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry; not to be confused with Colonel Hajek of the Czechoslovak General Staff concerned in an earlier incident (see footnote 64, p. 40).

<sup>50</sup> See document No. 2, p. 10.

Göring and Baron von Neurath must suffice.<sup>51</sup> Everything further would depend on a satisfactory settlement of the Sudeten German question. If really satisfactory relations with the Reich could be achieved, the pacts with France<sup>52</sup> and Russia would lose their significance and importance, even if they continued to exist formally. This is what Krofta and Hodza also thought. It would, of course, be very desirable if Prague broke off the Soviet pact, but I doubted whether this could be done in the face of the French ally. In any case nothing must be done to give new substance to the Russian pact. On the contrary I hoped that an energetic stand against the Communists on the part of the Czechoslovak Government would weaken the Russian pact still more.

Beran further mentioned economic negotiations with the Reich in the near future which would arise out of Czechoslovakia's economic and political position created by the *Anschluss*. I promised to report this to my Government.

Beran stated, as regards the internal political position, that his Party had now taken up the fight for the liquidation of the German Social Democrats as a Government party.<sup>53</sup> It not only did not desire a German Social Democrat Minister, but wanted to expel the Social Democratic Activists from the Government altogether, in order to facilitate understanding with the Sudeten German Party. Germany must help to liquidate Marxism here or weaken it decisively, in order to moderate the opposing ideologies detrimental to mutual relations. Germany could help here by advising the Sudeten German Party to join the Government after the elections, without imposing unacceptable conditions. The time was favorable for a fundamental and speedy agreement with the Sudeten German Party, because a big change of opinion had occurred also among the Czech Socialists due to the impression made by the Austrian *Anschluss*. That which formerly seemed impossible, or would have called forth the strongest opposition, had today become relatively easy to solve. The talks which had taken place between Hodza and Kundt, the Sudeten German Party delegate, were promising and might lead to success with good will on both sides. The difficulties which Hodza still encountered with the Socialists, and especially with Schramek's Clerical Party, must be overcome. The Agrarian Party would help in every direction and had already done so in the question of the amnesty, officials, languages, and schools. The Agrarian Party need have no

<sup>51</sup> See documents Nos. 74 and 78, pp. 158 and 161.

<sup>52</sup> See document No. 2, p. 10.

<sup>53</sup> On these and in general all the parties of the Czechoslovak Republic, see footnote 29, p. 115.

fear of the strength of the Sudeten German Party for, together with the National Democrats and Trade Union Party, and even with the Czech Fascists, it could amalgamate any day, thus constituting an even larger Czech National Party. Nevertheless, in the interests of a favorable development of affairs, the outbreak of an open conflict in the frontier area must be avoided at all costs. The Ministry of the Interior and the delegates of the Sudeten German Party were already working together to prevent such an occurrence.

The elections (municipal elections) would bring the Sudeten German Party victory in all German towns and municipalities; through this it would thus gain the entire self-governing organization. On the Czech side the bourgeois parties could reckon on a marked setback for the Left, which would probably even render the latter superfluous in the Government. Against the holding of elections before the National Festival, Beran asserted that the national Sokol Festival was to take place in July, and that voting had never yet taken place here during the harvest months. Of course there were no arguments against holding the municipal elections *immediately*, which would be desirable as a safety valve for the prevailing unrest and in order to put an end to the general uncertainty. Kundt, Herr Beran continued, had demanded elections for the Social Services (Sick Benefits) as soon as possible; he was in agreement with this. For the rest, it was desired that the Sudeten German Party, before it joined the Government, should take part in certain public duties, cooperate for instance in economic advisory boards, and also in the drawing up of laws for the settlement of social questions. In the National Culture Council the chairman of the German Section was a German, a former member of the *Landbund*<sup>56</sup> and now a member of the Sudeten German Party, who also presided over the meetings of the combined section.

EISENLOHB

PRAGUE, March 27, 1938.

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<sup>56</sup> See footnote 28, p. 186.

## No. 106

120/68075

*Memorandum for the Foreign Minister*<sup>57</sup>

## MEMORANDUM

SECRET

The Sudeten German Party might, *inter alia*, present the following demands to the Czechoslovak Government:

- 1) Cessation of the building of schools with Czech propaganda bias [*Tschechisierungsschulen*] and discontinuance of all other Czechization efforts in Sudeten German territory;
- 2) Creation of the possibility for the free profession of National Socialist ideology;
- 3) Development of autonomy in the Sudeten German settlement area in such a manner that only German State and autonomous officials are employed there;
- 4) Transfer of German officials and civil-service recruits to the Sudeten German settlement area;
- 5) Holding of State and communal elections;
- 6) Abolition of State police in the frontier area.

The foregoing points represent only partial claims for the basic demand for "home rule"<sup>58</sup> in the Sudeten German area. This claim should be kept elastic and defined step by step in the course of discussions with the Czechoslovak Government. The consent of the Sudeten German Party to enter the Czechoslovak Government should be made dependent on the fulfillment of this general claim.

BERLIN, March 28, 1938.

## No. 107

436/220916-22

*Unsigned Report With Enclosures*<sup>59</sup>

TOP SECRET, MILITARY

TO BE HANDLED ONLY BY OFFICERS

PRELIMINARY REPORT ON MY CONVERSATION WITH KONRAD HENLEIN, THE LEADER OF THE SUDETEN GERMAN PARTY, AND KARL HERMANN FRANK, HIS DEPUTY

*I. Konrad Henlein's report on his audience with the Führer.*<sup>60</sup>

Besides the Führer, Reich Minister Hess, the Führer's Deputy, von Ribbentrop, the Foreign Minister, and *Obergruppenführer*

<sup>57</sup> This memorandum is unsigned but bears Mackensen's initial as having been seen by him on March 29.

<sup>58</sup> This English expression appears in the original.

<sup>59</sup> From the State Secretary's files.

<sup>60</sup> Henlein visited Berlin on March 28, 1938.

Lorenz<sup>63</sup> were also present, and the conversation lasted for almost three hours. The Führer stated that he intended to settle the Sudeten German problem in the not-too-distant future. He could no longer tolerate Germans being oppressed or fired upon. He told Henlein that he knew how popular he [Henlein] was and that he was the rightful leader of the Sudeten German element, and as a result of his popularity and attractiveness he would triumph over circumstances. To Henlein's objection that he, Henlein, could only be a substitute, Hitler replied: I will stand by you; from tomorrow you will be my Viceroy [*Statthalter*]. I will not tolerate difficulties being made for you by any department whatsoever within the Reich.

The purport of the instructions, which the Führer has given to Henlein, is that demands should be made by the Sudeten German Party which are unacceptable to the Czech Government. In spite of the favorable situation created by the events in Austria, Henlein does not intend to drive things to the limit, but merely to put forward the old demands for self-administration and reparation at the Party Rally (April 23-24, 1938).<sup>64</sup> He wishes to reserve for later on a suggestion of the Führer's that he should demand their own German regiments with German officers, and military commands [*Kommandosprache*] to be given in German. The Reich will not intervene of its own accord. Henlein himself would be responsible for events for the time being. However, there would have to be close cooperation. Henlein summarized his view to the Führer as follows: We must always demand so much that we can never be satisfied. The Führer approved this view.

The Führer appreciates the great success which Henlein has had in England<sup>65</sup> and has requested him to go to London again, as soon as he possibly can, and to continue to use his influence with a view to ensuring nonintervention by Britain. As for the position of France, the Führer believes that in certain circumstances the possibility of a revolution in France can be reckoned with.

## II. Karl Hermann Frank's report.

### 1) Cooperation between minorities in the Czech State.

Contact is maintained with the Hungarian and Polish minorities and the Slovak People's Party (Hlinka). A joint declaration by the

<sup>63</sup> See footnote 7, p. 64.

<sup>64</sup> The Sudeten German Party Congress at Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary) on April 23-24, 1938.

<sup>65</sup> Henlein last visited London on October 10-15, 1937 (see footnote 34, p. 22). His next visit was on May 12.



Hungarians and Slovaks will be made in the Parliament today (March 29), which will demand autonomy for the territory of Slovakia on the basis of the Treaty of Pittsburgh.<sup>66</sup> The Polish front<sup>67</sup> was set up under unified leadership on March 28. The demands for autonomy which it has raised will be stressed by Beck<sup>68</sup> in his next speech.

2) Czech precautionary and defense measures.

Karl Hermann Frank gave a detailed report, which is enclosed as an annex, on measures taken by the Czechs, the arming of Jednota<sup>69</sup> and the Sokol,<sup>70</sup> and the recruiting of motorized formations from the Czech civilian population within the Sudeten German area. The placing of these formations directly under the command of the Czech General Staff means that with this the main provisions of the National Defense Law<sup>71</sup> have actually come into force, i. e., preparatory measures for a camouflaged mobilization are already under way.

Karl Hermann Frank then drew special attention to the fact that internal disorders in the Czech State were already invalidating the basis of the alliance between France and Czechoslovakia. Boncour, the new French Foreign Minister,<sup>72</sup> recently called attention to this possibility in no uncertain terms.

Hodza, the Czech Prime Minister, probably intends to settle the whole Czech problem by peaceful means as far as possible. However, it is no longer possible for him to do this, since the General Staff has completely seized control. Hodza is already being spied upon in his office by the General Staff. All the measures adopted by Hodza, e. g., the inclusion of Neuwirth<sup>73</sup> in the register of lawyers, are being sabotaged by the General Staff.

[Enclosure]

*Report by Karl Hermann Frank, Konrad Henlein's Deputy*

After the incorporation of Austria, rifles and ammunition as well as machine guns and hand grenades were being unloaded from lorries every day at the headquarters of the State police and the command posts of the district *gendarmerie* in Sudeten German towns. The

<sup>66</sup> See footnote 4, p. 63.

<sup>67</sup> The unified organization of all Polish minority parties in Czechoslovakia.

<sup>68</sup> Polish Foreign Minister.

<sup>69</sup> See footnote 55, p. 89.

<sup>70</sup> See footnote 93, p. 53.

<sup>71</sup> See footnote 18, p. 12.

<sup>72</sup> The Blum Cabinet, with Paul-Boncour as Foreign Minister, took office on March 13 in succession to the Chautemps Cabinet, in which Delbos had been Foreign Minister, which resigned on March 10. See footnote 9, p. 218.

<sup>73</sup> Dr. Hans Neuwirth, a lawyer and Sudeten German Deputy in the Czechoslovak Parliament and a leading member of the Party (cf. marginal note, p. 174).

number of firearms is far greater than the number of personnel. It corresponds in most cases to the number of persons of the Czech minority living in the towns, who are organized in the Jednotas. My informant told me that in the towns of Karlsbad, Ellbogen, Schlackenwald, and Schönfeld, for example, 1 rifle and 40 rounds of ammunition are said to have been issued to each individual Jednota-man. The formation of motorized units is said to be in full swing under the name of *Obrany Sbor csł. motoristu*.<sup>74</sup> Orders to the leaders of these units emanate directly from the Czech General Staff. General Vojcechovski<sup>75</sup> is said to be the organizer of all these civilian units. According to our information he is even said to be planning a military *Putsch*. My informant has personally seen the General Staff's orders to the military units and made a note of the following points:

Point 4): Steps will be taken to ensure that members of the *Obrany Sbor csł. motoristu* do not suffer the fate of refugees in previous wars.

Another point: The function of the units is to be available for the maintenance of peace and order in the German region in the event of war.

The formations composed of inhabitants of the frontier districts, who are in a state of tremendous agitation, are constantly pressing the Government to declare a state of military emergency at once in the frontier zone under the National Defense Law. These aims are supported by the Communists, as by the parties of the Czech Popular Front in general. The Italian Press Attaché claims to have himself read a directive from the Czech Comintern, in which the Commune, disguised as the Sudeten German Party, is ordered to provoke incidents and disorders in the German region on May 4, 1938, in order to secure the proclamation of a state of emergency in the country and the state of military preparedness.

We have done all in our power to draw the attention of the Czechoslovak Government to the extreme gravity of the situation. (See annexes.)

<sup>74</sup> Czechoslovak Motorist Defense Units.

<sup>75</sup> A White Russian General who had fought with the Czechoslovak Legionaries in the Russian war of 1919; returned to Czechoslovakia with the Legionaries; became a Czechoslovak citizen; served in Czechoslovak Army; and eventually became General Officer Commanding Bohemian Command.

[Annex 1]

MARCH 24, 1938.

MY DEAR PRIME MINISTER: Please permit me to bring to your notice some information which I have received during the last few hours. According to this information firearms and ammunition have been issued to members of the Czech minority in a number of Sudeten German towns. This involves the following places in particular: Asch, Eger, Falkenau, Graslitz, Ellbogen, Karlsbad, Saaz, Gablonz, Reichenberg, Friedland, Mährisch-Schönberg, and Jägerndorf.

I have also been informed that in some Sudeten German towns Czech-speaking persons held conferences with members of the "Red Defense Force" [*Rote Wehr*], have drawn up nominal rolls of members of the aforementioned organizations, and committed members of the "Red Defense Force" to undertake armed intervention. In addition, the Sokol has been armed in these towns. In isolated cases the formation of motorized units has begun also, and civilians called upon to attend training courses. As the reason for this it was expressly stated that it might be necessary within measurable time to adopt special measures for the maintenance of peace and order, for which *inter alia* motorized units are to serve. I am obliged, my dear Prime Minister, to draw your attention to the kind of incidents which may result from the fact that undisciplined military elements, formed from civilian circles, are being turned into armed men in the German region, and there is only one thing certain about this, namely, that they are imbued with political prejudices and passions. I am obliged to confirm the dangerous situation, demonstrate the great responsibility of the Government for further developments in the German region resulting from measures of this kind, and beg to close with the question whether you, Mr. Prime Minister, are acquainted with the above-mentioned facts, whether they are approved by you, and what measures you intend to adopt in order to guarantee a speedy elimination of the spirit of civil war which is beginning to manifest itself in the German region.

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

KARL H. FRANK

[Annex 2]

Telegram

PRAGUE, March 25, 1938.

MR. PRIME MINISTER: With reference to my letter of yesterday and the visit by Deputy Kundt, I feel myself bound, on account of further

information which I have just received, to draw your attention once more to the fact that in further Sudeten German towns civilians of Czech nationality and units of frontier dwellers are being equipped with firearms and ammunition. A number of further disquieting reports of a similar nature are being circulated in connection with this. I am making herewith an urgent request for an investigation and the termination of the same, and furthermore for a statement during the Tuesday session of the Chamber of Deputies designed to reassure the population.

With great respect,

K. H. FRANK

No. 108

631/252299-300

*Memorandum by the Counselor of the German Embassy in France  
(Bräuer) for the Foreign Ministry*

MEMORANDUM

A 1185

PARIS, March 28, 1938.

Frankowski, the Counselor to the Polish Embassy here, called on me today and mentioned the following among other things in the course of conversation:

People in Poland are extremely depressed over the attitude of the French press toward the Polish-Lithuanian conflict.<sup>76</sup> The Polish Embassy therefore, on instructions from its Government, had on March 25 delivered a very sharply worded note which was accompanied by a summary of French press opinions bearing on the subject. In its expression was given to the fact that the lack of understanding for Poland and for her legitimate demands which was becoming apparent here and had, among other things, revealed itself in the French press, affected the foundations of Franco-Polish relations, and if persisted in might endanger them.

In the course of the conversation M. Frankowski confirmed the report which had also reached us that, after the events in Austria, the Soviet Ambassador here had given assurances to the French Government regarding the implementation of the Czech-Soviet Treaty of Assistance.<sup>77</sup> In connection with this he seems also to have given information regarding the extent to which Russia's European fighting forces were in a position to render assistance irrespective of any special conditions obtaining in the Far East. The Ambassador's statements on this, however they may have been

<sup>76</sup> See footnote 95, p. 176.

<sup>77</sup> See document No. 2, p. 10.

worded, were accepted straight away as literally true by the French Government, while the General Staff advanced serious doubts. These doubts were entirely justified in the Polish view and were confirmed by Russian hesitancy in the Polish-Lithuanian conflict. In this connection M. Frankowski maintained that, in the event of a European conflict, Russia "would not move a man." Any Russian mobilization was so dangerous to the existence of the Russian regime that the Russian Government could hardly give the order for it. Besides which it was scarcely possible to strip the Russo-Polish frontier of the troops stationed there. Geographical, political, and strategic difficulties arose, which militated against the employment of Russian troops in Central Europe. A situation could hardly be envisaged on the basis of which, for instance, the Polish Government would permit a Russian march through, and probably the same applied to Rumania as well. At the most, in the Polish view, Russian participation with air forces might be considered a possibility.

BRÄUER

## No. 109

F18/359, 352-355

*Draft of Despatch by the Foreign Minister to the German Legation in Czechoslovakia, Enclosing a Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, March 29, 1938.

IMMEDIATE

(Pol. I 789 g)

The enclosed minute on a discussion of Sudeten German questions, held today at the Foreign Ministry, is passed to you for your most secret and personal information.

In accordance with the principles laid down in the discussion, I request you—as in the past—to maintain as close a contact as possible with the Sudeten German Party and to support it in the manner described, not officially, but as occasion arises, in conversations with Czechoslovak statesmen, in the course of its forthcoming negotiations with the Czechoslovak Government.

RIBBENTROP

[Enclosure]

*Minute of the Discussion on Sudeten German Questions Held in the Foreign Ministry at Midday on March 29, 1938*

TOP SECRET

(Pol. I 789 g (IV))

A list of those who took part in the discussion is attached.

The Reich Foreign Minister emphasized at the beginning the necessity of keeping the appointed discussion strictly secret and then stated, with reference to the principles imparted to Konrad Henlein yesterday afternoon by the Führer personally,<sup>78</sup> that there were two questions above all others which were important for the conduct of the policy of the Sudeten German Party:

1) The Sudeten German element must know that behind it stood a people of 75 millions who would tolerate no further suppression of the Sudeten Germans by the Czechoslovak Government.

2) It was for the Sudeten German Party to present to the Czechoslovak Government those demands, the fulfillment of which they considered necessary for the attainment of the freedom they desired.

In regard to this the Reich Foreign Minister said that it could not be the duty of the Reich Government to make detailed suggestions to Konrad Henlein, who was the expressly recognized leader of the Sudeten German element, recently confirmed by the Führer, as to what demands should be put to the Czechoslovak Government. It was a matter of drawing up a maximum program which would guarantee as its final aim total freedom for the Sudeten Germans. It seemed dangerous to accept prematurely promises of the Czechoslovak Government, which on the one hand could give the impression abroad that a solution had been found, and on the other would only partially satisfy the Sudeten Germans themselves. Caution was chiefly necessary also because previous experience had shown that no confidence could be placed in the assurances of Beneš and Hodza. The final object of the negotiations to be conducted by the Sudeten German Party with the Czechoslovak Government would be, by the scope and step-by-step specification of their demands, to avoid entry into the Government. It must be made clear in the negotiations that the Sudeten German Party alone, not the Reich Government, was the negotiating party with the Czechoslovak Government. The Reich Government, on its part, must decline to appear vis-à-vis the Prague Government, or London and Paris, as the representative or pacemaker of the Sudeten German demands. An obvious condition was that, during the impending discussions with the Czechoslovak Government,

<sup>78</sup> See document No. 107, p. 197.

the Sudeten German element should be firmly controlled by Konrad Henlein, observe calm and discipline, and avoid imprudent behavior. Konrad Henlein had already given satisfactory assurances of this.

Following on these general statements of the Reich Foreign Minister, the demands of the Sudeten German Party to the Czechoslovak Government, set out in the enclosure, were discussed and approved in principle. For further collaboration, Konrad Henlein was advised to maintain closest possible contact with the Reich Foreign Minister and with the leader of the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*,<sup>79</sup> as well as with the German Minister in Prague, as representative there of the Reich Foreign Minister. The task of the German Minister in Prague would consist in supporting as reasonable the demands of the Sudeten German Party, not officially, but in more private talks with the Czechoslovak statesmen without directly influencing the extent of the Party's demands.

In conclusion, the question of the appropriateness of the Sudeten German Party cooperating with the remaining minorities in Czechoslovakia, notably the Slovaks, was discussed. The Reich Foreign Minister decided here that the Party must be left free to keep in loose touch with the other minority groups, whose parallel action might appear appropriate.

R[IBBENTROP]

BERLIN, March 29, 1938.

[Subenclosure]

LIST OF THOSE PRESENT AT THE DISCUSSION ON SUDETEN GERMAN QUESTIONS ON TUESDAY, MARCH 29, 1938, 12 O'CLOCK MIDDAY

Present:

Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop.	}	Foreign Ministry
State Secretary von Mackensen.		
<i>Ministerial-Direktor</i> von Weizsäcker.		
Minister Eisenlohr, Prague.		
Minister Stieve.		
<i>Legationsrat</i> von Twardowski.		
<i>Legationsrat</i> Altenburg.		
<i>Legationsrat</i> Kordt.		
SS-Obergruppenführer Lorenz.	}	<i>Volksdeutsche</i>
Professor Haushofer.		<i>Mittelstelle</i>
Konrad Henlein, Karl Hermann Frank,	}	Sudeten German
Dr. Künzel, Dr. Kreissl.		Party

<sup>79</sup> SS-Obergruppenführer Lorenz.

## No. 110

120/68074

*Memorandum*

BERLIN, March 29, 1938.

The Heads of Foreign Missions who have called here recently—the French, Italian, Dutch, Portuguese, not however the Polish,<sup>80</sup> have all spoken to me of their anxiety on account of German-Czechoslovak relations. I told them explicitly that there was no cause for uneasiness, provided Czechoslovakia was mindful of her obligations toward the Sudeten German element.

The Portuguese Minister asked for and received from me a *démenti* of the report that we had bartered our *désintéressement* in Spain to England for a free hand in Czechoslovakia.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 111

F6/0156-58

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 205

Mastny, the Czechoslovak Minister, called on me at 6 p.m. and communicated the following:

The Czechoslovak Government were particularly anxious to maintain good relations with the German Reich. They wished to do all they could to remove any possible misunderstandings. In this connection he particularly wished to draw attention to the fact that the Czechoslovak Government were striving to bring about better relations with the Sudeten Germans. I was surely aware that the Czechoslovak Government would shortly promulgate a special Minorities Statute.<sup>81</sup> Understanding for the needs of the Sudeten Germans was on the increase in Czechoslovakia, so that there was a favorable atmosphere for the solution of the question. On my asking for pre-

<sup>80</sup> These Heads of Missions were François-Poncet (French), Attolico (Italian), van Rappard (Dutch), Simoes (Portuguese), and Lipski (Polish).

<sup>81</sup> The Czechoslovak Government's proposal of this new Minorities Statute was announced on March 28 by Hodza, the Prime Minister, in a broadcast speech. It was intended to replace the original statute of 1919 and was in effect the Government's counterproposal to the demands of the Sudeten German Party incorporated in the bills they proposed before Parliament, and the subsequent unsatisfactory negotiations on these, in April 1937. (See footnote 10, p. 6.) The proposed Minorities Statute was to regularize the position of the German and other national minorities in Czechoslovakia, and codify existing rights and concessions as a legal basis for a final settlement of the minority question, with, however, the proviso that any agreement was to be in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic.



cise information concerning the Minorities Statute, Mastny replied that so far he was not acquainted with details.

In reply I told M. Mastny that Germany could not but welcome serious efforts on the part of the Czechoslovak Government to improve the lot of the Sudeten Germans and to achieve real pacification. We must of course await the results of these efforts, since we had become skeptical in this respect as a result of experiences during recent years.

M. Mastny then drew attention to the statements made by the Führer, also by Field Marshal Göring on March 11, and by Reich Minister von Neurath,<sup>82</sup> according to which Czechoslovakia had nothing to fear from Germany. In this connection he stated that Herr von Neurath had confirmed to him the validity of the German-Czech Arbitration Treaty. M. Mastny then went on to say that I could surely for my part confirm these declarations also.

I replied that Germany did not intend to undertake any action against the Czechoslovak State, but that a complete reshaping of the destiny of the Sudeten Germans was necessary. In the event of the Czechoslovak Government succeeding in securing tangible results in their negotiations with the Sudeten Germans, it seemed to me that a new era would thereby dawn in German-Czechoslovak relations.

M. Mastny then said that in his view a new German-Czechoslovak treaty seemed advantageous for the relations between the two countries.

I replied that in my view the chief task was to give satisfaction to the Sudeten Germans. One could not put the cart before the horse. Only when a reconciliation had taken place could one look further ahead.

At the conclusion of our conversation M. Mastny told me that he regarded the amelioration of German-Czechoslovak relations as his lifework, and he hoped that I too would give him my support in these endeavors.

R[IBBENTROP]

BERLIN, March 31, 1938.

<sup>82</sup> See documents Nos. 74 and 78, pp. 158 and 161.

## No. 112

120/68080-81

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 77 of March 31

PRAGUE, March 31, 1938—4:15 p.m.

Received March 31, 1938—6:45 p.m.

Internal political situation regarding Sudeten German affairs reveals at present following picture:

1) For the first time since the merging of the German splinter parties into combined party<sup>83</sup> about 36 meetings of Henlein movement with some 500,000 members took place in Sudeten German area on Sunday, March 27. Demonstrations naturally overshadowed by happenings in Austria and were characterized by very violent outbreaks of enthusiasm on part of Sudeten German people, who expect complete reshaping of their destiny. In this connection understand from reliable agent that, for instance, Party flags were hoisted on town hall at Asch, accompanied by pealing of all church bells, during armed demonstration. Out of 34,000 inhabitants of Eger, 25,000 Germans deployed likewise to accompaniment of church bells. Henlein movement war standard was hoisted on town hall. Out of 18,000 inhabitants of Saaz, 15,000 Germans marched shouting "One people, one Reich, one Führer!" In Görkau, where Government representative had forbidden German salute, speaker commenced his address with words: "On behalf of you all I salute our Führer and the entire German people with upraised hands." In locality where formerly Activist or nonparty burgomaster went over to Sudeten German Party, this event was symbolized by hoisting Sudeten German Party flag on town hall to accompaniment of peals of church bells.

On orders from above Czechoslovak police and *gendarmerie* showed great restraint. At various places Government representatives were obliged to render military salute to Sudeten German Party flag. Population feel behavior of police to be helplessness and abdication of civil authority. They reckon on complete *volte-face* after April 10<sup>84</sup> and possibly even on direct Reich intervention.

<sup>83</sup> This refers to the fusion of German Christian Social, German Traders', and German Agrarian Parties with the Sudeten German Party earlier in March. The leader of the German Agrarian Party (Dr. Spina) resigned in consequence, and the German Christian Social Peoples' Party withdrew its representative from the Government. See enclosure to document No. 103, p. 186.

<sup>84</sup> This refers probably to the date of the German plebiscite in annexed Austria, announced on March 13 to take place on April 10, on the question of the union of Austria with the Reich.

This belief, fortified by rumors from Vienna, so far prevails over any other solution.

Party leaders of Sudeten German Party have recognized present enthusiastic mood as dangerous, and to calm it down have issued instructions to devote month of April to intensive expansion of their Party organization rather than to holding meetings.

Rumors circulating here to effect that Sudeten German Party is arming German athletic clubs in frontier area are described by Party leaders as ridiculous invention and their origin is attributed to reconstitution of Sudeten German *Ordnerdienst*,<sup>85</sup> at present under discussion by Ministry of Interior.

2) Written report on way regarding planned demonstrations by various racial groups of Czechoslovaks in Parliament and Senate on March 29.

3) Beran, leader of Czech Agrarian Party, sent intimation to me today that Hodza wishes to settle without exception all points discussed with me. Whether he is in a position to do so, even if he honestly desired to, appears exceedingly questionable in view of attitude of coalition parties up to present. Settlement would of course constitute realization of almost entire Sudeten German Party program.

Beran announced in particular that amnesty and communal elections were to take place soon and that Hodza intended to commence discussions with Sudeten German Party from tomorrow.

4) Confident attitude on part of General Staff observed for some days attributed by informed circles to reassuring news from Jan Masaryk, Czechoslovak Minister in London, who has arrived here. Krejčí, Chief of General Staff, said among other things to former Austrian Military Attaché, Longin, on latter's farewell visit:<sup>86</sup> "We shall probably have to come to blows."

EISENLOHR

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<sup>85</sup> Presumably the "*Ordnerdienst*" of the early N.S.D.A.P. in Bohemia and Austria—originally a semimilitary organization to protect the Party meetings and demonstrations.

<sup>86</sup> i.e., his departure as the accredited representative on the disappearance of Austria as an independent State.

## No. 113

120/68079

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PRAGUE, March 31, 1938—9:20 p.m.

No. 79 of March 31

Received March 31, 1938—11:10 p.m.

In continuation of telegram No. 77 of the 31st.<sup>87</sup>

Konrad Henlein has just conveyed following information to Legation with the request that it be forwarded immediately to the Foreign Ministry.

Party, SA and SS authorities on Austrian territory along Austro-Czechoslovak frontier are circulating reports in Sudeten German districts in southern Bohemia and southern Moravia that the entry of Reich German troops into Czechoslovakia will take place after April 10.<sup>88</sup> At the same time Sudeten Germans in frontier region were being called upon to form combatant organizations without delay. In order to avoid serious complications Konrad Henlein, who regards situation as being extremely dangerous, requests strong measures be taken to stop this propaganda.

In order to describe mood in the Sudeten German region Konrad Henlein's representative made the following statements:

1. It is reported from Krumau<sup>89</sup> (Bohemia) that Sudeten Germans there were already having uniforms made in large quantities so as to be equipped when the German troops march in.

2. Throughout whole of frontier region swastika flags were being made openly by Sudeten German women's organizations. Furthermore, swastika flags were being illegally imported into Sudeten German region on considerable scale.

3. Certain dissatisfaction with Sudeten German Party was already noticeable among students in Prague. Party was being reproached with delaying entry of German troops by its policy.

For the Minister:  
HENCKE

<sup>87</sup> Document No. 112, *supra*.

<sup>88</sup> See footnote 84, p. 208.

<sup>89</sup> Czech: Ceske Krumlov, in southern Bohemia.

## No. 114

2134/467240-42

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*<sup>89a</sup>

SECRET

BERLIN, April 1, 1938.

In pursuance of the discussion which the Hungarian Minister had with the State Secretary on the 31st ultimo,<sup>90</sup> M. Sztójay reverted in conversation with me to the topic of Hungarian-Yugoslav relations in addition to the so-called guarantee question and the subject of General Staff talks.

The Minister once more described in full detail the incidents indicating that, from a comparison of conversations through purely diplomatic channels with Field Marshal Göring (together with correspondence between Field Marshal Göring and Horthy) and with other military authorities (Field Marshal von Blomberg, etc.),<sup>91</sup> the Hungarian Government no longer seem able to see clearly where they actually stand.

The Hungarian Minister now has directions from his Government to ascertain:

(1) What is the position regarding the neutrality of Yugoslavia, which they desire, in the event of a war between Hungary and a third power? Are the German Government in possession of information on this subject which is not available in Budapest? Is Stoyadinovich<sup>92</sup> aware of the Hungarian offer to recognize definitely the present Hungarian-Yugoslav frontier? Is Germany willing or not to act as a guarantor of the eventual neutrality of Yugoslavia?

(2) Is Germany prepared to take part in General Staff talks which would pave the way in certain respects for mutual procedure in the event of any joint military action necessary against Czechoslovakia?

With reference to point (1) M. Sztójay was also particularly desirous of knowing whether it seemed practicable to us to pursue the matter further through the diplomatic channels or via Field Marshal Göring. As regards point (2) the Minister based his hopes on very precise statements made to the Hungarians, among others by Herr von Blomberg on behalf of the Führer, according to which these talks should have taken place a considerable time ago.

With reference to both points the Minister observed that Hungary was not nervous, but she must be clear about these matters. He was

<sup>89a</sup> Weizsäcker was appointed State Secretary on April 1, 1938, but did not take up his duties until later. See footnote 31, p. 155.

<sup>90</sup> Not printed.

<sup>91</sup> Records of these exchanges are not printed here, but see document No. 60, p. 153, concerning the Blomberg-Hungarian exchanges.

<sup>92</sup> Yugoslav Prime Minister.

asking for information calculated to dispel doubts and false conclusions in Budapest.

Apart from the delaying of the military talks, the Minister found inconsistencies in the German attitude, namely, that both Herr von Neurath and Field Marshal Göring had happened to mention that it would be advisable for Hungary, in the event of a German-Czechoslovak conflict, first of all to be on the *qui vive* and await Yugoslav decisions, while the Reich Foreign Minister had recently spoken to him in a decidedly reassuring manner concerning probable Serbian attitude.

The Minister saw a certain contrast with regard to a possible German "guarantee" between his conversation with Herr von Neurath, who had appeared more reserved concerning this, and the conversation of the Führer and Field Marshal Göring with the Hungarian Prime Minister, in which a very positive attitude to the question had been discernible.

It should also be mentioned that the Minister dropped a remark during the conversation that the Führer had told the Hungarian gentlemen that the whole of the territory at present Czechoslovak and formerly Hungarian must fall to Hungary again; he, the Führer, was not even interested in Pressburg.

I was essentially a listener during the whole of the conversation. Nevertheless I told the Minister that he should not draw any false conclusions from the various communications in his possession, which perhaps did not entirely agree with each other. From my experience diplomatic channels, by virtue of their customary use of memoranda, would certainly lead to more precise results than the utilization of a large number of other channels independent of each other.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 115

1613/386682

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, April 2, 1938.

The Czechoslovak Minister, who was with me today on other business, also mentioned the fresh developments among the Sudeten Germans. He dealt with the subject without revealing any nervousness at all and stated that the situation had become clearer and simpler through the merging of the various Sudeten German parties.<sup>94</sup> These parties would in future no longer seek to outbid

<sup>94</sup> See footnote 83, p. 208.

each other, but the Party would rather be under unified and firm leadership which would also have to assume responsibility.

I utilized the opportunity to tell the Minister that evidently arming or reinforcements of an unusual nature had taken place among the frontier guards on the Czech side, which had led to uneasiness among our frontier guards. We should probably obtain further details today and have the matter raised by Herr Eisenlohr in Prague.

This conversation was then followed by an observation by the Minister on warnings and hints to him from third parties regarding dubious intentions on the part of the Reich toward his country. In regard to this I told him that these warnings were too transparent for any importance to be attached to them. If his country made the necessary moves in favor of the Sudeten Germans, it would then have no need to be anxious about German-Czech relations.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 116

120/68086-87

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

No. 62

BERLIN, April 2, 1938.  
(zu Pol. I 780 g)

With reference to report of March 26, A. III. 2. m. 1.<sup>95</sup> Please see the Foreign Minister forthwith and inform him somewhat as follows:

The Reich Government possess absolutely reliable reports that, contrary to the declarations made to a member of the German Legation on March 26, the Czech frontier inhabitants, Sokol clubs, and the Red Guard [*Rote Wehr*] in the Sudeten German frontier area were in the last few days being provided with arms. Reports are also to hand that the Czech police forces in the frontier area have been considerably reinforced and heavily armed. Even the formation of motorized detachments was reported.

This news has aroused lively unrest, not only among the Sudeten Germans but also among the Reich-Germans living in Czechoslovakia, especially among the German customs and railway officials functioning in Czech territory, as they feel exposed to the danger of attacks without means of defense.

Every possible influence has been exerted by the Reich Government which can restore composure on this side of the frontier. The

<sup>95</sup> Not printed.

Reich Government feel obliged, however, to call the attention of the Czechoslovak Government to the threatening aspect of the situation. It appears necessary that a halt should be called immediately by the Prague Government to the arming of the Czech frontier inhabitants, Sokol groups, and Red Guard hitherto carried out, and that for the future precautionary measures should be taken to prevent further arming of this kind. Otherwise responsibility for all consequences arising would fall solely on the Czechoslovak Government.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 117

621/250535

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A 1380

PARIS, April 4, 1938.  
(Pol. II 1018)

When I recently paid my return visit to Paul-Boncour, the Foreign Minister, he spoke in earnest and anxious terms of the situation created by the incorporation of Austria, and France's anxiety that this altered situation, which he must now regard as a *chose acquise*, might be the starting point for new disturbances or even frontier changes in Central Europe. In these circumstances he considered it his duty to point out that France had given a solemn promise to the Prague Government that, in the event of a German attack on Czechoslovakia, France would come to the latter's help with all the forces at her disposal. That meant European war. He had always advocated clear speech; the less clearly one expressed oneself, the greater was the danger of war, which France, now as in the past, wanted to avoid. If people today tried to represent him, Paul-Boncour, as a warmonger, this was malicious calumny; he would work for understanding with Germany in the same way as his predecessors had done, although at the moment the atmosphere for this was not particularly favorable.

I confined myself to noting that M. Paul-Boncour regarded the *Anschluss* with Austria as a *chose acquise*, and assured him that aggressive intentions were far from our minds. Of course we expected decent treatment of the Sudeten Germans by Czechoslovakia.

H. WELCZECK



## No. 118

28/19223

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

No. 65 of April 6

BERLIN, April 6, 1938—9:20 p.m.

Received April 6, 1938—10:10 p.m.

With reference to telegram No. 91 of 4th.<sup>97</sup> Please inform the headquarters of the Sudeten German Party, that the Reich Minister, having regard to the state of tension at present existing, considers it expedient that the formation of a uniformed volunteer defense service should be postponed for the present.

WEIZSÄCKER

[Longhand note initialed by Hencke and Eisenlohr:] K. H. Frank instructed on April 7, 1938.

## No. 119

664/257239-43

*The German Embassy in France to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 192 of April 8

PARIS, April 8, 1938.

Received April 8, 1938—12:25 p.m.

(Copy, Pol. II 1024)

The following is learned from a well-known source on the talks between the Foreign Minister<sup>98</sup> and French diplomatic representatives in Central and Eastern Europe and on the instructions given to them:

Au cours de la conférence qu'ils ont tenue dans le bureau du ministre des affaires étrangères les représentants de la France en Russie, en Pologne, en Tchécoslovaquie et en Roumanie<sup>99</sup> ont complété auprès de M. Paul-Boncour les renseignements qu'ils avaient déjà transmis à Paris en même temps qu'ils ont pu confronter directement leurs impressions.

L'échange de vues a porté essentiellement sur les répercussions de l'*Anschluss* en Europe centrale et orientale et notamment sur la situation de la Tchécoslovaquie.

Dans chacun des pays où ils résident, l'annexion de l'Autriche à l'Allemagne a provoqué une inquiétude profonde.

<sup>97</sup> Not printed.

<sup>98</sup> M. Paul-Boncour. This conference was held in Paris on April 5.

<sup>99</sup> These representatives were the Ambassadors in Moscow, M. Coulondre, and in Warsaw, M. Noël; the Ministers in Prague, M. de Lacroix, and in Bucharest, M. Thierry.

Il y a quelques jours, M. Brugère, ministre de France à Belgrade, apportait à M. Paul-Boncour les mêmes observations. Les opinions publiques ont été singulièrement émues et s'il ne s'agissait que d'elles, toutes les conditions seraient réunies pour une politique active de résistance aux visées d'expansion du Reich. Mais, soit pour des raisons de politique intérieure, soit pour des motifs dont ils sont juges, peut-être même parce qu'il a pu arriver qu'ils aient cru justifié un doute sur la ferme résolution de la France, certains gouvernements, tout en ressentant une émotion aussi vive, ne traduisent pas leurs sentiments dans les faits.

Aussi les représentants de la France ont-ils reçu mission de souligner auprès d'eux toute l'importance des déterminations prises avec netteté à Paris en ce qui concerne la Tchécoslovaquie. La France a solennellement affirmé qu'elle tiendra, en toutes circonstances, ses engagements vis-à-vis de ce pays.

L'Angleterre elle-même, par la voix de M. Neville Chamberlain, a laissé subsister peu d'hésitation sur l'attitude qu'elle prendrait au cas où la Tchécoslovaquie serait attaquée, et la France se portant à son secours entraînée dans ces complications.

Le moment est venu dans ces conditions de demander aux états intéressés, en quelles dispositions ils se trouvent eux-mêmes, dans quelle mesure les puissances occidentales peuvent compter sur leur collaboration d'abord pour éviter le pire, pour sauvegarder l'indépendance de la Tchécoslovaquie et la leur propre, ensuite dans l'éventualité d'un coup de force de la part du Reich.

Certes, la position de ces différentes puissances est complexe. La Pologne, par exemple, est liée à la France par un traité d'alliance militaire, qu'elle n'a d'ailleurs jamais contesté, on se plaît à le souligner à Paris; au contraire, le 7 mars 1936, le Gouvernement de Varsovie a fait clairement entendre au Gouvernement français qu'il est prêt à tenir tous ses engagements.<sup>1</sup> Cependant, il n'existe aucun traité entre lui et le Gouvernement de Prague, avec lequel il entretient souvent des rapports difficiles. Les dirigeants français, tout en respectant la souveraineté de la Pologne, usent de leurs conseils amicaux auprès de celle-ci pour amener une amélioration tellement souhaitable dans ces relations.

La Roumanie a signé avec la France un traité aux obligations moins précises.<sup>2</sup> Mais, à défaut de texte, l'intimité entre les deux pays est si profonde que leur entente complète n'a jamais rencontré d'obstacle sérieux.

La Roumanie est l'alliée de la Pologne en même temps qu'elle est l'associée de la Yougoslavie et de la Tchécoslovaquie dans le cadre de la Petite Entente. Or, on sait que ce pacte ne vise que la résistance au révisionisme hongrois et non de l'Allemagne.

Dans quelle mesure ces obligations diverses peuvent-elles se compléter afin d'assurer la protection de leurs signataires contre les

<sup>1</sup> Assurances to this effect were given to France by both the Polish Foreign Minister and the Polish Ambassador in Paris at this date. The Franco-Polish Treaty of Alliance was concluded in February 1921.

<sup>2</sup> The Franco-Rumanian Treaty of Friendship, concluded on June 10, 1926, was really a treaty providing for arbitration and consultation on outstanding questions between the two Powers, within the framework of the League Covenant.

attaques de l'impérialisme allemand? Telle est la question qui est posée.

Enfin, à l'arrière-fond la Russie. Les rapports de cette puissance avec ses voisins, la Pologne et la Roumanie notamment, en vue de l'exécution, en cas de besoin, du pacte soviéto-tchécoslovaque,<sup>2</sup> quelque soit le traité conclu entre Paris et Prague,<sup>3</sup> sont d'une importance primordiale.

Somme tout, on le voit, c'est le problème tchécoslovaque qui est au centre des préoccupations françaises. C'est de ce problème que les ambassadeurs ont reçu instruction de s'occuper.

Dans le même esprit, les négociations avec la Turquie sont poussées activement à la conférence de Montreux,<sup>4</sup> où M. Paul-Boncour présidait la délégation française, la République Kemaliste a recouvré sa liberté dans les détroits. C'est donc elle qui détiendrait, en cas de complications internationales, les clefs de communications de la Russie avec l'Occident. On comprend qu'il s'agit là d'une question dont le Gouvernement français se préoccupe tout particulièrement en relation avec le pacte franco-soviétique. A Montreux, M. Paul-Boncour avait songé à la conclusion d'un pacte d'assistance mutuelle. Malheureusement les circonstances sont moins propices actuellement à la réalisation d'un tel instrument diplomatique. Mais si l'accord envisagé, qui comprendrait trois traités, car il porterait également sur le problème syrien,<sup>5</sup> ne revêtira pas cette forme, il n'en sera pas moins doué d'efficacité. Les négociations sur ce point sont en si bonne voie que M. Paul-Boncour envisage la possibilité de se rendre à Ankara pour la cérémonie de la signature le 18 ou le 20 mai prochain.

EMBASSY

No. 120

664/257244-51

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A 1263

PARIS, April 8, 1938.  
(Pol. II 1068)

Subject: France and Czechoslovakia.

I. "La France tiendrait effectivement, immédiatement, et intégralement ses obligations envers la Tchécoslovaquie résultant d'un traité connu de tous." According to an official announcement this assur-

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 2, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> The Montreux Conference, which dealt with the Straits question, was held in June-July 1936; the last Montreux Conference was held in April-May 1937.

<sup>4</sup> This question between France and Turkey, concerning the boundaries of the Sanjak of Alexandretta in French Syria and its status, was settled at the League of Nations Council, Geneva, with the Agreement of May 28, 1937, by which the Sanjak of Alexandretta was constituted a separate entity. Syria was responsible for its foreign relations and a customs and currency union between it and Syria was established.

ance was given by the Prime Minister, Blum, to Osusky, the Czechoslovak Minister in Paris, on March 14 in the presence of the Foreign Minister, Paul-Boncour, even before he had presented to the Chamber his new Cabinet, which he had formed with such difficulty. The Government statement repeated the promise, the Foreign Minister renewed it in the sessions of the Foreign Affairs Committees in the Chamber and the Senate, and finally it was expressly referred to in a semiofficial announcement on April 6. The last-mentioned announcement reports a conference<sup>8</sup> of the French Ambassadors and Ministers in Moscow, Warsaw, Prague, and Bucharest with Paul-Boncour, and the instructions given to them by the Foreign Minister on the situation in Central Europe. France, it is there stated, has solemnly affirmed her obligations toward Czechoslovakia and has firmly declared that these would be fulfilled under all circumstances.

The second Blum government has thus adhered to the assurances, also given by previous governments, in particular by the first and second Chautemps Cabinets.<sup>9</sup> Substantially the same formula recurs in numerous official statements of the last half year, as is seen from the résumé enclosed in Appendix I.<sup>10</sup>

Its meaning is clear: France will hasten to the aid of Czechoslovakia with armed force if the latter is attacked by Germany.

II. That the emphatic repetition of this promise was intended as a warning to Germany and as moral support to Czechoslovakia, especially now after the Austrian *Anschluss*, hardly needs to be emphasized. One would have thought that for the French people the statement was really no surprise, for it merely repeats the substance of the existing treaties. Is not France the country which has always pathetically and pedantically defended the sanctity and inviolability of treaties? Therefore the realization that this principle should also apply to France herself should really have found unanimous agreement in all camps. A certain contradiction to this, however, appearing in a reaction of public opinion, is that the prospect of being obliged to go to war for Czechoslovakia, according to the pledge given, is received with cold displeasure. Any government which conjured up this danger, no matter from what motives, would be attacked. The lofty principle of unconditional adherence to treaties is being gently relegated to the background, and the practical importance of such an obligation is being examined soberly and skept-

<sup>8</sup> Held in Paris, April 5; see document No. 119, p. 215.

<sup>9</sup> The first Cabinet of M. Chautemps was from June 22, 1937, to January 15, 1938 (with M. Delbos as Foreign Minister); the second was his re-formed administration of January 18, 1938 (with Delbos again Foreign Minister), which resigned on March 10, 1938, and was succeeded by the administration of M. Blum on March 13, 1938, with M. Paul-Boncour as Foreign Minister.

<sup>10</sup> Not printed.

tically in the clear light of day. The debate is motivated by deep-seated dislike of every warlike development. In the discussion it is not so much a question of seeking possibilities of really giving help to Czechoslovakia as of seeking difficulties which would make help appear hopeless. In this, juridical and political, military and national-egoistic arguments are adduced.

The *juridical and political situation*, it is maintained, is not favorable for France in the case of support to Czechoslovakia. A European war is not practicable for France without British help. Britain, however, is pledged to intervene only if France herself is exposed to an unprovoked attack. If France hastens directly to the help of threatened Czechoslovakia, without being attacked herself, the alliance obligation does not arise for Britain. It is not clear whether the remnants of the Locarno Treaty, to which the Franco-Czechoslovak Treaty of Mutual Guarantee belongs, cover France's action and ensure Britain's intervention. If France chooses the lengthy roundabout course via the League Council, the political risk is certainly less, but valuable time is wasted for military action, quite apart from the fact that in its present composition the League of Nations would hardly be in a position to take effective action. A debate on these questions has taken place also in the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber. From the Foreign Minister's statement that they were the subject of negotiations between London and Paris, it can be concluded that the Government also shared certain doubts, even if they might have a juridical rather than a practical significance. Chamberlain's statement on this point in the House of Commons<sup>11</sup> has had a calming effect, insofar as it emphasized British interest, beyond treaty obligations, in the event of warlike complications in which France would be involved, and the probably unavoidable British intervention on the side of France.

If, in the light of this, British armed help is still thought reasonably certain, even in the case of a conflict arising out of the fulfillment of the Treaty of Alliance with Czechoslovakia, the doubts as to whether *effective military aid* to Czechoslovakia is still possible at all are in no way removed and are being further discussed in public, roughly as follows. The glacis of the demilitarized Rhineland is lost. Hitherto French plans in the event of war were purely defensive. In order to come to the aid of Czechoslovakia, the French Army would have to break out from the cover of the Maginot Line, and would then probably be held up on the German counterdefenses. Here tactical advantages involving great sacrifices are the most that

<sup>11</sup> Presumably that made on March 24; cf. document No. 104, p. 192.

could be achieved, while in the meantime Czechoslovakia would bleed to death. On top of this, France's strategical position has also deteriorated considerably at another point, owing to the cooperation between Berlin and Rome and to the Austrian *Anschluss*. The German Army can link up with the Italian through the Alpine valleys, and appear with superior forces on the Franco-Italian frontier.

In addition, at present, France's Spanish flank is endangered, a fact which is specially indicated since Franco's recent military successes,<sup>12</sup> and a third front is coming into being which absorbs forces for its defense.

Since the German reoccupation of the Rhineland, it is often argued, only large-scale air armament still offers a possibility of rendering effective aid to Czechoslovakia; but this possibility has been neglected here.

There is particular skepticism about effective Russian help, which would permit Czechoslovakia a longer serious resistance. It is maintained in many quarters that this is not to be reckoned with at all, as neither Poland nor Rumania would permit the passage of Red aircraft or Red troops.

Can France—so runs the refrain of these deliberations—plunge into such a hopeless military adventure? And for whom after all? For Czechoslovakia? All of a sudden even this “noble, friendly, and allied nation” is being submitted to critical scrutiny. Especially the anti-Government Paris press and the provincial press do not mince matters. The basic theme is—“What do the Czechs matter to us?” “The invention of Czechoslovakia”; “Should the French let themselves be slaughtered for the Freemason Professor Beneš?” This mood finds its most brutal, but not its only, expression in an article by Léon Garibaldi, which has appeared in the *Marseille-Matin* and in other newspapers of southern France, and has been quoted by the Paris press without being seriously criticized by anyone. “The French nation is not cannon fodder! No, M. Blum and M. Boncour, France will fight only for her own independence, and you shall never have the French Army at your disposal to sacrifice it to interests which are not French, interests of eastern peoples, which are too far distant from us for us to be able to render them military aid of any real effectiveness.”

These pathetic tirades are supplemented by scornful irony and bitter sarcasm which are even more damaging. The widely read columnist in *Oeuvre*, de la Fouchardière, writes in an article “Assez

<sup>12</sup> The rapid advance of the Nationalist forces on the Aragon front toward Barcelona and the Mediterranean coast during the last half of March.

d'alliances clandestines": "the French learned some time ago that they have to go to the help of Czechoslovakia, if Czechoslovakia is threatened. Why? Because Czechoslovakia is our friend and ally! How did that happen?" In Parisian "argot" *Liberté* jeers at the zeal of the Popular Front: "Si ça fait plaisir à Léon Blum, à Moch<sup>13</sup> et à Thorez,<sup>14</sup> je veux bien mourir pour la Tchèque. Encore faudrait-il que la Tchèque ne soit pas crevée d'avance! Et que Versailles n'ait pas accouché d'un Etat mort-né." In *Action Française* Léon Daudet puts the following words into the mouth of an ignorant peasant from Touraine: "So it's for the Czechs . . ." and then exclaims, "C'est paysan ou ouvrier, Jacques Couillonas, le cobaye de la démocratie sanguinaire, qui doit aller crever sur un signe de tête d'un juif qu'il a en horreur, dans un obscur et lointain patelin, dont il n'a pas la moindre notion."

These articles are even more effective than the comparatively unknown resolutions of an equally unknown National Peace Council, which long-windedly enumerates the arguments against war and tries to see in article 19 of the League of Nations Covenant the crucial point of an attempt at solution (Appendix 2).<sup>15</sup>

The rest of the press strikes a calmer note, but it also carefully records the numerical relationship of the individual races in Czechoslovakia to each other, the desires for autonomy, the weakness of domestic policy, the unfavorable geographical position. The "coolness and courage" of the Czechoslovak Government are recognized, but nowhere is Czechoslovakia represented as an internally well integrated State. After reading the French press, the impression must rather remain in the mind of the French reader that, after all, Czechoslovakia is a threatened structure also in internal affairs. German policy is, to be sure, regarded as the main cause of the internal danger, but a serious reaction on the part of the Czechoslovak Government is hardly expected or recommended.

If one scans these press statements, which may be said to represent popular opinion, it might also appear as if the furtive hope were germinating in the French subconscious mind that France might be absolved from discharging her treaty obligations by developments inside Czechoslovakia.

No other clear solution to the problem appears anywhere. The Left wants to save Czechoslovakia in Spain and therefore demands intervention in Spain in favor of the Reds, so that Italian and Ger-

<sup>13</sup> Jules Moch was a Socialist Party leader and Minister of Public Works in the Blum Cabinet.

<sup>14</sup> Secretary-General and leader of the French Communist Party.

<sup>15</sup> Not printed.

man influence there may be forced back, the prestige of these Powers weakened, and thus Germany's aggressive proclivities toward Czechoslovakia lessened. The Right sees a solution in the increasingly urgent demand for *rapprochement* with Italy.

All parties, with the exception of the Communists, agree to recommend most urgently to Czechoslovakia caution, moderation, and conciliation. For this eventuality diplomatic support by France is to be ungrudgingly given.

III. Thus the following picture of the French attitude to Czechoslovakia emerges at present: The French Government is using every opportunity to emphasize France's obligations toward Czechoslovakia and to give solemn assurances that they will be unconditionally fulfilled in case of emergency. It addresses these views equally to public opinion at home and to the outside world. It feels constrained to this attitude immediately after the Austrian *Anschluss*, which was a severe setback to French self-esteem, for reasons of prestige as well as from the fear that, after the conclusion of the *Anschluss* and after a possible success over Czechoslovakia, Germany would continue her expansion and would not even, despite all previous assurances given to the contrary, stop at France. By decisive repetition of its statements, the French Government hopes to strengthen again the deeply shaken confidence of its allies. It will endeavor further to strengthen its own position and that of Czechoslovakia by seeking to arouse active interest in the independence of Czechoslovakia also in Moscow and Warsaw, in Belgrade, and Bucharest—a tendency which merits our most serious attention. According to the statements of Neville Chamberlain, the French Government can, in the event of a conflict arising from the French treaty obligations toward Czechoslovakia and leading to war between France and Germany, rely on Britain's entering the conflict on the side of France. It cherishes also the certainly not unjustified hope that the United States of America, too, would adopt an attitude of more than benevolent neutrality in this conflict. Yet the efforts of the French Government are undoubtedly concentrated on preventing, if possible, the outbreak of such a conflict on the grounds of treaty obligations toward Czechoslovakia.

So far, this policy finds little echo in public opinion, and cannot overcome the doubts as to whether intervention on behalf of Czechoslovakia is worth the risk involved for France in bringing about a general conflict. After the Austrian *Anschluss* doubts arise also whether the relative strength of military armaments and war potential still shows a balance in favor of France; or whether the scales are not beginning to be weighted in Germany's favor. Events in the Spanish theatre of war demonstrate the danger, real or imagined,



of the appearance of a third front and of the threat to French lines of communication with Africa and thus to French mobilization.

In judging this attitude of a not inconsiderable section of the population, it should be borne in mind that fluctuations in public opinion are not uncommon. Furthermore, the violent internal tension has obscured the view of problems of foreign policy more than has hitherto been the case in France. If a new Government succeeds in bridging or suppressing the internal differences, it can, with better hope of success, exert its strong influence on the press and its other means of propaganda for its foreign political ideas—a thing which in this question the present Government has done only hesitatingly, if at all. If the Government knew how to inculcate in the people the conviction that sooner or later hostilities between France and Germany were inevitable, the “bulwark of Czechoslovakia” would assume an entirely different significance in the minds of the people. It can be considered a certainty that Czechoslovak propaganda in France will, as can already be discerned, in future also work with all possible means to this end.

Weighing up all factors, one comes to the conclusion that, at the present moment, France would still march if an unprovoked attack were launched against Czechoslovakia, or if a situation arose which approximated to an unprovoked attack. This conclusion, of course, does not exclude the possibility that in this situation France would delay until the last possible moment her armed intervention, which would be bound to lead to a general conflict. Moreover, her attitude is based only on the present situation and may change. There is little to indicate that it might develop in the direction of more far-reaching commitments for Czechoslovakia or for other conflicts. There is more to indicate that, on the basis of the above-mentioned considerations and of a further development of public opinion in the country, a diminution, either open or concealed, of French obligations toward Czechoslovakia will take place and thus give rise to a gradual isolation of that country.

H. WELCZEK

## No. 121

1613/386688-89

*The Supreme Headquarters, the Wehrmacht, to the German  
Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

A. W. A.

Abw. No. 735/4. 38 VII A

SUPREME HEADQUARTERS, THE WEHRMACHT,

BERLIN, April 8, 1938.

(Pol. I 884 g (IV))

To the Foreign Ministry, for Counselor of Legation Altenburg,  
Berlin.

Reference Czechoslovakia.

Annexed is information from a leading member of the Sudeten German Party through Henlein's representative in Berlin.

On Tuesday, April 5, the political committee of the Sudeten German Party under Henlein's chairmanship was busy with the result of the conversation of the previous week of Kundt, Richter, and Pfrogner with Hodza. This conversation has again shown unmistakably that Hodza wants to bring about a fundamental settlement by granting concessions with regard to details. Although it is not the primary intention to insist from the outset on fundamental settlement, the danger involved in entering into questions of detail, on the other hand, has come to be realized. Hodza need only prove to well-disposed foreign countries that he is negotiating and that concessions will be made. It is, however, quite certain that Hodza holds no mandate from the Government as a whole, much less from the Czech people. The Social Democrat Minister, Meissner, told the Deputy, Peters, quite plainly a few days ago, that Hodza was certainly not empowered to make concessions to us.

During the conversation Hodza brought up approximately the same matters as had been announced weeks ago: concessions regarding language rights; proportional appointment of officials; schools; the fact that membership of the Sudeten German Party was no longer to be a cause for official investigation; amnesty. Upon the objection of our negotiators that a minority statute was unacceptable because the Sudeten German racial group [*Volksgruppe*] did not consider themselves a minority, he agreed there and then from now on to speak of a nationalities statute. A sign of how important Hodza considers it just to deceive and gain time is the fact that the subject matter of the conversation of the previous week was declared confidential, whereas shortly afterward it was established in a conversation between a member of the Sudeten German Party and a foreign diplomat that certain Legations were already informed of the subject of the conversation.

The result of Tuesday's conference was the drafting of a covering note to Hodza of approximately the following content, according to memorandum by Dr. Sch.<sup>16</sup>

(1) Negotiations would not serve any purpose unless a radical line of action were taken in solving the problem.

(2) Hodza's proposals are welcomed as a step toward a *détente*, but they must not be allowed to divert attention from the fundamental solution of the problem.

(3) Indispensable prerequisite for the solution of the problem is equal willingness among the Czech people, so that negotiations with authorized representatives of the Czech people can be called for. As soon as the desired equality of rights has been established, as under point 3, the following demands will be made:

- 1) Self-administration of people and homeland (the wording is deliberately chosen).
- 2) Participation on a basis of equality of status and rights in the determination of policy and administration in the State.
- 3) Compensation.

This note was handed to Hodza on April 6.

For the Chief of Supreme Headquarters:  
STOLZE

No. 122

1256/338374

*The German Embassy in Great Britain to the German Foreign  
Ministry*

A 1701

LONDON, April 8, 1938.  
(Pol. V 2777)

Subject: Passage of Russian troops through Polish and/or Rumanian territory.

An agent of the Embassy who has good connections with influential circles in the French Socialist Radical Party reports that he has received reliable information from Paris to the effect that Blum has ordered the Chiefs of Missions in Warsaw and Bucharest, who were recently called to Paris,<sup>17</sup> to sound the Polish and Rumanian Governments as to their attitude toward the passage of Russian troops through Polish and/or Rumanian territory in the event of Pacts between Czechoslovakia and Russia and Czechoslovakia and France coming into operation. They are said to have been instructed

<sup>16</sup> The person referred to by this abbreviation is not known.

<sup>17</sup> On April 5; see document No. 119, p. 215.

to bring every possible pressure to bear to obtain a reply in favor of France.

Above information passed on to you with reserve.

VON SELZAM

No. 123

1613/386690-92

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

STRICTLY SECRET  
No. 99 of April 8

PRAGUE, April 9, 1938—3:30 a.m.  
Received April 9, 1938—6 a.m.  
(Pol. I 891 g)

For the Reich Minister.

In continuation of telegraphic report 91 of April 4.<sup>18</sup>

Feelings becoming more violent in last few days in Sudeten German area. K. H. Frank's secretary and confidential agent, Dr. Eckert, returned from north Bohemia, described situation as "catastrophic and shattering." All classes of population, from manufacturers to unemployed, openly characterize negotiations of Sudeten German Party with Czechoslovak Government, even though they have hitherto striven for autonomy as the declared maximum goal, as betrayal of the people which would cost Henlein his entire following. Nor would autonomy protect Sudeten German area from threatening economic crisis which Czechoslovakia is facing, the consequences of which would be to make the masses more radical. Tension so great that single shot for Sudeten Germans would suffice to start blood bath among Czechs. Efforts for pacification by Party leaders were not taken seriously owing to Führer's speech about 10 million Germans.<sup>19</sup> General impression continues to be that decisive action will occur after April 10.<sup>20</sup> Ban on meetings<sup>21</sup> downright piece of luck for Sudeten German Party. If today a Sudeten German Party member attempted to speak of the possibility even of a policy of understanding he would indubitably be cried down. Dr. Eckert

<sup>18</sup> Not printed.

<sup>19</sup> The speech before the Reichstag on February 20, 1938; see footnote 83, p. 139. The actual remark of Hitler's containing this reference was: "Over 10 million Germans live in two of the States adjoining our frontiers. Till 1866 they were constitutionally united with the whole German people . . . Under the terms of the Peace Pact they were kept against their will from forming a union with the Reich." See *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler*, edited by Norman H. Baynes (Oxford, 1942), vol. II, p. 1376.

<sup>20</sup> See footnote 84, p. 208.

<sup>21</sup> The ban on political meetings originally imposed in October 1937 was reimposed by the Czechoslovak Government on April 1, 1938, until further notice.

gave it as his own and K. H. Frank's opinion that without help from the Reich it would not be possible to maintain discipline. Most effective of all would be declaration by authoritative personages of Reich in a position to pour oil on troubled waters; in any case it was imperative to broadcast a timely commentary over the German radio,<sup>22</sup> prepared by the Sudeten German Party in collaboration with German authorities, on Henlein's speech on future policy planned for April 24 or 25 at Karlsbad.<sup>23</sup>

K. H. Frank himself in subsequent conversation with confidential agent of Legation also summed up the situation as extremely tense, and expressed concern lest armed Communists provoke Sudeten German Party groups to irresponsible acts. Frank remarked explicitly that discipline in Sudeten German ranks could only be preserved by direct influence of Führer, for which appropriate form would have to be found. As to details, he mentioned the following:

(1) Illegal activities by frontier posts continue, especially in western Bohemia, and from Austria into southern Bohemia and southern Moravia. Various cases already reported direct to Berlin. Dr. Eckert alleged same about Reichenberg area where pressure was exerted from Zittau.

(2) Last week, after call-up, some 200 Czechoslovaks of military age and German race deserted from Moravia to Austria, where they are being employed partly on frontier duties. Austrian authorities had already sent request to Sudeten German Party to prevent further desertions of such extent. Report ends.

Even if sudden change in previous confidence of Sudeten German Party as to Henlein's having firm hold on Sudeten German people were perhaps due to nervousness about election day, I would nevertheless recommend that, in view of possible consequences, a steadying word be broadcast on Saturday noon and evening by the highest competent authority in the Reich.

EISENLOHR

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<sup>22</sup> Marginal longhand note initialed by Ribbentrop: "Yes."

<sup>23</sup> i.e., at the Congress of the Sudeten German Party to take place there on that date. Cf. also later documents on this, Nos. 128, 134, and 135, pp. 232, 241 and 242.

## No. 124

1613/386694

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, April 9, 1938.

(zu Pol. I  $\left. \begin{array}{l} 891 \text{ g} \\ 892 \text{ g (II Ang.)} \end{array} \right\}$ )

With reference to telegraphic report No. 99 from Prague.<sup>24</sup>

The Reich Minister agrees to the broadcasting of a commentary on Henlein's speech on future policy (cf. middle of page 2 of telegram<sup>25</sup>). The Reich Minister had further ordered that two or three persons from the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* should go to the disturbed areas to counsel reason there. The Reich Minister wants left out of the question any public authoritative Reich statement such as contemplated for today in the closing paragraph of telegram No. 99.

Finally, the Reich Minister has approved the participation in tomorrow's journey to Dresden<sup>26</sup> to vote as requested by Herr Eisenlohr.

Herewith submitted through Director Pol. to Pol. IV b. according to verbal instructions already given.

WEIZSÄCKER

[Longhand note by Altenburg, April 11:] The necessary instructions were given by tel[ephone]; zu Pol. I 891/2 g. [*Das erforderliche wurde tel. bezw. zu Pol. I 891/2 g veranlasst.*]

<sup>24</sup> Document No. 123, *supra*.

<sup>25</sup> The point at which footnote 22 occurs in the telegram.

<sup>26</sup> This was the transport to Dresden, organized by the Reich Government at reduced fares, of Reich-Germans to vote in the plebiscite on the issue of the *Anschluss* with Austria on April 10 (see footnote 84, p. 208). In this plebiscite all Reich-Germans besides those in Austria itself were to vote, and this included Germans outside the Reich.

## No. 125

2369/494422-23

*The Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle to the Headquarters of the SA***URGENT  
EXPRESS LETTER****BERLIN, W. 35.  
Tiergartenstrasse 18,  
April 9, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 2605)****To Headquarters of the SA, 7 Barerstrasse, Munich 43****Subject: Exercising influence on Sudeten Germans.****File No.: T/W-I.15 b.**

Since the reunion of Austria with the Reich, an extraordinary atmosphere of tension and enthusiasm prevails among the Sudeten Germans. In the interests of domestic and foreign policy it is necessary that this enthusiasm should not lead to indiscretions which would be detrimental to the interests of the Reich at the present moment. It is therefore necessary that Reich-Germans refrain from doing anything which might encourage indiscretions on the part of the Sudeten German population in frontier areas; in particular, all propaganda toward influencing the Sudeten German population in frontier areas must be avoided.

In this connection please note that Foreign Minister Krofta informed the German Minister that on April 3 in the neighborhood of Hermanice (?) and Weigsdorf, near Friedland, 16 motor lorries, each carrying 30 SA men drew up to the frontier and shouted across the slogan: "One people, one Reich, one Führer!"

Headquarters here request that this affair be investigated and, regardless of the result of the investigation, that an immediate order be issued to ensure that neither in the frontier area already named nor anywhere else along the frontier should propaganda influence of this nature be exerted upon the frontier population, whose responsible leaders are making every effort to keep the natural enthusiasm of the population within bounds dictated by political necessity.

**Heil Hitler!****DR. LUIG**

## No. 126

1650/392024

*Interdepartmental Minute of the Foreign Ministry*

(zu Pol. V 2172 (II))

In his letter of the 4th instant Counselor of Embassy von Tippelskirch<sup>27</sup> expressed doubts whether the alleged negotiations with the Rumanian Government about the right to march through their country will take place with the Soviet Government direct; Herr von Tippelskirch thinks it much more likely that these negotiations will be conducted with the Rumanian Government through the French or the Czechs. In these circumstances it is advisable—after consulting with Herr Busse<sup>28</sup>—not to send an instruction to the German Legation in Bucharest but discuss the matter verbally with Minister Fabricius,<sup>29</sup> who is coming to Berlin in about a week's time.

WELCK

BERLIN, April 11, 1938.

[Longhand note:] Pol. IV a. (Herr Busse) for initialing and with the request for a discussion of the matter with Minister Fabricius.

*Newspaper cutting appended:*

## EMERGENCY LANDING OF A SOVIET BOMBER AIRCRAFT IN RUMANIA

D.N.B.<sup>30</sup> BUCHAREST, April 14.

According to an announcement from Baja-Mare (northern Rumania) which appears in the Kronstadt issue of the Hungarian paper *Brassei Lapok*, a Soviet Russian bomber aircraft en route from Soviet Russia to Czechoslovakia was forced to land there on Tuesday. In accordance with article 91 of the new Rumanian Constitution of February 20, 1938,<sup>31</sup> no foreign army may set foot on or pass over Rumanian territory unless special permission is obtained. It is emphasized that flights over Rumania are also included in this. No law allowing for exceptions has been passed.

<sup>27</sup> Counselor of Embassy in the German Embassy, Moscow, 1935-41.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. document No. 131, p. 238.

<sup>29</sup> Dr. Wilhelm Fabricius, German Minister in Bucharest, 1936-41.

<sup>30</sup> *Deutsche Nachrichtenbüro*, the German official news agency.

<sup>31</sup> The new Rumanian Constitution proposed by the King was passed by plebiscite on February 24, 1938, and terminated the parliamentary influence of the Iron Guard. Clause 91 stated that no foreign armed troops might be admitted to the service of the State or might enter or pass through Rumanian territory unless authorized by specific legislation.



## No. 127

1650/382022-23

*Extracts From Letters From the Counselor of Embassy in Moscow  
(Tippelskirch) to Officials of the Foreign Ministry*<sup>32</sup>

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER OF MARCH 28, 1938, TO COUNSELOR SCHLIEP<sup>33</sup>  
FROM COUNSELOR OF EMBASSY VON TIPPELSKIRCH, MOSCOW

It will also interest you to know that the rumor has cropped up in journalistic circles here that the Russians are to negotiate again with the Rumanians about the right of transit for troops, possibly in exchange for the renunciation of claims to Bessarabia.<sup>34</sup> Here I would like to point out the following:

When Litvinov made his famous statement before press representatives here,<sup>35</sup> one journalist asked him how the Soviet Union proposed to help Czechoslovakia, with whom she had no common frontier, should the occasion arise. Litvinov answered that a way would no doubt be found. As I believe that the negotiations will be conducted—if they take place at all—by Alexandrovsky<sup>36</sup> in Bucharest, I would recommend you to make inquiries there.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER OF APRIL 4, 1938, TO SECRETARY OF LEGATION  
BARON VON WELCK FROM COUNSELOR OF EMBASSY VON TIPPEL-  
SKIRCH, MOSCOW

Herr Schliep wrote me saying that he would formulate in an instruction my information relating to negotiations between the Soviet Union and Rumania about right of transit of troops. The question is whether the Russians will conduct such negotiations directly with the Rumanians or whether they will prefer to avail themselves of the mediation of Paris or Prague if the occasion arises. If I am not mistaken, Litvinov was formerly of the opinion that it was for France and Czechoslovakia to provide for right of transit and thereby create the conditions for Russian support of Czechoslovakia. I have heard

<sup>32</sup> These are extracts made in the Foreign Ministry for the files of Pol. IV.

<sup>33</sup> Head of the Eastern European Division of the German Foreign Ministry (Pol. V).

<sup>34</sup> The assignment of the province of Bessarabia to Rumania was recognized by the Allied Supreme Council in London on March 3, 1920, but the Soviet Government never renounced its claim on the province.

<sup>35</sup> The statement of Litvinov, Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, made to foreign press representatives in Moscow on March 17, 1938, suggesting that Governments, other than those of Germany, Italy, and Japan, should meet to discuss measures to resist aggression, and adding the assurance that Soviet Russia would respect her obligations toward Czechoslovakia if France carried out hers. (See document No. 92, p. 176.)

<sup>36</sup> Sergei Alexandrovsky, Soviet Minister in Prague, 1934-39.

in the meantime that a report from Bucharest has been broadcast by the Italian radio to the effect that the Rumanians deny that they are negotiating with the Russians about right of transit. I have heard nothing more definite about this. In my opinion it has yet to be established whether the rumor is based on something concrete, or whether Litvinov only wished to provide himself with an alibi in order not to be forced to support Czechoslovakia. In addition, the obligation of the Soviet Union to render aid, contained in the Pact of Mutual Assistance, signature protocol, paragraph II, only applies if assistance is rendered to Czechoslovakia by France. Neither is the assistance defined in any way; it is merely stated that the Czechoslovak Republic and the U.S.S.R. will render each other immediate assistance and support in the event of an unprovoked attack. This explains why the Soviet press treats the Czechoslovak question with great reserve. As a rule the Soviet press mentions only France's obligations to Czechoslovakia. On one occasion only has *Izvestia*<sup>37</sup> intimated in a weekly review that Russia, too, would do her bit toward creating a "lasting cordon of collective defense" against aggression. One can take this to mean whatever one likes. It has never yet been said that the Soviet Union will range herself with all her power behind Czechoslovakia. In view of the geographical position of Czechoslovakia and the other peculiarities of this country, this attitude of the Soviet Government is not to be wondered at.

Forwarded to Herr Busse with reference to the conversation of April 11, 1938.

BERLIN, April 12, 1938.

### No. 128

1613/386705-09

*The Supreme Headquarters, the Wehrmacht, to the German  
Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

A. W. A.

Abw. No. 1132/4. 38 VII A

SUPREME HEADQUARTERS, THE WEHRMACHT,

BERLIN, April 14, 1938.

(Pol. I 954 g (IV))

To the Foreign Ministry, for Counselor of Legation Dr. Altenburg.  
Enclosed herewith is the memorandum of the conversation of April 11, 1938, between the delegates of the Sudeten German Party and Hodza, the Czech Prime Minister.

Henlein's deputy, Karl Hermann Frank, comments upon details as follows:

<sup>37</sup> The official Soviet Government organ.

1) Abandonment of the May celebration<sup>38</sup> on May 1 is scarcely to be tolerated by the Party. It is exactly the ban on all demonstrations on April 10,<sup>39</sup> observed at the request of the Reich, that makes it necessary to allow the Party members to give expression to their enthusiasm in disciplined fashion within lawful limits, as will be possible on May 1. In the event of abandonment of the May celebrations the Sudeten Germans would lose faith in Henlein.

2) Hodza keeps all foreign Legations in Prague currently informed of his negotiations with the Sudeten German Party, and maintains that so far these negotiations have been without success, because the Sudeten German Party were not in a position to present their demands in concrete terms. It is characteristic of his double-dealing that he nevertheless dissuaded the Sudeten German Party from making any concrete proposals.

For the Chief of Supreme Headquarters, the *Wehrmacht*:  
GROSCURTH<sup>40</sup>

[Enclosure]

*Memorandum on the Visit by Deputy Kundt and Senator Pfrogner to the Prime Minister, Hodza, in the Prime Minister's Office on April 11, 1938, Beginning at 4:45 p.m.*

Hodza opened the conversation with appreciative words for the disciplined behavior of the Sudeten German Party on the previous day. Deputy Kundt protested vehemently against the recent tightening up of censorship methods and produces the censored passages and pictures in support of his representations of Saturday the 9th of this month. He points out in particular that, on the other hand, the *Montag* of the *émigré* Tschuppik<sup>41</sup> could, unrebuked, accuse the German Reich of swindling and fraud at the polls. He asserted that in the long run the disciplined Sudeten German people could not understand, while the conversation with the Prime Minister was going on, how it was that the Government were not even able to bring an attorney [*Staatsanwalt*] to his senses. Moreover, our people read into the blank spaces of the newspapers a political program different from that actually contained in them. Thus appeasement

<sup>38</sup> The Sudeten German Party celebrations to be held on May Day. The celebrations, during which Henlein spoke and demanded equality between Czechs and Germans, were in fact held, and without any noteworthy incident. See further, memorandum enclosed with this document.

<sup>39</sup> The occasion of the Reich plebiscite on the question of the *Anschluss* with Austria (see footnote 84, p. 208).

<sup>40</sup> Colonel Groscurth was apparently one of the adjutants to the Chief of Supreme Headquarters, the *Wehrmacht*.

<sup>41</sup> Walter Tschuppik, a Left-Wing journalist and former editor of a paper in Munich until his emigration to Prague.

cannot be produced nor preconditions established in accordance with our attitude outlined on April 5.<sup>43</sup>

Hodza acknowledged the justice of the complaint, promised immediate and energetic measures, got into touch with Dr. Derer, the Minister of Justice, at once by telephone and gave him appropriate instructions. He requested both Sudeten German representatives to supervise the observance of these measures in collaboration with him.

Upon this, Deputy Kundt submitted the attached.<sup>44</sup>

The Sudeten German representatives request information whether the press reports are correct which publish an order of the Civil Minister about his cancellation of the May 1st demonstrations and indefinite postponement of the municipal elections.<sup>45</sup> Hodza affirms that no such orders exist. The municipal elections will take place in June on one or on two consecutive Sundays. Hodza declared positively: "I want to be rid of this affair by the holidays."

As to May 1st there are no decisions as yet, and he would not undertake anything without agreement with the Sudeten German Party, but it would give him great pleasure if the leaders of the Sudeten German Party could, for special definite reasons, agree to the postponement of the May celebrations from May 1st to 8th. Kundt gave reasons for May 1st; the Sudeten German representatives left the decision open to the *Party leaders*.

Hodza requested a discussion about this matter with Cerny, the Minister for Home Affairs.

With reference to point 3 of the attached,<sup>44</sup> Hodza said that he took cognizance of the contents but that he attached importance to the avoidance as far as possible of the expression "Autonomy" and of a too far-reaching crystallization of our demands for self-administration. "I would not like you to pin me down with a claim which would perforce lead to a breaking-off of our conversations, because later you would not be in a position to withdraw any of this publicized claim."

Hodza took note of the fact that a declaration will be made in Karlsbad<sup>46</sup> to the effect that the Sudeten German element had never renounced the right to self-determination, but that at Karlsbad self-determination (plebiscite) would not be demanded. Hodza noted further that at Karlsbad a profession of National Socialist ideology will be made. After lengthy reflection Hodza said that from the

<sup>43</sup> See document No. 121, p. 224.

<sup>44</sup> See Annex, p. 235.

<sup>45</sup> See footnote 53, p. 88.

<sup>46</sup> See footnote 64, p. 198, and footnote 23, p. 227.

constitutional standpoint he did not raise any objection to this. He recommended, however, that:

- a) it should be stated at Karlsbad that the Czechoslovak constitution guarantees freedom of opinion and
- b) that this profession did not involve rejection of true democracy, and that there was room for National Socialist ideology.

The Sudeten German Party representatives mentioned the proposed amnesty<sup>47</sup> while pointing out its inadequacy, especially with regard to administrative and disciplinary penalties. Hodza wishes Dr. Neuwirth<sup>48</sup> to get in touch as soon as possible with Cerny, the Minister for Home Affairs, to whom he had handed over this matter to be dealt with from the political aspect. If Dr. Neuwirth was not yet on the list of paragraph 6—defense counsel—the Prime Minister was guided in this by special reasons; he reserved to himself the choice of a suitable moment.

The conversation was concluded by Hodza's saying: "I observe that so far nothing has been spoiled, and that, in political conversations, is already a great deal, in view of the political situation."

End of the conversation, 6:30 p.m.

PRAGUE, April 11, 1938.

[Annex]

1. We take note of the Premier's offer on the part of the Government to inform the Sudeten German Party of all their measures, and, if need be, to set up commissions in accordance with point 2 of our statement of our position of April 5th of this year,<sup>49</sup> with a view to creating prerequisite conditions for possible subsequent negotiations for a fundamental solution of problems.

2. In accordance with this our decision, negotiations on the solution of the problem itself cannot be considered as long as the appropriate preconditions for this have not been brought about.

These include, first of all, measures—either of a direct nature or designed to alter existing legislation—which would prove that on the part of the Government as a whole, the coalition majority, and the State authorities, there really exist the will and power necessary to carry out a fundamental change of system. Such measures must be taken in the shortest time possible, the Sudeten German Party sub-

<sup>47</sup> The amnesty (cf. document No. 103, p. 186) proposed by the Czechoslovak Government was eventually signed by President Beneš on April 16. It applied only to political prisoners (not to persons awaiting trial on charges of treason and espionage) and benefited about 1,235 Germans, 930 Czechs and Slovaks, 485 Hungarians, 187 Ruthenians, and 30 Poles.

<sup>48</sup> See footnote 73, p. 199.

\* See document No. 121, p. 224.

mitting informative suggestions step by step on the particular groups of interdependent questions. This means first and foremost that from now on all legislation be omitted or suspended which could be considered a continuation of the previous system.

3. The Sudeten German Party is not in a position to negotiate about the concrete purport of Sudeten German Party leadership at the general meeting at Karlsbad. It can, however, be said with certainty that there will be no going beyond the political framework of our position and that the Sudeten German Party will take into account the Prime Minister's efforts to change the mentality of the Czech people (the question of self-determination and German ideology).

The Sudeten German Party, however, expect that on the part of the Government and also of their subordinate departments everything will be done immediately to enable the Sudeten German Party to participate, even in this informative capacity, in the creation of conditions for negotiations on the solution of problems in general.

4. The representatives of the Sudeten German Party club are available for this informative collaboration after the Easter holiday,<sup>50</sup> and reserve the right to enlist the services of experts now and then.

### No. 129

1613/386711

*The Supreme Headquarters, the Wehrmacht, to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

A. W. A.

No. 1191/4 58 ADW. (VII A)

SUPREME HEADQUARTERS, THE WEHRMACHT,

BERLIN, April 14, 1938.

(Pol. I 958 g (II))

To the Foreign Ministry, for Counselor of Legation Altenburg.

From a not unimportant source (the British Minister in Prague<sup>51</sup>):

The Sudeten German Party must specify its demands, otherwise Great Britain must assume that the allegation of the Czech Government is correct, namely, that the Sudeten German Party does not desire a solution, but that the situation will become increasingly critical until invasion is necessary.

France will march if we resort to a solution by force. Great Britain has not decided in favor of this at the moment. If, however, no concrete suggestions for a solution are forthcoming, the trend

<sup>50</sup> Easter Sunday in 1938 fell on April 17.

<sup>51</sup> Mr. Basil Newton, 1937-39.

existing particularly in young Conservative circles in favor of the French view will win.

If further concessions are made to the Reich, its accretion of power will be so great that it will become *the* dangerous opponent of Great Britain. But if by this war becomes unavoidable, then the earlier the better.

For the Chief of Supreme Headquarters, the *Wehrmacht*:  
GROSCURTH

No. 130

120/68100

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 105 of April 19

PRAGUE, April 19, 1938—8 p.m.

Received April 19, 1938—9:30 p.m.

About fourteen people forced way into garden of private residence of Hencke, Legation Counselor, this forenoon, by forcing garden gate, and threw about twenty stones, some of them quite large, at the windows of the house. Twelve window panes smashed. Before that two members of Counselor's domestic staff pelted with stones in garden outside house; no injuries. Cause of incident was that swastika flag was put up inside house and was partially visible from outside through gap in curtain.

This undoubtedly organized attack was made after demand to remove flag had been refused. Attackers were told by domestics as well as by Frau Hencke that this was an extraterritorial building.

Chief of Protocol on behalf of Foreign Minister expressed to me deep regret of Czechoslovak Government, and promised strict investigation and punishment of perpetrators. So far eight workmen employed on a neighboring building have been arrested as perpetrators by the police, who have taken over responsibility for the safety of the house.

Have informed Government that on Führer's birthday tomorrow numerous Reich-Germans would fly swastika flags and demanded provision of adequate protection. Government promised suitable measures.

EISENLOHR

## No. 131

1650/392025-26

*Interdepartmental Minute of the Foreign Ministry*

BERLIN, April 21, 1938.

(zu Pol. V 2172 (II))

Drafting Officer: Counselor of Legation Busse.

The matter<sup>52</sup> has been discussed with Minister Fabricius. According to him the question of right of transit for the Russians has presumably not been discussed lately in Bucharest; in any case it has not become acute again recently.

Just before Easter, however (presumably on April 16), Alexandrovsky, the Soviet Minister in Prague, spent a day in Bucharest<sup>52a</sup> and had a talk with Foreign Minister Comnen. The subject of the conversation is not known. According to Herr Fabricius the Rumanians in the meantime maintain their attitude of strict noncompliance with the Russians' requests.

Returned to Pol. V herewith.

BUSSE

## No. 132

C34/000258-59

*Notes Made by the Führer's Adjutant (Schmundt) on Observations Made by the Führer on the Contemporary Strategic Situation*<sup>53</sup>

[APRIL 1938?]

## OBSERVATIONS OF THE FÜHRER

- 1) Mussolini regards his work as completed or not.
  - a) If so, Czechoslovakia in distant future. Close Western frontier, then wait and see. "Return with the bag empty."
  - b) If not, then "Imperium" Africa. Not possible without German aid. Czechoslovakia prerequisite. "Return with Czechoslovakia in the bag."
  
- 2) Mussolini, no daydreamer, fully able to estimate military possibilities; therefore he will make the timing of his strokes coincide with this.

<sup>52</sup> Evidently that referred to in document No. 126, p. 230.

<sup>52a</sup> Cf. document No. 127, p. 231.

<sup>53</sup> This document comes from a file kept by Schmundt at Hitler's Headquarters and captured at Obersalzberg, near Berchtesgaden. This file forms document 388-PS in the evidence produced at the Nuremberg trials. This document is the first in the file, and No. 133 is the second.



3) Czech question only to be solved in face of Fr[ance] and Br[itain] if closely allied with Italy. Fr[ance] and Br[itain] will not intervene (only in this way overcome the 4 weeks' regrouping). Subtract white divisions: Africa, Fr[anco]-It[alian] frontier.

4) Common destiny. (Example of 1805 and 1806.)

5) State of armaments: Comparisons relative but in our favor.

a) Production of minerals: Fr[ance] 600,000 tons  
Germany 2,000,000 tons

b) Britain rearming for three-fourths of a year. Launchings not for 2 years.

c) Most obsolete equipment of air force.

6) *No* General Staff talks by individual branches of the armed forces. Must withdraw permission to Army. Only by Supreme Command. Concealment of actual intentions important.

7) Tempo of rearmament too slow: artillery not only for units to be formed but in reserve for replacement. Fortifications. Range of artillery.

8) Objection to exchange of officers.

SCHM[UNDT]

### No. 133

C34/000260-61

#### *Memorandum on Operation "Green"<sup>54</sup> Initialed by the Führer's Adjutant (Schmundt)*

TOP SECRET, MILITARY

BERLIN, April 22, 1938.

Plan for Operation "Green" [*Fall Grün*].

Summary of Führer-General Keitel conversation on April 21.

#### A. POLITICAL

(1) Idea of strategic attack out of the blue without cause or possibility of justification is rejected. Reason: hostile world opinion which might lead to serious situation. Such measures only justified for elimination of last enemy on the Continent.

(2) Action after a period of diplomatic discussions which gradually lead to a crisis and to war.

(3) Lightning action based on an incident (for example the murder of the German Minister in the course of an anti-German demonstration).

<sup>54</sup> Operation "Green" (*Fall Grün*) was the German code name for the plan of attack on Czechoslovakia. The word "*Grün*" is similarly used in the documents merely as the code name for Czechoslovakia. See footnote 56, p. 240.

## B. MILITARY CONCLUSIONS

(1) Preparations to be made for political contingencies 2 and 3. Contingency 2 is undesirable because "Green" security measures will have been taken.

(2) The loss of time through transport by rail of the bulk of the divisions—which is unavoidable and must be reduced to a minimum—must not be allowed to divert from lightning attack at the time of action.

(3) "Partial thrusts" toward breaching the defense line at numerous points and in operationally advantageous directions are to be undertaken at once.

These thrusts are to be prepared down to the smallest detail (knowledge of the routes, the objectives, composition of the columns according to tasks allotted them).

Simultaneous attack by land and air forces.

The *Luftwaffe* is to support the individual columns (for instance, dive bombers, sealing off fortification works at the points of penetration; hindering the movement of reserves; destruction of signal communications and thus isolating the garrisons).

(4) The first 4 days of military action are, politically speaking, decisive. In the absence of outstanding military successes, a European crisis is certain to arise. *Faits accomplis* must convince foreign powers of the hopelessness of military intervention; call in allies to the scene (sharing the booty!); demoralize "Green."

Hence, bridging the period between first penetration of enemy's lines and throwing into action the advancing troops by the determined ruthless advance of a motorized army (for instance through Pi past Pr).<sup>56</sup>

(5) If possible, separation of the transport movement "Red" ["*Rot*"]<sup>56</sup> from "Green." A simultaneous deployment of "Red" might cause "Red" to adopt undesirable measures. On the other hand operation "Red" must at all times be ready to come into action.

## C. PROPAGANDA

(1) Leaflets for the conduct of the Germans in "Green" territory [*Grünland*].

(2) Leaflets with threats to intimidate the "Greens."

SCHM[UNDT]

Written by hand of officer

<sup>56</sup> Presumably meaning "through Pilsen and by-passing Prague."

<sup>56</sup> Operation "Red" (*Fall Rot*) was the German code name for the military plan on the western frontier against France in the event of her mobilizing against the Reich in defense of Czechoslovakia. Similarly the word "*Rot*" is used in the documents merely as the code name for France.

## No. 134

1613/386718

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 109 of April 23

PRAGUE, April 23, 1938—3 p.m.

Received April 23, 1938—4:50 p.m.

(Pol. I 991 g)

(Pol. IV 2778)

Kundt, Sebekovsky, and perhaps Killner, are speaking at Karlsbad today at a meeting of the Sudeten German Party,<sup>57</sup> and tomorrow, Konrad Henlein. Henlein's speech is fundamental, clear, and moderate. Reporting of excerpts by German radio will have decisive effect on Sudeten German people. I request therefore that the reporting be as detailed as possible, both the conciliatory passages of today as well as those psychologically important for Sudeten German morale. Among the latter is the demand that Czechs must choose between giving up the idea of a National State and having a Czech National State without Germans, and therefore the demand for fundamental reconstruction of the State. Furthermore, emphasis is requested on statement that Germans do not intend to play the part of humble serfs, and, finally, a demand for the right to proclaim unhindered German, i.e., National Socialist, ideas.

EISENLOHR

[Longhand note initialed by Altenburg, April 25:] The necessary steps have been taken by N.P.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup> This was the big Congress of the Sudeten German Party at Karlsbad (Karlov Vary) which took place April 23-24.

<sup>58</sup> The Information and Press Department of the Foreign Ministry.

## No. 135

120/68468

*Memorandum of the Eight Demands Made by Konrad Henlein at the Sudeten German Party Congress at Karlsbad*

THE EIGHT DEMANDS OF KONRAD HENLEIN ANNOUNCED AT KARLSBAD,  
APRIL 24, 1938<sup>59</sup>

1. Restoration of complete equality of German national group with the Czech people;
2. Recognition of the Sudeten German national group as a legal entity for the safeguarding of this position of equality within the State;
3. Confirmation and recognition of the Sudeten German settlement area;
4. Building up of Sudeten German self-government in the Sudeten German settlement area in all branches of public life insofar as questions affecting the interests and affairs of the German national group are involved;
5. Introduction of legal provisions for the protection of those Sudeten German citizens living outside the defined settlement area of their national group;
6. Removal of wrong done to Sudeten German element since the year 1918, and compensation for damage suffered through this wrong;
7. Recognition and enforcement of the principle: German public servants in the German area;
8. Complete freedom to profess adherence to the German element and German ideology.

[Longhand note at foot of document initialed by Weizsäcker on July 20:]

Registry: Please procure also our copies of these eight points and copy of yesterday's telegraphic instructions, as I require them now for visits of diplomats.

[Very faint longhand note in margin opposite point 1:]

Nat[ional] State, not Nationalities [?] State. Czechs want to lead [?]

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<sup>59</sup> These eight demands were made in the important speech which Henlein made on April 24 at the Sudeten German Party Congress at Karlsbad held on April 23-24. In the speech he stated the Sudeten German Party's attitude to the Czechoslovak Government's proposals for a settlement of the minority question (the Minority Statute, etc.), and propounded his eight points as the basis of this and "the way for a peaceful development."

[Opposite point 4:] *Landtage* with provincial autonomy.  
 [?]-social rights and—election of national legislative assemblies  
 [*Kurien*].

[Opposite point 5:] Inadequate as previously.

### No. 136

F2/0286-88

*The German Foreign Ministry to Heads of German Missions Abroad*

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, April 25 [, 1938].  
 (Pol. I 260 g. Rs.)

To all Missions and Consular Posts abroad.

In continuation of instruction of April 2, 1937 (Pol. I 1686/37, Top Secret).<sup>60</sup>

Now that work in the sphere of preparations for mobilization at home has made further progress in the armed forces and all civil administrative departments, including the Foreign Ministry, it is necessary that now the authorities abroad also should immediately set about taking corresponding measures in their administrative areas to bring them into line with those obtaining at home. The incidence of a period of tension or of mobilization confronts the authorities abroad with great and difficult tasks in the most diverse spheres, the nature and extent of which will be very different owing to local and political conditions. To mention among others: reinforcement of staff, employment of Reich-Germans for special duties (ciphering and special wireless work, propaganda, etc.), safeguarding of archives and destruction of secret documents, securing of necessary funds, maintenance of the information service, repatriation of men of military age, protection of German persons and property, cooperation in the planning of war economy already under development, which perforce must include economic possibilities in foreign countries.

The specific spheres of activity will be indicated in further instructions from the various departments of the Foreign Ministry. The work to be done by the authorities abroad is to be begun at once. The carrying out of all preparatory measures for mobilization, which naturally are to be treated as "top secret," is under the personal supervision and responsibility of the Head of the Mission. In peacetime they are to be performed by the existing staff.

I request Heads of Missions—in the absence of more precise instructions—to study at once the measures appropriate to their spheres

<sup>60</sup> Not printed.

of activity in the event of emergency, and to make relevant suggestions immediately. In the interests of absolute secrecy greatest care must be taken that the number of the initiated be restricted to the minimum. If necessary, the reports are to be written by the Head of Mission personally.

I request that acknowledgment of this order, which is to be kept by the Head of the Mission sealed and under lock and key, be made in writing and only with the words: "I have received instructions of April 25, Pol. I 260/38, Top Secret."

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 137

1613/386717

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation in Bucharest*

SECRET

BERLIN, April 25, 1938.

Rough draft (R. 1 b) Kf.

(e. o. Pol. I 990 g)

According to a confidential report from Prague, said to be based on information from circles very close to Premier Hodza, Soviet Russian-Rumanian negotiations are alleged to have begun in Bucharest on April 8 with Anglo-French collaboration, which relate to the granting of right of transit to Soviet troops through Rumanian territory on the way to Czechoslovakia.

The Legation is requested to report whether, and to what extent, this information is correct.

B[USSE], April 25.

[Longhand notes initialed by Busse, May 4:]

Pol. V suggests that Moscow be informed also because the first reports of such negotiations came from there.

2) Minute: Based on counterespionage [*Abwehr*] BN/4.38 and 21.4.38. Secret I East S.

3) Minute: This will now no longer be necessary as Moscow Embassy is informed through Pol. I 1046 g. Should occasion arise Moscow can be informed simultaneously with the reply to this. Pol. 1046 g.

## No. 138

120/68102

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 115 of April 26

PRAGUE, April 26, 1938—3:30 p.m.

Received April 26, 1938—5:20 p.m.

Henlein's Karlsbad speech<sup>63</sup> provides main theme for entire press. Czech press evinces disapproval with exception of Agrarian *Venkov* and National Democratic *Narodni Listy*; the bitterest are the organs of the National Socialists.<sup>64</sup> Rupture of negotiations with Sudeten German Party is, however, nowhere demanded . . . (group garbled). Ministerial Council for press affairs points out that negotiations should only be continued in the calmer atmosphere after the municipal elections, but that even during the election period contact for informative purposes could be maintained between the Sudeten German Party and the competent Government departments.

Main objections throughout to Henlein's demands for change of foreign policy, for recognition of national group as a corporate body having legal status within the State, which is considered irreconcilable with Constitution, and for freedom for National Socialist ideology, the latter, however, only insofar as totalitarian and dictatorial aims are to be inferred from this ideology.

In general, it can be said that Henlein has succeeded in keeping the road for negotiation open without disappointing his followers. The tone of the German radio and press will probably remain the deciding factor for the latter. The situation is, however, not an impasse and the further development resulting from the clarity now established among the Czechs, as well as among the Sudeten Germans, as to the aims of the Sudeten German Party, can be judged rather more hopefully than heretofore in spite of momentary unrest in the Czech camp. Krofta, it is true, spoke in irritated and disappointed tones yesterday.

EISENLOHR

<sup>63</sup> See footnote 59, p. 242.

<sup>64</sup> I.e., the Czechoslovak National Socialists, or Beneš' Party; see footnote 34, p. 188.

## No. 139

289/183084-85

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

LONDON, April 29, 1938—10:38 p.m.

SECRET

Received April 30, 1938—1:40 a.m.

No. 224 of April 29

Lord Halifax asked me to come to him today, a few minutes after termination of the discussions with the French,<sup>67</sup> in order to inform me, in markedly cordial and friendly manner, of substance of the conversations.

He attached value to assuring the Reich Foreign Minister that he remembered with peculiar satisfaction his close collaboration with him, and that he cherished the wish to continue in the future this cooperation which had been so fruitful. It was, therefore, especially necessary for him to inform Herr von Ribbentrop, immediately the negotiations with the French were concluded, that no fresh military commitments or obligations<sup>68</sup> (no further commitments or obligations) had been entered into by Great Britain during these negotiations. The press had concocted much nonsense this morning about the alleged tenor of the military agreement, and he was anxious to prevent misunderstanding arising from this irresponsible scribbling. The Reich Government were informed by the British Government in the spring of 1936 of the Franco-British General Staff conversations.<sup>69</sup> Since that time nothing had occurred which in any way overstepped the framework of the arrangements then made.

In reply to my inquiry regarding the further gist of the negotiations with the French, Lord Halifax said they had made a *tour d'horizon* and discussed the Italian, Spanish, and Czechoslovak questions. He believed that he had succeeded in particular in achieving results on the Czechoslovak question which would be useful for a peaceful solution of the problem. At the moment he was not in a

<sup>67</sup> The French Prime Minister and Foreign Minister (MM. Daladier and Bonnet) visited London on April 27-28 for conversations with Mr. Chamberlain and the Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, on joint policy toward the situation in Europe. They agreed to continue the General Staff talks under the arrangement of March 19, 1936, which provided for such (see footnote 69), and to proceed on immediate joint purchases of armaments and raw materials.

<sup>68</sup> The actual English phrase used by Lord Halifax "no further commitments or obligations" is given in parentheses in the original here.

<sup>69</sup> This was the exchange of notes between Britain and France by which joint staff conversations were arranged in connection with the Locarno Agreements and in consequence of the recent German breach of them by her reoccupation of the Rhineland.



position to give me particulars, but would immediately inform the Reich Foreign Minister in detail through Sir Nevile Henderson.

Lord Halifax then spoke, with obvious emotion, of the necessity for preserving peace. Doubtless the best thing would be if the three kindred nations, Germany, Britain, and the United States, could unite in joint work for peace. There were many things in which the British did not understand the Germans, and also some things in which the Germans did not realize the British point of view. To this latter category belonged the British view that an understanding with Germany must of necessity include France. France and Great Britain looked back together on a long period of joint effort, although the French point of view was not always the British one. Anglo-French cooperation was, however, in no way a hindrance to good terms with Germany. I answered him that German-Italian cooperation was intended in the same sense and that Italy could count upon us in the same way. But this did not need to prejudice the desired collaboration for peace. Lord Halifax agreed heartily. European peace was valuable in itself and was worth the utmost endeavors of those who could preserve it. Germany and Britain to a certain degree were the protagonists whose task it was to encourage the others.

Lord Halifax then asked me if I knew Daladier<sup>70</sup> personally, to which I had to reply in the negative. He himself had only become acquainted with Daladier and Bonnet for the first time yesterday and had been agreeably touched by the frankness and candor with which Daladier had put forward his views. He took him to be a man of no subterfuges, a partner with whom a serious talk was worth while.

He then indicated the many chairs arranged round about and said jokingly that he still had before him the not very pleasant task of making statements to the press. Tomorrow morning a communiqué would be issued, which would have the advantage over other communiqués of being in detail and true.

Halifax received Ambassador Grandi immediately afterward.

KORDT

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<sup>70</sup> The government of M. Daladier, with M. Bonnet as Foreign Minister, came into office on April 10, 1938, in succession to that of M. Blum.

## No. 140

1234/336554-55

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 227 of April 30

LONDON, April 30, 1938.

Received May 1, 1938—5 p.m.

(Pol. I 1264)

Crolla, Counselor to the Italian Embassy, fully informed me today on the course of the conversation which Grandi, the Ambassador, had with Lord Halifax after my visit yesterday.<sup>73</sup> During this conversation Lord Halifax told the Ambassador approximately the same as he told me, paying, however, more attention to the questions which were of special interest to the Italians, as, particularly, the pending questions regarding nonintervention in Spain. Lord Halifax made to the Italian Ambassador the same statement about the General Staff conversations<sup>74</sup> as to me, but in giving the assurance that these conversations had not gone beyond the limits made known to us, he used the words "no further political obligations and military commitments."<sup>75</sup> I remember distinctly that to me Lord Halifax spoke of "no further obligations and commitments,"<sup>75</sup> words which I also repeated to him. The statement made to the Italian Ambassador is more logical, for it defines in detail exactly what is to be understood by "obligations"<sup>75</sup> and especially by "commitments."<sup>75</sup> I have no doubt that both terms are intended to express the same thing.

With reference to the Czechoslovak question, Lord Halifax told the Ambassador, Grandi, that Britain had not entered into any commitments in favor of Czechoslovakia; here Chamberlain's declaration of March 24<sup>76</sup> of this year still held good. It was true that Britain would be placed in an "extremely difficult position"<sup>75</sup> if Germany were perhaps to try to solve the Sudeten German question by force. The Embassy Counselor, Crolla, explained this statement to me as meaning that Britain would hardly look on unmoved if France were to get involved in a war with us on the western frontier; Signor Crolla himself thought that with a little patience the Sudeten German question would solve itself in the way the Germans had in mind.

At the close of the conversation the Counselor pointed out particularly that the Soviet Russian Ambassador had not been officially in-

<sup>73</sup> See document No. 139, *supra*.

<sup>74</sup> See footnote 67, p. 246.

<sup>75</sup> The phrase is quoted thus in English in the original.

<sup>76</sup> House of Commons speech; cf. document No. 104, p. 192.

formed by the British Government as to the result of the conversations with the French.<sup>77</sup> In this connection he received with great interest my information from a French source that the British had suggested to the French that they should withdraw from the Franco-Soviet Russian Pact.

I informed Signor Crolla on broad lines of the trend of my conversation with Lord Halifax, without, however, mentioning Lord Halifax's remark about the desirability of German-British-American cooperation. Signor Crolla, visibly pleased, thanked me for the information that, on mention being made of Anglo-French cooperation, I had emphasized German-Italian cooperation in the same sense.

TH. KORDT

No. 141

1613/386723

*The German Minister in Rumania (Fabricius) to the German  
Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 92 of April 30

BUCHAREST, April 30, 1938—7 p.m.  
Received April 30, 1938—9:30 p.m.  
(Pol. I 1046 g)  
(Pol. I 990 g)

Comnen, the Foreign Minister, declared regarding report of Soviet squadrons flying over Rumanian territory that, in consequence of similar inquiry by Polish Minister, he had confirmed through military authorities that seven unarmed bombers, purchased in Russia by Czechoslovakia,<sup>78</sup> had, with permission of the Rumanian General Staff, been flown to Czechoslovakia with an intermediate landing in Rumania. Reports going beyond this are incorrect.

To my question whether, as it transpires, Soviet Russian-Rumanian negotiations on Russian right of transit were conducted in Bucharest in April (cf. report Pol. I M 990 g),<sup>79</sup> Comnen gave his word of honor that such negotiations had not taken place. Written report follows.

FABRICIUS

<sup>77</sup> See footnote 67, p. 246.

<sup>78</sup> The Czechoslovak Government had obtained a license for constructing in Czechoslovakia the S.B.1 aircraft, a Soviet medium bomber of new design, and purchased about 20 of these as models for Czechoslovak engineers. These 20 were flown to Czechoslovakia, and later 16 more were ordered and delivered in the same way.

<sup>79</sup> Document No. 137, p. 244.

## No. 142

1613/386742-44

*The German Minister in Rumania (Fabricius) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

BUCHAREST, April 30, 1938.

Nr. 1328/38

(Pol. I 1166 g (IV))

I A 13

For Herr Busse, Counselor of Legation, or his deputy.

In continuation of No. 92 of April 30, 1938 (Pol. I 1046 g)<sup>81</sup>

Subject: Right of transit through Rumanian territory for Soviet Russian troops.

To begin with I had the opportunity of asking Comnen, the Foreign Minister, whether the current reports were correct according to which Soviet Russian negotiations had begun on April 8 in Bucharest with Anglo-French cooperation, relating to the granting of right of transit for Soviet Russian troops through Rumanian territory into Czechoslovakia. I mentioned here that just about this time Alexandrovsky, Soviet Minister in Prague, had been here and, as I remembered, had spoken with him on April 13.

M. Comnen in reply gave me his word of honor that such negotiations had not taken place. He could assure me of this in the most definite terms. To my comment that the military authorities often gave their approval or carried on negotiations of which the civil authorities knew nothing, in which I referred to the previously confirmed incident of the flying-over of aircraft from Soviet Russia to Czechoslovakia, M. Comnen stressed that the flight over from Soviet Russia of unarmed aircraft purchased by Czechoslovakia<sup>82</sup> was not a matter that would have required the assent of the Foreign Ministry, because the transport of aircraft in this way was in accord with international usage, which I admitted. He must, however, be informed of negotiations of the nature mentioned and he could once more give me his word of honor that they had not taken place.

M. Comnen continued: I will tell you frankly the object of the visit paid me by the Soviet Minister in Prague. He came here to tell us that the present appointment to the Soviet Legation in Bucharest<sup>83</sup> was not agreeable to the Moscow Foreign Ministry either. They

<sup>81</sup> Document No. 141, *supra*.

<sup>82</sup> See footnote 78, p. 249.

<sup>83</sup> Ostrovsky, who had been Soviet Minister in Bucharest since December 1934, when diplomatic relations between the two countries were restored. He incurred the displeasure of his Government and was recalled on January 11, 1938, the Legation being in the hands of a Chargé d'Affaires thereafter.

were looking for a Minister but could not find one so easily, to which M. Comnen commented: because no one would take the risk of having his head cut off afterward, and Russia did not want to send out a second Boutenko.<sup>84</sup>

M. Alexandrovsky, however, had begged that Rumania should not take any counteraction which would disturb mutual relations; he had requested that a Rumanian Minister be sent as soon as possible.<sup>85</sup> M. Comnen had replied that the Minister already appointed, Radu Crutescu, had fallen ill and could not go; he would remain in Prague. The King, on the other hand, would accredit Dianu, the Minister at present *en poste* in Chile, to the Moscow post and would apply for the *agrément*. It seems to me from this account that relations between Rumania and Soviet Russia have not yet improved in any way. Otherwise Rumania would have shown more haste about sending a Minister to Moscow.

The present atmosphere between Rumania and Soviet Russia seems to me in fact hardly suitable for negotiations on the right of transit for Soviet troops. I met the same view while discussing the situation with my Italian and Polish colleagues. I will continue my investigations, nevertheless, and will take the opportunity of making a further report should these give rise to positive results.

Regarding the question of the flying-over of aircraft, allegedly Soviet Russian, the Polish Minister informs me further that he reported seven to the Foreign Minister because only that number had been observed in Poland. He did not exclude the possibility that there may have been a much larger number which had perhaps flown over Rumanian territory further south.

I am continuing my inquiries in this direction, too, for it does not seem very probable to me that Czechoslovakia would buy only seven aircraft of one type if she has already decided that she must supply her wants from Soviet Russia.

FABRICIUS

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<sup>84</sup> Soviet Chargé d'Affaires in Bucharest from December 1937 to February 8, 1938, when he was reported missing and variously rumored to have been murdered or kidnaped by Right-Wing organizations, or to have fled. The Rumanian Government informed the Soviet Government on February 17, 1938, that it had received a letter from Boutenko stating that he had left Rumania voluntarily, which information the Soviet Foreign Minister refused to believe. On February 27 an emissary of the Rumanian Government went to Rome and identified Boutenko there.

<sup>85</sup> M. Ciuntu was formerly Rumanian Minister in Moscow. Nicolae Dianu was ultimately appointed and took up his post on June 24, 1938.

## No. 143

664/257275-77

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*CONFIDENTIAL  
A 1996LONDON, April 30, 1938.  
(Pol. II 1307)Subject: Anglo-French conversations.<sup>86</sup>

A confidential agent of the Embassy had an opportunity of speaking to Daladier for a few minutes shortly after his arrival. A memorandum drawn up on the conversation is attached. It is worthy of note that, according to it, Daladier apparently cherished the wish from the outset that the British should exert pressure on Czechoslovakia. Daladier considers for this purpose pressure exerted from London to be more effective than pressure exerted from Paris because, unlike France, Britain is not already bound by treaty to render assistance in the event of an attack on Czechoslovakia, and is therefore more independent.

I have confirmation of the above from another quarter as well.

TH. KORDT

[Enclosure]

*Memorandum Dated April 28, 1938<sup>87</sup>*

I saw Daladier last evening shortly after his arrival, in company with four or five other newspaper correspondents. He treated us all to just a few generalities, for instance, expressing his hope that Great Britain would agree to the widest and closest possible measure of collaboration with France in every domain, and then dismissed us, beckoning, however, to me to remain behind. When we were alone he simply said that he regretted to be unable to have with me the full talk he would have wished, but that [I] must realize that he had hardly a minute to spare. Then abruptly, in his characteristic manner, he put to me the question, "Well, are you going to put pressure on Prague? Are you going to give the Czechs pressing councils [*councils*] of wisdom?" I replied that I thought we had already done so to a considerable extent, but that, of course, we were rather chary of going too far in so delicate a matter which we might regard as lying rather within France's province, as Czechoslovakia's ally. "There you are wrong," he exclaimed, "for we are bound, bound in

<sup>86</sup> See footnote 67, p. 246.

<sup>87</sup> This memorandum is in English in the original.

honor to Czechoslovakia by treaty. France has her hands tied. But you are free. I hope you realize how urgent and acute is the situation. Why, only the other day Osusky almost made a scene in asking whether or not France intended to honor her obligation to Czechoslovakia. Do you believe that Henlein would really have spoken as he did<sup>88</sup> without Berlin's approval? I don't. The Germans themselves want the Czechoslovak question settled now—summer. And we must assume that they mean it. It may be an issue of peace or war, to be decided in a few months' time. You must act. Germany is in a dangerous mood. She is terribly strong, and, what is perhaps more dangerous still, she may be tempted to think that her strength is even greater than it is in relation to others. The British Government must act in Berlin, and in Prague; possibly in Prague even more than in Berlin. I believe that some of your Ministers would suggest that Mussolini also use all the influence he possesses with Berlin to moderate the German demands. No doubt he would like to do so, and be willing to do so. But frankly I doubt whether today he possesses much influence with Hitler. What happened about Austria convinced me that he had overrated it. For after all what he got was a kick in the backside,—a pretty rough one, too! . . . And now you must excuse me; go and see our friend; I have told him to speak to you quite openly, as usual. But, mark my words, the peace of Europe probably depends at this moment on the Czechoslovak issue and on what your Government, and especially Mr. Chamberlain, will do in that direction." And I took my leave.

## No. 144

120/68109-10

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 229 of May 1

PARIS, May 1, 1938.

Received May 1, 1938—4:10 p.m.

When, soon after my return yesterday evening, I called on the Foreign Minister in order to return his initial visit, Bonnet received me with the words that he would otherwise have asked me, and also the Italian Chargé d'Affaires, to call upon him so that he might declare on behalf of his Government that the closer military cooperation between France and Britain discussed in London<sup>89</sup> was directed against no third power, and thus also not against Germany, but only

<sup>88</sup> Presumably at Karlsbad; see footnote 59, p. 242.

<sup>89</sup> See footnote 67, p. 246.

followed as a sequence to former agreements.<sup>90</sup> I could not help receiving this declaration with an ironic smile, but otherwise observed an attitude of cool attention.

Bonnet, who, as avowed agent of authoritative economic circles [*massgebende Wirtschaftskreise*] here, represents the conservative elements in Radical Socialist Party, spoke first of all of his sympathy for German culture and the German way of life, and then even went so far as to express admiration for the rise and achievements of the new Germany which, after the incorporation of Austria, had so splendid and varied a reconstruction program before it. Although this incorporation had come inopportune for all powers preoccupied with the maintenance of the *status quo*, people in France had nonetheless accepted the change. The position was different, however, with regard to any violent action against Czechoslovakia, which would render the treaty of alliance operative. He begged us most earnestly not to compel France, who always honored her obligations as an ally, to take up arms, by reason of an act of violence in favor of the Sudeten Germans. Both France and, as he could assure me, Britain too, placed themselves most readily at our disposal as mediators, and would exert their utmost influence to induce the Prague Government to adopt an accommodating attitude up to the extreme bounds of possibility; for he considered any arrangement better than world war, in the event of which all Europe would perish, and both victor and vanquished would fall victims to world Communism. People in France and Britain were convinced that the Sudeten German problem must be solved, and saw in this very crisis an opportunity of reaching an understanding with Germany which would finally assure the peace of Europe. It was already hoped that conversations would be opened with us on this matter in the immediate future.

I replied to the Foreign Minister that we did not doubt the good will of France and Britain to settle this burning problem by peaceful means, but we could not, after all our experiences so far, place any special confidence in the promises of the Prague Government.

It is understood from the Foreign Ministry here, moreover, that Bonnet has given the Czechoslovak Minister here the same assurances in regard to the Treaty of Alliance<sup>91</sup> as did his predecessor, Paul-Boncour.

WELCZECK

<sup>90</sup> See footnote 69, p. 246.

<sup>91</sup> See document No. 2, p. 10.



## No. 145

120/68111-12

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 231 of May 3

LONDON, May 3, 1938.

Received May 4, 1938—11:15 a.m.

I paid my inaugural visit<sup>92</sup> to Lord Halifax today.

1) Halifax very soon brought the conversation round to the Czechoslovak problem; he fully recognized that, for national reasons, Germany was primarily interested in the Czechoslovak question. But other countries, especially Britain, were also interested, on the basis of maintaining world peace. Britain wished to make her contribution to guide the difficult Czechoslovak problem toward a just solution. He therefore intended making an appropriate *démarche* in Prague which should aim at inducing Beneš to show the utmost measure of accommodation to the Sudeten Germans. It was further under consideration to instruct Ambassador Henderson to ascertain Berlin's views on the settlement of the question.

I replied that the maintenance of peace was undoubtedly of the greatest interest to all nations, and all efforts toward its maintenance were desirable. Nevertheless, the German Government regarded the Sudeten German question as one which should be settled by the Sudeten Germans in negotiations with the Czechoslovak Government. We did not desire to take part in these negotiations, and we must refuse a guarantee of their outcome. Our demand was that the Sudeten Germans should receive full equality of rights. Their continued oppression, or indeed any forcible action by the Czechoslovak authorities against them, would create a very grave situation for us.

Halifax replied that the concept of equality of rights still needed settlement on a juridical basis; he had thought that the Reich Government could perhaps make a contribution to the solution of the question by formulating in writing their desires in this respect.

I repeated that we did not wish to embark on details, but only aspired to full equality of rights as the outcome. I could well imagine that the Reich Government *might be able* to enter into friendly *conversations* on the problem, but they would on the other hand reject representations aimed at acceptance of a definite program.

I have the impression that a definite decision has not yet been taken with regard to the *modus procedendi*.

<sup>92</sup> Herbert von Dirksen took up his duties as Ambassador in London in succession to Ribbentrop on May 3, 1938. See footnote 21, p. 152.

2) I indicated to Lord Halifax that the statement that no "further obligations and commitments"<sup>93</sup> had been undertaken by Britain in the negotiations with the French Ministers<sup>94</sup> had been well received in Berlin. I personally, during my journey to London, had had the opportunity of confirming that western European public opinion had in a very decisive manner placed the military part of the negotiations in the foreground.

Lord Halifax replied that he had to admit the truth of this impression; that, too, had been the reason why he had immediately acquainted the Chargé d'Affaires with the position.

The conversation with Lord Halifax was of a decidedly friendly character.

DIRKSEN

No. 146

1613/386741

*The German Minister in Rumania (Fabricius) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

BUCHAREST, May 5, 1938.

No. 1452/38. I A 13 (Pol. I 1166 g)

(Pol. I 1165 g (IV))

For Herr Busse, Counselor of Legation, or his deputy.

In continuation of report of April 30, No. 1328/38.<sup>95</sup>

Subject: Soviet Russian aircraft for Czechoslovakia.

M. Krofta, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, to whom I spoke about the purchase of Soviet Russian aircraft by Czechoslovakia<sup>96</sup> at the meeting of the council of the Little Entente at Sinaia,<sup>97</sup> told me that Czechoslovakia has bought 20 Russian bombers which would be brought by air in small groups from Soviet Russia via Rumania. Some 7 or 9 had already arrived; the remainder would follow in the next few days.

Czechoslovakia intended, moreover, to order still more such aircraft in Russia which were a type not constructed in Czechoslovakia. The number, 300, which had been reported, was not correct; neither were the aircraft destined for Red Spain, but for Czechoslovakia herself.

FABRICIUS

[Stamped:] The Führer informed.

<sup>93</sup> This phrase is given thus in English in the original.

<sup>94</sup> See footnote 67, p. 246.

<sup>95</sup> Document No. 142, p. 250.

<sup>96</sup> See footnote 78, p. 249.

<sup>97</sup> The Conference was held on May 4 and 5; the delegates were the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia and the Foreign Ministers of Rumania and Czechoslovakia.

## No. 147

664/257287-90

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A 1996 II

LONDON, May 6, 1938.  
(Pol. II 1385)In continuation of report A 1996 of April 30, 1938.<sup>98</sup>Subject: Conversation between a confidential agent of the Embassy and Senator Comte de Brion.<sup>99</sup>

As postscript to the memorandum of a confidential agent of the Embassy, which was transmitted with the above-mentioned report, a memorandum of a conversation which the agent had with Senator Comte de Brion on the occasion of the presence of the French Ministers in London<sup>1</sup> is herewith submitted. The Senator is evidently on friendly terms with Daladier. The Franco-Russian Pact, the Franco-Czechoslovak Pact, and the Czech question, as well as Italian policy toward the Balkans, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, were touched upon during the conversation.

VON DIRKSEN

[Enclosure]

*Annex to Report No. A 1996 II of May 6, 1938, From the London Embassy<sup>2</sup>*

I subsequently had a long chat with Daladier's confidant. He explained to me that his chief would naturally not be able to urge British pressure on Prague with quite the same force and frankness as he had emphasized its necessity to me, as a personal friend and privately. Daladier's hope was that Chamberlain and Halifax would themselves suggest that pressure should be put on Prague when our French visitor could acquiesce without seeming to have taken the initiative in the matter. For, as Daladier himself had remarked to me, they were bound in honor to their Czechoslovak ally. My friend added that Bonnet was, if anything, even keener than Daladier on steering clear of France's obligations to fight for Czechoslovakia. Indeed, in a recent talk which he had with Bonnet, the latter ex-

<sup>98</sup> Document No. 143, p. 252.<sup>99</sup> Thus in the German original; presumably the Comte de Brion, employed by the French Prime Minister and Foreign Minister for private contacts with Berlin, but wrongly described as a member of the French Senate.<sup>1</sup> See footnote 67, p. 246.<sup>2</sup> The whole of this memorandum is in English in the original document.

claimed: "It would be too dreadful if the whole of Europe had to be plunged into war for the sake of the Czechoslovaks!" Nevertheless, even Bonnet did not deny that if things came to the worst, France would have to honor, and would honor, her onerous obligations. I asked my friend what was happening to the Franco-Soviet Pact,<sup>3</sup> in the minds of his leaders? He retorted that, while it was impossible to denounce that Pact, the French Government had decided to bury it—"to put it to sleep" in other words. It was not in the same category of honor as the Franco-Czechoslovak Pact;<sup>3</sup> and the present French Ministers realized how objectionable it was to both Germany and ourselves, and how it had prejudiced Franco-German relations. He believed that Berlin fully realized France's new outlook on the subject, and was fairly well content to see the Franco-Soviet Pact "put to sleep." For he himself had paid a recent visit to Germany, where he had seen several leading figures. While there he had learned of several new developments of importance. The Germans did not want war, but they no longer recoiled from its risks, more particularly with reference to Czechoslovakia. He feared that British influence in Berlin was on the wane. This, as Germans had explained to him, was due to our alleged incomprehension of German psychology and motives. They had bitterly resented our criticism of their action in consummating the union of the two German nations. I admitted that there was some foundation for this German complaint, but that the Germans had erred in failing to distinguish between the restraint of British statesmen like Chamberlain and Halifax and the violence of our free press. He then went on to say that such influence as we still retained in Berlin (which was perhaps considerably weaker than Daladier himself imagined) was due to the admirable attitude of our Ambassador, Henderson, who had strongly pressed the legitimacy of at least part of the German case against Czechoslovakia on our Cabinet. He agreed, however, with Daladier that Mussolini at this date probably possessed but little influence with Hitler. As a matter of fact, even those Frenchmen who favored an accord with Italy were far from optimistic about its durability and ultimate reactions. They had found Italy, in their first approaches to Rome, by no means as accommodating as she had shown herself toward ourselves. Indeed, when Rome was first and formally sounded as to whether the guarantees given by Italy to Great Britain in respect of the integrity of Spanish territory could not be automatically included in the proposed Franco-Italian agreement, the surprising retort was made that France's position in

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 2, p. 10.

the matter was not the same as Great Britain's. The latter's attitude had been strictly noninterventional and correct. France, however, until at any rate the advent of the Daladier Cabinet, had intervened in Spain again and again in every possible way. Therefore Italy was as much entitled to require of France guarantees of nonintervention as she (France) evidently thought herself entitled to require of Italy. The atmosphere, in fact, between Paris and Rome, was still the reverse of cordial, and Paris was probably glad of London's aid to facilitate smoother and swifter progress in the Franco-Italian negotiations.

Reverting to the Central-European situation, my friend, in reply to my questions, remarked that neither he nor anybody else had any serious belief in the scheme which the Quai d'Orsay is putting forward for the opening up of new markets for the Danubian Powers in Western Europe, so as to lessen their economic dependence on Germany. For such markets as could be perhaps artificially established for the benefit of those Powers—except in regard to a few essential articles like petrol—could not compete, whether in magnitude or in the matter of long-term credits, or again in the domain of barter, with the facilities that Germany was offering and would continue to offer them. I concurred, describing this re-hash of old-time projects a pill for an earthquake! Not even Italy could compete with Germany in that field. The impossibility of any genuine competition with Germany down the Danube Valley should go a long way to prove to the Germans how mistaken would be a policy which incurred unlimited war risks for the sake of an objective, namely, economic penetration, and political hegemony through that penetration, which could be realized by economic and diplomatic means without such risks. His information confirmed mine to the effect that Italian diplomacy was now seeking to mobilize against German penetration every element of resistance in the various Danube States, and notably in Hungary, Rumania, and Yugoslavia, not to mention Czechoslovakia. But Italian diplomacy was doomed to failure in this respect, because it could not offer to the countries in question the equivalent of the advantages which Germany could offer. As a matter of fact, my friend took the view that not only would all these Italian activities fail to make any deep and lasting impression, but that, wriggle as he might, Mussolini remained the prisoner of the Rome-Berlin Axis. But he fancied a second one to play with. Hence the Anglo-Italian Agreement.

In conversation with officials of the Quai d'Orsay, I noticed the persistence of the old prejudice against Poland, who was accused of becoming more and more the tool of Germany. Even now the French

cannot grasp either the purpose or the legitimacy of the pursuance by the smaller powers of a neutralist policy which may save them from the fate of becoming a battleground for their bigger neighbors. They deplore the bad state of Polish-Czechoslovak relations, and suggest that in Warsaw, as in Berlin and Prague, we should use our influence to bring about a relaxation of the tension, political and economic, between the Poles and Czechs. I doubt whether the French appreciate the meaning of the growing intimacy between Poland and Italy, and its main objective, which is to restore a kind of balance of power on the European Continent.

## No. 148

2379/497769

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 133 of May 7

PRAGUE, May 7, 1938—4:55 p.m.

Received May 7, 1938—6:30 p.m.

(Pol. IV 3134)

Internal political situation in whole frontier area and in Prague aggravated by a series of incidents. I refer you to reports by *Zeit*<sup>6</sup> today and yesterday. Apparently orders of Government no longer always carried out by police authorities. Consequently agitation among Czech frontier population has increased dangerously and, lastly, soldiers are beginning, with connivance of their officers, to cause disturbances, as, for instance, at Troppau, Mährisch-Schönberg, Tachau, Falkenau, and apparently also at Trautenau. General impression that Czechs beginning to recover from initial consternation and becoming aggressive, in order to restore authority in frontier and fortified zones. Calm acceptance by Germany is apparently interpreted as sense of weakness; London Anglo-French conversations, exaggerated by press, have again given the Czechs courage.

Sudeten German Party has made energetic representations to Hodza and demanded that, before the discussions on questions of power politics, the military should be kept neutral by command of the highest authority, and that not only the Sudeten German Party, but also the Czech Party, should publicly exhort their followers to calm and discipline.

EISENLOHR

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<sup>6</sup> The organ of the Sudeten German Party.

## No. 149

289/183088-90

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy in Italy  
for the Foreign Minister and State Secretary*

Telegram

URGENT  
No. 152

BERLIN, May 7, 1938.

For Reich Minister and State Secretary.<sup>7</sup>

The British Ambassador called on me today to inform me, on behalf of his Government, that the British Minister in Prague had been instructed to make urgent representations to the Czechoslovak Government<sup>8</sup> to seek immediately a settlement of the Sudeten German question on comprehensive lines<sup>9</sup> by means of direct negotiations with the Sudeten Germans. The British Government desired to inform the German Government of this and to express the hope that the latter Government will be prepared to use their influence to promote a settlement.<sup>10</sup>

The Ambassador added he hoped for an opportunity to pursue the matter in more detail with the Reich Foreign Minister as soon as possible after his return.

I answered the Ambassador that, in the absence of the Reich Foreign Minister, I must limit myself to accepting his declaration and could not say how it would be received. I gathered from his remarks that British Government were of opinion that the matter must be settled direct between Czechoslovak Government and Henlein; this, as was well known, was also our view.

Henderson then added confidentially and, as he said, without instructions, that the British Government would make no detailed recommendations in Prague as to the nature of the settlement, but the purpose of their *démarche* was not to achieve a solution of a number of individual problems still pending, but a general settlement based, not on a Czechoslovak National State, but a State of Nationalities. Henderson answered in the affirmative my inquiry whether French Government were undertaking corresponding *démarche* in Prague. The Ambassador then added, as his personal

<sup>7</sup> Ribbentrop, the Foreign Minister, and Weizsäcker, the State Secretary, were at this time in Rome with Hitler during his visit to Mussolini from May 3 to 9.

<sup>8</sup> The Anglo-French *démarche* to Prague was made on this day, May 7. See also document No. 151, p. 265.

<sup>9</sup> The words "on comprehensive lines" are repeated in parentheses in English after the German text.

<sup>10</sup> The words "that the German Government will be ready to use their influence to promote a settlement" are repeated in parentheses in English after the German text.

view of the situation, that France was acting for the Czechs and Germany for the Sudeten Germans. Britain was supporting Germany in this case and he urgently hoped that Germany would not refuse some kind of cooperation with Britain in this matter, which might then, perhaps, lead to cooperation in other questions also. I refrained from committing myself on this matter.

Henderson repeated finally in addition that France would look upon a forcible solution as a *casus belli*, and that it could not be foreseen what consequences would then arise for Great Britain. But Britain desired a peaceful solution by all means.

As Henderson is informing the press about this step, I have made it known through D.N.B.<sup>12</sup> that the British Ambassador has informed the German Government that the British Government have made a *démarche* in Prague to achieve a solution of the Sudeten German question.

WOERMANN

[Longhand note:] Missions interested are receiving telegram for information.

### No. 150

239/183092-94

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the Foreign Minister, With Memorandum From the British Embassy*

SECRET

BERLIN, May 7, 1938.

During his visit today the British Ambassador reverted to the conversation which Lord Halifax had on April 29 with the German Chargé d'Affaires in London,<sup>13</sup> and in which he had acquainted the Chargé in part with the substance of the Anglo-French conversations which took place in London at the end of April (cf. telegram No. 224 of April 29 from London).<sup>14</sup> Sir Nevile Henderson said that the purport of the communication which he wished to make would certainly be already known to us from the report of the German Chargé d'Affaires, to which I replied in the affirmative. The Ambassador therefore refrained from giving a further exposition of the facts, but handed to me—as he said, purely personally—the attached memorandum summarizing the substance of his instructions.

<sup>12</sup> The German official news agency.

<sup>13</sup> Theodor Kordt. Cf. document No. 139, p. 246.

<sup>14</sup> Document No. 139, p. 246. See also footnote 67 thereto.



Sir Nevile remarked in this connection that he had not been directed to deliver a document to us, and that I should treat its existence confidentially.

The exposition in this document agrees substantially with the telegram from the German Chargé d'Affaires of April 29. It is, however, more clearly expressed herein than in Herr Kordt's report that the British Government consider the improvement of the international position to be possible only if that Government, in their endeavors to bring about an understanding with Germany, also succeed in facilitating a similar *rapprochement* between Germany and France.

The last two paragraphs of the document refer to the *démarche* which the Ambassador has made in the Czechoslovak question. A special memorandum on the observations made by the Ambassador regarding this matter was not prepared, as the purport of the conversation is recorded in telegram No. 152 of today's date to the Embassy in Rome.<sup>15</sup>

WOERMANN

[Departmental note:] Pol. II and Pol. IV b: the relevant Missions should be informed about the first part.

[Annex]<sup>16</sup>

*Memorandum From the British Embassy*

BRITISH EMBASSY, BERLIN.

His Majesty's Government are particularly desirous that the German Government should not be kept in ignorance of certain of the subjects under discussion with the French Ministers on the occasion of their recent visit to London.

I have instructions to speak to Herr von Ribbentrop, but, in view of the inevitable delay occasioned by his absence in Rome,<sup>17</sup> it is felt that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs should be informed as soon as possible of the general purport of my remarks.

On April 29 the Secretary of State informed the German Chargé d'Affaires in London that he wished to lose no time in speaking to him regarding one subject which has been discussed with the French representatives and to which there had been a great deal of unauthorized and misleading reference in the press. This was the question of staff conversations between the British and the French Governments.<sup>18</sup> Lord Halifax wished Dr. Theodor Kordt to inform

<sup>15</sup> Document No. 149, *supra*.

<sup>16</sup> The file copy of this memorandum is in English.

<sup>17</sup> See footnote 7, p. 261.

<sup>18</sup> See footnotes 67 and 69, p. 246.

his Government that His Majesty's Government had agreed with the French Government that the technical staff conversations which had been first entered upon in 1936, and the fact of which had been made public at that time, should be continued. There was nothing new in the decision, except the decision to continue them, and that decision represented no change of policy on the part of His Majesty's Government, who had assumed no further obligations or commitments. Lord Halifax told the Counselor that His Majesty's Government were as anxious as they had always been to use their best endeavors for the promotion of better international feeling, and that this was evidently quite impossible unless His Majesty's Government were able, in the course of reaching a better understanding with Germany, to facilitate a similar *rapprochement* between Germany and France. It was not necessary for Lord Halifax to remind Dr. Kordt how vitally this depended on the removal of French anxieties, and this had accordingly been one of the principal considerations in the mind of His Majesty's Government in agreeing to continue the process that had been begun 3 years ago. Dr. Kordt thanked Lord Halifax and said that he would transmit what the Secretary of State had said to the German Government.

With regard to Czechoslovakia it was agreed that both His Majesty's Government and the French Government should use their influence at Prague to promote a peaceful and equitable solution of the Sudeten German question; Lord Halifax mentioned this matter to Herr von Dirksen on May 3. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom are now urging the Czechoslovak Government to seek without delay a solution of this problem on comprehensive lines by direct negotiation with the Sudeten Germans. His Majesty's Government wish to inform the German Government of this and to express the hope that the German Government will be ready to use their influence to promote a settlement.

I have instructions to speak to Herr von Ribbentrop accordingly as soon as he is accessible, but His Majesty's Government desire that the German Government should be informed in general terms of the action which the United Kingdom Government is taking. I hope to pursue the question in greater detail with Herr von Ribbentrop on his return.

## No. 151

289/183095-97

*Memorandum*

BERLIN, May 10, 1938.

At a lunch to which Mr. Kirkpatrick<sup>19</sup> invited me yesterday he mentioned the *démarche* made by the British Ambassador last Saturday,<sup>20</sup> and was of opinion that he expected but little from the contemplated conversations between the Czechoslovak Government and Herr Henlein. The British Government had intentionally limited themselves to advising the Czechoslovak Government in general terms to display the utmost spirit of accommodation regarding the Sudeten German demands, but on the other hand had avoided making detailed proposals. As the reason for this Mr. Kirkpatrick stated that the British Government would be in a difficult position if the Czechoslovak Government declared their readiness to accept detailed British proposals, but Herr Henlein declined these proposals as not going far enough. In that event the danger would arise that the Czechoslovak Government would lay at the door of the British Government the responsibility for the negotiations breaking down. He himself, in fact, was of the opinion that the whole question could only be satisfactorily settled by the German and British Governments arriving at a direct understanding with regard to the objective to be attained. He considered participation by other powers in this matter to be unnecessary. If the German Government would advise the British Government confidentially what solution of the Sudeten German question they were striving after, he believed that he could assure us that the British Government would bring such pressure to bear in Prague that the Czechoslovak Government would be compelled to accede to the German wishes. If by this means the Sudeten German question were settled, the road for Anglo-German conversations<sup>21</sup> of wider scope would be open. With regard to the purport of such Anglo-German conversations Mr. Kirkpatrick expressed himself to the effect that no German assurances whatever were requested by the British, so that the main subject of the talks would only be the colonial problem. If the Führer still adhered to his proposal for the prohibition of bombing, this question might possibly form a

<sup>19</sup> First Secretary of the British Embassy in Berlin.

<sup>20</sup> See document No. 149, p. 261, and footnote 8 thereto.

<sup>21</sup> On this subject see the relevant documents in vol. I, chap. VII.

further subject of negotiation. Finally, one might also consider discussing an agreement on the extent of air armaments.

From Mr. Kirkpatrick's remaining remarks it transpired that the British Government had decided upon the *démarche* in Prague principally because they were strongly impressed by the firm determination of the French Ministers, on the occasion of their visit to London,<sup>22</sup> to intervene in the event of an armed German-Czechoslovak conflict.

BISMARCK

No. 152

621/250549-50

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A 1913

PARIS, May 11, 1938.  
(Pol. II 1414)

Subject: Conversation with Paul Reynaud, Minister of Justice.

Yesterday Paul Reynaud, the Minister of Justice, paid me his inaugural visit on taking office, which had been delayed on account of my absence, a custom here which is only observed when a newly appointed Minister wishes to cultivate existing personal relations with the respective Head of a Mission. Every talk with the shrewd, sarcastic Paul Reynaud is always a kind of intellectual fencing match which does not lack a certain attractiveness for the very reason that he does not weigh every word.

The conversation turned first to the urgently needed extension of the Embassy property, most advantageously effected by the acquisition of the neighboring mansion with the adjoining office building and garden, for which the French Government had placed currency at our disposal. Paul Reynaud congratulated us on this transaction, and added that in the case of other extensions we had also shown a hand as skillfully played as it was lucky. I acknowledged this compliment with thanks and remarked with a smile that there might also be perhaps opportunities for helping us in the future in cases of obvious necessity and in the course of inevitable development. In this way one obstacle after another that lay in the way of a Franco-German *rapprochement* and friendship would be removed. I was aware that there were many Frenchmen who for this reason had in their hearts welcomed the reunion of Austria with the German Reich. Here, Paul Reynaud interposed that he had always been one of those to whom the territorial and nationality clauses of the Peace Treaties

<sup>22</sup> See footnote 67, p. 246.

of Trianon and St. Germain had by no means appeared particularly happy solutions; if, however, in the realization of our national aspirations, we were to apply the same or similar methods as in the annexation of Austria, and, following a revolt by the Sudeten Germans, oppressed by the Czech Government, we should hasten to their assistance, either *manu militari* or with volunteer formations, then the catastrophe would have happened from which Europe would never recover, with the possible exception of Russia, remote and already living under Communism. Everything must be done to avert the destruction of the civilized old world. He personally—speaking now as an old acquaintance and not as a member of the Cabinet—was convinced that the magnetic attraction of the Third Reich on those frontier areas populated by Sudeten Germans would become so pronounced that something radical, or at least very far reaching, would have to be done to prevent a permanent state of unrest, while the isolated German islands within the purely Czech territory could perhaps be removed by resettlement. I seized on the expression “radical” used by the Minister, and declared that only radical treatment could remove such a serious and dangerous malady; nowadays such acute illnesses could no longer be cured by the normal household remedies, however well proven in the past, but only by amputation. Contrary to my expectations Paul Reynaud did not remonstrate very much, but contented himself with the observation that it still would not be so easy to find a suitable surgeon for the case.



H. WELCZECK

### No. 153

635/253204, 253206-07

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*<sup>23</sup>

A. III. 1. b. 27.

PRAGUE, May 11, 1938.

(Copy Pol. V 3648)

Reference to: Kalinin on the treaty obligations of the Soviet Union.

On the 8th of this month in Moscow, Kalinin<sup>24</sup> also received among others the workers' delegation from Czechoslovakia, which had come to Moscow for the May 1st celebrations. Kalinin replied in the affirmative to a question by a Czech trade-union official, whether the Soviet Union would come to the assistance of Czechoslovakia in the event of an unprovoked attack. The Soviet Union would fulfill its

<sup>23</sup> This despatch and enclosure were also forwarded for information by the Foreign Ministry to Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht* (Intelligence Directorate), to the Reich Propaganda Ministry, and to the Gestapo, on May 18 (frame 253205).

<sup>24</sup> Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union, 1937-45.

treaty obligations toward Czechoslovakia and France to the last letter.

The text of Kalinin's statements were given great prominence and repeated with obvious satisfaction in the entire Czech press, a version of which appeared in the *Prager Presse*<sup>25</sup> of the 11th of this month.

EISENLOHR

[Enclosure]

(Copy to Pol. V 3648)

FROM THE "PRAGER PRESSE", MAY 11, 1938

"To the Last Letter"

Kalinin on the fulfillment of the treaty obligations  
of the Soviet Union

RC. Moscow, May 10.

On Sunday afternoon Kalinin, Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union, received the foreign workers' delegations which had come to Moscow for the 1st of May celebrations. After the welcoming speeches Kalinin answered various questions, among them a question by Skaunic,<sup>26</sup> the Czech trade-union official, who asked whether Kalinin as head of the Soviet Union could reply to the question whether the Soviet Union would come to the aid of Czechoslovakia if the Republic were attacked without provocation and France rendered assistance. Kalinin replied as follows:

"The Soviet Union has always and without reserve honored the treaties concluded with other nations; she would do the same in this case, too, and if necessary would fulfill all her obligations toward Czechoslovakia and France<sup>27</sup> to the last letter. Some French newspapers had written in a vein as if the Franco-Soviet Treaty were of advantage only to the Soviet Union. I do not want to say that this Treaty is not advantageous for the Soviet Union, but it is, and will be, more useful to France. The Soviet Union is a rich country. I do not mean by this that France is not a rich country, for France is even the creditor of a number of other nations. But the Soviet Union has minerals, iron, petroleum, foodstuffs, cotton, and in fact everything necessary for the conduct of any war. And France does not possess all this in the same measure. If the Treaty of Friendship between the Soviet Union, France, and Czechoslovakia were as strong

<sup>25</sup> The German-language Czechoslovak Government paper.

<sup>26</sup> His correct name in Czech was Skavnič.

<sup>27</sup> See document No. 2, p. 10.

as we wish it to be, then it would influence Britain also to choose other directions for her policy than those so far followed, and the Treaty would have greater international significance and weight."

## No. 154

F13/306-299

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 218

BERLIN, May 11, 1938.

Today at 7 p.m., in response to his request, I received the British Ambassador for a lengthy discussion.

The British Ambassador began by handing me the annexed memorandum<sup>28</sup> and commented upon it as follows:

His Government had instructed him to inform me that they had undertaken an energetic *démarche* in Prague,<sup>29</sup> with a view to bringing about a peaceful settlement of the Sudeten German question. The memorandum handed to me did not amount to an *aide-mémoire*, it was simply a record in writing of the observations which he had been instructed to make to me. He had considered it expedient to set these observations down quite informally in writing. For the rest he had compiled the memorandum from various telegrams.

I replied to the British Ambassador that in principle I welcomed the British step in Prague and only wished that this action by the British would bring the Czech Government to reason. We were, of course, ready to work for a reasonable solution of the problem. In itself the Sudeten German question was a problem of internal politics between the Czech Government and Henlein's party. As was well known, Henlein had in his Karlsbad speech put forward eight demands,<sup>30</sup> the acceptance of which he had himself indicated as a minimum for satisfaction. Konrad Henlein and the Sudeten German leaders were, of course, personally known to us, but I must draw attention to the fact that they represented the German element there independently and therefore knew best on what basis a solution of these questions could be reached. Their demands, as set down in Henlein's speech, seemed to me to be reasonable, and I therefore saw no ground for influencing the Sudeten German Party to alter these demands. It could not lie in the interest of a peaceful settlement if a hollow compromise were to be arrived at between the Sudeten Germans and Prague, which would not lead to any final pacification but would leave the problem still with us. Nothing could be gained

<sup>28</sup> *Aide-mémoire* printed on p. 271.

<sup>29</sup> See document No. 149, p. 261, and footnote 8 thereto.

<sup>30</sup> See document No. 135, p. 242.

by this. In my view everything depended upon Beneš' now taking a big decision for a settlement of the problem.

The British Ambassador answered that the British Government did not at the moment wish to induce the German Government to exert such an influence. He had simply been instructed to inform us about the British step in Prague. If, however, a deadlock should arise in the negotiations, which it was hoped would now soon begin, then he did hope for our support and for our influence on Henlein.

I stated that the German Government was, of course, ready to do anything to bring about a peaceful solution. In view of past experience, however, it could not be taken amiss if we continued mistrustful in the face of Czech promises.

Sir Nevile Henderson again emphasized that the British Government would gladly cooperate with us toward a peaceful solution, for such a solution would react most powerfully upon the general situation.

In reply to my question whether he had already received any news to the effect that Beneš was prepared to make any serious advances, Sir Nevile answered that up to the present he had heard nothing further, but that the British Government hoped that there would be such advances. Everything must be done to avoid a conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia, for such a conflict might involve France, who was allied with Czechoslovakia, and in that case grave danger would arise for Britain, too, from such a development.

To this I answered Sir Nevile in the following terms: In his Reichstag speech of February 20,<sup>31</sup> the Führer had declared that Germany could not submit to any further oppression of the German people on her frontiers. Let no one be deceived about the Führer. If Prague did not listen to reason, he would not allow himself to be influenced by any threats from third parties and would not even shrink from a European war. Germany would do everything for a peaceful solution, but if by reason of Czech provocation against German people Germany should be driven to act, she would regard intervention by France as a war of aggression. The whole German people would then rise like one man.

Sir Nevile replied that he had not imagined that the German attitude would be any different, and he added the question whether I could imagine that British soldiers would again march into Germany.

I answered that I regarded it as unthinkable that Britain or even France would declare war on Germany, because Germany would not look on quietly at the oppression and gradual extermination of those

<sup>31</sup> See footnote 83, p. 139.



of her own race by the Czechs. If war were declared on Germany on account of such action on her part, it would be regarded by the German people as a war of aggression for the restoration of French hegemony in Europe, and we should act accordingly. No one should indulge himself in any doubts about the resolution of the Führer, and I requested him not to leave the British Government either in any doubt about the attitude of Germany. The Sudeten German question was advancing irresistibly toward a solution. For the rest, I was ready to remain in touch with him in this matter, and I should be grateful if he would keep me informed concerning the outcome of the British *démarche* in Prague. After a solution of the Sudeten German question Germany was to be regarded as saturated [*saturiert*]. There then still remained only a solution of the colonial question, so as to reach a lasting understanding on a wide basis.

The British Ambassador answered that he was convinced of the justice of these ideas and that I was, therefore, preaching to one already converted. It was important that Henlein and Prague should now embark upon negotiations, and he hoped that Beneš would listen to reason. In bringing their influence to bear upon the Czechoslovak Government, the British Government did not, however, contemplate going into details.

R[IBBENTROP]

[Annex]

*Aide-Mémoire From the British Embassy*<sup>32</sup>

AIDE-MÉMOIRE

BRITISH EMBASSY, BERLIN.

His Majesty's Government and the French Government are, as the German Government are aware, using their influence in Prague to promote a peaceful and equitable settlement of the Sudeten German question, and express the hope that the German Government will be ready to use their influence with the Sudeten Germans in the direction of moderation and to work with His Majesty's Government in promoting a settlement.

On such information as His Majesty's Government have in their possession a peaceful settlement should certainly be capable of achievement. His Majesty's Government recall the Chancellor's remark to Sir Nevile Henderson on March 3<sup>33</sup> that His Excellency was perfectly willing to live in peace and amity with Czechoslovakia

<sup>32</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>33</sup> At an interview in Berlin. See vol. I, chap. I.

on condition that the Sudeten Germans obtained full equality, and that if Great Britain really desired German friendship it was indispensable that His Majesty's Government should make it clear at Prague that they would not encourage the Czechoslovak Government in refusing proper treatment to nationals of German origin. Field Marshal Göring also assured His Majesty's Ambassador on March 11<sup>th</sup> of Germany's earnest desire to improve her relations with Czechoslovakia.

His Majesty's Government have always urged upon the Czechoslovak Government the importance of proper treatment of her nationals of German origin, and they are now actively engaged in urging that Government to go to the limit of concession in an effort to reach a comprehensive and lasting agreement with the Sudeten Germans.

His Majesty's Government would not wish to intervene in any matter of exclusively German-Czech relations. They recognize, of course, that the lot of the Sudeten Germans must be a matter of particular interest to Germany, but in the present situation it is undeniable that the problems which have been raised may affect the peace of Europe. It is the chief concern of His Majesty's Government, as it is doubtless that of the German Government, that peace should not be disturbed. That is their justification for raising this matter with the German Government, and indeed they feel it their duty to offer any assistance that they can give—and they believe in the present situation they are able to assist toward reaching an equitable solution.

His Majesty's Government are now using their influence urgently with the Czech Government to bring them to seek without delay a solution of the problem on comprehensive lines by direct negotiation with the Sudeten Germans. His Majesty's Government are thus doing their best to bring about a peaceful and equitable solution by representing to the Czechoslovak Government the necessity for a contribution from their side. But it takes two to make an agreement and, if a settlement is to be reached, it is to be hoped that Herr Henlein may be prevailed upon also to show a spirit of accommodation.

His Majesty's Government do not stand on ceremony in this matter and they trust that the German Government will not do so either. The Sudeten Germans are Czech citizens, but the Government of the Reich has undoubtedly a powerful influence upon the population of German race and speech living across the Czechoslovak-German fron-

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<sup>2</sup> Göring repeated to Sir Neville Henderson on March 11 the substance of the assurance he had given to the Czechoslovak Minister in Berlin on that day; see documents Nos. 74 and 81, pp. 158 and 164.

tier. And since the question is one that closely affects the peace of Europe, His Majesty's Government trust that, in view of the action taken by His Majesty's Government at Prague, the German Government will use their influence with Herr Henlein in the direction of moderation. His Majesty's Government have no doubt that the German Government would prefer a peaceful and orderly solution of the question to any other, and they are hopeful that the German Government will use all their influence on behalf of such a solution.

In one other way the German Government could, His Majesty's Government believe, assist toward the achievement of a settlement. If His Majesty's Government are to use their influence in Prague they must have some idea of the terms that would be likely, from the German point of view, to form the basis of an agreed settlement. If they encourage the Czechoslovak Government to put forward proposals that do not prove acceptable, their efforts may be of no avail; if, however, the German Government could indicate the lines of a settlement which in their view would be satisfactory to the *Sudeten-deutschen* [*sic*], His Majesty's Government would consider how far they could recommend acceptance by the Czechoslovak Government.

### No. 155

289/183105

#### *Memorandum*

SECRET

BERLIN, May 12, 1938.

Herr Henlein, who visited the Reich Minister<sup>35</sup> today while journeying through, is going to England for 2 days in order to talk there with Vansittart and certain other personalities. He will there put forward the fulfillment of his demands in the Karlsbad speech<sup>36</sup> as the condition for the appeasement of the Sudeten Germans. Should the Czech Government procrastinate in this matter, or show any signs of stubbornness, an appeal for the right of self-determination of the Sudeten Germans could not permanently be avoided. It was not the Sudeten Germans who were provoking, but Prague. It was not Prague which was justified in talking of provocation and *war-anxiety*, but the Sudeten Germans, who did not wish to take the field for the Czechs. Herr Henlein will deny in London that he is acting on instructions from Berlin. His Karlsbad speech was not known in Berlin prior to its publication. He will further attempt to obtain information on the memorandum which, under the name

<sup>35</sup> The Reich Foreign Minister. Henlein was in Berlin at the time and proceeded to London on the same day, May 12. The visit was nominally secret.

<sup>36</sup> See document No. 135, p. 242.

of the Beneš Memorandum, was transmitted to London and Paris by Czech diplomatic channels.<sup>37</sup> Finally, Henlein will speak of the progressive disintegration of the Czech political structure actually taking place, in order to discourage those circles which consider that their intervention on behalf of this political structure may still be of use.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 156

28/18550

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 138 of May 12

PRAGUE, May 12, 1938.

Referring to telegram No. 91 of May 11.<sup>38</sup>

Draw attention as a precaution to the fact that almost every week Legation officials transmit secret consignments of money and documents to members of Sudeten German Party. In spite of every care taken in the matter, danger of discovery by Czechoslovak Government involved each time, offering opportunity for countermeasures.

Would be grateful for detailed information regarding Holovec affair as well as general circumstances of his arrest.

EISENLOHR

## No. 157

120/68131-32

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 139 of May 12

PRAGUE, May 12, 1938—4:55 p.m.

Received May 12, 1938—6:50 p.m.

Krofta today communicated the following regarding *démarches* by British and French Ministers on May 7.<sup>39</sup>

No written communications were delivered, but British Minister used written notes for his statements. Newton first of all explained in detail that internal tension produced by Sudeten German question, a tension which also extended beyond the frontiers of the State, was a source of great danger to Czechoslovakia. The military situ-

<sup>37</sup> Presumably the memorandum handed to the French and British Governments by the Czechoslovak Ministers in Paris and London on April 28.

<sup>38</sup> Not printed.

<sup>39</sup> See document No. 149, p. 261, and footnote 8 thereto.

ation of the country was very unfavorable, although France would come to her aid in the event of war and then possibly Great Britain, too, would become involved in conflict. Britain, however, stood by Chamberlain's declaration<sup>40</sup> and thus assumed no obligations of wider extent. In view of her imperiled position Czechoslovakia must do all in her power to ward off the danger. Danger to Czechoslovakia and world peace was emphasized three times by British Minister. British Government considered that it was possible for Czechoslovak Government to bring about understanding with the Sudeten Germans. They had taken cognizance of draft Nationalities Statute submitted to London,<sup>41</sup> without venturing to pass judgment on it, but did not know whether it went far enough and considered rather that one ought to go still further. They were always ready to support the Czechoslovak Government with their counsel. French Minister<sup>42</sup> was much more concise and, citing Britain's example, submitted recommendation from his Government to go to the utmost limit possible, as far as the integrity of the State permitted.

In his reply to Newton, Krofta stated that British Government's view of magnitude of danger was perhaps too pessimistic, but that Czechoslovakia was aware of the gravity of the situation and was prepared for that reason to make great sacrifices for maintenance of peace and appeasement of Sudeten Germans. There were, of course, certain limits beyond which one could not go.

British Minister had repeated his *démarche* with Hodza and would be received by President of the Republic for the same purpose. French Minister would likewise call on Beneš.

The Cabinet Ministers had been deliberating during the whole week and would probably in the next few days reach agreement on program, which was then to be subject of negotiations with Sudeten German Party. Krofta regards understanding as possible if others taking part were equally sincere in their intentions. I confined myself to replying that I regarded agreement as possible if his Government's aim was full equality of rights for the Sudeten Germans, the latter thus losing the feeling of being under foreign rule.

EISENLOHR

<sup>40</sup> House of Commons statement of March 24: cf. document No. 104, p. 192.

<sup>41</sup> For this proposed statute, formerly called the Minorities Statute, see footnote 81, p. 203. The draft of the statute was submitted to the British Government by the Czechoslovak Government at the end of April. It included proposals to stop denationalization, reform of the language law, a guarantee to the minorities of a proportion of the national budget, provisions for increased allocation of Government posts to members of minorities, and a project for educational autonomy for them.

<sup>42</sup> Léopold-Victor de Lacroix, French Minister in Prague, 1936-39.

## No. 158

2389/494453-57

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 2. allg.

PRAGUE, May 13, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 3390)

Menacing situation in frontier regions; the Sudeten German Party can no longer guarantee the maintenance of order. Effect of Anglo-French *démarches* upon Czechoslovak politicians and parties. Hodza wishes to negotiate; his views. The need for achieving results.

## POLITICAL REPORT

The position in the Sudeten German region is more tense than ever. The Sudeten German Party has, it is true with a few exceptions, succeeded in preventing clashes with the authorities and with political opponents during the first weeks of the incorporation of Austria and particularly on the day of the plebiscite,<sup>44</sup> on the Führer's birthday, and on May 1, by means of energetic instructions to assistant leaders as well as by public appeals for calm and order, which latter were energetically supported by the German wireless, but the political excitement of the Sudeten German population continues unabated; it has, if anything, increased. In spite of Henlein's Karlsbad speech, which put forward far-reaching demands within the State, hardly anyone thinks any longer of autonomy, on however comprehensive a scale. The overwhelming majority, in fact almost the whole population, hopes for *Anschluss* with the German Reich and expects it in the immediate future. Even persons who otherwise reflect calmly are not worrying about the manner of realizing this. German troops will march in as in Austria, or uniformed Party formations will make their appearance. No one thinks or wishes to think about the ring of fortifications, about the bitter resistance of the Czechoslovak Army which is to be expected, about the sanguinary measures of repression which will then be adopted in the frontier regions, about the possibility of European war, above all about the danger to the German Reich. The mass are intoxicated by the overwhelming success in Austria; they will neither await nor accept any other form of political solution.

On the other hand, the danger of local explosions resulting from a marked change in the Czech attitude has become more acute. The

<sup>44</sup> The plebiscite of April 10; see footnote 84, p. 208. The Führer's birthday was April 20.

Czech frontier people, altogether nearly 300,000 in number, and with them Sudeten German Communists and Social Democrats, State police, *gendarmérie*, and troops, have recovered from their first shock and are beginning to be aggressive in their turn. The incidents at Troppau<sup>45</sup> as well as the increasingly frequent provocation by soldiers, for instance at Falkenau and in the Adler Mountains, speak in particularly clear terms. It may be that during the coming days strict orders will compel the troops to return to a neutral attitude, but even then the fact would remain that Germans and Czechs face one another ready and eager for battle. To that must be added the Czech stores of weapons, the contents of which might in a period of disturbance suddenly fall into the hands of the civil population. The case of Glaser, the *agent provocateur*, is known to you. The day before yesterday I brought to the notice of Foreign Minister Krofta a second case from southern Moravia, citing a witness. Today I was informed of a third particularly suspicious example of this kind occurring at Trautenau. I gave instructions that the Premier or the Minister of the Interior should be at once informed of it. Legation Counselor Hencke will report verbally to them upon other even more serious incidents.<sup>46</sup>

All this forces one to the conclusion that things cannot go on like this, because it is no longer possible to calculate the full effects of the passions that have been let loose. The leaders of the Sudeten German Party, too, as Deputy K. H. Frank and others have assured me, have come to realize that in the existing circumstances they can no longer guarantee party discipline.

On another plane there is some progress to report, showing in what direction a possibility of relieving the tension may be found. The British and French *démarches* of the 7th of the month, upon which I reported by telegram,<sup>47</sup> were welcome to the Government, since the advice of the protecting Powers<sup>48</sup> could not fail to assist Premier Hodza in his task of convincing his recalcitrant colleagues, and among them above all the leaders of the Left Wing Parties, of the need for far-reaching compromise in the question of nationalities. The so-called Political Cabinet, that is, the representation of parties in the Council of Ministers—the Foreign Minister, for instance, is not one of them—has been in permanent session all the week. Shortly before this a dissolution of the Government coalition was only just avoided. But the outcome of the laborious debate is this, as Hodza

<sup>45</sup> See document No. 148, p. 260.

<sup>46</sup> Marginal note by Altenburg: "concerning incitement by leaflet to refuse service in the Army."

<sup>47</sup> See document No. 157, p. 274.

<sup>48</sup> The allusion is presumably to France and Britain.

informed me: that he has now been accorded a clear path and the necessary full powers for reaching a comprehensive settlement. In this connection it must, of course, still be borne in mind that the parties behind their now united leaders are in their own ranks at variance over the measure of what should be conceded and, finally, that it is not only a question of an alteration in the political aims of the parties, but that the mentality of the bureaucracy and of the whole Czech people must undergo a change if peace and justice are really to be restored to this State.

Hodza told me that the petty postponement of the communal elections<sup>49</sup> that had been intended had been abandoned and that, as had in the meantime been announced, all communes were to have voted by June 12, even if, as some politicians feared, this should lead to a kind of plebiscite among the Sudeten Germans. He further informed me that the German language was to be placed on a footing of equality with the Czech and that he intended to fill the vacuum in the services of public order, created in Sudeten German territory by the now unavoidable inactivity of the police authorities, by making the Sudeten Germans themselves responsible for the maintenance of public order through cutting down the State police stage by stage. He desired a reconstruction of the State. He would not adopt the terminology "National State or Nationalities State," since previously he had never spoken of a National State, which the Constitution did not do either, but in practice that was what it was to come to. He wanted to open conversations with the Sudeten German Party as early as possible, but to begin them confidentially, in order that parties and press might not interfere. The Sudeten German Party was to state what it demanded; he would say what he could do. Each side might keep something in reserve for itself. Of the known demands of the Sudeten German Party, self-government, a share in the political life and administration of the State, were concepts over which an understanding could be reached. What was meant by "compensation" had still to be explained to him. Of course, the eight points<sup>50</sup> from Henlein's Karlsbad speech must be discussed. It would soon become clear whether the Sudeten German Party really wished to achieve practical results. If so, he would be at pains at once to bring every point on which agreement had been achieved to realization, without waiting for the full results. If not, then he would have to give up this attempt to reach internal peace. Only

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<sup>49</sup> They had been announced by the Prime Minister to take place early in June and a further postponement of them had been rumored in the middle of April; see p. 88, paragraph bearing footnote 53. The first elections were ultimately held on May 22.

<sup>50</sup> See document No. 135, p. 242.



the Sudeten German question was a matter of vital importance to the State; compared with it the Hungarian, Polish, Ruthenian, and even the Slovak questions<sup>51</sup> were of little account.

From among Hodza's observations I would pick out one which relates to the integrity in negotiation of the Sudeten German Party. Do the leaders of the Sudeten German Party desire the settlement [*Ausgleich*] on the basis of equality of rights, or will they only make a pretense of negotiating and keep raising new demands so as to make an agreement impossible, and then call for help from the Reich? This is the question that is being put everywhere, by the press, by politicians, and by diplomats. And it is suspected by the overwhelming majority that the question is to be answered in the negative, as conversely it seems generally to be assumed that the Sudeten German Party only acts on instructions from the Reich Government and that every point in Henlein's Karlsbad speech has been dictated by Berlin.

If, however, in spite of a Czech offer of complete equality of rights the negotiations should break down, not perhaps, as would still be perfectly conceivable, on account of sabotage by the Czechs, but owing to the attitude of the Sudeten German Party, then not only the blame for it would be laid upon our shoulders, while the Czechs would have won over public opinion in foreign countries, but also it would no longer be possible to prevent the tension within the country from exploding.

The only method that I can see of lessening the tension lies in speedily carrying out the negotiations up to the point at present attainable, with appropriate support from our press and our radio. This would not, of course, bring any final solution either to the problem of nationalities or indeed to the problem of German-Czech relations. But by interposing a transitional period it might be possible to facilitate the development of events at a quieter tempo, while retaining full freedom to negotiate.

EISENLOHR

[Longhand note by Altenburg:] Add for *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*: Reference is being made to the conversation with Legation Counselor Hencke and to the other confidential discussions held in the last few days on the above question.

<sup>51</sup> i.e., the political status of these national minorities in Czechoslovakia.

## No. 159

120/68139

*Memorandum by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 14, 1938.

Both the United States Ambassador<sup>52</sup> and the Italian Chargé d'Affaires<sup>53</sup> called on me today with reference to the Czechoslovak problem. I replied in the familiar manner, but in somewhat more detail to the Italian, concerning the British Ambassador's recent visit to the Reich Minister. I dropped a remark to both diplomats that, according to information we had received, certain individuals in the Prague Government, in military circles, and also in the diplomatic service of Czechoslovakia, were desirous of directing matters toward a European crisis for fear of the automatic chemical process of disintegration of Czechoslovakia. I perceived in this a critical and dangerous symptom of the present situation. Ambassador Wilson, who is traveling to Paris today for the week end, asked me point-blank whether I was alluding to Osusky, the Czech Minister in Paris. I replied that I could not but fear that Osusky was not far removed from such ideas.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 160

1613/386748

*The Supreme Headquarters, the Wehrmacht, to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

No. 2610/38 g Ausl Id.

SUPREME HEADQUARTERS, THE WEHRMACHT,

BERLIN, May 17, 1938.

(Pol. I 1205 g (V))

To the Foreign Ministry through Foreign Ministry representative.<sup>54</sup>

Intelligence Directorate learns from a reliable source:

A conference took place at the house of Marshal Rydz Smigly<sup>55</sup> on May 12 between the Ambassadors Lukasiewicz (Paris), Dr. Papee (Prague), Lipski (Berlin), the President of the Republic, and Foreign Minister Beck. The conference considered what decision to take

<sup>52</sup> Mr. Hugh R. Wilson, 1938-39.

<sup>53</sup> Count Massimo Magistrati.

<sup>54</sup> I.e., the Foreign Ministry representative at the *Wehrmacht* Headquarters.

<sup>55</sup> Marshal Edward Smigly-Rydz, Chief of the Polish Armed Forces, 1936-39.

regarding Poland's attitude toward Czechoslovakia in view of an appeal by the French Ambassador, Noël, in favor of Czechoslovakia.

The appeal of France was rejected, the opinion being expressed that the view of Ambassador Lipski was the most securely founded. Lipski pointed out that Poland's position in regard to Germany would undergo considerable deterioration if she were to adopt a positive attitude toward Czechoslovakia. Lukaszewicz was instructed to state in Paris that Poland was pursuing in regard to Czechoslovakia a policy dictated exclusively by considerations of security and had at present no interest in a military guarantee.

For the Chief of the Supreme Headquarters, the *Wehrmacht*:

SHELLER

[Marginal note:] Information regarding source has been requested.

### No. 161

120/68141

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 144 of May 17

PRAGUE, May 17, 1938—12:50 p.m.

Received May 17, 1938—2:20 p.m.

Krofta gave me confirmation of the press report according to which he had made written reply to the British and French *démarches* of May 7.<sup>56</sup> Purport was substantially that Czechoslovak Government would deal with nationalities question with utmost expedition, and would initiate conversations on draft statute<sup>57</sup> with representatives of nationalities, especially German, before its publication. These discussions were to begin during current week and, indeed, not only with deputies but also with Henlein himself. Beneš, too, wished to get into personal contact with latter in near future.

Krofta further related that the wildest rumors of an imminent attack by Germany had been current at the Geneva meeting,<sup>58</sup> and expressed considerable anxiety in regard to affair of subversive leaflets alleged to have been circulated by Sudeten German Party. He agreed, however, with me that this sort of thing should not be exaggerated but had best be ignored.

EISENLOHR

<sup>56</sup> See documents Nos. 149 and 157, pp. 261 and 274.

<sup>57</sup> The draft Minorities or Nationalities Statute; see footnote 81, p. 206, and footnote 41, p. 275.

<sup>58</sup> Of the League of Nations Council from May 9 to 15.

## No. 162

1339/353292-95

*The German Ambassador in Poland (Moltke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

RV 47/5. 38

WARSAW, May 17, 1938.  
(Pol. V 3826)In continuation of telegram No. 29 of May 14, 1938 (Pol. V 3705).<sup>59</sup>

Subject: Poland's attitude to the Czechoslovak question.

## POLITICAL REPORT

As I already reported in my telegram of the 14th instant and as has now been confirmed by further observations, the report from Prague in the *Berliner Tageblatt* mentioned in your telegram No. 83 of the 12th instant,<sup>59</sup> according to which Poland in a given case "would act in accordance with her own interests," may be traced to a report of the Warsaw representative of the United Press, who in his turn had received his information from the Deputy Director of the Press Department of the Polish Foreign Ministry. If, therefore, we are not dealing with an official announcement, the utterance in question should still correctly represent the views of the Polish Government. Certain indications even go far to prove that the phraseology alluded to was circulated by the Polish Foreign Ministry as a general directive "for the language to be held."

For the rest, the reports constantly appearing in the press that pressure has been exerted by France to obtain from Poland a formal statement regarding her attitude in the event of an armed conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia, are not, so far as I have been able to establish, correct. It is quite true that, alike in Paris and in Warsaw, serious conferences have taken place with a view to bringing Polish policy into line with French policy in the Czechoslovak question. But, so far as my information goes, it is only a matter of modifying Polish anti-Czech propaganda, while the question of supporting France in the event of her coming to the assistance of Czechoslovakia has so far not been brought up. "We have not yet got as far as that," was the answer of the French Ambassador here<sup>60</sup> to a friend when a question to that effect was put to him. In view of their aspirations for Teschen in Silesia,<sup>60a</sup> of which the Poles now

<sup>59</sup> Not printed.

<sup>60</sup> Léon Noël, 1935-39.

<sup>60a</sup> The southern part of the frontier Duchy of Teschen, formerly in Austrian Silesia, had been assigned to Czechoslovakia on July 28, 1920, by the Conference of Ambassadors in Paris, although the Polish population greatly outnumbered the Czech. The portion of the Teschen area handed over to Czechoslovakia included the important coal-mining district of Karvinna. (See also document No. 506, p. 816.)

hardly make any secret, it is, of course, barely imaginable that Poland would at the same time agree to assume an obligation to protect the integrity of Czechoslovakia:

For the rest, as regards the efforts of France to exert a moderating influence upon Poland's anti-Czech attitude, it appears that the French have made use of the argument that the destruction of Czechoslovakia would render French support of the Polish ally, which might become necessary in the future, uncommonly difficult, if not absolutely impossible. And they clearly did not omit to point out that the example of Czechoslovakia might produce serious repercussions upon the attitude of the minorities in Poland. And, in fact, the demand of the Ukrainians for autonomy publicized in the meantime<sup>61</sup> shows that such dangers do exist. What, however, manifestly most distresses the French is the fact that the attitude hitherto maintained by Poland must in the public view create the impression that there does exist a line of action agreed upon with Germany. In fact, how little successful French efforts have been to bring about even a moderation of anti-Czech propaganda is clear from a glance at the Polish press of the last few days. Now, as before, the papers supporting the Government give the greatest prominence to reproaches and complaints about the oppression of the Polish minority in Czechoslovakia. Side by side and with evident design, the reports from Berlin depict a mood of firm determination on the part of Germany to force through now a final solution of the Sudeten German question under any circumstances.

The Czechoslovak Minister, M. Slavik, has also taken steps here during the last few days to bring about a *détente*. M. Beck<sup>62</sup> is said to have been particularly amiable in his conversation with M. Slavik, but, to the thrice-repeated request for an intervention against the anti-Czech press campaign, is said to have replied that he would discuss it with his press chief. As already mentioned, there has been no change in practice.

On the other hand, the Czechoslovak Minister seems to have found a more favorable atmosphere with Vice Premier Kwiatkowski, who is not generally in the habit of receiving diplomats, but who had a lengthy conversation with M. Slavik. This probably was mainly about economic questions, particularly the increased utilization of Gdynia as a Czech export harbor. But the political sphere was also

<sup>61</sup> About May 11 a meeting of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian National Democratic Organization at Lvov decided to abandon cooperation with the Polish Government and demanded an autonomous regime for the Ukrainians of eastern Galicia.

<sup>62</sup> Polish Foreign Minister, 1932-39.

obviously touched upon and, moreover, in a way but little gratifying to us. M. Kwiatkowski, so I learn from a generally well informed source, is said to have stated to M. Slavik that he considered the dispute about the Teschen region barren, for a correct frontier demarcation simply did not exist. Both countries, Poland and Czechoslovakia, must fully realize what they had lost by the Austrian *Anschluss* to the Reich, and it was now high time for them to get together to make good these losses by active cooperation.

In view of the growing influence of the Vice Premier and his close ties with the President, this attitude of M. Kwiatkowski, diverging from the Beck policy, deserves special attention.

MOLTKE

### No. 163

F13/307-314

#### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 219

The French Ambassador, François-Poncet, called on me today at noon in order to communicate the following:

He had not been instructed by his Government to undertake any sort of *démarche* with me in regard to the Czechoslovak question, but he would merely like, as agreed between us, to discuss a few points with me after my return from Italy.<sup>63</sup> The [British] Ambassador, Henderson, had acquainted him with the broad outline of his conversation with me. He had gained the impression from it that I was skeptical in regard to the energy with which the French Government had intervened in Prague for a settlement of the Sudeten German question. He could assure me that the French Government, as also the British Government, would do everything to contribute to a settlement of the Sudeten German problem. In my conversation with Sir Neville Henderson I had apparently indicated the eight points of Henlein's Karlsbad speech<sup>64</sup> as a basis for negotiations. He very much hoped that an agreement would come about between Prague and Henlein.

I replied to the French Ambassador that Henlein's speech seemed very reasonable to me. I could not, however, define my attitude with regard to his individual demands. Henderson indeed characterized them as a basis for negotiation. Henlein himself had characterized his demands as the absolute minimum which he must have for satis-

<sup>63</sup> See footnote 7, p. 261.

<sup>64</sup> See document No. 135, p. 242.

faction. In any case it seemed to me purposeless to endeavor to strive for a hollow compromise which would not eliminate the difficulties. I very much hoped, moreover, that Prague would see reason. The latest press reports on incidents in Czechoslovakia were certainly making me skeptical again. Germany was endeavoring to secure a peaceful settlement of the Sudeten problem, and would welcome it if Britain and France exerted their influence in Prague in order to promote a reasonable settlement. It was not for Germany to negotiate with Czechoslovakia. The Sudeten German question was rather a matter between the German group and the Prague Government.

François-Poncet replied in a cautious and very conciliatory manner that he was extremely anxious in regard to a possible German-Czech conflict, the consequences of which were incalculable.

I answered that the German attitude to the Sudeten German question was simple and was certainly known to him. The Führer had, in his Reichstag speech of February 20,<sup>65</sup> stated that he could no longer tolerate the continued oppression of Germans on the Reich frontiers. The entire German people stood behind this resolve. The German Government hoped that no further acts of provocation against German racial entity would occur from the Czechoslovak side, for the situation which would arise therefrom would be grave. I had lately read in some French newspapers that France would "march" in the event of a German-Czech conflict. Threats of this kind seemed irresponsible to me; moreover, he, Poncet, knew full well from experience that they left the Führer and ourselves completely cold. I could not, however, imagine that France would conjure up a world war in order to maintain intolerable conditions in Czechoslovakia, for there was no justification for such interference. A war for the preservation of a state of affairs in which an unarmed majority in the Czechoslovak State was held subject by an armed minority would defy all the principles of democracy so highly prized by France. I had no need to tell him, Poncet, how Germany would reply to an attempt of such a character.

François-Poncet attempted to dismiss my reference to the French press reports concerning military action against Germany by remarking that journalists always wrote wild stories. (There were scamps among them who for 500 francs a month were ready to serve up any sensation.)

I replied that press reports of this sort might, however, have truly fatal consequences. If German-French relations were surveyed from a higher vantage point, it seemed to me that the German attitude was

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\* See footnote 83, p. 139.

clear and simple. Germany had no territorial claims on France, as the Führer had unequivocally declared. Through the agreement with Belgium,<sup>66</sup> Germany had made a further contribution toward pacification in the West. Our naval treaty with Great Britain<sup>67</sup> pointed in the same direction. On the other side the Sudeten German problem must be solved. It seemed to me grotesque that Germany and France should wage a war over this question. To begin with, the Czechoslovak question seemed to me to be, from the military strategic standpoint, of completely subordinate interest to France today, for as far as the German Army was concerned it was no longer a military problem at all. The power of resistance of Czechoslovakia, in her position between Austria and Silesia, seemed to me to be comparable with that of a hollow nut. Besides, a handful of Hussites with Communist leanings constituted, in my opinion, no serious problem otherwise for German-French relations. I could not imagine that two lions would come to blows over a Czech mouse. This seemed to me, in actual fact, no fitting objective for the two great armies. In any case, Germany must regard any intervention by France as a war of aggression and conquest directed against Germany, and would act accordingly. The entire German people would rise as one man and world opinion would be fully and entirely with Germany.

François-Poncet replied that he regarded the Czechoslovak problem in a somewhat different light. France had concluded with that State an alliance<sup>68</sup> which was binding upon her. If, therefore, the German armies marched into Czechoslovakia, France would be faced with the question how she ought to act. Furthermore, in the event of a German-Czechoslovak conflict, Hungary would certainly intervene, and as a result Rumania and Yugoslavia would also come into the picture. The danger existed that a great world conflagration might break out in consequence. Britain, too, would probably be drawn in. He hoped, however, that this eventuality would never occur but that it would be possible to reach a reasonable settlement. The French Government had no intention of intervening in Berlin, but it had been agreed that the British Ambassador, whom we probably preferred, should arrange a discussion on the Sudeten German question. He was conscious that a step on his own part would only be received with distrust in Berlin.

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<sup>66</sup> Apparently the German declaration to Belgium of October 14, 1937, undertaking to respect Belgian neutrality and to come to her assistance in the event of an unprovoked attack.

<sup>67</sup> The Anglo-German Naval Treaty concluded on June 18, 1935, providing for a limitation of naval armaments and exchange of naval information.

<sup>68</sup> See document No. 2, p. 10.



I contradicted François-Poncet and replied that I talked with him just as readily as with Sir Nevile Henderson. On a further remark by the Ambassador regarding acts of provocation in the Czechoslovak question, I interjected that I hoped France had not sold herself out-and-out to the Czech Hussites so that she would have to spring to her feet at every Czech act of provocation.

Poncet answered that this was just the difficulty, because the Czechs would, of course, always maintain that the Sudeten Germans had given the provocation, while the Germans would maintain the converse (the French obligation of assistance exists, as is well known, for the contingency of an "unprovoked attack").

I replied to François-Poncet that the Sudeten Germans had, during many years, undoubtedly given the whole world proof of their forbearance in the face of continual Czech provocation. In the eyes of the world, therefore, a Sudeten German act of provocation hardly existed for discussion. In Britain, too, for example, people were very indignant over the treatment of the Sudeten Germans during recent years. In concluding this topic, I left the Ambassador at any rate in no doubt that any intervention by France in a German-Czech conflict would at once bring 75 million Germans into action. The leaders of the great French Army were certainly too sensible to embark on an adventure for a problem of secondary importance and to come to blows with the German Army on its account. He, Poncet, who was always considered to be exceptionally well informed, doubtless had a clear understanding of the fact that hundreds of thousands of Frenchmen would lose their lives without their soldiers succeeding in setting foot on German soil. I begged him in any case to leave his Government in no doubt as to the attitude of the Führer in this question, which was shared by the entire 75 millions of German people.

François-Poncet then went on to speak of Mussolini's speech in Genoa,<sup>69</sup> which he characterized as very regrettable. It was not known what Mussolini really wanted, as he was now again suddenly attacking France in every connection.

I contradicted the French Ambassador and pointed out that, according to newspaper reports, the Franco-Italian negotiations<sup>70</sup> had been continued by means of a new conversation between Ciano and

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\* The public speech made on May 15, 1938, in which he defended the Italian attitude to the Austrian *Anschluss*, criticized the policies of Britain and France toward Italy, and affirmed Axis solidarity in the event of war.

<sup>70</sup> Negotiations for the regularization of relations between France and Italy had been begun on April 16 in Rome between M. Blondel (French Chargé d'Affaires in Rome) and Ciano, and were resumed on April 29 after Blondel's return to Paris to report.

Blondel. François-Poncet bitterly complained that Daladier had been caused great difficulties as a result of the above-mentioned speech. The danger existed that he would soon fall, and that a new Popular Front government would take his place.

I declared to François-Poncet that I found Mussolini's speech to be perfectly intelligible, and referred him especially to the concluding sentences, in which he had demonstrated that, judging by certain utterances, as for instance those of the American Secretary of War,<sup>71</sup> the democracies were possibly preparing a war against the authoritarian states.

François-Poncet replied that, before the Mussolini speech, he had hoped to begin conversations soon with Germany, too. He had thought, among other things, of confirming Belgian neutrality by means of a pact between the four or five Powers jointly. He had further considered a declaration regarding the neutrality of Switzerland, and possible declarations by the statesmen of the four Great Powers in regard to a certain limitation of armaments. Should the four great European States for once cooperate in any way at all concerning these questions, this fact alone would work wonders.

I replied to him that it was necessary to call a halt to the campaign which, during the last weeks, had again been conducted against the authoritarian states in the French, British, and American press. If the atmosphere were cleared in this respect it would be easier to work toward the goal which he had in mind, the attainment of which I, too, would most warmly welcome. I supported my statements regarding the press with a few examples from the American press, and added that the Mussolini speech seemed to me to be merely an answer to provocation of that type.

François-Poncet insisted that Mussolini's speech meant a step backwards, but he expressed his hope for renewed negotiations. He agreed, moreover, with me that it was first of all for Prague to take the initiative to bring about a reasonable settlement of the Sudeten German question.

RIBBENTROP

BERLIN, May 17, 1938.

<sup>71</sup> Mr. Harry H. Woodring; this refers presumably to the address on May 5 to the United States Chamber of Commerce, in which he gave a warning that continued aggression by the dictatorships might drive the democracies to war and that the United States must be prepared.

## No. 164

1613/386750

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

STRICTLY SECRET

URGENT

No. 147 of May 18

PRAGUE, May 18, 1938—8 p.m.

Received May 18, 1938—9:45 p.m.

(Pol. I 1210 g (IV))

For the State Secretary.

On May 17 Wannemacher, editor in chief of the central organ of the Sudeten German Party, *Zeit*, gave the following information to Stranik, representative of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, regarding directions given by Sudeten German leaders as to line to be followed by journalists in immediate future:

Reports about Czechoslovakia cannot be trenchant enough. No favorable opinions are to be given space, not even those derived from the Czech Agrarian press. Negotiations between Sudeten German Party and Government will not take place. Autonomy demand is long out of date. Even if Government were willing to give it of its own free will, Sudeten German Party would no longer accept it. Aim is plebiscite, and they will strive for it with all their might. Wannemacher counters Stranik's objection that he has received contrary instructions from editorial department of *Berliner Tageblatt* by pointing out all authoritative Reich-German quarters approved attitude communicated by Wannemacher. Stranik was not to continue learning Czech, as march-in is expected in near future. Wannemacher further observed he had issued instructions in the above sense to contributors to the *Zeit*, who at the same time reported for Viennese papers.

These directives given out only yesterday by Wannemacher in no way correspond with instructions transmitted to me today by Counselor of Legation Hencke, regarding tactics to be adopted until further notice. Suggest informing *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* with a view to further directives. Kindly telegraph instructions.

EISENLOHR

[Longhand note:] Copy sent to SS-Obergruppenführer Lorenz for RM in accordance with wishes of [Dr. Kordt?].

## No. 165

1941/435045

*The German Foreign Ministry to Certain German Missions Abroad*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, May 18, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 3290)

To German Embassies in London, Washington, Paris, Rome, Warsaw; and Legations in Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest.

The Foreign Ministry has lately been informed on several occasions that there are certain individuals in the Czechoslovak Government, as well as in the Czech Army and in the Prague Diplomatic Service, who take a pessimistic view of the further development of the Czech question. They fear an automatic, as it were, chemical process of dissolution of the territory of the Czech State, in the face of which French eagerness for the alliance might gradually flag. Owing to this anxiety these persons are inclined to force the Czech-Sudeten German problem by an attitude of intransigence and to steer toward an international European crisis.

The foregoing information is confirmed by certain observations made by the German Legation in Prague. The danger of such a policy renders it desirable that we should give particular attention to such tendencies. I should, therefore, be grateful for suitable observations and for a report. At the same time it seems expedient in diplomatic conversations to draw the attention of the outside world cautiously to these developments.

For the Minister:  
BISMARCK

## No. 166

120/68153

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

SECRET

BERLIN, May 19, 1938.

The Hungarian Minister<sup>72</sup> reverted today, as usual, to the subject of his country's probable attitude when the Czechoslovak question started moving. He wanted to show that a conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia could not be localized, but that Hungary also would in that case have to act, and act promptly.

I replied to the Minister that the complex possibilities of the political course of a crisis between Germany and Czechoslovakia could,

<sup>72</sup> Döme Sztójay, 1935-44.

after all, not be anticipated to the same extent in terms of mobilization, as was perhaps customary at military deliberations in definite and clear-cut cases of war. The political course was usually such that it continually needed to be readapted to the position of the moment.

As the Minister again brought up his favorite theme, namely, a Hungarian-Yugoslav agreement<sup>73</sup> in view of the possibility of a Hungarian-Czechoslovak conflict, I told him briefly that our Minister in Belgrade had recently broached once more the matter there, but so far had called forth no response.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 167

2369/494485

*Minute by an Official of Political Division IV (Altenburg)*

MINUTE

(zu Pol. IV 3509)

Herr Karmasin<sup>74</sup> had a talk with me yesterday and states his reason was the wish for political instructions. I declined to comply with his request and referred him to the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*, to which he had already been recommended by the V.D.A.<sup>75</sup> Herr Karmasin thereupon remarked curtly that a mood of great excitement prevailed among the Racial-Germans in Czechoslovakia and all clamored for annexation to the Reich. He did not ask to be received by the State Secretary; as things are, it would have been pointless to make this request. In view of the fact that Henlein is also known to be the leader of the Carpathian Germans,<sup>76</sup> Herr Karmasin must adhere in principle to Henlein's instructions and utterances. His visit to the Foreign Ministry is therefore a case of lack of discipline and self-importance which there is no need to encourage.

Pass to Prince Bismarck<sup>77</sup> for information.

ALTENBURG

BERLIN, May 19, 1938.

<sup>73</sup>This question had been mooted in Hungarian Government circles since late 1937, the Hungarian idea being to secure Yugoslav neutrality in the event of a Hungarian-Czechoslovak conflict, in return for Hungarian renunciation of her revisionist claims against Yugoslavia.

<sup>74</sup>Leader of the German minority in Slovakia.

<sup>75</sup>*Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland*, i.e., the organization for the protection and expansion of German minorities abroad. Originally a cultural organization dating from Imperial times, it appears later to have been fused with the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*, the political organization dealing with German minorities abroad. However, the relations of these bodies to each other and to the *Auslandsorganisation* (the Party organization responsible for Reich-Germans living abroad) are obscure.

<sup>76</sup>i.e., the German minority in Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia.

<sup>77</sup>Deputy head of the Political Department of the Foreign Ministry.

## No. 168

664/257291-93

*Minute by the President of the Secret Cabinet Council (Neurath)*

(Pol. II 1528)

During a meeting with the French Ambassador on the occasion of a social function, the latter began by giving vent to sharp complaints about Mussolini's speech in Genoa.<sup>78</sup> It was his conjecture that the tone and subject matter of this speech had been influenced by the Führer's visit<sup>79</sup> which had preceded it. I rejected this imputation with the utmost emphasis and said to him that it would be much more natural to look for the explanation in the attitude of the French Government, and in particular of the French press, on the occasion of the Führer's visit to Rome. Mussolini's attitude to the Spanish question was certainly not unknown in Paris, and it would be absurd to assume that he would alter this simply because it was suddenly felt desirable in Paris to seek for a *rapprochement* with Italy.<sup>80</sup> In my opinion it was only logical and justified that Mussolini had drawn attention to the difficulties attendant upon such an understanding, which lay just in the attitude of France toward the Spanish Civil War. M. Poncet attempted to explain his evident annoyance at my objections by saying that abroad people took the French press much too seriously and thus put difficulties in the way of the good intentions entertained by M. Daladier of opening a way to an understanding with Germany by means of an understanding with Italy.

After these observations, however, M. Poncet went on to speak of the Czech question. He wanted to know from me what intentions we had toward Czechoslovakia. I told him that these had been given a clear enough expression by the Führer in his speeches. It was unbearable that the German minorities in Czechoslovakia should be discriminated against and ill-used as they had been up till the present. If now, after the events in Austria, they made their voices heard more distinctly and demanded a change in the policy pursued in Prague, it was only natural. For the rest, the policy of oppression carried on for years against the German minorities in Czechoslovakia by M. Beneš with French support and his policy of hostility toward the German Reich were now bearing their fruit. That the German Reich would not put up forever with M. Beneš' conduct, inspired as it was by megalomania, had been pointed out by me for a long time, and

<sup>78</sup> See footnote 69, p. 287.

<sup>79</sup> Hitler paid a state visit to Italy from May 3 to 9.

<sup>80</sup> See footnote 70, p. 287.

particularly in conversations with the Czech Minister. If Paris and London were now beginning to understand the danger inherent in the Central European situation, nothing was more obvious than that they should advise their friend in Prague to change his conduct. On M. Poncet's observing that this had taken place during the last week, I said to him that, apart from the fact that it was not yet known how far the Czechs intended to follow this advice, I was convinced that this single step in Prague would in no way suffice. We had had thoroughly bad experiences with Czech promises, and it was a long way from the giving of an assurance by M. Beneš to the implementing of that assurance. London and Paris now had it in their power to decide whether matters would develop along peaceful lines or whether one day breaking point would be reached.

M. Poncet then attempted to depict the dangers of a European war by observations about the firm intention of the French Government to fulfill its engagements under the alliance in the event of an armed intervention by Germany in Czechoslovakia, and about the intervention of Britain, which in his view must be confidently expected. I confined myself to repeating that the key for a peaceful development in Central Europe was to be found in Paris and London.

BARON VON NEURATH

BERLIN, May 19, 1938.

CHAPTER III  
THE MAY CRISIS AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS

No. 169

120/68154

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT  
MOST SECRET

PRAGUE, May 20, 1938—12:52 p.m.  
Received May 20, 1938—2:05 p.m.

No. 148 of May 20

For the State Secretary.

Foreign Minister has just informed me by telephone that the Czechoslovak Government are perturbed by reports of concentration of troops in Saxony. I returned an interim reply that there were absolutely no grounds for anxiety, but request that investigations be made and that I be informed by telegram of result.

Nervousness on part of Government here presumably heightened by fresh Italo-French tension and continuing incidents between Sudeten Germans and Czechs, which occurred again last night, particularly in Prague and Brünn.

EISENLOHR

No. 170

120/68156-57

*Memorandum by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 20, 1938.

The Czech Minister called on me today. He began the conversation by saying that he had really wished to speak to the Reich Minister. He then made optimistic statements concerning the good intentions of his Government. The question of the Nationalities Statute<sup>82</sup> was approaching solution, even though the parliamentary formalities had to be taken into account.

<sup>82</sup> See footnote 41, p. 275, and document No. 161, p. 281.



The conversation then got sidetracked for some time in matters of detail. M. Mastny complained about the attached article<sup>83</sup> in the *Westdeutscher Beobachter* by Heinz Kleiss, who had offended against the most important obligations of a foreign correspondent as laid down by our Reich Press Chief. I replied by drawing attention to new excesses in Prague against Sudeten Germans. Mastny maintained that the Czech police were already far too lenient, since they were instructed to overlook minor offenses.

When Mastny then spoke of great uneasiness in Prague, I reproached him with the false allegations of German troop concentrations in Saxony. It was by means of such reports which were hawked round in the European capitals that systematic mischief-makers were obviously seeking to engineer a crisis. Thereupon Mastny maintained that troops had allegedly been moved toward the frontier in Silesia and northern Austria as well, and that orders were said to have been given for the SA and SS to hold themselves in readiness on May 21 and 22. This, in conjunction with the well-known leaflet affair of the 14th instant,<sup>84</sup> made the Czech Government nervous, as could easily be understood.

I declared to M. Mastny that this nervousness and all those excesses and other occurrences which we had discussed could have been avoided if the Czech Government had not neglected their duty toward the Sudeten Germans during the last 20 years. M. Mastny did not deny such acts of neglect. I then went on to observe that all that had been said so far could merely lead to this conclusion: It's up to you, Prague! If Prague did not now let things slide or do them by halves, then there would be no cause for uneasiness or any ground for fear; otherwise, I should certainly be pessimistic.

WEIZSÄCKER

Pol. IV (with the request for verification of the alleged SS and SA readiness, and also the troop movements in Silesia and northern Austria).

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<sup>83</sup> Not printed.

<sup>84</sup> Apparently the incident of May 14, when a series of arrests were made by the Czech authorities in the towns of Bohemia and Moravia, resulting from the distribution of leaflets attacking the interests of the State and asserting that France was an unreliable ally.

## No. 171

2134/466976

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 20, 1938.

The British Ambassador also called upon me today in connection with the alleged concentration of troops in Saxony (telegram, Prague No. 148).<sup>85</sup> After inquiries in the War Ministry I told the Ambassador that the report was pure nonsense; it was only on the training ground of Königsbrück that detachments of any strength were present for their normal training.

The Ambassador added to his report some general observations regarding his uneasiness regarding the further development of the Sudeten German question.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 172

120/68155

*Minute by Counselor of Legation Kessel in the Foreign Ministry for the State Secretary*

Minute referring to Prague telegram No. 148 of May 20.<sup>85</sup>

Legation Counselor Altenburg has informed the Prague Legation (Counselor of Legation Hencke) by telephone that the reports of concentration of troops in Saxony are "pure nonsense," according to information from the competent authorities, and that the Legation should notify the Czechoslovak Government accordingly.

KESSEL

BERLIN, May 20, 1938.

## No. 173

120/68173-75

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV in the German Foreign Ministry (Altenburg) for the State Secretary*

The Czechoslovak Minister called on the State Secretary this afternoon and stated that his Government had information that troops were concentrated in Saxony, Silesia, and Lower Austria, and that, further, in consideration of the impending communal elections

<sup>85</sup> Document No. 169, p. 294.

in Czechoslovakia,<sup>86</sup> SA and SS men were in readiness on the German-Czech frontier.

As inquiries regarding troop concentrations in Saxony had already been made of the High Command of the Army in consequence of telegram No. 148 from the German Legation in Prague,<sup>87</sup> the State Secretary was immediately able to reply to the Minister that this report had been characterized by the High Command as sheer nonsense. This notification has also been made by telephone to the German Legation in Prague for information and forwarding to the Prague Government.

As regards the troop concentrations in Silesia and Lower Austria, the necessary inquiries will also be made of the Army High Command.

With respect to the alleged preparation for action of SA and SS forces, the necessary inquiries have been made through SS-*Oberführer* Behrendt of the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*; in the case of the SS they were made of SS-*Gruppenführer* Zech, as the representative of the *Reichsführer* at the time,<sup>88</sup> and, in the case of the SA, of the duty chief at the SA headquarters (name could not be stated). Both gentlemen declared that the reports concerning mobilization of SA and SS formations were pure invention and absolute nonsense.

In accordance with the State Secretary's instructions I attempted to see M. Mastny, the Czechoslovak Minister, at his house in order to acquaint him with the result of the inquiries regarding the SA and SS. On being told that the Minister was at the moment with the Reich Minister, I placed Dr. Kordt,<sup>89</sup> of the Reich Minister's office, in possession of the facts, and he thereupon made a report to the Reich Minister so that Herr von Ribbentrop could himself, at the end of his conversation with the Czechoslovak Minister, give the latter the necessary reply regarding the SA and SS. I then telephoned the facts of the case to Herr Eisenlohr, the Minister in Prague; he took the opportunity to inform me that Prague was at the moment full of the most varied rumors regarding troop concentrations, and that the same inquiry as was addressed to him by the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister had also been addressed to the Hungarian Minister in Prague.<sup>90</sup> The Hungarian Minister had, likewise, after consultation with his Government, denied most energetically

<sup>86</sup> See footnote 49, p. 278.

<sup>87</sup> Document No. 169, p. 294.

<sup>88</sup> i.e., the *Reichsführer*-SS, Himmler.

<sup>89</sup> Dr. Erich Kordt, an official in the Reich Foreign Minister's Secretariat, not to be confused with his brother, Dr. Theodor Kordt, Counselor at the Embassy in London.

<sup>90</sup> Dr. Janos Wettstein de Westersheimb, 1933-39.

the information that Hungarian military forces were being assembled on the Czechoslovak frontier.

Herr Eisenlohr requested that his thanks be communicated to the State Secretary for his speedy information on the matter in question.

ALTENBURG

BERLIN, May 20, 1938.

No. 174

F6/0162-63

*Minute by the Foreign Minister*

RM 222

Today I invited the Czechoslovak Minister to see me at 7:30 p.m. and made the following communication to him:

Reports were at present becoming increasingly numerous of incidents in the Sudeten German region and also in Prague, originating in Czech provocation. If there were a recurrence of such incidents, it might have very serious results. I therefore requested him urgently to advise his Government to do everything to prevent further provocation of the Sudeten Germans. As he knew from the speech of the Führer and Reich Chancellor,<sup>91</sup> Germany could not quietly suffer any further oppression of her people.

It had further come to my notice that rumors were being circulated in Prague that Germany was assembling troops on the frontier and that units of SS and SA were being stationed in readiness. As there was not a word of truth in this, and as it was only from Prague that such rumors were disseminated, the suspicion could not fail to be aroused among us that the Czechoslovak Government was planning some measures of this kind and was trying to provide itself with an excuse by means of such rumors. If the existence of such tactics were to be confirmed, they could have only one result with the German Government, namely, that these troop concentrations, which Prague at least seemed not to desire, would take place with lightning speed. I thought it desirable that, if Prague wished for a peaceful development of events, a stop should be put to the dissemination of such rumors.

In the further course of our conversation I left the Minister in no doubt that the present development of the Sudeten German problem might lead irresistibly to the most serious consequences.

<sup>91</sup> Presumably that of February 20, 1938; see footnote 83, p. 139.

The Czechoslovak Minister answered me that he would do everything to contribute toward a pacification. He hoped very much for a peaceful development.

At a moment of peculiar tension such as the present he hoped that in general patience would be maintained.

R[IBBENTROP]

BERLIN, May 20, 1938.

No. 175

C34/000269-76

*Letter From the Chief of Supreme Headquarters, the Wehrmacht (Keitel) to the Führer, Enclosing Revised Draft Directive for Operation "Green"*<sup>92</sup>

TOP SECRET, MILITARY  
ONLY TO BE HANDLED BY AN OFFICER

THE CHIEF OF SUPREME HEADQUARTERS,  
THE WEHRMACHT,  
BERLIN, May 20, 1938.

MY FÜHRER! New strategic directions must be issued with effect from October 1, 1938 (beginning of the mobilization year for the Army), the political principles and assumptions for which it was your intention, my Führer, yourself to lay down.

It is, however, necessary for the *interim period* to replace the section "Green"<sup>93</sup> of the strategic directive by a new version which takes account of the situation created by the incorporation of Austria in the German Reich and the most recent supposed plans of the Czech General Staff.

A draft of this kind is attached. It has not yet been discussed with the Commanders in Chief. I intend to do this only when the main outline of the draft has been approved by you, my Führer, and will then again submit it for signature.

Heil my Führer!

KEITEL

<sup>92</sup> General Keitel drew up a first draft for the directive after a conference with Hitler which took place on April 21. This is probably substantially as in document No. 133, p. 239. The final directive for Operation "Green" was signed by Hitler on May 30 and is printed as enclosure to document No. 221, p. 357.

<sup>93</sup> See footnote 54, p. 239.

[Enclosure]

TOP SECRET, MILITARY

BERLIN, May 20, 1938.

WRITTEN BY AN OFFICER

ONLY TO BE HANDLED BY AN OFFICER

*Draft for the New Directive "Green" (Interim)*

1) *Political assumptions*: It is not my intention to smash Czechoslovakia by military action in the immediate future without provocation, unless an unavoidable development of the political conditions *within* Czechoslovakia forces the issue, or political events in Europe create a particularly favorable opportunity which may perhaps never recur.

2) *Political possibilities for commencing the operation*: A sudden attack without convenient outward excuse and without adequate political justification cannot be considered in the present circumstances, in view of the possible results of such action.

Operations will preferably be launched, either:

a) After a period of increasing diplomatic controversies and tension linked with military preparations, which will be exploited so as to shift the war guilt on the enemy.

But even such a period of tension preceding the war will be terminated by sudden military action on our part with as much of the surprise element as possible, alike in regard to time and extent, or

b) by lightning action as the result of a serious incident which will subject Germany to unbearable provocation and which, in the eyes of at least a part of world opinion, affords the moral justification for military measures.

Case b) is more favorable, both from a military and a political point of view.

3) *Conclusions for the preparation of Operation "Green,"* based on the possible cases mentioned in 2 a) and b):

a) For the *military operation* it is essential to create in the first 4 days a strategic situation which demonstrates to enemy states which may wish to intervene the hopelessness of the Czech military position, and also provides an incentive to those states which have territorial claims upon Czechoslovakia to join in immediately against her.

In this case the intervention of Hungary and Poland against Czechoslovakia can be expected, particularly if France, as a result of Italy's unequivocal attitude on our side, fears, or at least hesitates, to unleash a European war by intervening against Germany. In all probability attempts by Russia to give Czechoslovakia military support are to be expected.

If concrete successes are not achieved in the first few days by land operations, a European crisis will certainly arise.

b) *Propaganda warfare* must on the one hand intimidate the Czechs by means of threats and wear down their power of resistance; on the other hand it must give the national minorities indications as to how to support our military operations and influence the neutrals in our favor.

c) *Economic warfare* has the task of employing all available economic resources to hasten the final collapse of the Czechs.

The opening of the propaganda and economic campaign may precede military operations in point of time.

I reserve to myself the determination of the appropriate zero date.

#### 4) Tasks of the *Wehrmacht*:

The preparations of the *Wehrmacht* are to be carried out on the following principles:

a) The whole weight of all forces must be employed in the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

b) In the West a minimum strength is to be provided as a rear cover which might possibly become necessary; the other frontiers in the East against Poland and Lithuania are only to be held defensively; the Southern frontier to remain under observation.

c) The army formations capable of rapid employment must force the frontier fortifications with speed and energy, and must break boldly into Czechoslovakia in the certainty that the bulk of the mobile army will be brought up with all possible speed. I reserve to myself the decision of the moment for the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Preparations for this are to be made in such a way that the army formations most capable of rapid movement can cross the frontier at the same time as the *Luftwaffe*.

The proposed timetable, which is attached in the annex,<sup>94</sup> can serve as a guide for the preparatory work.<sup>95</sup>

#### 5) *Tasks for the services of the Wehrmacht*:

a) *Army*. The basic principle of a first, surprise attack on Czechoslovakia must not be prejudiced by the time unavoidably needed for transporting the bulk of the field army by rail, nor must the more rapid deployment of the *Luftwaffe* be wasted.

The first task for the Army is, therefore, to put into immediate action, simultaneously with the attack by the *Luftwaffe*, as many assault columns as can be more rapidly employed in view of their proximity to the frontier or of their motorization.

<sup>94</sup> Not printed.

<sup>95</sup> Marginal longhand note: "Drawn up together by Army and *Luftwaffe*."

It must be the purpose of these thrusts to break into the Czech fortified lines at numerous points and in a strategically favorable direction, to penetrate them or to take them from the rear. For success cooperation with the Sudeten German frontier population, with deserters from the Czechoslovak Army, with parachutists or air-borne troops, and with units of the sabotage service is of importance.

It will be the task of the bulk of the Army, by exploiting these first successes and the effect produced by the *Luftwaffe*, to smash the Czechoslovak Army and to occupy Bohemia and Moravia as quickly as possible.

The rear cover provided for the *West* must be limited in quantity and quality in accordance with the present state of the fortifications.

Whether the formations assigned for this purpose will be at once transferred to the Western frontier or be held back for the time being will be decided by my special order.

Preparations must, however, be made to enable security detachments to be brought up to the Western frontier even during the deployment "Green."

The *remaining frontiers*, as well as East Prussia, are only to be weakly guarded. According to the political situation, however, the transport of a part or of the bulk of the active forces of East Prussia by sea to the Reich must be arranged.

b) *Luftwaffe*. While leaving a minimum force for a defensive role in the West, the main strength of the *Luftwaffe* is to be employed for a surprise attack against Czechoslovakia. The frontier is to be crossed by aircraft at the same time as it is crossed by the units of the Army (see No. 5 a)). *The most important task* of the *Luftwaffe* is the destruction of the Czech Air Striking Force and its supply bases in the shortest space of time, to prevent its employment and, should the case arise, that of Russian and French supporting forces against the German Army during its deployment and invasion, and against the German *Lebensraum*.

The paralyzing of mobilization, of the conduct of civil affairs, and of the direction of the armed forces, as well as delaying the deployment of the Czech Army by attacks on its communication system, and on centers of mobilization and government, will also be of vital importance for the initial success of the Army. Where in the frontier region stronger Czech Army formations may render a speedy and successful break-through of the German land attack doubtful, the employment of adequate air formations must be ensured.



As far as the course of operations at all permits, Czechoslovak industrial establishments are to be spared. Reprisal attacks upon the population are subject to my approval.

Main areas for anti-aircraft defense are to be organized in Berlin, the industrial region of Central Germany, and the Ruhr district.

c) *The Navy*. The Navy will take part in the operations of the Army by the employment of the Danube flotilla. For this purpose the flotilla is placed under the command of the Commander in Chief of the Army.

As regards the conduct of naval warfare, at first only such measures are to be taken as seem necessary for securing the North Sea and Baltic against a surprise intervention by other states in the conflict. These measures are to be limited to the absolute essentials. Their concealment must be assured.

In this it is of decisive importance to avoid all action which might adversely affect the political attitude of the European Great Powers.

d) *Economic warfare tasks*. In economic warfare it is essential that in the sphere of armament industry a maximum deployment of forces should be made possible through increased supplies.

In the course of military operations it is important to help to increase the total economic war effort by rapidly collecting information about important factories and setting them going again as soon as possible.

For this reason the sparing—as far as military operations permit—of Czech industrial and engineering establishments may be of decisive importance for us.

Z[EITZLER]

### No. 176

1613/386749

*The Director of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle to the German Foreign Ministry*

STRICTLY SECRET  
BY HAND OF OFFICER

BERLIN, May 20, 1938.  
(zu Pol. I 1210 g)

For the attention of Counselor of Legation Altenburg.

Referring to telegram, Prague No. 147 of May 18, 1938.<sup>96</sup>

With reference to the above-mentioned telegram which has been handed in, it is requested that the following telegraphic instructions be transmitted to the Legation in Prague:

<sup>96</sup> Document No. 164, p. 289.

"I am instructed by SS-*Obergruppenführer* Lorenz<sup>97</sup> to request that Wannemacher<sup>98</sup> be reprimanded and be informed that his view is entirely erroneous. Eight Karlsbad points<sup>99</sup> continue to form basis of policy. Utterances opposed to this are contrary to Reich policy. Henlein's instructions are to be awaited.

Henlein's representative, Frank, is also to be informed accordingly."

I should be grateful if this might be transmitted as promptly as possible.

Heil Hitler!

DR. BEHRENDT  
SS-*Oberführer*

No. 177

120/68163-64

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 153 of May 21

PRAGUE, May 21, 1938—3:05 p.m.

Received May 21, 1938—5:30 p.m.

Krofta requested me to call on him at 10 o'clock this morning. He informed me that the Reich Foreign Minister told Mastny yesterday evening that if Czechoslovakia continued to spread reports of German troop concentrations these might become a reality. Foreign Minister had furthermore reminded him of Führer's words that he would not tolerate oppression and torture of Racial-Germans.

Krofta continued that situation must be considered "fairly serious." Czechoslovak Government had information that large concentrations of troops were actually being massed on the frontier, some secretly. After our precise declarations of yesterday in Berlin and here that these reports were pure nonsense, Czechoslovak Government had changed original plan to call up five classes and contented themselves with one class.<sup>1</sup> He justified this measure by alleged necessity for creating requisite basis for State's authority in face of growing unrest in "mixed language areas." There was nothing unusual in this. Thus Hungary had called up five classes 3 weeks ago, and Poland, too, had reinforced her troops some time back.

<sup>97</sup> Head of the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*.

<sup>98</sup> Editor of the principal Sudeten German daily, *Die Zeit*; see document No. 164, p. 289.

<sup>99</sup> See document No. 135, p. 242 and footnote 59 thereto.

<sup>1</sup> On the afternoon of Friday the 20th, the Czechoslovak Government called up one class of reservists and certain technical specialists.

Krofta further referred to Eger incident,<sup>2</sup> where two Sudeten German farmers were shot down this morning by a gendarme from a motorcycle with sidecar. Both dead. Gendarme would be called to account. Krofta could not, however, tell me whether he had already been placed under arrest and brought up for trial. Krofta had received no information regarding Komotau incident<sup>3</sup> from local authorities. I drew attention to fact that this example showed how reinforcement of troops in frontier region must inevitably lead to similar or even worse occurrences.

He promised me to keep telephone and telegraph communication open with Berlin under all circumstances.

Deputy Frank found Premier Hodza in despairing mood. Hour was probably deciding peace of Europe. He asked Frank whether latter was willing to aid him in saving situation, to which Frank answered in affirmative. Hodza's words: "You cannot allow your people to be shot dead by Czech soldiers any longer." Beneš returns from Tabor this afternoon.<sup>4</sup> Everything will depend upon interview with him. Hodza asked Frank in confidence what he envisaged as possible final solution. Frank replied: complete federalization, and in the event of its failure, a plebiscite. Hodza agreed unreservedly and declared that he intended to resign if Beneš did not side with him. From repeated statement that he did not wish to be rescued by anyone, it would certainly appear that he feels his life to be threatened. Frank sees Hodza again at midday and will maintain closest contact with Legation in agreement with him.

Have impression that at moment control of things has slipped from civil Government's grasp. Will report continuously. Advise for present against application of German measures, since no threat of any kind to Reich territory exists, until it has become clear here whether Czechoslovak Government can still do anything to restore calm, and if so, what.

EISENLOHR

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<sup>2</sup> This incident at Eger (Czech: Cheb) occurred on the evening of May 20 when two Sudeten German Party officials (according to the Czech account) or merely farmers (according to the German) on motorcycles were challenged by a Czechoslovak policeman. They refused to stop—according to the German version because they were not correctly challenged—and were shot dead. Indignation led immediately to other exaggerated incidents, including a tavern brawl out of which much was made.

<sup>3</sup> Apparently a reference to an incident at Komotau when a Sudeten German tax official used the Nazi greeting "Sieg Heil," which, though trivial, was made the occasion for considerable political agitation.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Beneš was at Tabor, his country house in south Bohemia, on the 21st and 22d, and on the latter day made a speech there in which, declaring that the present was the most critical time since the Great War, he made an appeal to all nationalities in the State to cooperate on the basis of equality, and declared that Czechoslovakia was not afraid of the days ahead and was prepared for everything.

## No. 178

120/68200-02

*The German Foreign Ministry to Certain German Missions Abroad*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, May 21, 1938.  
(zu Pol. IV 3455)

- German Embassy,  
London, No. 146
- German Embassy,  
Washington, No. 132
- German Embassy,  
Paris, No. 177
- German Embassy,  
Rome, No. 167
- German Embassy,  
Warsaw, No. 91
- German Legation,  
Prague, No. 107
- German Legation,  
Budapest, No. 82
- German Legation,  
Belgrade, No. 66
- German Legation,  
Bucharest, No. 116

As you will be aware from the press reports which are in your possession also, incidents have occurred in increasing numbers in Sudeten German region of Czechoslovakia in course of last few days, by reason of which situation has been substantially aggravated. While serious clashes occurred yesterday at Komotau and Chodau, two Sudeten German farmers on a motorcycle were shot at without warning by Czech soldiers on orders from a Czech major at Eger yesterday evening. Both are dead.

Yesterday—obviously in order to shift responsibility—Czechoslovak Government made agitated inquiries, both of our Minister in Prague and here as well, regarding alleged troop concentrations in Saxony, Silesia, and Lower Austria and also regarding alleged state of alert for SA and SS on German-Czechoslovak frontier during week end. These allegations have been disseminated simultaneously by world press. All reports of this kind are pure invention. The Czechoslovak Minister and also the British Ambassador, on his making inquiry, were informed of their erroneous nature. In spite of this the Czechoslovak Government has called up one class of reservists and also further specialists and technicians early today.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 1, p. 304.

Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, who informed our Minister of this, added that call-up of five classes had originally been intended but this had not been carried out as result of above German *démenti*; call-up of one class was, however, necessary for maintenance of State authority in mixed language areas. This disquieting state of affairs is aggravated by the reports, which keep coming in here today, of Czechoslovak troop movements, closing of the frontier, and removal of the Sudeten German<sup>6</sup> population, etc., from the frontier region.

Reich Government intends to reply to these provocative measures with silence for time being. Authorities concerned are instructed not to give any information whatsoever regarding German military and political aims if inquiry is made. We intend to leave it to foreign countries to form their own judgment of conditions prevailing in Czechoslovakia on basis of available factual reports from that country.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 179

120/68171

*Minute by an Official of the Foreign Ministry (Heyden-Rynsch)  
for the State Secretary*

BERLIN, May 21, 1938.  
(e. o. Pol. I M 1728 g)

From Counselor of Legation, Baron von der Heyden-Rynsch.

Colonel Jodel<sup>7</sup> of the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht* spoke as follows to me in answer to my question whether troop concentrations had taken place in Silesia and Lower Austria:

1) No concentrations of troops had taken place in Silesia and Lower Austria apart from peacetime maneuvers.

2) As was known, the armored division had been in Austria since we marched in. Apart from this the relief of the troops which previously marched into Austria was being gradually carried out. It should be added that training formations, companies, and batteries had been transferred to Austria during the process of the reorganization of the Austrian Army. For the rest, he could give an emphatic assurance that no large-scale maneuvers had taken place in Austria.

3) What he had already communicated about Saxony held good for Silesia. He would ascertain whether any extensive maneuvers

<sup>6</sup> Longhand marginal note: "the Czech!"

<sup>7</sup> Thus in the German; Colonel Jodl, Chief of the Operations Staff of the Supreme Headquarters (O.K.W.), is obviously meant.

were being held on the normal scale and would then inform me without delay.

Respectfully submitted to State Secretary, Baron von Weizsäcker, in accordance with instructions.

HEYDEN-RYNSCH

### No. 180

120/68172

*Minute by an Official of the Foreign Ministry (Heyden-Rynsch)  
for the State Secretary*

BERLIN, May 21, 1938.  
(zu Pol. I M 1728 g)

From: Counselor of Legation Baron von der Heyden-Rynsch.

1) Lieutenant Colonel Zeitzler of the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht* has, on the instruction of Colonel Jodel,<sup>7a</sup> communicated the additional information that the movements in Austria which had been intended for May 20 had not yet begun. Also the training formations had not yet started their march into Austria.

2) In Silesia no large-scale maneuvers were taking place; there were only two infantry regiments on the way to Neuhammer near Sagan for the usual training courses, partly by route march.

Respectfully submitted to State Secretary Baron von Weizsäcker, according to instructions.

HEYDEN-RYNSCH

### No. 181

120/68166-67

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German  
Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

No. 155 of May 21

PRAGUE, May 21, 1938—7 p.m.

Received May 21, 1938—9 p.m.

Following emerges from second conversation which Frank and Neuwirth<sup>8</sup> had this afternoon with Hodza and then with the Minister of the Interior, Cerny:

1. Hodza communicated that this evening a state of emergency would possibly be proclaimed in Brünn and certain places in German

<sup>7a</sup> See footnote 7, p. 307.

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 73, p. 199.

districts. Frank uttered very urgent warning against this and refused to discuss subject.

2. President of Republic was still at Tabor,<sup>9</sup> thus was only accessible to Hodza by telephone. Beneš had declared he approved Hodza's measures and particularly his cooperation with Sudeten German Party for restoration of calm and order.

3. Minister of Interior broke down completely and wrung his hands. Telephone interruption and closing of frontier had been ordered by military without the Minister of the Interior's having anything to do with it. The military had seized power and in Eger two lives had been lost for nothing. He admitted the existence of a military insurrection and further admitted that probably more than one class had been called to the colors and, without the knowledge of the Government, to a great extent mobilized. The representative of the Sudeten German Party declared that they would only continue negotiations if a constitutional situation were restored and the Chief of the General Staff<sup>10</sup> dismissed.

This afternoon the question is to be brought before the Council of Ministers and the results will be communicated to the representative of the Sudeten German Party.

Attitude of Beneš obviously [inspired] wholly by Paris. Council of Ministers intends to demand his return and to compel him to choose between Government and General Staff.

Kindly confirm arrival of all telegrams.

EISENLOHR

### No. 182

120/68168-69

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) and the Military Attaché of the German Legation in Czechoslovakia (Toussaint) to the German Foreign Ministry and War Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

No. 156 of May 21

PRAGUE, May 21, 1938—9:30 p.m.

Received May 21, 1938—11:20 p.m.

For Foreign Ministry and War Ministry.

1) My demand to speak with the Chief of the General Staff<sup>10</sup> in person was acceded to at 4 p.m. I described the technical military measures of which I had learned and added that I could not view them as training, but held them to be mobilization measures, and that in my report to Berlin I had styled them "provisionally concerned with internal politics."

<sup>9</sup> See footnote 4, p. 305.

<sup>10</sup> General Ludvík Krejčí.

In reply the General emphasized that the measures adopted had not only the character of internal political measures, but that they also aimed at repelling a German attack. He had irrefutable proof that in Saxony a concentration of from eight to ten divisions had taken place. It was only natural that as a soldier he should have taken these measures. The question whether Czechoslovakia would cancel the partial mobilization if it proved that no concentration had taken place in Saxony was answered by Krejčí in the affirmative.

2) As regards the political internal situation the General stated that the sudden breaking off of negotiations by the Sudeten German Party<sup>11</sup> had placed the Government in a position in which it was compelled to adopt measures of military security in the frontier regions.

Krejčí interpreted Henlein's temporary absence<sup>12</sup> as the "break-off of negotiations," which in reality had never even begun. It must be recorded that:

At 10:15 a.m., after mentioning yesterday's conversation between Ribbentrop and Mastny,<sup>13</sup> Krofta described the situation to the Minister as fairly grave, and for the rest justified the calling up of one class as necessary to strengthen the authority of the State.

At 9:30 a.m. the answer was returned to my question by the General Staff that it was only a matter of training.

At 12:15 p.m. I was informed in response to further questioning that it was a matter of the application of §22 of the Defense Law<sup>14</sup> for the restoration of law and order in the frontier region.

At 4 p.m. I was told that it was a question of military measures to protect the frontier against a German attack.

It is clear from these various pretexts and from the changes in the reasons given for the mobilization that the Generals systematically tried to sabotage the Hodza-Sudeten German Party negotiations even before they had begun. The Czechoslovak rule in the Sudeten German region is to be set up again and rendered secure by force of arms, and the alleged concentration of German troops in Saxony is to be used as a pretext for the outside world, for which purpose

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<sup>11</sup> The breaking off of the negotiations, which had been resumed after the Czechoslovak Government's announcement on May 13 of their willingness to renew them, was decided at an extraordinary meeting of the political committee of the Sudeten German Party on May 20, when the party decided to inform the Czechoslovak Prime Minister that it would not discuss the Nationalities Statute (see footnote 41, p. 275), except on the conditions that peace and order and the constitutional rights of freedom of opinion, press, and assembly were guaranteed.

<sup>12</sup> Henlein, on his return on May 14 from his visit to London (see footnote 35, p. 273) went to Berchtesgaden; he was back in Prague on the 23d when he reopened negotiations with the Czechoslovak Prime Minister.

<sup>13</sup> See document No. 174, p. 298.

<sup>14</sup> See footnote 18, p. 12.



the indispensable reports of yesterday were invented. On these grounds I thought it would be particularly effective if this trumped-up excuse were to be exposed by the evidence of the Czech Military Attaché in Berlin.

EISENLOHR  
TOUSSAINT

### No. 183

289/183122

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 157 of May 21

PRAGUE, May 21, 1938—10:50 p.m.

Received May 22, 1938—1:15 a.m.

Please telegraph authority to begin burning unnecessary papers as precaution.

EISENLOHR

### No. 184

F13/325-321

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 224

The British Ambassador called on me today, to inform me in the name of Lord Halifax that the British Government were striving to do everything to seek a settlement of the Sudeten German question.

At the very beginning of our conversation I drew Sir Nevile Henderson's attention to the Reuter message of the 20th instant from Berlin, in which his conversation of the 19th with State Secretary von Weizsäcker was reported in detail.<sup>15</sup> I reproached the Ambassador that this was contrary to all diplomatic usage, since, as Herr von Weizsäcker informed me, no agreement regarding any publication in the press had been reached between himself and the State Secretary.

Sir Nevile Henderson apologized and tried to excuse himself by saying that he had communicated a few points of his conversation with Herr von Weizsäcker to the Secretary, Kirkpatrick,<sup>16</sup> and had also authorized him to give a statement to the press about the incorrectness of the report on German troop movements. Apparently Kirkpatrick had gone too far, which he regretted. He had, however,

<sup>15</sup> The record of this conversation is not printed here.

<sup>16</sup> Ivone Kirkpatrick, First Secretary at the British Embassy.

meant well and had only wished to produce a tranquilizing effect upon the world press.

I replied to the Ambassador that I must request him in the future to address no questions of any sort to us regarding alleged movements of the German Army, since I must on principle refuse to answer such questions or give any information about the German Army.

As in the further course of the conversation we came again to speak of this subject, the Ambassador asked whether this meant that troop concentrations were after all taking place. I explained that I must refuse to answer this question; he had, no doubt, opportunities to inform himself on this point from other sources.

I then drew the Ambassador's attention to the incidents of yesterday, in particular, to the affair at Komotau,<sup>17</sup> where a large number of people were injured, some of them seriously, and to the affair at Eger,<sup>18</sup> on which occasion two Germans had been shot from an ambush, and signified to him that a continuation of this persecution of the Sudeten Germans must inevitably give rise to a very serious situation. Continuing, I pointed out to the Ambassador that he surely knew from our conversation of the 11th<sup>19</sup> that we were striving for a peaceful settlement of the Sudeten German problem. I had now observed with displeasure that, not long after our conversation, a section of the British press had taken advantage of this German readiness for an understanding suddenly to enter the lists on behalf of the Czechs. To adopt such an attitude, shortly after the British Government had set to work seriously to enjoin appeasement in Prague itself, must at the very least be styled most unfortunate. Whether this attitude of the British press had produced any kind of effect on the Czech Government, I did not know. One thing in any case was true, that Czechoslovakia was now showing her true features. The boastful gentlemen in Prague seemed to me to have become somewhat crazy. The kind of mentality that prevailed there also emerged from the following: Yesterday the Czech Minister, and Henderson also, had called upon me in connection with German troop concentrations near Dresden. I at once stated to the Czech Minister that this step seemed to me very strange. Reports of such alleged concentrations near Dresden all came from Prague, and, as they were not founded upon truth, it might be presumed that the Czech Government was disseminating such reports, in order to provide itself with an alibi for military measures. The Czech Minister assured me

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<sup>17</sup> See footnote 3, p. 305.

<sup>18</sup> See footnote 2, *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> For this conversation, see document No. 154, p. 269.

of the contrary. Now this morning I had received proof of the correctness of my assumption, a report having come from Prague of the calling up of one class of reservists.<sup>20</sup> In this case there was no question of any silly rumor [*Tatarennachricht*], but of an official communication from the Foreign Minister to our Minister. From this could be seen how little those in power in Prague were to be trusted, since, when they opened their mouths, they could do absolutely nothing but lie.

In regard to the calling up of a class of reservists the British Ambassador expressed the opinion that this was a "very foolish"<sup>21</sup> measure on the part of Prague. He had not yet heard anything at all about it. His Government, at all events, had done everything to help and were ready to do everything in the future as well. We should only have patience, and he was certain that all would end well and that Germany would win all along the line. If only this Sudeten German problem were shifted out of the way, conversations could then be continued on all subjects.

I again drew the British Ambassador's attention to the gravity of the situation and told him that we should follow further developments most seriously. Everything else depended upon Prague, and I could not make any additional communications in the matter.

When the British Ambassador, thereupon, once more reverted to the earnest desire of the British Government to find a compromise, I said to him that their recent step had so far had as its sole result that in Czechoslovakia they were now starting to shoot down Germans.

In conclusion, Sir Nevile Henderson once again begged that we might still have patience, since it was, after all, always better for a few men to lose their lives there, bad though that might be, than for millions to perish.

I brought the conversation to a close with the remark that any threat of intervention by a third party would leave us completely cold, and that, if a remedy were not speedily found in Prague, the whole German people would rise like one man. No one should be in any way deceived on that point.

RIBBENTROP

BERLIN, May 21, 1938.

<sup>20</sup> See footnote 1, p. 304.

<sup>21</sup> The words "very foolish" are given thus in English in the original.

## No. 185

289/183118-19

*Memorandum by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*<sup>24</sup>

BERLIN, May 21, 1938.

Before his visit this afternoon to the Reich Minister the British Ambassador called on me and spoke on the following lines:

In London people were very perturbed about the situation; in particular the refusal of the Sudeten German Party to negotiate was deeply deplored.<sup>25</sup> The very conditions demanded by the party as a preliminary to negotiations were in fact an essential part of the discussions as planned.

I did not accept this, insofar as the Prague Government, without even a discussion with the Sudeten German Party, could of its own accord make reassuring concessions, the nature of which had long ago been made clear enough by the Sudeten German Party.

The Ambassador then continued; he entreated us to keep calm from now onward. Czechoslovakia was a small country in comparison with ourselves; it was always easier for the great to remain calm. Germany held all the cards in her hand. She could only lose by abandoning her reserve. After some further variations upon this theme the Ambassador then read to me instructions from Halifax which ended with the phrase that, as was well known, France was bound by treaty to render aid to Czechoslovakia, if the latter should be victim of an aggression by a third party. The British Government had, as was known, no treaty commitments of this kind, but in a given case they would have to act, not only in accordance with some treaty obligation [*vertragliche Unterlagen*], but at the behest of political necessity.

I said to the Ambassador in no less emphatic terms than he had used to me that to put pressure on Berlin seemed to me superfluous. We had not given any sign of nervousness at all. I was almost compelled to believe that the reports discussed between us yesterday of alleged German troop concentrations had been put out by Prague as preparation for what had now assumed shape by the calling to the colors of a military class in Czechoslovakia. (The Ambassador himself thought that this version of mine might well be correct in view of yesterday's circulation of reports from Prague.) I continued: if

<sup>24</sup> The substance of this memorandum was repeated by the Foreign Ministry to the Minister in Prague at 1:15 p.m. on May 22 as telegram No. 108 of May 21 (28/19179-80).

<sup>25</sup> See footnote 11, p. 310.

Henderson's instructions from Halifax hinted at an aggression against Czechoslovakia, I should rather like to know where any sign of aggressive tendencies on our part could be observed. Though by rumors such as those just mentioned it was sought in Prague to gain credence for such views, actually this very day we had experienced the opposite in a great variety of forms, namely, a series of separate reports of a military nature from Czechoslovakia which were causing us disquiet. I gave a number of instances of this. I could only express the hope in the most emphatic terms that Mr. Newton in Prague would hold the kind of language which was at present appropriate there.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 186

F13/331-326

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 225

Today the British Ambassador again called on me and read out to me from a telegram which he had received from Lord Halifax, roughly as follows:—

The British Government had done everything in Prague to induce the Prague Government to negotiate, and they rejoiced that Prague had consented to such negotiations. All the more did they regret that the Sudeten German Party were unwilling to enter into negotiations until certain guarantees had been given. Lord Halifax would, therefore, urgently ask the German Government whether it could not exert its influence on Henlein, so that he might enter into negotiations with the Prague Government. The British Government themselves had put forward all their influence in Prague and had received from the Czechoslovak Government far-reaching assurances.

Further, the British Government still continued to receive reports of alleged German troop movements. Lord Halifax had taken note that I had told the British Ambassador that, if bloodshed occurred in Czechoslovakia as a result of the tension between Czechs and Germans, Germany would act. The position of the German Government was understood, but Lord Halifax would once again draw attention to the heavy responsibility which would be incurred by German intervention in Czechoslovakia. Also on the score of Anglo-German relations, which Lord Halifax had so much at heart, such a step by Germany was only to be viewed with most profound regret. Lord Halifax, therefore, hoped that the German Government would bring its whole influence to bear upon those in authority in the Sudetenland to contribute to calm and to a peaceful solution, for, if a conflict really were to break out, the dangers would be incalculable. France would be compelled to intervene in case of German aggres-

sion<sup>28</sup> and, even without any treaty commitment, England might be forced in by circumstances<sup>28</sup> or by political necessity. In this connection the British Ambassador referred to the statements of the British Prime Minister of March 24.<sup>29</sup> In London the whole situation was causing anxiety, and it was greatly hoped that Germany would remain quiet.

I replied to this effusion of the British Ambassador among other remarks as follows:

1) This step of Lord Halifax seemed to me to be directed altogether to the wrong address. I advised the British Government to take it up in Prague and not in Berlin. To have to exhort calmness on unarmed Germans, who today could no longer bicycle or walk in the streets without being exposed to the worst terror on the part of armed Czechs, seemed to me a grotesque imputation, and I could not take this demand seriously.

2) That the Sudeten German Party demanded certain guarantees before they entered into negotiations with the Czech Government seemed to me to be anything but an unreasonable demand, for, in order to be able to enter into negotiations, one must at least have one's life and security guaranteed, but in Czechoslovakia today no such guarantee existed. On these grounds I very well understood the demand for guarantees and must refuse to bring any kind of influence to bear upon Henlein.

3) I took note that the British Government had put forward all their influence in Prague and had received the most far-reaching assurances from the Prague Government.<sup>30</sup> These assurances were, however, completely worthless, and British influence had obviously not disposed the Prague Government to anything but to start now with shooting down Germans.

4) As regards the question of troop movements, I had already this morning expressed my opinion to him,<sup>31</sup> and I could only repeat that we saw not the slightest reason to give anyone in the world information about the German Army. I again requested him to bring this to the notice of his Government unambiguously.

5) If Lord Halifax's statement that the German Government would in the event of intervention in Czechoslovakia burden itself with a heavy responsibility, since such a conflict would force France to intervene and Great Britain might be drawn in, were intended as

<sup>28</sup> The phrase "compelled to intervene in case of German aggression" is quoted thus in English in parentheses in the original. The same is the case with the phrase which follows: "England could [*sic*] be forced in by circumstances."

<sup>29</sup> Statement in the House of Commons; cf. document No. 104, p. 192.

<sup>30</sup> With regard to the Anglo-French *démarche* to Prague of May 7, cf. document No. 149, p. 261, and footnote 8 thereto; also document No. 151, p. 265. There was no written reply from the Czechoslovak Government to this *démarche*, but the British Minister, on communicating the *démarche* to President Beneš, received from the latter a statement that the Czechoslovak Government were convinced of the necessity for coming to an agreement on the Sudeten German question without delay. On May 13 the Czechoslovak Government announced its willingness to resume negotiations with the Sudeten German Party and the other parties concerned over the National Minorities Statute.

<sup>31</sup> See document No. 184, p. 311.

a threat for us, I must reject such a threat, which did not touch the German Government, but left it completely cold. Reduced to its true proportions and applied to the real situation, such a threat could only mean that France and Britain intended to declare war on Germany, if she were not prepared to look on in silence while the blood of unarmed Germans on her frontiers was daily shed by people of an inferior race. I reminded the British Ambassador that no nation of honor could act in that way, and he had certainly seen some examples how we in Germany thought on this point today during his stay. For the rest, I thought that in a similar situation Britain would think in exactly the same manner. Germany would in no circumstances look on at the annihilation of Germanism [*Volkstum*]. The Czechs were playing with fire if they relied upon foreign aid, for before such aid arrived there would certainly not be a living soul in that State; those Czech gentlemen must be clear about that. If, however, France were really to be so crazy as to attack us, it would lead to perhaps the greatest French defeat in world history and, if Britain were to join her, then once again we should have to fight to the death.

Sir Nevile Henderson once again asserted that it was very far from Britain to begin a war with us, and that he, also, did not wish to utter any kind of threat, but only wished to indicate to me the possible development of a conflict. Finally, he once more asked whether it was not possible for me to say something positive to him on the subject of bringing influence to bear upon Henlein on the part of the German Government. I unhesitatingly rejected this as an impossible demand and once again asked him to call upon his Government to take this step with M. Beneš.

Sir Nevile Henderson said to me in conclusion that he had expected this answer, and he could assure me that, when he had received his instructions, he had already telephoned this view to London as being his own.

I ended by saying to him that our attitude depended exclusively upon further developments in Czechoslovakia.

RIBBENTROP

BERLIN, May 21, 1938.

## No. 187

120/68210

*Memorandum*

BERLIN, May 22, 1938.

Yesterday, after a party, the French Ambassador addressed me earnestly about the dangers that must automatically arise out of the alliance commitments of France toward Czechoslovakia in the event of the situation becoming further aggravated.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 188

120/68211-12

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 22, 1938.

At a function yesterday evening the British Ambassador had a lengthy conversation with me on the present situation. The Ambassador dealt chiefly with the following points:

1) The Sudeten Germans should not put themselves in the wrong by refusing to negotiate with the Prague Government.<sup>34</sup> I answered, as I had already done in the afternoon, that the Prague Government might make the necessary concessions of their own accord. The important thing was not contacts but deeds.

2) The Ambassador again tried some variations on the theme that the German Government must take no action at present. I explained at some length that the British Minister in Prague must use language that could not be misunderstood, because the Government there was somewhat hard of hearing. I stressed this idea very strongly.

3) The British Ambassador apologized again for the detailed publication in the press of our conversation on Friday afternoon, and deplored the fact that from now on we should no longer be willing to make any further statements at all concerning our military intentions. The Reich Minister had given him a definite refusal on that score. He had now been reduced to sending his two Military Attachés<sup>35</sup> in person by car to Silesia and Saxony to verify whether troop movements could be confirmed there. I replied to the Ambassador that I regretted that he did not have ten Military Attachés. Not one of them would find a single soldier on the roads in the areas concerned.

4) Finally, the Ambassador again said that Britain was not indeed obliged to intervene in a conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia; yet it seemed to him that the control over the course of the

<sup>34</sup> See footnote 11, p. 310.

<sup>35</sup> Col. F. N. Mason-MacFarlane and Maj. K. W. D. Strong.



crisis was gradually slipping out of the hands of the people concerned. In such a state of affairs decisions were no longer made according to rational points of view. On the contrary, the Powers would in the end find themselves willy-nilly entangled and drawn into the struggle.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 189

120/68213-15

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker), Enclosing Copy of Letter From the British Ambassador in Germany (Henderson) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 22, 1938.

The British Ambassador intended calling upon the Reich Minister this morning. It was intimated to him that the Reich Minister would not be coming to the office today; consequently, he came to me in order to deliver at once the letter enclosed herewith. The letter contains a personal message from Lord Halifax to the Reich Minister. The Ambassador added to the contents that Herr von Ribbentrop might take the letter in the sense in which it was written and intended, namely, as a personal and friendly appeal. Halifax considered the situation to be very grave, but earnestly hoped that we, the parties concerned, might all be stronger than fate. We should not let it get out of hand, for then the only ones to profit would be the Communists. Henderson then went on to say that, in conformity with Berlin's suggestions, very strict instructions had been issued to the British Minister in Prague to exert strong pressure in that quarter. He, the Ambassador, could add, in confidence, that in Paris they were dismayed at the irregular and unagreed mobilization measures and were advising the Government in Prague to cancel them. Henderson was skeptical when I rejoined that, according to one of our information reports, Beneš was acting in agreement with Paris. He did not believe in the existence of French intriguers who had Beneš in their power.

I then informed the Ambassador, in the light of telegram No. 155 from Prague,<sup>36</sup> of the powerlessness of the civilian authorities and also brought telegram No. 156 from Prague<sup>37</sup> to his knowledge. Henderson agreed of his own accord that such a thing as the deployment of eight to ten divisions in Saxony was completely out of the question, because that of even one single division could not be concealed from anyone with present-day transport columns.

<sup>36</sup> Document No. 181, p. 308.

<sup>37</sup> Document No. 182, p. 309.

In conclusion, the Ambassador urgently requested me to bring immediately to the Reich Minister's knowledge his personal letter with Halifax's message.

Ambassador von Dirksen has been summoned at midday today to Halifax and will afterward telegraph the substance of the conversation.

WEIZSÄCKER

[Enclosure]\*

*The British Ambassador in Germany (Henderson) to the German Foreign Minister*

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
BERLIN, May 22, 1938.

MY DEAR REICH MINISTER: Lord Halifax has asked me to convey to you the following as a personal message from himself.

"His Majesty's Government are exerting all possible influence at Prague for the avoidance of further incidents and will continue to do so. I earnestly hope that Herr von Ribbentrop will do anything he can on his part to secure patience at this critical time. If a resort is had to forcible measures, it is quite impossible for me or for him to foretell the results that may follow, and I would beg him not to count on this country's being able to stand aside if from any precipitate action there should start a European conflagration. Only those will benefit from such a catastrophe who wish to see the destruction of European civilization.

"In any case the prospects of understanding and cooperation between our two countries would be gravely jeopardized by any action that would appear to English opinion as wantonly destroying a chance of a peaceful settlement."

Yours sincerely,

NEVILLE HENDERSON

[Departmental note:] Pol. IV: Please telephone text of the memorandum with enclosure immediately to the Reich Minister in Munich.

No. 190

120/68208-09

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 252 of May 22

PARIS, May 22, 1938.

Received May 22, 1938—4:40 p.m.

Developments in the situation in Czechoslovakia, in particular Henlein's refusal to negotiate<sup>40</sup> and the killing of the two Sudeten

\* This enclosed letter is in English in the original.

\* See footnote 11, p. 310.

Germans near Eger,<sup>41</sup> are causing extreme disquiet in political circles and among general public. Incident near Eger is regarded as particularly serious in view of Reich Minister's statements to British Ambassador,<sup>42</sup> which are being circulated here, that Germany could not quietly look on if German blood were shed in Czechoslovakia. Possibility of imminent military intervention by Germany is being generally discussed. On Saturday evening Foreign Minister Bonnet received British Ambassador and Czechoslovak Minister<sup>43</sup> to confer on the situation in Czechoslovakia. Question was also discussed with Spanish Ambassador<sup>44</sup> who visited Foreign Minister on other business. In order to allay general nervousness Government have passed the word: "Keep cool." Accordingly this morning's press, though recording that situation has been much aggravated by latest events, avoids adding fuel to the flames. Killing of Sudeten Germans is presented according to Czech version and described as regrettable, but its importance is attenuated by remark that incidents are difficult to avoid in times of excitement. *Petit Parisien* urges Prague Government to undertake thorough investigation and, if necessary, punishment of culprits.

Press emphasizes briefly that French attitude toward Czechoslovak problem is generally known, but lays main stress, however, not on France's obligations to render assistance to Czechoslovakia, but on mediation by Britain, which receives unqualified approval and to whom they are obviously willing to leave the initiative and also the responsibility for dealing with the matter. It is presumed that British *démarches* were very energetic. Mediation by Great Britain was outcome of arrangements made in London on April 29.<sup>45</sup> Plain and forcible language on Britain's part is the surest means of preserving peace. A report from London in the *Journal* considers it possible that Britain will suggest a reiteration of assurance regarding Czechoslovakia alleged to have been given to British Ambassador in Berlin by Field Marshal Göring on occasion of occupation of Austria.<sup>46</sup>

It is especially emphasized by semiofficial *Petit Parisien* that France must exert a moderating influence in Prague, while Britain must work for a peaceful solution in Berlin.

Hope is generally expressed that steps taken by Britain will restrain Germany from any intended military intervention.

WELCZECK

<sup>41</sup> See footnote 2, p. 305.

<sup>42</sup> See document No. 186, p. 315.

<sup>43</sup> Sir Eric Phipps and Dr. Stefan Osusky. The date of this Saturday was the 21st.

<sup>44</sup> Marcelino Pascua y Martinez, 1938-39.

<sup>45</sup> See document No. 143, p. 252, and footnote 67, p. 246.

<sup>46</sup> See document No. 74, p. 158; the assurances were actually given to the Czech Minister in Berlin, but the British Ambassador in Berlin received similar assurances from Neurath about the same time (see document No. 81, p. 164).

## No. 191

120/68221-22

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

LONDON, May 22, 1938—6:28 p.m.

No. 251 of May 22

Received May 22, 1938—9 p.m.

Reference telegram No. 146 of May 21.<sup>47</sup>

Lord Halifax requested me to call on him at 12:30 today for an exchange of views on Czechoslovakia and asked me what information I had received.

I) I communicated the contents of telegram No. 146 to him in broad outline and presumed that he was acquainted with the substance of the State Secretary's conversation with the British Ambassador.<sup>48</sup>

In continuation I communicated to Halifax the reports passed by telephone from State Secretary to Counselor of Embassy on following subjects:

- 1) Waning influence of the civilian Ministers and the defective working of the machinery of Government in Czechoslovakia.
- 2) Increasing influence of military circles, who were acting without consulting the civilian Ministers.
- 3) Reliable information regarding further calling to the colors.
- 4) Increasing intervention of irregular military formations.

I added that further mendacious Czech reports of fresh German mobilization measures would not be denied by us; they were just as false as the reports contradicted yesterday.

II) Halifax then informed me of the contents of personal message to Reich Minister,<sup>49</sup> which was handed to the latter today by British Ambassador.

He particularly emphasized that in the case of a German entry into Czechoslovakia, in whatever circumstances, even in the event of serious acts of provocation by the Czechs, the French would march against us. He expressed this in the words, "If in fact these measures are taken, these consequences will in any case follow."<sup>50</sup> In the event of a European conflict it was impossible to foresee whether Britain would not be drawn into it.

<sup>47</sup> Document No. 178, p. 306.

<sup>48</sup> See document No. 185, p. 314.

<sup>49</sup> See document No. 189, p. 319.

<sup>50</sup> The words are given thus in English in the original.

In any case only those destructive forces which were anxious for the overthrow of European civilization would stand to gain.

III) In course of further conversation I drew Halifax's attention to the need of very serious and emphatic speaking by British Minister in Prague; it seemed doubtful to us whether Newton, the Minister, whom we esteemed highly, took account of the thickness of the Czechs' skins.

The Foreign Secretary replied that every conceivable action had been taken in this respect.

IV) I then refuted the assertion in yesterday's statement by News Department here<sup>51</sup> that the Sudeten Germans were wrong in refusing negotiation and making their acceptance dependent on the fulfillment of certain prior conditions.<sup>52</sup> The events of the previous day had proved the justice of this demand.

V) The Foreign Secretary expressed conviction that negotiations envisaged between Beneš and Sudeten Germans would lead to some result. The atmosphere must of course be calmed. It was the aim of the British Government to show patience and lower the temperature.

VI) I drew Halifax's attention to fact that a thoroughly sober and calm appraisal of the situation prevailed in Berlin. Even this morning's press was at pains to use very moderate language.

The danger point lay in the possibility of clashes in Czechoslovakia as result of forcible action by Czech military and police authorities against the Sudeten Germans. In this event the German Government would under no circumstances refrain from aiding the Sudeten Germans.

Halifax again expressed hope for relaxation of tension and added that he would be grateful for any suggestion and any proposal from the German Government; he requested that, in such case, they might be conveyed to him with all speed.

DIRKSEN

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<sup>51</sup> The News Department of the Foreign Office.

<sup>52</sup> See document No. 182, p. 309, and footnote 11 thereto.

## No. 192

621/250551-52

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A 2087

PARIS, May 23, 1938.  
(Pol. II 1572)

Subject: M. Zay, Minister of Education, on the foreign political situation.

I have the honor to submit the enclosed memorandum on a conversation which a member of the Embassy had with Jean Zay, French Minister of Education, at a social gathering. Even though a certain amount of reserve is advisable with the Minister personally—he is a Jew—nevertheless his statements do reflect the present mood of the French Cabinet in general pretty accurately. His remark about Barthélémy's<sup>53</sup> articles seems interesting. The repudiation and condemnation of these articles has recently found very strong expression in the press as well, and might be connected with Zay's attitude, which is doubtless shared by the majority of the Cabinet. The attack on the articles might appear necessary to the Cabinet, as they tally with a similar point of view found in certain sections of the population, and perhaps for this reason there is the fear that these points of view, reproduced in them, might gain a following.

H. WELCZECK

[Enclosure]

(Pol. II 1572)

## MEMORANDUM

Yesterday I had a lengthy conversation at M. Cornu's country seat with Jean Zay, French Minister of Education, on the present political situation. Zay spoke first of all with great respect of the Führer and Reich Chancellor and of Germany's achievements since the war, especially in recent years. He said he was convinced that the Führer wished for war as little as did any other European statesman. The great danger lay, however, in the fact that Germany underestimated France's actual strength and, under the influence of criminal newspaper-articles, as for example Barthélémy's articles in *Le Temps*, was bringing about a situation which was bound to lead to war. Germany's foreign policy in recent years had, of course, been re-

<sup>53</sup> Joseph Barthélémy, a lawyer and political journalist on the staff of *Le Temps*; formerly a Deputy of the French Chamber, and Vice President of the French Foreign Affairs Committee.

garded in France with displeasure, but had been, up to a point, appreciated. But with Czechoslovakia the limit to what France could tolerate had been reached. The French Government was firmly resolved to oppose with force any armed intervention in Czechoslovakia by Germany, whether direct or indirect, and would, in the event of this, have all parties, including even the Communists, united behind them. Barthélémy was wrong; with regard to Czechoslovakia, the Treaty of Locarno<sup>54</sup> was still completely valid as far as France was concerned. Britain was unable to make as definite a statement as could be desired, for internal political reasons.

The attitude of the British Government was, however, unequivocal, and he hoped that Henderson's *démarche*<sup>55</sup> had been correctly understood in Berlin.

Even though these statements were naturally intended for German ears, I got the impression, from the youthful and temperamental character of the Minister, that they represented his own convictions.

PARIS, May 23, 1938.

### No. 193

F13/334-332

#### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 226

The Italian Ambassador, Attolico, called on me at 1:30 p.m. today.

I informed him briefly of the position of the Czechoslovak problem and also communicated to him the substance of my talks with the British Ambassador. For transmission, confidentially, to Mussolini and Ciano, I was also able to give him the information that no concentration of German troops had taken place and indeed that nothing would occur on our side, unless machinations of the Czechoslovak Government brought about a serious turn of events. I told the Italian Ambassador that I attached importance to the fact that these communications should not, on account of possible undesirable reactions in Prague and other capitals, reach the press.

I further informed the Italian Ambassador about my conversations with Mussolini and Ciano<sup>56</sup> on the question of the South Tyrol and

<sup>54</sup> I.e., the Franco-Czechoslovak Treaty of Mutual Assistance of October 1925 (see document No. 2, p. 10), which was one of the Locarno group of treaties.

<sup>55</sup> Presumably the Ambassador's communications of May 21 and 22; see documents Nos. 186 and 189, pp. 315 and 319.

<sup>56</sup> Those held in Rome during his visit with Hitler to Italy, May 3-9. Cf. also the relevant documents on the South Tyrol question in vol. I, chap. II.

apprised him of the subsequent German move<sup>57</sup> in Rome. I further expressed the hope that on the Italian side everything conducive to a definitive solution of the problem would be done, as Mussolini had promised me.

Attolico replied that he had absolute confidence in German policy; it was merely regrettable that a few minor people did not fully comply with German policy in the South Tyrol question.

I replied to the Italian Ambassador that such little setbacks, which might always occur, should not be taken tragically. Moreover, we had already agreed with the Italian Government about the notification of such incidents.

The Italian Ambassador then pointed out that the task of pacifying the South Tyrol might be crowned with success by removing the name "South Tyrol" from a monument in Munich.

I replied that I did not know of the monument, that in any case such an inscription had only historical significance, and it seemed to me erroneous to see in it anything more.

The Italian Ambassador then approached me about the administration of the Southern Railway Company,<sup>58</sup> After the Italian representative had already attended two meetings of the board of directors, entry was now denied him, ostensibly on the question of principle. He asked that no precipitate action should be taken in the matter.

I answered the Italian Ambassador that I knew nothing of the matter but that I would have it investigated.

RIBBENTROP

BERLIN, May 23, 1938.

### No. 194

2369/494499-501

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A 2089

PARIS, May 23, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 3539)

Subject: Conversation with M. Daladier, the French Prime Minister.

Yesterday evening the Prime Minister invited me to his private house, not, as he said, to discuss the present critical situation in a

<sup>57</sup> After the Italo-German discussions in Rome, in May, a severe ban was placed by the German Government upon German nationalist activity and propaganda in South Tyrol and Austria; e.g., the activity of the A.O. and South Tyrolean German organizations were suspended.

<sup>58</sup> The railway from Lienz to Bressanone (Brixen) and Bolzano, the administration of which, as the link between Austria and the German-speaking part of South Tyrol, had become the subject of friction between Germany and Italy since the *Anschluss* with Austria.



formal diplomatic conversation, but to speak frankly as a French ex-serviceman to his German comrade. From our time in the trenches both of us knew the horrors of the last war, but the catastrophic frightfulness of a modern war would surpass all that humanity had ever seen, and would mean the utter destruction of European civilization. Into the battle zones, devastated and denuded of men, Cossack and Mongol hordes would then pour, bringing to Europe a new "Culture." This must be prevented, even if it entailed great sacrifices.

He regarded the development of affairs in Czechoslovakia with grave anxiety. Both the British and French Governments had made strong representations in Prague, not only for the purpose of avoiding further deplorable incidents, but also to pave the way for a thorough clarification of the Sudeten German question, which seemed to him extremely urgent. The dilemma in which France found herself vis-à-vis her ally Czechoslovakia was not unknown to me. He had not made the alliance and was certainly not happy about it. It did, however, exist and, if we attacked Czechoslovakia, the French would have to fight if they did not wish to be dishonored (*déshonorés*). A nation who valued her honor could no more break her word than could a man of honor. Neither would we act otherwise in the same situation. He personally had repeatedly had the Czechs' attitude toward the Sudeten German question explained to him. They maintained that the treatment of German minorities in Poland and South Tyrol<sup>59</sup> had for a long time been less favorable than in Czechoslovakia; in spite of this, we made no protests about their oppression, while we wished to take action against Czechoslovakia. The Czechs were therefore of the opinion that in their case more considerations were involved than simply and solely the protection of a minority. He had asked me to see him principally to acquaint himself with our opinion on so vital a question and its origin. I answered that, during my period of service in Budapest and with the League of Nations, I had studied the minority problems in detail, and had also obtained accurate knowledge from personal observation, being myself an inhabitant of a frontier district. I now had an opportunity of ex-

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<sup>59</sup> The German minority problem in Poland, formerly regulated by the Polish-German Nonaggression Treaty of 1934 and by the Geneva Convention on Upper Silesia, became acute in 1937 and had been the subject of German-Polish exchanges, particularly since the expiry of the Geneva Convention in July of that year. The negotiations led to the German-Polish Agreement of November 5, 1937, which took the form of a joint declaration, an undertaking to improve the status of the national minority of the other Power in its territory.

The South Tyrol German minority question had become more acute since the German *Anschluss* with Austria. It had been a subject of discussion between Germany and Italy during Hitler's visit to Rome on May 3-9, and was a very active question at this present date. See relevant documents in vol. I, chap. VII.

plaining to Daladier the whole maze of questions from a historical, geopolitical, economic, cultural, and finally, a moral point of view. I dealt especially thoroughly with the calamitous results of the peace treaties, from which Europe still suffered today. The Sudeten German question brooked no delay and must be settled in favor of our fellow Germans, if one wished to avoid a war. The obligation to do this lay with those who in 1919 had built up a crazy structure, which was now cracking at all its corners and joints. Daladier was particularly impressed by my allusion to a group of warmongers in Prague, backed by Russophile elements and international Jewry—Daladier is anti-Semitic—who had even sent *agents provocateurs* into the areas inhabited by Sudeten Germans, in order to provoke incidents. The Prime Minister added in this connection that he would be grateful for any information with which we could supply him on the matter. The discussion lasted about 1½ hours. Finally, Daladier thanked me for my clear and detailed exposé, from which he had learned much that was hitherto unknown to him, and expressed the hope that we might in future discuss all current questions with the same frankness as today. As an ex-serviceman he wished for nothing more ardently than the mutual understanding of all nations.

H. WELCZECK

No. 195

120/68233

*Minute*

BERLIN, May 23, 1938.

As Count Magistrati has just informed me by telephone, the British Ambassador<sup>60</sup> called on Count Ciano yesterday, Sunday evening, at 8 o'clock, in order to communicate the following to him:

The crisis in the Czech affair was serious. As was well known, France was bound to Czechoslovakia by a treaty, which was admittedly not the case with Britain, but Britain might possibly still be compelled by the course of events to associate herself with the French action.

Count Magistrati remarked that Lord Perth's statement certainly corresponded with that made to us by Henderson. The fact that this *démarche* had been made in Rome would, however, no doubt be of interest to us.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>60</sup> i.e., the Ambassador in Rome, Lord Perth.

## No. 196

120/68237

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 162 of May 23

PRAGUE, May 23, 1938—2:35 p.m.

Received May 23, 1938—5:15 p.m.

With reference to telegraphic instruction 113 of May 22.<sup>61</sup>

Italian Minister<sup>62</sup> has reported on conversation with Head of French Military Mission.<sup>63</sup> Faucher was in best of spirits and declared he felt 20 years younger. Czechoslovak military measures had taken place on instructions from Beneš, "naturally in agreement with Cabinet." Reason to be found in reports of considerable troop movements. In event of international conflict France would march immediately.

Italian Minister had further heard that Rumanian Government in contrast to Yugoslav Government had given assurances in event of intervention by Hungary. Report that had reached me privately, that Deputy Chief of French General Staff<sup>64</sup> had spent a day here recently, was not yet known to Italian Minister.

He interprets origin just as I did, namely, that Beneš and General Staff, in agreement with French, against opposition from their own Government, had ordered military measures on well-known pretext, in order (1) to have better basis for negotiations with Sudeten German Party and, if necessary, to be able to let them break down; (2) to keep fortified areas firmly under their control; (3) to demonstrate solidarity of French alliance even at risk of letting loose a war on Europe. Beneš' absence on Saturday at Tabor, his peace speech there,<sup>65</sup> and his delayed return were designed to disguise President's direct responsibility.

EISENLOHR

<sup>61</sup> Not printed.

<sup>62</sup> Domenico de Facendis, 1935-38.

<sup>63</sup> The French Military Mission to Czechoslovakia had been in Prague since 1919, in order to act as liaison in the military sphere and later also for the implementation of the Franco-Czechoslovak alliance. General Faucher had been a member of the Mission since the beginning, and became head of it in 1926.

<sup>64</sup> Général Georges.

<sup>65</sup> See footnote 4, p. 305.

## No. 197

120/68238-39

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister,  
Enclosing Letter From the British Ambassador in Germany (Henderson)*

BERLIN, May 23, 1938.

In accordance with instructions I have just given the British Ambassador the following answer<sup>68</sup> to the attached letter from him:

If the British Government believed that by sending observers to the Sudeten German area they could contribute toward remedying the grievances there, the German Government had no objections to raise.

I added that I had read a Reuter report this morning to the effect that yesterday's *démarche* in Prague<sup>69</sup> by the Minister, Newton, had yielded very good results. I feared that the publication of such statements must encourage the Czechs; no practical results of the last British *démarche* in Prague<sup>70</sup> had so far been ascertained by us. These might, for example, comprise the withdrawal by the Czechs of the units which they had moved up to the frontier.

The Ambassador took cognizance of the above communication and will convey it to London. To my further ironic inquiry whether his Military Attachés had encountered a single German soldier during their motor tours yesterday in Saxony and Silesia, the Ambassador laughingly answered in the negative. A Government statement to that effect would probably be made in the House of Commons today. The Ambassador added, however, that we must assume therefrom how useful was a public corroboration of the fact that we were remaining calm in the military sense. I might also communicate this fact to the Reich Minister.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>68</sup> The original draft of the reply, corrected and initialed by Ribbentrop, is attached to the original of this minute (frame 68240) and its text is as follows:—

Germany in principle regards any step as useful which might lead to the removal of the grievances in the Sudeten German area. If the British Government believe that the dispatch of an observer to Sudeten German territory could contribute to the removal of grievances, the German Government would have no objections. We would, however, wish to point out in this connection that the last British *démarche* in Prague, which indeed according to press reports produced far-reaching Czech assurances, does not in actual practice appear, as the events of the last few days prove, to have contributed to an improvement in the state of affairs.

Berlin, May 23, 1938.

<sup>69</sup> This apparently refers to the further British representations to the Czechoslovak Government made verbally by the British Minister in Prague on Sunday, May 22, and supported by the French, urging moderation and a readiness to make the greatest possible concessions.

<sup>70</sup> That presumably of May 7.

[Enclosure]

*The British Ambassador in Germany (Henderson) to the  
State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
BERLIN, May 23, 1938.

MY DEAR STATE SECRETARY: My Government have been considering the question of sending an observer from our Legation at Prague to the Sudeten districts to report direct on the actual situation there to His Majesty's Government. They think that his presence there might have a steadying influence.

Before sending instructions to our Minister at Prague in this sense Lord Halifax has asked me to inquire of Herr von Ribbentrop whether he would regard such a step as helpful.

Yours sincerely,

NEVILLE HENDERSON

[Longhand note by Weizsäcker:] RM: I would suggest that I report by telephone that we had no objections to raise, since Czech territory was involved.

No. 198

1863/422988

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Hungary (Werkmeister) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 56 of May 23

BUDAPEST, May 23, 1938—10:45 p.m.

Received May 24, 1938—2:10 a.m.

(zu Pol. IV 3519)

Baron Apor, Foreign Minister's Deputy, informed me Hungarian Government had indisputable evidence that Krofta had been expressly assured at Sinaia<sup>71</sup> of armed assistance from Rumania and Yugoslavia, in the event of military action by Hungary against Czechoslovakia.<sup>72</sup> On the other hand Krofta had been told that, in event of a German-Czech conflict, Rumania and Yugoslavia were unable to promise armed assistance. Apor further stated that it had been expressly confirmed to Hungarian Minister,<sup>73</sup> on his inquiry in

<sup>71</sup> At the meeting of the Little Entente Powers (Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia) at Sinaia (Rumania) on May 3-5, 1938, which was attended by Stoyadinovich (Yugoslav Prime Minister), Comnen (Rumanian Foreign Minister), and Dr. Krofta (Czechoslovak Foreign Minister). According to the communiqué issued, the meeting reaffirmed the solidarity of the Little Entente and its readiness to cooperate in any work of appeasement, and gave its special attention to the examination of the relations of the Little Entente with Hungary.

<sup>72</sup> See document No. 166, p. 290, and footnote 73 thereto.

<sup>73</sup> The Hungarian Minister in Rome was Baron Frigyes Villani, 1934-41.

Rome, that Italy would not leave Hungary in lurch in event of attack by Little Entente.

Hungarian Government was already yesterday informed by British Minister<sup>74</sup> of British Ambassador's *démarche*<sup>75</sup> to State Secretary, reported in yesterday's telegraphic instruction No. 85 (Pol. IV).<sup>76</sup>

WERKMEISTER

No. 199

120/68284

*Memorandum by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 24, 1938.

In the course of a visit occasioned by other business the British Ambassador touched briefly on the situation in Czechoslovakia. The Ambassador described to me his personal exertions, not only with London and Prague, but also particularly in regard to his British journalists here, whom he had kept to sober and truthful reporting concerning German patience and restraint.

In the further course of the conversation I told the Ambassador that a plan of action must now be formulated for further procedure in Czechoslovakia, because the problem on which things hinged continued unchanged. Nothing practical would be achieved by a conversation between Hodza and Henlein.<sup>77</sup> The series of steps to be taken were, according to my opinion: withdrawal of the Czech military forces from the frontier; release of the age group and specialists called up; and then speedy fulfillment of Henlein's well-known demands.

Henderson agreed.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>74</sup> Sir Geoffrey Knox, 1935-39.

<sup>75</sup> Presumably that of May 21 or 22; see documents Nos. 185 and 189, pp. 314 and 319.

<sup>76</sup> Not printed.

<sup>77</sup> Conversations between the Prime Minister, Hodza, and Henlein were renewed in Prague on May 23. See also footnote 12, p. 310.

## No. 200

2004/442509

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation in Hungary*  
Telegram

No. 92 of May 24

MAY 24, 1938.

Ambassador, Washington,<sup>78</sup> telegraphs on May 24 attitude of American Government in event of war as follows:

Since midday today rumors circulating here that American Government was considering expressing in Berlin its intention to stand by French and British Governments in event of conflict. Another report states that the French Government had made representations here to this effect; on inquiry by journalists, report neither confirmed nor denied by State Department.

I do not believe that President will decide on such a step at present time (unless very strong British pressure is exerted here). There can be no doubt, however, that the American Government shares to great extent British and Francophile views on present situation.

ALTENBURG

## No. 201

120/68255

*The German Ambassador in Poland (Moltke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

WARSAW, May 24, 1938—1:07 a.m.

No. 32 of May 23

Received May 24, 1938—4:05 a.m.

I learn regarding *démarches* of the French and British Ambassadors on Sunday afternoon that, in view of serious view of situation taken in Paris and London and of efforts of both Governments for preservation of peace, urgent appeal has been addressed to Polish Government<sup>79</sup> to associate themselves with these efforts. French Ambassador<sup>80</sup> is said to have stated that in event of attack on Czechoslovakia France would fulfill her obligations under the alliance and must expect Poland also to draw "certain conclusions" [*"gewisse Konsequenzen"*] therefrom. There was, however, no question here of active military intervention but of a neutral attitude.

<sup>78</sup> Dr. Hans Dieckhoff, 1937-41.

<sup>79</sup> This was evidently the visit of the French and British Ambassadors to Colonel Beck, the Polish Foreign Minister, on May 22, about which great reserve was maintained in official circles.

<sup>80</sup> Léon Noël, 1935-39.

According to a statement of French Ambassador, Beck showed understanding for French apprehensions, without, however, making promises of any kind.

Press Department of Foreign Ministry yesterday evening described view of situation held here as being that polling in Czechoslovakia<sup>82</sup> was endangered by outside elements owing to internal disintegration, which was continuing further. This attitude would confirm that the *démarches*<sup>83</sup> have not had effect of diverting Poland from her anti-Czech policy.

MOLTKE

No. 202

120/68262-63

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 255 of May 24

LONDON, May 24, 1938.

Received May 25, 1938—11:45 a.m.

In continuation of telegram No. 251 of May 22.<sup>84</sup>

I. Lord Halifax invited me today to have half an hour's conversation with him, and said to me that, following upon our conversation of the day before yesterday and my communication regarding the more moderate tone of the German press,<sup>85</sup> he had invited British press representatives to call on him and advised them likewise to use moderation. Yesterday's press had followed this advice. British Government were therefore rather perturbed that the German press today, according to reports from Berlin, made a somewhat violent attack on the British Government. He asked me the reason for this hostile tone.

I expressed the supposition that the German press considered it an injustice if the press of third countries accorded the same treatment to Germany and to Czechoslovakia. It was the Czechs who had mobilized troops, shot Germans, and caused the most varied incidents. In any case, I was fully convinced from today's British papers that the British press did not appreciate sufficiently our moderation and discretion.

Lord Halifax requested me, in the interests of general pacification of tense situation, to use my efforts to induce German press as far as

<sup>82</sup> See footnote 89, p. 335.

<sup>83</sup> These *démarches* were apparently the "urgent appeal . . . to Polish Government" referred to in the first paragraph of this document.

<sup>84</sup> Document No. 191, p. 322.

<sup>85</sup> See *ibid.*, paragraph VI.



possible to suppress ill temper. He referred to his conversation with Reich Minister Goebbels,<sup>86</sup> with whom he had expressed himself frankly to satisfaction of both parties, and with whom he had agreed to influence press of both parties in direction of moderation. He requested that this personal communication from him might be passed on to Reich Minister Goebbels.

II. Foreign Minister further stated that he had caused French Government to bring pressure to bear on Prague that no further call-up<sup>87</sup> of troops should take place. In reply to my question when Czech Government would release age group already called up, he promised to make appropriate inquiries.

III. Halifax further said that, on my information that authority was slipping from the civilian Ministers and was passing into the hands of the military, he had addressed an inquiry to that effect to Prague and urgently advised restoration of the full authority of civil power. He had reason to assume that this advice was being followed.

IV. In reply to his question as to my views on the significance of the plebiscite figures<sup>88</sup> I replied that these demonstrated the complete solidarity of the German people and the justification of Henlein's demands.

In reply to the further question from Halifax whether the peaceful course of the elections<sup>89</sup> did not testify to the moderation of the Czech Government, I said that numerous minor incidents had taken place, and that the Government had shrunk from further bloodshed after the incidents on Saturday.<sup>90</sup>

V. Foreign Minister further deplored that polling was again to be held on two Sundays and seemed to be considering the possibility of combining the two on one day.

DIRKSEN

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<sup>86</sup> During Lord Halifax's visit to Germany, November 19-20, 1937; see footnote 26, p. 73.

<sup>87</sup> See footnote 1, p. 304.

<sup>88</sup> I.e., the Reich plebiscite held on April 10 on the question of the *Anschluss* with Austria. (See footnote 84, p. 208.) The result of the plebiscite, 99.8 percent in favor of the *Anschluss*, was announced on April 11.

<sup>89</sup> The first stage of communal elections in Czechoslovakia was held on Sunday, May 22, the remaining stages being held on two subsequent Sundays, May 29 and June 12. The first stage, on May 22, passed off without incident.

<sup>90</sup> Probably refers to the Eger and Komotau incidents; see footnotes 2 and 3, p. 305.

## No. 203

120/68258

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 254 of May 24

PARIS, May 24, 1938.

Received May 24, 1938—9:35 p.m.

Reliable informant from Quai d'Orsay circles tells me that there is extreme dissatisfaction there concerning Poland's attitude recently. On being questioned about the attitude Poland would adopt in event of a German attack on Czechoslovakia, Foreign Minister Beck was evasive and maintained his attitude, even under increased pressure from Britain and France. In reply to the question finally put to him, whether Poland would stand by the Polish-French alliance<sup>93</sup> should the occasion arise, Beck stated that he would meet the alliance commitments as agreed, in the event of France being attacked also. This answer is taken to mean here that Poland was keeping a free hand in case France took action against Germany, in consequence of her treaty commitments vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia.

WELCZECK

## No. 204

2369/494495-96

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy in Great Britain*

Telegram

No. 158

BERLIN, May 24, 1938.

(Pol. IV 3535)

(Pol. IV 4059)

In reply to No. 251 (IV 3460).<sup>94</sup>

Reference second paragraph, II:

If Lord Halifax told you that, in the event of a German invasion of Czechoslovakia, in whatever circumstances, even of great provocation by the Czechs, the French would march against us, then such an intention on the part of France, especially when communicated to us verbally by an Englishman, cannot but greatly astonish us. French treaty obligation to render assistance to Czechoslovakia arises, as is

<sup>93</sup> The Franco-Polish Treaty of Alliance of February 19, 1921, which was supplemented by the Franco-Polish Treaty of Mutual Guarantee of October 18, 1925, as part of the Locarno Agreements.

<sup>94</sup> Document No. 191, p. 322.

well known, only in the event of an unprovoked attack on that country by a third state.<sup>95</sup> The French intention as described by Lord Halifax, and the proposed British attitude toward this, could only be tantamount to a vain attempt, by means of threats going far beyond France's treaty obligations, to intimidate Germany to such an extent that she would submit to any acts of provocation by Czechoslovakia without resistance. Conversely, this attitude would set the highest premium on Czech provocation that France could pay, and Britain would become the spineless follower of this drifting European policy.

I therefore request you to raise this matter again in your next conversation with Halifax. Halifax should be informed that we could not conceive that this was the real purport of his statements to you. Please inquire of him whether he does not wish to correct his previous statement. Otherwise we should not be able to withhold it from the public.

RIBBENTROP

### No. 205

120/68259

*The German Minister in Rumania (Fabricius) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 118 of May 24

BUCHAREST, May 24, 1938—9:40 p.m.

Received May 24, 1938—11:45 p.m.

Court Minister Urdareanu, the Queen's intimate friend, informed me in conversation that King Carol had clearly stated to Beneš that Rumania would not intervene in a conflict between Czechoslovakia and Germany.<sup>96</sup> Rumania would only march if Hungary attacked, or if a world war broke out and she were compelled by virtue of League of Nations Covenant to intervene. Naturally position was extraordinarily difficult for Rumania as, like Poland, she had not conceded right of transit or flight over territory to Soviet Russia and would be compelled to fire on aircraft flying over.

Rumania had been kept informed by Great Britain about every phase of present crisis, and along with Britain had brought influence to bear on Prague to induce Beneš to give way. Impression here is that military action by Germany would have resulted in world war

<sup>95</sup> See document No. 2, p. 10.

<sup>96</sup> This statement was made presumably during King Carol's visit to President Beneš at Seelowitz (Czechoslovakia) in November 1937. See footnote 61, p. 38.

in consequence of France's attitude, and Britain would then from general political considerations have hastened to assistance of France.

FABRICIUS

No. 206

28/19160

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

No. 122 of May 24

BERLIN, May 24, 1938—10:58 p.m.

Received Prague, May 24, 1938—11:36 p.m.

Reference to telegram of 23d instant, No. 167.<sup>97</sup>

Supreme Headquarters of *Wehrmacht* has communicated following with reference to details given in paragraph 2:

Ninth Infantry Regiment [*I.R. 9*] is at training camp. Twenty-third Artillery Regiment [*A.R. 23*] has moved out to Döberitz. Data on Antiaircraft Battery and Searchlight Battery of Regiment Göring are incorrect. Reports on 7th Machine Gun Battery (not Regiment) are correct as Battery is stationed in Dresden. The same applies to 3d Antiaircraft and 43d Antiaircraft.

Allegations about calling up of reservists on May 21 are incorrect. Allegations concerning squadrons of 152d Bomber Group [*Kampfgeschwader*] have not yet been fully checked, but are described as improbable.

Moreover, no transfer of *Luftwaffe* units has taken place. It is correct that during present spring period troops throughout Germany are moving to training areas and are undergoing training there or on the way there. In the same way the routine exercises will take place within framework of normal training of *Luftwaffe*.

In accordance with instructions from higher authority, I request that you regard this data as supplied only for your information, as information concerning troop movements is no longer to be given.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>97</sup> Not printed.

## No. 207

223/150224

*The Supreme Headquarters, the Wehrmacht, to the Foreign Ministry*

URGENT

BERLIN, May 25, 1938.

(e. o. Pol. I M 1803)

Drafting Officer: Counselor of Legation Baron von der Heyden-Rynsch.

Colonel Schellert, of the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht*, has communicated the following information:

As has already been reported a few days ago, some troops are marching back from Austria to the Old Reich. Apart from this, training units are moving to Austria from the Old Reich.

The transport of troops from Austria has been carried out according to plan from May 23-25. About 28 trains have been dispatched from Austria to the Old Reich.

Between May 26 and 28, 8 infantry battalions, 3 artillery groups [*Abteilungen*], and some technical troops (engineers, etc.), altogether about 20 trains, will run from Germany to Austria.

VON KAMPHOEVENER

(Dictated by telephone from the War Ministry by Counselor of Legation Baron von der Heyden-Rynsch.)

## No. 208

120/68269

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 258 of May 25

LONDON, May 25, 1938—1 p.m.

Received May 25, 1938—10:50 p.m.

On occasion of return visit I had lengthy conversation today with Czechoslovak Minister,<sup>98</sup> who had just been with Lord Halifax and is flying to Paris tomorrow in order to act there in harmony with efforts of British Government. He emphasized that Czechoslovak Government were willing to negotiate on *all matters* in order to achieve peaceful solution. Relationship to Soviet Russia might also be discussed, although a demand for *immediate* change of direction could naturally not be granted. Masaryk hinted at the desire for creation of a measure of greater security for a Czechoslovak State which had granted the justified demands of its minorities, without specifically mentioning guarantee or neutralization. He expressed

<sup>98</sup> Jan Masaryk, 1925-38.

himself as satisfied with the result of his conversation with Henlein.<sup>99</sup> He emphasized again and again that his Government were ready to comply with all demands as long as they were in any way compatible with independence of Czechoslovakia.

I drew attention to fact that immediate cancellation of military measures taken was necessary. He challenged my further observation that the Czech military circles had now really gained the upper hand. He admitted straight away that the Sudeten German minority had been oppressed in many ways by Czech authorities.

It was obvious that he had been subjected to strong pressure by Lord Halifax.

DIRKSEN

### No. 209

2369/494522-25

#### *The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 1.

PRAGUE, May 25, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 3847)

Subject: Events preceding mobilization; the role of the British Military Attaché in Berlin. Revival of the Hussite spirit. More favorable prospects for the negotiations between the Sudeten German Party and the Czechoslovak Government?

#### POLITICAL REPORT<sup>1</sup>

From a completely reliable source I have learned the following about events preceding the Czechoslovak partial mobilization:<sup>2</sup>

President Beneš is said to have received on Thursday, May 19, the first reports of German troop movements near the frontier. He had first supposed that it was not a question of a plan of attack against Czechoslovakia, but rather of the propagandist effect which the proximity of German troops was intended to have on the communal elections<sup>3</sup> of the Sudeten German population. Thus no military significance had at first been attached to these reports, nor had, therefore, any military countermeasures been envisaged. Twelve hours later, however, the British Military Attaché in Berlin<sup>4</sup> had sent a report to London on German troop concentrations directed against

<sup>99</sup> The conversation with Henlein during his visit to London in May; see footnote 35, p. 273.

<sup>1</sup> Marginal longhand note initialed by Weizsäcker, May 27: "RM: The version given on pages 1 and 2 here is not very probable according to our information."

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1, p. 304.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 89, p. 335.

<sup>4</sup> Col. F. N. Mason-MacFarlane.

Czechoslovakia, and the British Government informed Prague of this. Whereupon urgent inquiries to the German Government had been made by the Czechoslovak Government. At the consultation, which had taken place on Friday evening,<sup>5</sup> there had been present members of the Government—my information does not state whether all had been there, or only the so-called political ones and the Foreign Minister—as well as Generals. Beneš himself had taken the chair. The military members had demanded the calling up of five age groups, the civilian Ministers had been opposed to this and had been ready, in view of the clear German answer, to limit themselves to the calling up of one age group for “exercises,” which was not therefore a mobilization measure. The President had bridged this difference of opinion by deciding that two age groups were to be “mobilized.” Hodza, the Prime Minister, had taken part in this consultation and therefore shared responsibility for its outcome.

The conclusion that the deciding factor confirming the view that Czechoslovakia was militarily threatened by Germany came from London is supported by the following further information:—

Yesterday I charged Krofta with the fact that the Czechoslovak Government had represented Germany as a disturber of the peace, because he, and particularly Krejčí, Chief of the General Staff, in his discussion with Colonel Toussaint,<sup>6</sup> had spoken of a threat by us as the reason for Czechoslovak military measures, and that this idea had been spread throughout the world.<sup>7</sup> Krofta, in reply, gave as an excuse the fact that not only the Prague Government but, quite independently, the London Government also had received definite and serious reports about German troop concentrations. Furthermore, the British Minister here had only yesterday spoken to the Italian Minister<sup>8</sup> of the established fact of German military measures.

It appears from all this that the British Military Attaché in Berlin is to a large degree responsible for the uneasiness which has arisen here<sup>9</sup> and particularly in London, and which, if the Reich Government had allowed itself to be influenced by it, might have led to the most serious complications—quite apart from the consequences that have actually resulted. The British Government, however, had undoubtedly no interest whatever in the artificial creation of a danger of war, which fact was substantiated by Newton's further statement to Facendis that he was giving the Czechs here only the most urgent

<sup>5</sup> May 20.

<sup>6</sup> The German Military Attaché in Prague.

<sup>7</sup> Marginal longhand note: “by Prague.”

<sup>8</sup> Domenico de Facendis, 1935-38.

<sup>9</sup> Marginal longhand note: “In my opinion Henderson should be questioned about this directly.”

advice to show a conciliatory attitude toward the Sudeten Germans, but had said nothing to them about extensive British support for Czechoslovakia, because this "would not be good for the Czechs." If, therefore, the British Military Attaché in Berlin believed his reports of a German strategic concentration and attached such importance to them, these reports must have sounded very definite, and one wonders who supplied them. Perhaps the supposition is justified, that a third interested party fabricates such reports and plays them into the hands of military agents in order to let loose a disaster.

According to the above account, the part played by Beneš appears in a somewhat more favorable light than it had hitherto done to me. From this he is not the instigator but partly the victim of a deception. It is, nevertheless, still clear from this that he took advantage of Britain's agitation, supported by the Generals' vote against the civilian Ministers, to realize at a decisive moment the internal political aim of establishing once more the authority of the State in the Sudeten German area, in such a way as to bring about the danger of a European war. He may well have been led to do this by the wish to demonstrate to his own people and to the world the strength of the system of alliances created by him and the political and military support expected from Britain. The Hussite spirit, which had always been alive in the Army, has also appeared in Beneš and has now undoubtedly taken hold of large sections of the Czech people also.

The version, according to which Germany had not wished to attack Czechoslovakia with her troop concentrations but rather to wear her down internally, is also to be found today in the *Narodni Politika*,<sup>10</sup> from which I here quote the following paragraph in translation:

"Germany wished by the massing of military forces on our frontiers—admittedly only for the normal exercises—to strengthen the position of our Henleinists, who wanted to take advantage of the results of the communal elections and the state of unrest to seriously shake governmental authority in the Germanized frontier districts. But the Prague Government did not fail. The Army answered with a speedy and well-timed massing of our military forces on the frontiers—admittedly only for the normal exercises. Except for the incident at Eger,<sup>11</sup> the Government has demonstrated its power without resorting to force."

Hodza's attitude appears somewhat weak compared with that of Beneš, who turned the scales and played for high stakes. His policy of conciliation has not been able to check the signs of internal collapse in the State. He had only lost time because he had neither won over the Czechs to his way of thinking nor, indeed, appeased the Germans.

<sup>10</sup> The organ of the Czechoslovak National Democrat Party.

<sup>11</sup> See footnote 2, p. 305.



The prospects for his move for negotiations have now, however, improved insofar as, on the one hand, the Czechoslovak Government must follow in all circumstances the British advice to conciliate, in order not to prejudice the invaluable diplomatic assistance of Britain, and since, on the other hand, the illusion of Germany's imminent armed intervention having been dispelled, the Sudeten Germans have at present no other way out of the situation created in the frontier area by these military measures than to extract by negotiation as great a measure of political freedom of action and self-administration as can be attained. Thus, the first exchange of views between Hodza and Henlein<sup>12</sup> took place in a not unfavorable atmosphere. The discussions are to be continued on the 28th instant on the basis of a list of Sudeten German demands to be drawn up by that date.

EISENLOHR

## No. 210

120/68276-77

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 259 of May 26

PARIS, May 26, 1938.

Received May 26, 1938—4:30 p.m.

Foreign Minister sent for me late yesterday evening and in moving terms expressed the thanks of the French Government for the dignified calm and restraint shown by us during the last few days, whereby the lamentable occurrences and events in Czechoslovakia are shown up in all the more unfavorable light. The German Government had on this occasion made in the most conspicuous fashion a contribution toward preserving European peace, as was acknowledged by the whole world. If he had not sent for me during the critical days, but had left it to the Prime Minister instead to receive me informally at his private residence on Sunday evening,<sup>13</sup> he had intended in this way to avoid giving ill-intentioned press men the impression that influence of any kind or even pressure was being exerted upon us, a thing which would never have occurred to anyone here. He had, however, brought all the stronger pressure to bear on Prague, and during the critical days had often spoken twice or three times on the telephone with leading men there, and at once demanded that Czech frontier officials responsible should be brought to book

<sup>12</sup> See footnote 77, p. 332.<sup>13</sup> See document No. 194, p. 326.

and punished. Yesterday he had sent Osusky, the Czechoslovak Minister here, to Prague in order to remonstrate firmly with the Government there. He sincerely hoped that the combined Franco-British efforts would succeed in a comparatively short time in securing desired guarantees for the Sudeten Germans. Even if the demands could not perhaps be fulfilled 100 percent now, they ought still to secure a 60 or 70 percent fulfillment, and could go beyond this, if after a few years it proved that the concessions were insufficient. Time might meanwhile pave the way for much which would prove absolutely necessary, but which today must lead to war if methods of force were adopted. With some understanding and good will a way could be found which would more or less achieve the same end without injuring the susceptibilities of other people.

I began my observations in reply by pointing out the bias of the Peace Treaties, the unnatural provisions of which must be eliminated if ever peace was to come to Europe. Most acute problem was the Sudeten German one.

The only reason why Czechs showed themselves so stubborn was that they were presuming on French alliance. In Prague there were warmongers who, from a hankering after Czech hegemony and hatred of authoritarian regime, were preaching crusade against Germany and were even sending *agents provocateurs* into Sudeten German districts. It was there that pressure must be exerted; if the French Government did not secure fulfillment of well-founded demands of Sudeten Germans by means of strongest pressure, responsibility for the war would fall upon France. Not until Czechs realized that France was no longer indirectly encouraging them to resist by means of repeated assertions of alliance, would it be possible to settle the Sudeten German problem. Foreign Minister, obviously impressed, finally declared to me that, if the Czechoslovak Government continued unyielding, the French Government would inform them that under these circumstances they would be obliged to submit their obligations under the alliance to revision. I replied that this seemed to me the proper way to make progress in the Sudeten German question.

In this connection Bonnet endeavored more than once to act as spokesman for the idea of German-French-British cooperation in the Sudeten German question, in the hope that cooperation in other fields might result therefrom. Without entirely rejecting the idea of cooperation, I explained to the Foreign Minister that we preferred, and the reasons why we preferred, the settlement of the Sudeten German problem by direct negotiations between Prague and Henlein.

WELCZECK

## No. 211

120/68279-80

*The German Ambassador in Italy (Mackensen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

ROME, May 26, 1938—9 p.m.

No. 142 of May 26

Received May 27, 1938—1:30 a.m.

For State Secretary.

In continuation of my telephone conversation with Counselor of Legation Altenburg today.<sup>14</sup>

Ciano sent for me urgently at midday today in order to discuss the following:

As the Italian Government knew reliably from agents, an unsatisfactory attitude from point of view of German-Italian relations was noticeable of late in German journalistic circles here. In this connection, as he expressly stated, he mentioned the names of Langen and Hildebrandt by way of example. The . . . (group missing) hitherto observed by the Italian Government toward the events in Czechoslovakia were interpreted by these gentlemen in their conversations as tendency on the part of the Italians to depart from their attitude with which we have been familiar up till now. In this gossip, which has also reached the ears of the French and British press representatives, the reason, moreover, is to be found why French and British press, and especially the former, have during last few days contained articles which are most regrettable from point of view of German-Italian relations. Yesterday evening an exchange of views had taken place by telephone between the Ministers, Dr. Goebbels and Alfieri,<sup>15</sup> regarding this matter, which had led Italian Government to issue instructions to their press without delay to reply to certain tendentious articles in British and French papers, which has in the meantime already been done.

Gossip among journalists fastened upon fact that he—Ciano—had received Lord Perth three times. In first conversation no mention was made of Czechoslovakia at all. In both other conversations, in which Lord Perth communicated the well-known standpoint of the British Government, he, Ciano, had explained to the British Ambassador quite distinctly that the Italian Government were on Germany's side with "*solidarité complète et sympathie*," showed fullest understanding for the German point of view, regarded the Czech

<sup>14</sup> Record of this not printed.

<sup>15</sup> Italian Minister for Popular Enlightenment, 1936-39.

question as an "*affaire de famille*," and said that the future fate of Czechoslovakia was a matter of complete indifference to them.

To these observations Ciano added that I might hasten to sound my Government whether they perhaps desired that their unequivocal attitude toward Czech question should, in some other form, be indignantly publicized by the Italians. He was willing to take action immediately on receiving from us a request to this effect, and had in mind a suitable article in the *Informazione Diplomatica*.<sup>17</sup>

Ciano then launched forth into lengthy reflections on the press and particularly our press representatives here. He considered that it would be good if I could take up this matter some time soon and in particular ascertain for myself whether his view was correct that perhaps it might be greatly to the advantage of our mutual interests to introduce some time a general rejuvenation of our press representatives. There were a number of individuals among them who consciously, or partly perhaps unconsciously, were unable to adapt themselves to the clear new line of policy and, hampered by reminiscences of the past, could not rise to genuine confidence in the Government here. Present events proved this quite clearly. Further report on this subject will follow.

In conclusion, Ciano requested me to make known in Berlin that the journalist Zigalli of the *Stampa*,<sup>18</sup> regarding whose recent article on Czech question, undesirable from our point of view, the Reich Foreign Minister had lately spoken to Ambassador Attolico, had, according to a report just received by him, been instantly dismissed in conformity with his suggestion.

MACKENSEN

## No. 212

2369/494504-06

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

CONFIDENTIAL

A 2368

LONDON, May 26, 1938.

(Pol. IV 3648)

According to information received in strict confidence (from Foreign Office circles) by a press representative known to the Embassy for several years, the unusual state of agitation in London last

<sup>17</sup> An Italian political review, used by Ciano.

<sup>18</sup> The principal Turin daily, less Fascist than most; Zigalli was one of the best-known Italian correspondents in Central Europe. The article, published on about May 23, among other things asserted that the Germans in Bohemia were not a compact ethnical unit, and that annexation by Germany of regions inhabited by Sudeten Germans might prejudice the interests of minorities.

Saturday and Sunday<sup>19</sup> can be largely attributed to the reports from the British Ambassador in Berlin. Sir Nevile Henderson has evidently sent a very pessimistic account of the situation to London following his two conversations with the Reich Minister. It seems almost as if he had been under the impression that Germany wished to settle the Sudeten German problem this week end by force.

According to the Foreign Office account, the Ambassador was said to have called together the Embassy officials after his last conversation with Herr von Ribbentrop,<sup>20</sup> and advised them to send their wives and children back to England.<sup>21</sup> Nobody could tell what the next hours would bring. He is said to have given the same advice again 24 hours later to British press representatives in Berlin. People in the Foreign Office today are under the impression that the Ambassador had lost his nerve. The pessimistic reports from the Ambassador are also said to have been the reason why Mr. Chamberlain called a Cabinet meeting for Sunday afternoon, although he himself hardly shared the opinions expressed in Sir Nevile Henderson's reports.

I hear further that Lord Halifax gave instructions on arrival of the reports that these papers were not to be passed through the usual channels. Lord Halifax had also probably convinced himself, from other information available to him, that the account of the British Ambassador in Berlin did not represent the situation accurately.

The attitude of the London press on Sunday, which could be described as neurasthenic, was clearly derived from the Berlin correspondents of British newspapers. How great the agitation of these gentlemen must have been is shown by a further communication from the German journalist mentioned at the beginning, according to which even the representative of a Swiss newspaper in Berlin wished to send his wife home, because of information from his British colleague.

The British press subsequently realized that the reports it was receiving were altogether wide of the mark. People are now looking for a culprit. In several newspapers yesterday the question was raised as to who had really given the order in Berlin on Sunday evening to send the women and children back to England. The *Evening Standard* of the 25th writes under the headline "The Canceled Order":<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> May 21 and 22, respectively.

<sup>20</sup> That on May 21; see document No. 186, p. 315.

<sup>21</sup> On this whole matter, cf. Henderson, *Failure of a Mission* (London, 1940), pp. 137-138; and J. W. Wheeler-Bennett, *Munich* (London 1948), pp. 58-59, footnote. The rumor reached London, and the Foreign Secretary telegraphed a request to the Ambassador to cancel any of the rumored arrangements to evacuate the British colony.

<sup>22</sup> The following passage is quoted in English in the original.

"Who gave the order on Sunday to evacuate women and children belonging to the families of members of the British Embassy and Consulate staff in Berlin?"

"Who later on canceled that order?"

"The order should never have been given. [Did] the cancellation emanate from London? These are questions which should be answered."

It is to be assumed that with these remarks the newspaper wished to attack the British Ambassador in Berlin. His name has not yet been publicly mentioned in this connection.

It seems as if these indiscretions in the British press emanate from those persons in the Foreign Office to whom Sir Nevile Henderson's attitude to Germany appears too positive, and who for this reason have for a long time been working for his downfall.

VON DIRKSEN

### No. 213

1650/392035

*Extract From a Letter From the German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to an Official of the German Foreign Ministry (Schliep)*

(Pol. IV 3732)

I share the opinion of the Bucharest Legation that the Rumanian Government will not grant right of troop transit to the Russians. I cannot see the King even agreeing to any such thing. In any case the entire political situation would have to change completely. Neither can I believe that the Russians are making great efforts to obtain this privilege. One is constantly seeing here of how little the Soviet Union wants war. I enclose a short report<sup>25</sup> which shows how reserved the Soviet press is in regard to the Sudeten German question. It is obviously no pleasant thought for the Soviet Union to have to go to war on account of Czechoslovakia.

Passed to: Director, Political Department

Pol. IV Rumania

SCHLIEP

BERLIN, May 27, 1938.

\* Not printed.

## No. 214

120/68285

*The German Foreign Ministry to Certain German Missions Abroad.*

Telegram

BERLIN, May 27, 1938.  
(zu Pol. IV 3532 (I))

To

- 1) German Embassy, Washington, No. 150.
- 2) German Embassy, London, No. 169.
- 3) German Embassy, Paris, No. 196.
- 4) German Embassy, Warsaw, No. 107.
- 5) German Legation, Prague, No. 135.
- 6) German Legation, Belgrade, No. 82.
- 7) German Legation, Bucharest, No. 129.

According to impression received up to the present, the Italian Government seem to want to stand aloof in event of a German-Czechoslovak conflict. In a conversation which our Ambassador in Rome had with the Italian Foreign Minister on May 23,<sup>26</sup> Count Ciano stated that he had plainly stressed the fact to the British Ambassador that the Czech question did not concern Italy. In the further course of the conversation, moreover, he refrained from inquiring from Herr von Mackensen about the present state of the question.

BISMARCK

## No. 215

120/68305-06

*Memorandum*

Yesterday I asked the British Military Attaché in the course of conversation after dinner at his house whether he had had a great many things to do during last week end in view of events in Czechoslovakia. Colonel MacFarlane replied with a certain amount of pride that he had covered over 1,100 km. last Sunday<sup>27</sup> in his car, driving himself. He had driven along almost the entire German-Czech frontier in order to verify the rumors of alleged German troop movements. He had sent his assistant to other points on the German-Czech frontier for the same purpose. Both had been unable to dis-

<sup>26</sup> See vol. I, document No. 770, p. 1125.

<sup>27</sup> May 22; see also document No. 188, p. 318 (paragraph 3).

cover any signs whatever of such German troop movements during their extensive journeys.

I remarked that it was quite incomprehensible to me how these rumors had arisen in such circumstances and could have produced such fateful reactions in Czechoslovakia. MacFarlane gave the following explanation of this:

It was well known that troop movements were continuously taking place at the present time throughout Germany. Individual units were changing their stations, moving into new barracks, being transferred to Austria or withdrawn from there again, etc. There was absolutely nothing out of the ordinary about this and it was known to all the experts. Naturally, they had people who kept an eye on these proceedings. If the Czechoslovak General Staff had chanced to receive toward the end of last week a rather large number of reports of such troop transfers inside Germany (e.g., Infantry Regiment No. 3 today moved from Potsdam in a southerly direction), and if, on comparing the various directions of the moves reported they concluded that these were taking place in the direction of Czechoslovakia as a part of a unified plan, one could well understand their decision. In fact this decision was clearly due to a misunderstanding. However, this misunderstanding could perhaps be accounted for, since such reports mostly mentioned only the fact that there had been a movement of troops, perhaps also its general direction, but almost never the ultimate destination of the transfer.

I also told the Colonel that it was surely strange that, in spite of his own personal corroboration, the idea had been given support for days also in the British press and was even now still partially maintained, that German troop transfers toward the Czechoslovak frontier had actually taken place. He merely shrugged his shoulders at this by way of an answer.

WIEHL

BERLIN, May 28, 1938.

No. 216

289/183197-98

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, May 28, 1938.

The British Ambassador came to see me today and observed that he would have called on the Reich Minister himself, but he merely wished to make some preliminary inquiries on a matter which he wished to postpone bringing to the notice of the Reich Minister,



officially, until he had a clearer idea of the principles underlying our policy.

The Ambassador went on to say that I undoubtedly knew of a plan which had also been discussed in the House of Commons yesterday and which envisaged the sending of an impartial commission to the vital places involved in the German-Czech problem.<sup>30</sup> His Government had no precise views at all on the plan itself, the method of setting up the commission, its terms of reference, or the areas in which it would eventually operate. Neither did they wish to come forward with any plan which was not approved by us.

The British Government put forward the following points for discussion. The commission's task could be regarded as the investigation of every kind of incident which might occur in the present state of German-Czech tension, in order to bring the facts to light. Their sphere of activity might be the Sudeten German frontier area, or even the frontier area on both sides. In the former case it would only be a matter of investigating internal Czech incidents, and in the latter of investigating frontier violations on both sides of the frontier. The commission might perhaps be composed either of Swiss and Swedes, or English and French, or neutrals and representatives of the Great Powers, or even only of Englishmen. The commission might function by virtue of its general plenary powers, or in each case at the request of the Government concerned on whose territory the incident to be investigated had occurred. Sir Nevile Henderson then emphasized the fact once more that his Government had no preconceived opinions whatever, but only wished to make some contribution toward a general peaceful settlement.

I told the Ambassador that I must naturally reserve my answer to his inquiries. At first sight I wanted to point out that international commissions on German territory were, from our own experience, not very popular. I also believed that representatives of *one* country, for instance British, as had already been mentioned when the question of sending observers was discussed recently, usually served a more useful purpose than an international group which could not reach decisions; but I did not wish to anticipate on this point. One thing only seemed certain to me: if one really wished to make some contribution toward a peaceful settlement, care must be

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\* On the 26th (not 27th), Mr. Noel-Baker, M.P., asked the Prime Minister in the House of Commons whether His Majesty's Government would propose the immediate dispatch of an impartial international commission to the Czechoslovak-German frontier area to investigate the alleged violations of the frontier and other incidents which might arise. The Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. R. A. Butler) replied that His Majesty's Government would bear the suggestion in mind.

taken to see that the program already discussed here during Henderson's last visit<sup>32</sup> was realized, namely, the withdrawal of Czech troops from the frontier area and the release of mobilized armed forces, as well as the fulfillment of Henlein's demands. That would be more effective than commissions for investigation and verification.

The Ambassador would be grateful for an early report on the basic German view of the plan described.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 217

120/68303

*Memorandum by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, May 28, 1938.

When the British Ambassador visited me today we also broached the subject of the lack of effect hitherto shown by British pressure in Prague. I said to the Ambassador that it was just impossible to exhort the Czech Government to reason, while at the same time giving them to understand by means of debates in the House of Commons and the like that in the extreme resort they would after all receive assistance. I also made passing reference to the well-known statement to this effect by Halifax reported by Herr von Dirksen.<sup>32a</sup> Henderson replied immediately that there must certainly be some misunderstanding. If the Czechs allowed themselves to be carried away to commit actions entailing unbearable provocation, then Britain would not support them, but would on the contrary leave them to their fate.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>32</sup> On May 24; concerning the visit and the program discussed, see document No. 199, p. 332.

<sup>32a</sup> Evidently the statement of Lord Halifax on May 22 in his interview with Dirksen, recorded in document No. 191, p. 322, and especially referred to by Ribbentrop in document No. 204, p. 336.

## No. 218

120/68312

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 182 of May 28

PRAGUE, May 28, 1938—3:50 p.m.

Received May 28, 1938—5:30 p.m.

British Minister today had interview with Hodza, contents of which he reported to me, with Hodza's consent, "confidentially and personally." According to this, Hodza confirmed that he now would and could go further in meeting the Sudeten German Party than previously expected, that he was expecting Sudeten German Party proposals today<sup>33</sup> and was ready to continue negotiations with Henlein immediately.

Today and tomorrow troops would be confined to barracks, these being election days. Hodza had "ordained" that troops (not only aircraft therefore) must keep away from frontier and, moreover, at a distance of considerably more than 5 kilometers at many points.

At beginning of next week a start is to be made with cancellation of mobilization measures and a few thousand men would be sent home to begin with. On the other hand, when Newton called his attention to interview publicly reported today with Deputy Prime Minister Bechyne,<sup>34</sup> according to which security measures would not be countermanded, Hodza referred to proviso mentioned therein, "so long as situation is unchanged."

Hodza hopes to be able to establish publicly change in situation immediately after beginning of negotiations.

I asked Newton to use his influence strongly on following points:

1. Removal of road blocks, which isolated many villages and placed them in difficulties;
2. Withdrawal of ball ammunition;
3. Accelerated demobilization;
4. Severest measures against excesses by soldiery [*Soldateska*];
5. Early removal of State police from frontier area.<sup>35</sup>

Newton promised to work ceaselessly to this end and to continue to maintain close contact with us.

EISENLOHR

<sup>33</sup> The contacts between the Sudeten German Party leaders and the Czechoslovak Government had been renewed on May 23 (see footnote 12, p. 310) and Henlein had an interview with Dr. Hodza on the 24th from which little resulted. The Sudeten German Party proposals were not in fact presented until early in June.

<sup>34</sup> Rudolf Bechyne, the Social Democrat Deputy Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia.

<sup>35</sup> See document No. 103, p. 186.

## No. 219

120/68313-17

*Minute by an Official of Political Division I of the Foreign Ministry  
(Heyden-Rynsch)*

MINUTE OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN FRANK, HEYDEN-RYNSCH AND WEIZSÄCKER ON THE AFTERNOON OF MAY 28, 1938 (DRAWN UP BY HEYDEN-RYNSCH)<sup>36</sup>

I asked Herr Frank for his views as to what course could best be adopted for the future, both as regards our negotiations with the Czechs and in our relations with foreign countries.

Herr Frank emphasized that Konrad Henlein and he had already in their conversations with Premier Hodza placed the question of responsibility in the foreground. In his opinion we must keep to the line that the Sudeten German Party always acted correctly and was in the right, while the Czechs as far as possible were to be put in the wrong and pilloried as partisans of power politics. Their propaganda crystallized around three points:

1. Elections held at the bayonet's point. The presumed mobilization of the Czech Army would result in the executive power passing into the hands of the military, so that the civilian officials and with them, too, the Sudeten German administrative authorities would be robbed of their functions.

2. Czechoslovakia was deploying her Army against foreign countries and was entrenching herself on every frontier. Although details regarding these points could not be cited, because they came under the State Security Law,<sup>37</sup> involving liability to the death penalty, he and Konrad Henlein had nonetheless in conversation with Hodza alluded to this state of affairs. In so doing they had left him in no doubt that they would inform their foreign friends as well about it.

3. The constant excesses committed by the Czech Army and *gendarmerie* at the expense of the Sudeten Germans.

Herr Frank brought up a number of details for discussion, and for the rest referred to the comprehensive material which he had placed at the disposal of the Legation with the request that it might be forwarded to Berlin.

It was not possible to broadcast these points throughout the Sudeten German press, as the censorship prevented the appearance of such news. In consequence, the carefully checked material relating

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<sup>36</sup>This heading is entered on the original in Weizsäcker's handwriting; the minute itself is unsigned, but bears numerous initials, including that of Weizsäcker.

<sup>37</sup>i.e., the National Defense Law; see footnote 18, p. 12.

to all incidents and occurrences was in the first place addressed to the Premier, and then to all the Legations concerned.

In this connection Frank observed that on the French side General Fouchet<sup>38</sup> must be regarded as a thorough intriguer. The British Legation, too, particularly the Minister himself, showed no understanding for Sudeten German interests. Frank described the latter's sources of information as pure propaganda, obtained, moreover, from Beneš, who had got him completely under his thumb. For the rest, a certain role was also played by a Czech Commission which was at the moment visiting in Moscow.<sup>39</sup> This Commission kept sending encouraging news to Prague about the chances of support from the Soviet Union. It was evidently recognized in British Government circles, too, that the information of the British Minister in Prague was not adequate, so that Vansittart<sup>40</sup> only during the last few days had sent word to Henlein that he requested further direct information.

For the rest, Herr Frank pointed out that negotiations<sup>41</sup> might certainly still be continued for a while, but that finally the patience of the Sudeten Germans, too, might reach a limit. The continual provocation on the part of the Czechs might in the end lead to outbreaks which must have unpredictable consequences. On the other hand, attempts were also being made on the enemy's part to work upon the morale of the Sudeten Germans. The slogan "Impotence test of the German Reich" was being broadcast throughout the press, and attempts were being made to win over the waverers with such statements as "Hitler and Henlein have left you in the lurch"; the Czech Government "is all powerful"; since only within their ranks would it be possible to force through the demands in the face of the Czech Government. Herr Frank, however, described the influence of this propaganda as not very impressive up to the present, but thought that its effect might be estimated at about 10 percent of the votes.

Herr Frank expressed in the most positive terms his view that no credence must be attached to any likelihood of yielding on the part of the military party; he feared, however, that perhaps a few obtrusive military measures might be withdrawn for the sake of appearances, but that in reality a situation would continue to prevail which

<sup>38</sup> Obviously meaning General Faucher, the Head of the French Military Mission in Prague; see footnote 63, p. 329.

<sup>39</sup> This presumably refers to the Czechoslovak delegation which had gone to Moscow to join in the May Day celebrations there.

<sup>40</sup> Chief Diplomatic Adviser to the British Government; he had had conversations with Henlein during the latter's visit to London, May 12-14; see footnote 35, p. 273.

<sup>41</sup> See footnote 77, p. 332, and footnote 33, p. 353.

would render any free action on the part of the Sudeten Germans out of the question. He could imagine that a nationalities statute<sup>42</sup> might be conferred upon them by decree, but that it would be sabotaged in its application by the camouflaged maintenance of the military dictatorship.

For the support of propaganda activity Herr Frank suggested that the Vienna radio should if possible broadcast in Czech every day. These talks must be carefully prepared and might also deal mainly with quite harmless subjects as, for instance, the construction of motor roads, etc.

He gave an evasive answer to the question what he thought about an economic campaign against Czechoslovakia. Although he was technically insufficiently informed about details, he still preferred to advise against it.

To a question which was interjected how he viewed the possibility of an election held under the protection of international commissions, Frank expressed himself comparatively favorably, subject to the decision in principle of the Führer.

Herr Frank laid stress on the excellence of his cooperation with Herr Eisenlohr, expressing the wish that the liaison officer of the Party, Dr. Brandt,<sup>43</sup> who was now in Paris for reasons connected with domestic politics, might establish contact with our Embassy there. He considered this to be all the more necessary, because Vansittart had of late adopted the practice of communicating with Henlein through the agency of Brandt.

### No. 220

120/68309

#### *The German Ambassador in Italy (Mackensen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 144 of May 28

ROME, May 29, 1938—12:05 a.m.

Received May 29, 1938—6 a.m.

Reference No. 187.<sup>44</sup>

This evening in accordance with instructions I informed Ciano. Though he showed interest in historical exposition of latest development of Czech question, he expressed opinion that Mussolini did not

<sup>42</sup> See footnote 81, p. 206, and footnote 41, p. 275.

<sup>43</sup> Dr. Walter Brandt was liaison officer of the Sudeten German Party and was appointed for special duties in this connection to the Paris Embassy.

<sup>44</sup> Telegram No. 187 was an answer to No. 142 from Rome (document No. 211, p. 345) and authorized Mackensen to give Ciano a historical outline suitable for use as an article in *Informazione Diplomatica*.

wish to enter into any details, but thought solely of presenting Italian point of view in clear outline. For this purpose, however, he must know what constituted our final aim regarding Czechoslovakia; in other words, whether we should be satisfied with carrying into effect well-known Henlein points which Ciano described as "cantonalization," or whether our final aim extended further, namely, the dissolution of fabric of State. Mussolini, to whom, as he once again repeated, final fate of Czechoslovakia was matter of complete indifference, wished to adapt his position as closely as possible to our policy, from which it automatically follows that he must know our aims with a view to weighing his words accordingly, so that he might not in the end uphold points which might possibly impede these aims of ours. To engage himself on behalf of Henlein program, while we in reality wished to go further, seemed to the Duce to be a mistake.

I assured Ciano that nothing in our aims, as compared with what he had learned from his conversations with the Führer and the Reich Foreign Minister during the Führer's visit, had undergone any change; on the contrary these aims were, as before, to be sought for in securing for the Sudeten Germans an entirely unrestricted equality of rights with the Czechs, with any notion of minority eliminated. I knew nothing of any projects that went further. In reply to this statement Ciano insisted, while indicating that a confirmation of this in Berlin was desired by Duce, fulfillment of which . . . (group missing) would mean loss of time, since in any case no newspapers appeared before Monday. Instructions requested.

MACKENSEN

No. 221

C34/000287-95

*Directive for Operation "Green"<sup>45</sup> From the Führer to the Commanders in Chief, With Covering Letter From the Chief of Supreme Headquarters, the Wehrmacht (Keitel)*

TOP SECRET, MILITARY

BERLIN, May 30, 1938.

Supreme Commander of the *Wehrmacht*.

O.K.W. No. 42/38 Top Secret, Military. L I

ONLY TO BE HANDLED BY AN OFFICER

WRITTEN BY AN OFFICER

By order of the Supreme Commander of the *Wehrmacht*, part 2, section II of the directive on the combined preparations for war of

<sup>45</sup> See footnote 54, p. 239. This document is from the Schmundt file (Nuremberg document 388-PS).

the *Wehrmacht* of June 24, 1937 (Supreme Headquarters No. 55/37, Top Secret, Mil. L I a).<sup>48</sup> (War on Two Fronts With Main Effort in the Southeast, Strategic Concentration "Green") is to be replaced by the attached version. Its execution must be assured by October 1, 1938, at the latest.

Alterations to the other parts of the directive are to be expected during the next few weeks.

KEITEL  
*Chief of the Supreme Headquarters  
of the Wehrmacht*

To: C.-in-C. Army  
" " " Navy  
" " " Air Force  
O.K.W. Section L

Certified true copy,  
ZEITZLER  
*Lieut. Colonel, General Staff*

[Enclosure]

TOP SECRET, MILITARY

Copy of 4th version.

Appendix to: Supreme Commander of the *Wehrmacht* O.K.W. No. 42/38, Top Secret, Military, L I a, dated May 30, 1938.

ONLY TO BE HANDLED BY AN OFFICER

WRITTEN BY AN OFFICER

## II. WAR ON TWO FRONTS WITH MAIN EFFORT IN SOUTHEAST (STRATEGIC CONCENTRATION "GREEN")

### 1) *Political Assumptions.*

It is my unalterable decision to smash Czechoslovakia by military action in the near future. It is the business of the political leadership to await or bring about the suitable moment from a political and military point of view.

An unavoidable development of events within Czechoslovakia, or other political events in Europe providing a suddenly favorable opportunity which may never recur, may cause me to take early action.

The proper choice and determined exploitation of a favorable moment is the surest guarantee of success. To this end preparations are to be made immediately.

<sup>48</sup> This directive of June 1937 is not printed. Reference also should be made to document No. 175, p. 299.



## 2) *Political Possibilities for Commencing the Operation.*

The following are necessary prerequisites for the intended attack:

- a) A convenient apparent excuse and, with it,
- b) Adequate political justification,
- c) Action not expected by the enemy which will find him in the least possible state of readiness.

Most favorable from a military as well as a political point of view would be lightning action as the result of an incident which would subject Germany to unbearable provocation, and which, in the eyes of at least a part of world opinion, affords the moral justification for military measures.

Moreover, any period of diplomatic tension prior to war must be terminated by sudden action on our part, unexpected in both timing and extent, before the enemy is so far advanced in his state of military readiness that he cannot be overtaken.

## 3) *Conclusions for the Preparation of Operation "Green."*

a) For the military operations it is essential to make the fullest use of the surprise element as the most important factor contributing to victory, by means of appropriate preparatory measures, already in peacetime, and an unexpected swiftness of action.

Thus it is essential to create a situation within the first two or three days which demonstrates to enemy states which wish to intervene the hopelessness of the Czech military position, and also provides an incentive to those states which have territorial claims upon Czechoslovakia to join in immediately against her. In this case the intervention of Hungary and Poland against Czechoslovakia can be expected, particularly if France, as a result of Italy's unequivocal attitude on our side, fears, or at least hesitates, to unleash a European war by intervening against Germany. In all probability attempts by Russia to give Czechoslovakia military support, particularly with her air force, are to be expected.

If concrete successes are not achieved in the first few days by land operations, a European crisis will certainly arise. Realization of this ought to give commanders of all ranks an incentive to resolute and bold action.

b) *Propaganda warfare* must on the one hand intimidate the Czechs by means of threats and wear down their power of resistance; and on the other hand it must give the national racial groups indications as to how to support our military operations and influence the neutrals in our favor. Further instructions and determination of the appropriate moment are reserved to me.

#### 4) *Tasks of the Wehrmacht.*

*Wehrmacht* preparations are to be carried out on the following principles:

a) The whole weight of all forces must be employed against Czechoslovakia.

b) In the West, a minimum strength is to be provided as cover for our rear, as may become necessary; the other frontiers in the East against Poland and Lithuania are only to be held defensively; the southern frontier to remain under observation.

c) The army formations capable of rapid employment must force the frontier fortifications with speed and energy, and must break very boldly into Czechoslovakia in the certainty that the bulk of the mobile army will be brought up with all possible speed.

Preparations for this are to be made and timed in such a way that the army formations most capable of rapid movement cross the frontier at the appointed time *simultaneously* with the penetration by the *Luftwaffe*, before the enemy can become aware of our mobilization.

To this end a timetable is to be drawn up by the Army and *Luftwaffe* in conjunction with O.K.W. and submitted to me for approval.

#### 5) *Tasks for the Services of the Wehrmacht.*

##### a) *Army.*

The basic principle of surprise attack on Czechoslovakia must not be endangered by the time unavoidably needed for transporting the bulk of the field army by rail, nor must the more rapid deployment of the *Luftwaffe* fail to be exploited.

The first task for the Army is therefore to employ as many assault columns as possible simultaneously with the attack by the *Luftwaffe*.

These assault columns organized in conformity with their tasks, must be composed of troops which can be rapidly employed because of their proximity to the frontier, their motorization, and their special measures of readiness.

It must be the purpose of these thrusts to break into the Czech fortified lines at numerous points and in a strategically favorable direction, in order to penetrate them or to take them from the rear. For success, cooperation with the Sudeten German frontier population, with deserters from the Czechoslovak Army, with parachutists or airborne troops, and with units of the sabotage service is of importance.

The bulk of the Army has the task of frustrating the Czech defense plan, preventing a withdrawal by the Czech Army into Slovakia, forcing it to battle and defeating it, and swiftly occupying Bohemia and Moravia. To this end a thrust into the heart of Czechoslovakia

must be made with the strongest possible mechanized and armored units, exploiting the first successes of the assault columns and the effects of the *Luftwaffe's* action.

The rear cover provided for the *West* must be limited in quantity and quality in accordance with the existing state of the fortifications.

Whether the formations assigned for this purpose will be at once transferred to the western frontier, or be held back for the time being, will be decided by my special order.

Preparations must, however, be made to enable security detachments to be brought up to the western frontier, even during the strategic concentration "Green." Independently of this, a first security garrison must be improvised from the engineers and formations of the Labor Corps employed at the time on the construction of fortifications.

The *remaining frontiers*, as well as East Prussia, are only to be weakly guarded. According to the political situation, however, the transport of a part or the bulk of the active forces of East Prussia by sea to the Reich must be envisaged.

b) *Luftwaffe.*

While leaving a minimum force for a defensive role in the West, the main strength of the *Luftwaffe* is to be employed for a surprise attack against Czechoslovakia. The frontier is to be crossed by aircraft at the same time as it is crossed by the first units of the Army (see No. 5 a). *The most important task* of the *Luftwaffe* is the destruction of the Czech Air Striking Force and its supply bases in the shortest space of time, to prevent its employment and, should the case arise, that of the Russian and French Air Forces, against the German Army during its deployment and invasion and against the German *Lebensraum*.

The paralyzing of mobilization, of the conduct of civil affairs and the direction of the armed forces, as well as delaying the deployment of the Czech Army by attacks on its communication system and on centers of mobilization and government, will also be of vital importance for the initial success of the Army. Where in the frontier region stronger Czech Army formations or the depth of the defense system may render a speedy and successful break-through of the German land attack doubtful, the employment of adequate air formations must be ensured.

As far as the course of operations at all permits, Czechoslovak industrial establishments are to be spared.

Reprisal attacks upon the population are subject to my approval.

Main centers for antiaircraft defense are to be organized in Berlin, the industrial region of Central Germany, and the Ruhr district, and are to be gradually prepared from now in an inconspicuous fashion.

*e) Navy.*

The Navy will take part in the operations of the Army by the employment of the Danube flotilla. For this purpose the flotilla is placed under the command of the Commander in Chief of the Army.

As regards the conduct of naval warfare, at first only such measures are to be taken as seem necessary for securing the North Sea and the Baltic against a surprise intervention by other states in the conflict. These measures are to be limited to the absolute essentials. Their concealment must be ensured. In this it is of decisive importance to avoid all actions which might adversely affect the political attitude of the European Great Powers.

*6) Economic warfare tasks.*

In economic warfare it is essential that in the sphere of the armament industry a maximum deployment of forces should be made possible through increased supplies.

In the course of military operations it is important to help to increase the total economic war effort by rapidly collecting information about important factories and setting them going again as soon as possible.

For this reason the sparing, as far as military operations permit, of Czech industrial and engineering establishments may be of decisive importance for us.

7) All preparations for sabotage and insurrection will be made by O.K.W. They will be made in agreement with and according to the requirements of the branches of the *Wehrmacht* so that their effects in both time and place will harmonize with operations by the Army and *Luftwaffe*.

ADOLF HITLER

Certified true copy

ZEITZLER

*Lieut. Colonel, General Staff*

## No. 222

397/212891-93

*The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg)  
to the German Foreign Ministry*

A/796

Moscow, May 30, 1938.

Subject: Soviet-Czechoslovak relations.

In continuation of report of May 20 of this year, No. A/738.<sup>51</sup>

According to confidential information which I have received, Fierlinger, Czechoslovak Minister here, has expressed himself in the following terms to another Minister, also accredited to Moscow, regarding the Czechoslovak crisis and the attitude of the Soviet Union.

Czechoslovakia intends to avoid war at all costs. She is ready to make any conceivable concessions within the bounds of reason.

The British Government has promised Czechoslovakia military help in the event of a German attack on Czechoslovakia. However, it is not known in what form this British assistance would be given in that eventuality. To this must be added Soviet help, which is very much to be considered. Germany knows these facts. If it comes to war, an event which she does not anticipate, Czechoslovakia will exert the utmost efforts in her defense in the consciousness that she will not remain alone. The war cannot be localized. Directly or indirectly all European states, even the Scandinavian, and perhaps also non-European powers, will be affected. Soviet Russia's participation in the war will be of greatest and decisive import.

The Military Attaché of the Czechoslovak Legation<sup>52</sup> here, who has been 4 years in the Soviet Union, expresses himself with much more restraint regarding the possible value of Soviet help for Czechoslovakia. M. Fierlinger, who was only accredited to Moscow in October 1937, is, as so many new arrivals, still strongly influenced by Soviet propaganda to which, for understandable reasons, he is all too willing to give credence. Characteristic of this pro-Soviet attitude of his is the fact that he considered as true and proven the accusations made at the last Moscow trial.<sup>53</sup>

His views on the significance of Soviet aid to Czechoslovakia are not shared by the majority of my colleagues here. Here the view prevails that the Soviet will for the present avoid being drawn into the war at all costs. The reasons for this attitude are to be found in strained internal conditions and in fear of a war on two fronts.

<sup>51</sup> Not printed.

<sup>52</sup> Lt. Col. Dastich.

<sup>53</sup> Presumably refers to those of the Soviet service chiefs in March; see footnote 61, p. 165.

The Soviet Union will only intervene in a war if she herself is attacked, or if it became manifest that the outcome will be favorable to the side hostile to Germany. It is therefore generally accepted that, in the event of a German-Czechoslovak war, the Soviet Union will at first limit her assistance to a minimum; for which the absence of a common frontier between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia could at any time be put forward on the Soviet side as a convenient excuse.

COUNT VON DER SCHULENBURG

No. 223

120/68310-11

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 192

BERLIN, May 30, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 3690)

Reference No. 144 of May 28.<sup>54</sup>

Instructions given by Italian Government to press regarding treatment of Czechoslovak question have now produced perceptible results. A semi-official article in Italian *Informazione Diplomatica*<sup>55</sup> seems therefore no longer necessary. Please express in appropriate terms our thanks to Italian Government for readiness to meet wishes and understanding attitude of Italian press.

In regard to Ciano's question about our final aim in regard to Czechoslovakia, the following might be gist of your talk:

We had really no longer expected this question now that attitude of both parties—as Ciano himself observed during earlier conversation—was made clear in Rome during Führer's visit.<sup>56</sup> Since then German view has undergone no change. Moreover, negotiations between Henlein and Czechoslovak Government have actually begun;<sup>57</sup> their course cannot yet be predicted. The aim which we, too, regarded as reasonable has been laid down in the Karlsbad program.<sup>58</sup> Unfortunately, despite all assurances given, we are not after earlier experiences fully convinced that Czechoslovak Government are really in earnest in their manifestations of good will. It is, however, difficult today to form any clear notion or make dispositions going beyond this program; likewise, to proclaim demands or aims which might either disturb negotiations in their present stage or prove later to be on wrong lines.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>54</sup> Document No. 220, p. 356.

<sup>55</sup> See footnote 17, p. 346.

<sup>56</sup> See footnote 79, p. 292.

<sup>57</sup> See footnote 77, p. 332, and footnote 11, p. 310.

<sup>58</sup> See document No. 135, p. 242, and footnote 59 thereto.

## No. 224

120/68330-32

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, May 31, 1938.

The British Ambassador visited me today in order to return to his suggestion of the 28th of this month<sup>59</sup> regarding the establishment of an impartial verifying authority in the Sudeten German territory.

Henderson opened the conversation by saying that, according to news from Prague, a certain withdrawal of Czech troops from the frontier had been commenced. A start had already been made by the release of technicians to the extent of some 1,000 men.<sup>60</sup>

Proceeding from this confidential communication by the Ambassador, which I characterized as a welcome beginning should it be confirmed and continued, I did not find it difficult to remark to the Ambassador that the suggestion, originating with Noel-Baker, for the setting up of a commission to clear up incidents in the Sudeten German territory<sup>61</sup> was, surely, not quite reasonable. I pointed out to the Ambassador that the Sudeten Germans had certainly nothing to fear from the establishment of the truth, and were gratified by many candid British and French press reports. The setting up of international bodies for this purpose could, however, almost be interpreted as signifying that we must permanently reckon on incidents. It would doubtless be better, indeed necessary, that the evil should be torn out by the root, and that Prague should undertake the often discussed measures for the abolition of oppression in the Sudeten German territory.

The Ambassador made a note of these remarks of mine but stated at once that it had only been a matter of a suggestion. His Government would certainly not pursue the matter further.

The Ambassador then passed on to press questions. He read out to me a telegram from London in which the question was raised as to whether or not, after our open criticism of the London Government, we really believed in their good intentions for a settlement and for the removal of the danger of crisis.

I told Henderson that his good intentions were not denied here. I also conceded to Henderson, after he had pressed me further, that his Government would doubtless like to see peace maintained. It seemed to me, however, that the methods they used were not always

<sup>59</sup> See document No. 216, p. 350.

<sup>60</sup> Marginal note: "Compare telegraphed report No. 189 from Prague." (No. 189 not printed.)

<sup>61</sup> See footnote 30, p. 351.

exactly the best ones. I once again cited to him as an example the encouragement Prague derived from the last Commons debate,<sup>62</sup> and the triumphant language of the British press on account of an alleged diplomatic success scored against Berlin.

Conversely, Henderson then again complained of our press, and considered that Reich Minister Goebbels' speech of last Sunday<sup>63</sup> had given the lie to his report to London, according to which German public opinion was beginning to quiet down. Henderson asked me whether it would not be practicable for him to speak with Dr. Goebbels personally.

I promised the Ambassador to inform Dr. Goebbels through the Reich Foreign Minister, so that, if it were considered advantageous, a Goebbels-Henderson conversation could be arranged.

In further representations the Ambassador then sought to prove that the Government were only taking upon themselves the role of honest broker in the Czech affair because no one else was in a position to do this. It was to be concluded from the remarks of the Ambassador that the British Government recoiled from committing themselves too deeply and from acting as arbiter and, at the same time, as executor of their own verdict. Henderson considered that neither for the Czechs nor for the Sudeten Germans did they desire to sacrifice one British soldier.

Passing on from this the Ambassador once again intimated what a good thing it would be if the German Government spoke more freely and made known the Prague concessions which, in their opinion, were not only necessary but adequate also. I evaded with the usual arguments this attempt to commit us to more responsibility than we had hitherto accepted.

In conclusion, the Ambassador stated that Mr. Strang had returned from his journey<sup>64</sup> with the conviction that Beneš really had decided to make considerable concessions.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>62</sup> Presumably the debate on May 23-24.

<sup>63</sup> Speech made at Dessau on May 29 at the opening of a new theater there—the first speech made by a responsible Nazi Minister on the recent Czechoslovak crisis. It consisted mainly of violent attacks on Czechoslovakia (in particular for alleged frontier violations by aircraft) and vehement criticism of the democracies.

<sup>64</sup> Mr. William Strang, of the British Foreign Office, went to Prague on May 26 to discuss with the British Minister there the suggestion of sending observers to the Sudeten area; see documents Nos. 197 and 216, pp. 330 and 350.



## No. 225

289/183208

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST IMMEDIATE

PRAGUE, May 31, 1938—1:50 p.m.

No. 188 of May 31

Received May 31, 1938—3:05 p.m.

Reference telegram No. 143 of May 30.<sup>65</sup>

1) Here nothing known as to whether British Government has approached Czechoslovak Government with corresponding proposal.

2) Czechoslovak Government would presumably affect reserve with regard to such a proposal in order to be pressed. In actual fact, however, they would welcome it most joyfully because it would open the way to an internationalization of the Sudeten German question. As is well known, Beneš has at all times endeavored to bring his allies and protectors together at the conference table in the event of possible future disputes with Germany.

3) Presence of a commission would cause Czech soldiers and civilians to behave in an exemplary manner, and would to a very large extent cause Sudeten German complaints to appear unfounded.

4) Urgency of negotiations between Sudeten German Party and the Government, and the extent of necessary Czech concessions, could be called into question as result of commission's activities.

5) I therefore recommend that Czech demobilization, the prompt carrying through of negotiations with the Sudeten German Party for purpose of a complete reorganization of the State, and replacement of State police by local police be pushed into the foreground as urgent necessities.

6) British proposal could be held in reserve in case of a fresh difficult development, the occurrence of which I do not consider probable in the immediate future. The commission should then only consist of Britons whose task should be limited to the clarification and tranquilization of domestic incidents in the Sudeten territory.

EISENLOHR

<sup>65</sup> Not printed. This telegram gave the gist of the conversation recorded in document No. 216, p. 350, and asked the Ambassador to find out whether a corresponding proposal had been made to the Czechoslovak Government.

## No. 226

2369/494534-36

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the  
State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*LONDON, May 31, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 3919)

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: As you have seen from my telegraphed reports, I have now survived the first stages of my official life here which have been, as a result of the Czechoslovak crisis, the Cabinet reshuffle and the resuscitation of the nonintervention committee, both checkered and exciting. I have now got the general perspective and assume that, in the event of the elections in Czechoslovakia passing off peacefully next Sunday,<sup>68</sup> the end of a definite phase will have been reached. Allow me therefore to make claim on your time with a few short questions:

1) I have the intention of bringing about a conversation with the Prime Minister next week; I had merely conceived of it as a personal visit on my part and as a general talk.

I only wished to inform you here of this intention, so that you have the opportunity of sending me instructions for this conversation if necessary, or, if a discussion with Mr. Chamberlain should not now be desirable, of instructing me to postpone my design until a later date.

2) If you have time to send me a word on our further attitude as regards treatment of the Czechoslovak affair I would be very grateful to you. I have gathered from the attacks of our press in which direction we feel ourselves to be injured by the British action; I also believe this was correctly understood here, and that this press campaign has had a clarifying effect. I suppose that, of itself, the British pressure in Prague is not undesirable from our point of view, providing that it does not assume the character of a mediation between ourselves and the Czech Government, which we must reject for the most varied reasons.

I would also be grateful to you for a short indication regarding our future attitude toward conversations between the Sudeten Germans and the Government in Prague. Will these discussions be carried on with a positive or negative intention? Will Henlein make more extensive demands than in his Karlsbad speech?<sup>69</sup>

3) In conclusion, I would like to mention a matter for which I am myself by no means competent. Mr. Kennedy, the United States

<sup>68</sup> See footnote 89, p. 335.

<sup>69</sup> See document No. 135, p. 242.

Ambassador here, is not a career diplomat, but a private business man, very rich, and a close friend of President Roosevelt. On various social occasions he has repeatedly turned the conversation to the point that he would like to do his very best to improve German-United States relations; he had the intention of undertaking a tour of study to Germany; he also wished, during his next stay in Washington, to discuss the European complex of questions with President Roosevelt. It transpired from his statements that he would not merely restrict his official activities to Britain, but that he would report on the entire European situation. I have so far talked with Mr. Kennedy along the lines suggested to me in Berlin.

Kennedy has now told me during today's reception at Court that he is going to Washington in a fortnight and wishes to visit me beforehand so that he can approach President Roosevelt for an amelioration of German-United States relations along the lines of our conversations to date; he asked me to put him more completely in the picture on that occasion.

Regardless of whether Kennedy possesses the influence which he ascribes to himself, I should consider it wrong to rebuff him and not take advantage of his offer.

I would ask you, therefore, if you share my view, to transmit a few ideas to me which I can communicate to the U.S. Ambassador for the journey to Washington. Dieckhoff<sup>70</sup> could be put in the picture by telegraph.

I would be grateful if I could perhaps receive your answer by the middle of next week.

With many greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

DIRKSEN

No. 227

438/220947-50

*The German Ambassador in the United States (Dieckhoff)  
to the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

WASHINGTON, May 31, 1938.

DEAR WEIZSÄCKER: Many thanks for your interesting letter of May 16.<sup>71</sup> Meanwhile you have unfortunately not had much peace. For hardly had you returned from Rome when the dance with the Czechs began. Here the press promptly came down on us, obviously at a suitable hint from Prague, Paris, and London, and we were once

<sup>70</sup> The German Ambassador in Washington.

<sup>71</sup> Not printed.

again the "disturbers of the peace," the "aggressors," and so on. Meanwhile the hue and cry of the newspapers here has quieted down a little, but unfortunately the impression has remained behind that we have planned something wicked, and only desisted from invading the peaceful land of the democratic Czechs because it has suddenly become clear to us—possibly on May 21 or 22—that we would not only come up against Czech resistance, but against the Anglo-French alliance and possibly also the Russians. My efforts here to explain to people that we had no intention of undertaking any military action, and especially that we had dispatched no troops to the frontier, were without much success because I was always referred to the loud tone of the German press, which has allegedly been so threatening that it can only be regarded as a prelude to military action, and because I was further met with the argument that we had ourselves admitted the reinforcement of troops on the Czech frontier, though certainly only characterizing it as a normal routine measure. I naturally do not allow myself to be sidetracked by all these transparent insinuations from the main line of argument that the position of the Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia is *the* point to consider, that this position is admittedly unsatisfactory, and that it must be settled as soon as possible in a rational and final manner. However, as is well known, there is little understanding for such a line of argument in Washington; for everything which smacks of consideration for the rights of a racial group is unwelcome here, as the United States has no very clear conscience as regards its own racial groups. On no point are the Americans more sensitive than on this; hence also the great excitement over the German-American Bund [*Amerika-deutscher Volksbund*], whose methods are certainly extremely clumsy.

You will have seen from my report that the French and British have been feverishly at work here during the last 10 days in order to win the Americans over to a sort of declaration of solidarity in the Czech question. The President would probably have been disposed to do something of the sort. But, after the setback which he suffered with the Chicago speech<sup>74</sup> and the Brussels Conference,<sup>75</sup> he has become somewhat more cautious, and Hull, who thinks in quieter

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<sup>74</sup> A public speech by Mr. Roosevelt at Chicago on October 5, 1937, in which he criticized Germany, Italy, and especially Japan, and added a warning of the danger to the Western Hemisphere from the policies of the dictatorships and advocated concerted effort by the peace-loving nations against the violation of treaties.

<sup>75</sup> The Nine Power Conference on the Far East, held at Brussels on November 3, 1937, attended by the signatories (except Germany and Japan) of the Nine Power Treaty on Far Eastern questions of 1922. The Conference adjourned *sine die* and without result on November 24.

terms, has succeeded in preventing him from taking unnecessary risks. (This line of cautious reserve has, indeed, already been pursued in the question of the possible abrogation of the Statute of Neutrality and in the question of raising the arms embargo to Spain; I do not believe that this attitude will be modified during the election months, in which there is no desire to complicate the domestic picture, which is of itself already sufficiently obscure, by discussion of foreign policy.) Hull has had, however, to make a small concession to the French and British, who were annoyed at the United States Government's negative attitude to their insistence, which they regarded as an unpleasant setback, and he has, therefore, on May 28, unleashed the invocation of the Kellogg Pact. This declaration has been soft-pedaled here; but in Paris, as I observe from the newspapers, it has been seized upon and interpreted as a warning to Germany. I consider it quite right that the German press has rapped Mr. Hull over the knuckles, which has probably ended this American interlude. For the present, nothing further will ensue from the American side in this matter. But I repeat on this occasion, too, that if, as a result of the Czech affair, a large-scale conflict should arise in which Britains became involved, the United States would not permanently stand aside, but would enter the conflict against us. Feeling here has become much more acute and bitter in recent months, and the few friends we still have are so timorous and dumb that there is little to prevent the entry of the United States into a war against us. The propaganda news from Austria has produced a bad impression in the widest circles here, by no means only in the Jewish. A still worse effect, however, has been produced by those things which are here regarded as a direct infringement of, or threat to, American interests: In the first place, the espionage trial;<sup>76</sup> further, the German national campaign in the United States and Brazil, which despite all our declarations to the contrary has always been connected with Berlin; and, finally, the measures against the property of foreign Jews in Germany, including American Jews also.<sup>77</sup> Whereas, until a few months ago, people here became emotionally excited over affairs which, they were forced to admit, did not concern them personally (Jewish question, church question, question of freedom, etc., in Germany), now many people have the honest conviction that America is directly threatened by us and that

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<sup>76</sup> The arrest (the trial did not take place until later in June) of certain persons in the United States on charges of selling military and naval secrets of the United States to an unnamed European power.

<sup>77</sup> This presumably refers to the Reich Decree of April 26 requiring the declaration by Jews (including also foreign Jews) in the Reich and Austria of their property, if of greater value than 5,000 RM, and in effect empowering the appropriation of it for State purposes.

we are on the point of undertaking military (espionage case), ideological ("un-American activities"),<sup>79</sup> and material action (expropriation of property of American citizens in Germany) against the United States. All this is grist to the mill of our adversaries.

As I am today writing to the Reich Minister, I intend to leave here on July 9, and to be in Berlin from about July 19 to 30, and would be available for conversations during these days and, of course, at any time during my subsequent leave in south Germany. Will you be in Berlin then?

With best wishes, Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

DIECKHOFF

[Longhand postscript:] I am particularly grateful to you for the detailed information by telegram on the Czech affair.

[Marginal note initialed by Weizsäcker:] To Under Secretary of State for possible wishes regarding reply.

No. 228

120/68327

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, May 31, 1938.

After consultation with the Reich Minister and on the advice of the Ambassador, von Moltke, I have told the latter today that on a suitable occasion he can inform the Polish Foreign Ministry that "we have appreciated the recent attitude of the Polish Government (German-Czechoslovak question)."

I have informed the Ambassador, von Moltke, verbally of the above.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>79</sup> The phrase in parentheses is given thus in English in the original.

CHAPTER IV  
FROM THE MAY CRISIS TO THE  
RUNCIMAN MISSION

No. 229

289/183209

*The German Ambassador in Italy (Mackensen) to the German  
Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

STRICTLY SECRET

ROME (QUIRINAL), June 1, 1938—12:30 a.m.

No. 148 of May 31

Received June 1, 1938—4:15 a.m.

For the State Secretary.

With reference to telegram No. 192 of the 30th.<sup>80</sup>

Today in accordance with instructions I informed Ciano, who rendered thanks for the recognition of his spirit of compromise and of the understanding attitude of the Italian press. Our abstention from a semiofficial announcement seemed to him not unwished for.

He answered my representations, which closely adhered to telegraphed instruction, and which concerned our final aims regarding Czechoslovakia, with the observation that our policy in this respect, in accordance with what was formerly said to him at the time of the Führer's visit,<sup>81</sup> still amounted, therefore, to awaiting the issue of the negotiations<sup>82</sup> based on the Karlsbad program, and to do nothing which might disturb the atmosphere of these negotiations.

MACKENSEN

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<sup>80</sup> Document No. 223, p. 364.

<sup>81</sup> See footnote 79, p. 292.

<sup>82</sup> See footnote 11, p. 310, and footnote 77, p. 332, on the negotiations. For the Karlsbad program, see document No. 135, p. 242, and footnote 59 thereto.

## No. 230

2369/494537-39

*The State Secretary (Weizsäcker) to the German Ambassador  
in Great Britain (Dirksen)*

BERLIN, June 1, 1938.

(zu Pol. IV 3919)

DEAR HERR VON DIRKSEN: Your letter of the 31st of last month<sup>83</sup> confirmed my supposition that you had to put your shoulder to the wheel in good earnest immediately. I hope this has suited your health. Probably your social duties, too, will now be heavy.

I would like to answer your question regarding your visit to the Prime Minister by saying that there are certainly no objections to such a conversation. I have not checked up on it, but presume that the Political Department keeps you fully supplied with news of our conversations here with Sir Nevile Henderson, and that you are therefore kept informed of current events. For the rest, it will certainly also be known to you that we received a personal and confidential message from Halifax through Henderson about 10 days ago,<sup>84</sup> and that we still owe an answer to this. I assume that this answer will go off in the very near future, perhaps even today. It would perhaps be a good thing for you to have read this before you go to see Chamberlain. We will have it sent to you as soon as possible.

Concerning your questions regarding British activity in the Czech affair, we, too, are convinced of British disinclination for a European war at the present juncture. Thus far we have faith in the good will of London to mediate in Prague. But whether the British method of exerting influence in Prague was a suitable one remains to be seen. One cannot well say "be good" to a baby and at the same time promise it a bonbon if it is thoroughly naughty. Henderson, who has just been with me, did not deny to me that Czechoslovak extremists felt themselves to be decidedly encouraged by this behavior. He maintained, however, confidentially, that Prague has been given to understand that people were by no means prepared to connive at Czech intransigence or, indeed, strong provocation in any circumstances. The same was true of the language used by France in Prague.

Perhaps you should not make use of Henderson's above communications when talking to Chamberlain. It would be better if he could be brought to confirm Henderson's statements of his own accord, or still better, to repeat them publicly.

<sup>83</sup> Document No. 226, p. 368.

<sup>84</sup> The message is that of May 22; see document No. 189, p. 319. Concerning the reply, see document No. 234, p. 377, and footnote 90 thereto.



In answer to your question I therefore categorically confirm here once again that we do not wish to put an end to the British pressure in Prague and that we do not wish to release Britain from this task which she herself has chosen and undertaken. Moreover, the British will of themselves scarcely give up the path once taken. As you have already written, however, it is not part of our plan to allow ourselves to be drawn into the negotiations as a jointly responsible agent.

Henlein is said to be conducting his discussions in Prague on the basis of his Karlsbad speech.<sup>85</sup> He will probably not make more extensive demands for the present as the Karlsbad program is already a comprehensive one. One can hardly suppose that Prague will sanction it in its present form. However, we do not seek a new crisis, nor, indeed, a complete break between Henlein and Prague. We have no intention of allowing Henlein to dictate to us the terms of reference or, indeed, the date of the negotiations.

I would like to answer your closing question regarding Kennedy, the American Ambassador, on another occasion, in order to conclude this letter today. I assume that Dr. Kordt, Jr.,<sup>86</sup> will take it with him. He will certainly be pleased and well qualified to render any assistance you need regarding its interpretation.

Best wishes, Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

WEIZSÄCKER

Letter to be given to Dr. Kordt to take to London.

[Longhand note:] The original has been handed to Herr Kordt, Counselor of Legation, through the State Secretary.

### No. 231

120/68336

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

PRAGUE, June 1, 1938—8:05 p.m.

No. 193 of June 1

Received June 1, 1938—10:15 p.m.

In continuation of telegram No. 188 of the 31st.<sup>87</sup> I now learn from a reliable source that the British have put out feelers here regarding a neutral commission. Krofta is said to have replied that Czechoslovak Government agrees to a neutral commission in the event of the negotiations between Hodza and the Sudeten German Party

<sup>85</sup> See document No. 135, p. 242.

<sup>86</sup> Dr. Erich Kordt; see footnote 89, p. 297.

<sup>87</sup> Document No. 225, p. 367.

proving unsuccessful. The task of the commission would, in the view of the Czechoslovak Government, be limited to domestic affairs.

EISENLOHR

No. 232

120/68337-38

*The State Secretary (Weizsäcker) to the German Ambassador  
in Italy (Mackensen)*

BERLIN, June 1, 1938.

DEAR FRIEND: Enclosed you will find a memorandum which might perhaps interest you. I should like to leave it entirely to your discretion whether or not you will report anything on the subject.

Heil Hitler! and hearty greetings,

Yours as ever,

WEIZSÄCKER

[Enclosure]

According to information from a very reliable source we should have expected that, in the event of the outbreak of war over the present German-Czech crisis, Italy would have maintained complete neutrality so long as Russia for her part did not take part in the war. Britain and France are even said to have received assurances to that effect, which in the Italian view were entirely compatible with the conception of the Axis. Deep satisfaction is felt in Fascist Party circles that the Duce intends to remain neutral in this question, which does not directly concern Italy.

No. 233

120/68339

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, June 1, 1938.

The British Ambassador, who was not able to see the Reich Minister today on the matter of the *Austrian debts*,<sup>88</sup> was with me afterward. As regards this part of the conversation, refer to the memorandum<sup>89</sup> of Herr Wiehl, Ministerial Director.

<sup>88</sup> i.e., the question of Germany's renunciation of her liability for the Austrian debts and State loans, after the *Anschluss*.

<sup>89</sup> Not printed.

The Ambassador then took up the *Sudeten German* question again. In the course of the conversation I told him it would be of advantage if his Government were to make known publicly that they did not intend to stand by the Czechs in the extreme case of the latter's not listening to reason and a conflict arising in consequence. The Ambassador maintained in this connection that, in fact, such declarations had already been made in confidence in Prague by the British Government. The French, too, had held similar language in Prague.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 234

120/68389-92

*Draft of a Letter From the Foreign Minister to the British  
Ambassador in Germany (Henderson)*<sup>90</sup>

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, June 1938.

MY DEAR AMBASSADOR: You transmitted to me on May 22 a special communication from Lord Halifax intended for myself personally on the Czechoslovak question.<sup>91</sup> Although I have already explained to you with perfect frankness and clarity in our frequent conversations my views on this entire subject, I cannot refrain from referring once more today to Lord Halifax's communication. It contains incidentally one point which seems to me of particular significance above and beyond the present situation. This is confirmed afresh by the memorandum on the conversation between Lord Halifax and Herr von Dirksen on May 22,<sup>92</sup> which you so kindly let me have a few days ago.

Lord Halifax speaks of Britain's future policy toward any further developments in Czechoslovakia. In connection with the observations which, according to the above-mentioned memorandum, he made on that same day on this subject to Herr von Dirksen, his words can scarcely be taken to mean anything else than that any intervention on the part of Germany in Czechoslovakia, even although preceded by the greatest provocation on the Czechoslovak side, would lead to military intervention by France. Great Britain would probably not be in a position to remain aloof. This would therefore mean that

<sup>90</sup> The original is an unsigned and presumably draft copy from the State Secretary's file. It is left undated except as regards the month and year. An earlier draft of the reply exists dated "May . . ." (289/183192-94), differing only slightly from this one. See also document No. 230, p. 374.

<sup>91</sup> See document No. 189, p. 319.

<sup>92</sup> See document No. 191, p. 322.

Britain, in such a case, would not only approve of a French attack on Germany but also support it.

Lord Halifax, it is true, said in a later conversation with Herr von Dirksen that the British Government were by no means willing to give Czechoslovakia *carte blanche* as regards her future conduct. In my opinion, however, this does not essentially alter the matter from the political point of view. Treaties of alliance and other assurances of military aid are, as is well known, never expressed in unconditional terms by the States concerned, but customarily always contain a clause to the effect that there must first be an unprovoked attack on the other contracting party. The political effect of the pledge of assistance is not thereby weakened. This applies especially when such a pledge is given in a situation like the present one.

Lord Halifax himself would not assume that the announcement of such a policy would deter Germany from adopting toward Czechoslovakia's future moves an attitude in keeping with Germany's position as a Great Power. Such an announcement can, at most, be conducive to fortifying the Prague Government in their intransigent policy, and by so doing increase the possibility of a conflict. I fail to see how the German-British understanding and cooperation, of which Lord Halifax speaks at the close of his communication and which, as you know, Germany also sincerely desires, could be realized in any practical way whatsoever under such circumstances. In the interests of a reasonable development of European relations I would therefore venture to hope that the British Government will not exclude the points of view which I have outlined above when they further consider their foreign policy.

I should be most grateful if Your Excellency would bring these personal observations of mine to the knowledge of Lord Halifax.

Yours very sincerely,

(RM)

## No. 235

Nuremberg U. S. Exhibit No. 82 (R-150)

*Excerpt From a Strategic Study for 1938 of the Supreme Headquarters of the Wehrmacht*<sup>93</sup>TOP SECRET, MILITARY  
BY OFFICER'S HAND ONLYTo: *Luftwaffe* Group Command 3  
Az. Plst. 38/Ia. op.  
No. 450/38. g. Kdos.  
Top Secret Matter of June 2, 1938.STRATEGIC STUDY 1938  
MAIN PART III  
INSTRUCTIONS FOR DEPLOYMENT AND COMBAT  
OPERATION "RED"Place names in accordance with  
Ordnance Survey Map 1: 1,000,000.*Index of Main Part III Operation "Red" of Strategic Study 1938*

## Preliminary Remarks

- Part A *General principles for combat in event of Operation "Red."*
- " B *Air attack against the West.*
  - " C *Instructions for the deployment and first employment of air defense forces in the event of Operation "Red."*
  - " D *Instructions for signal communication service in the event of Operation "Red."*
  - " E *Formations of Luftwaffe Group 3 which in the event of Operation "Red" are to be attached to the Army, and airfields in the area of Luftwaffe Group 3 which are to be taken over by the Army.*
  - " F *Instructions concerning supply.*
  - " G *Instructions for the preparation of marches and rail transport.*
  - " H *List of code words and method of transmission.*
  - " J *Deadlines.*
  - " K *Supply of target information and maps.*

- Enclosure 1. *First employment of ground-staff companies.*
- " 2. *French Air Force: Deployment areas, ground organization, supply installations.*
  - " 3. *French deployment routes: Targets for dislocation.*

<sup>93</sup> This document is an excerpt from a larger Strategic Study which presumably covered the whole strategy planned for the year 1938. The document here produced consists of excerpts from Part III of this Study, and is, as its title indicates, that dealing with the deployment and operational directives for Operation "Red," i.e., the military plan for the western frontier against France in the event of her mobilizing in defense of Czechoslovakia. See footnote 56, p. 240.

- " 3a. French *deployment routes*: *Stretches* in open country favorable for cutting.
- " 4. First priority *power and transformer stations, oil refineries, oil depots, disembarkation ports*.
- " 5. Operation "Red," "Air Defense Red."
- " 6. *Luftwaffe* Group 3—*telephone communications* (Net Ludwig).
- " 7. *Luftwaffe* Group 3—*teleprinter communications* (Net Ludwig).
- " 8. *Luftwaffe* Group 3—*telegraph communications* (Net Ludwig).
- " 9. Survey map of networks for leadership and command: *Radio communications*.
- " 10. *Flight control and radio navigation*.
- " 11. Static ground *network for flight signals* and employment of *flight signal companies* in *Luftwaffe* Group 3, including Tyrol and Vorarlberg, with annex "*List of places with their numbers*."

## PRELIMINARY REMARKS

1. In order to elaborate the preparations for Operation "Red," formations will base individual maneuvers and field discussions on tasks corresponding to this operation. They will bear in mind the restrictions prescribed in Main Part I, section B I, article 5.

2. The officers of attack formations and reconnaissance groups F. must be familiar with the *priority targets* in question and also acquaint themselves with all targets within the combat area which are of interest to the *Luftwaffe*.

3. Necessary reconnaissance on the subject of air defense will be assigned to the troops as individual reconnaissance tasks for the air defense target file and will be treated as top secret matter. The troops must not be able to deduce from the tasks a picture of the total deployment planned.

## PART A

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR COMBAT IN THE EVENT OF OPERATION "RED"

I. *The Enemy*.1) *Military-political situation*:*Commencement of hostilities*:

If a war threatens between France and Germany it is expected that hostilities will be started by France.

*France will*

(a) *either interfere in the struggle between the Reich and Czechoslovakia in the course of Operation "Green", or*

(b) *commence hostilities simultaneously with Czechoslovakia.*

(c) *It is possible, but not likely, that France will begin the struggle while Czechoslovakia to begin with still remains aloof.*

*It is to be assumed that France will begin the war with her Air Force, probably without a declaration of war.*

Great Britain's entry into the war and the employment of British air combat forces, even from continental bases, *must be reckoned with*. Belgium's participation is uncertain.

It is *questionable* whether France and Great Britain will respect a possible *Belgian neutrality*.

It is *unlikely* that France will respect the *neutrality of Luxembourg*.

*German formations* will not fly over *Luxembourg* and *Belgian* territory until they receive specific orders from the Supreme Commander of the *Luftwaffe*.

[Speculations as to the probable deployment and strategic plan of the French Air Force follow. Pages 3 to 8 of the document are missing.]

11) *Intention of the Commanding General and of Commander of Luftwaffe Group 3.*

a) *Combat area*: The whole area of France.

[Delineation of combat area of *Luftwaffe* Group 3 as against that of *Luftwaffe* Group 2 follows.]

*Combat* (including reconnaissance, but excluding contact with *enemy formations* which have carried out attacks in form of raids) will not be commenced until the Supreme Commander of the *Luftwaffe* has given the signal: "*Western frontier clear for flight*."

b) *Intention*: regardless of whether France enters the war as a result of Operation "Green," or whether she commences hostilities simultaneously with Czechoslovakia, *the mass of the German offensive formations will in any case*, in conjunction with the Army, *first* deliver the decisive blow against Czechoslovakia.

Until the main forces employed in the southeast become available, it will be the task of *Luftwaffe* Group 3 to prevent France from obtaining complete freedom of action in the air. For this purpose, attacks will be carried out continuously, in varying strength and in irregular sequence; air defense will be mobile and will be concentrated on focal points. In addition it may be necessary in exceptional cases to relieve Army Group West through concentrated use [of the *Luftwaffe*] at threatened parts of the front or through attacks against the deploying French armies, their deployment routes, and supply service.

By means of *simulated activities* on as many peacetime airports as possible and on other airfields known to the enemy, by installing new dummy airfields, and by distributing our own forces in small units over a wide area, we intend to create a deceptive impression of *great fighting strength* and to split up the enemy's combat forces.

*Later phase:*

If stronger forces are assigned during the course of the operations, the *main task* will be:

*To break up the French flying formations on their airfields, to destroy their supply depots and the vital installations on the airfields.*

*In addition preparations will be made for:*

aa) Attacks against power and transformer stations which are indispensable for the supply of power to the armament industries in and around Paris (the most important stations which are to be destroyed first are marked on annex 4).

bb) Attacks against the French fuel supply, especially the refineries and oil depots (for the most important installations see annex 4).

cc) Attacks against vessels unloading in the French Mediterranean ports (see annex 4).

These attacks, as well as attacks on airfields and supply depots in the Paris zone, will not be carried out until a specific order is received from the Supreme Commander of the *Luftwaffe*.

[Pages 11 to 44 of the document are omitted.]

24) *Preparatory measures for employment against West of further air attacking forces freed from service in the southeast.*

a) As the undertaking against Czechoslovakia progresses, tactical air forces freed from service in the southeast will, in the event of Operation "Red," be transferred to the west and employed against France *with the utmost possible striking power.*

According as the situation in the southeast develops, the transfer of reinforcements to the west may already *become possible a few days after the commencement of Operation "Red."*

The strength of these forces cannot be determined exactly beforehand. However, forces to approximately the *following maximum* may be counted upon (additional to the forces already employed in the west by the Commanding General of *Luftwaffe* Group 3):

3 Air Division Commanders with on the average 2 bomber groups [*K. Geschwader*], 1 dive-bomber group [*Stz. K. Gruppe*] and 1 reconnaissance squadron [*Aufkl. Staffel*] or group (*F*) each.

(Therefore total strength approximately up to 30 bomber and dive-bomber groups.)

For *combat objectives* of the Commanding General of *Luftwaffe* Group 3 after receipt of reinforcements, see Part A, article 11.



PART J  
DEADLINES

*July 15, 1938: Luftgau Commands will:*

Report that *preparations* ordered in Strategic Study 1938, Main Part III, for the event of Operation "Red" have been *completed* (cf. article 2 of covering letter of Decree *Luftwaffe* Group Command 3 Az. Plst. 38/I a. op. No. 450/38 Top Secret, June 2, 1938, concerning Strategic Study 1938).

*July 15, 1938: Luftgau Commands will:*

Effect changes of distribution of air defense forces in accordance with Part C, article 16a.

Submit marching orders in accordance with Part C, articles 16e and f.

Report that the issue of operation orders has been completed in accordance with Part C, articles 16e and f.

August 1, 1938	} Report by <i>Luftwaffe</i> Commands VII, XII, and XIII concerning <i>substitute airfields</i> in accordance with Part E, article 8.
November 1, 1938	
March 1, 1939	

## No. 236

120/68347

*The German Minister in Rumania (Fabricius) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 125 of June 3

BUCHAREST, June 3, 1938—8 p.m.

Received June 4, 1938—2:30 a.m.

Learn from reliable source that as result Czechoslovak pressure Rumanian General Staff has given *general* consent for Russian aircraft to fly over Rumanian territory on condition that they bear Czechoslovak markings, that crews only carry Czechoslovak identity papers, and will fly nonstop across Rumania; last point is contrary to what Comnen, the Foreign Minister, originally told me, namely, that intermediate landing was stipulated for purposes of control.

Approval of Rumanian General Staff is said to have been given under threat of embargo on further arms deliveries by Czechoslovakia. On the other hand, in consequence of Poland's opposition, there was no success in obtaining from Rumania right of transit for troops as well.

Nevertheless, it is said that Russians have stationed on Dniester railway construction regiments which can in a very short time throw railway bridge across river near Zmerinka and Slobodka.

FABRICIUS

## No. 237

Nuremberg U.S.S.R. Exhibit 268

*Memorandum by the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*

SECRET

BERLIN, June 3, 1938.  
(Pol. I 458 g)

Subject: Henlein and the Czechoslovak Government.

During the discussion between SS-*Obergruppenführer* Lorenz and Henlein, Henlein raised the following question:

"What attitude should I adopt if the Czechs, under foreign pressure, suddenly accede to all my demands and present, as a counter-demand, entry into the Government?" It is clear that this question will not immediately become acute, and that we must work hard at negotiations for a considerable time yet. But still, he requests, for his guidance, instructions as to what attitude he should adopt with regard to this question in the event of his no longer being able to maintain contact with Germany.

He himself proposes the following: "If the Czechs yield on all points, I shall answer 'Yes,' with the demand that the foreign policy of Czechoslovakia be modified. The Czechs would never accede to that."<sup>96</sup>

Henlein has been promised that this matter will be cleared up with the Foreign Minister.

LORENZ

## No. 238

Nuremberg U.S.S.R. Exhibit 268

*Memorandum by the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*

SECRET

BERLIN, June 3, 1938.  
(Pol. I 458 g)

Subject: Supply of information to the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* and exchange of information between branches of the Sudeten German Party.

In the discussion with SS-*Obergruppenführer* Lorenz, Henlein drew attention to the fact that in time of stress the Czechs prevented him from supplying his branch leaders with information so that the danger might arise that, in cases of urgency, he could not, without means of communication, keep the Party instructed in accordance with his functions of leadership, and that hence the coordination of the branches would be prejudiced. In order that in such cases direct

<sup>96</sup> Marginal note by Weizsäcker: "It would be better to reserve the answer until all circumstances of the case are known."

reports could be sent to the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* by the individual branches also, he intended for the time being to have a man posted on German territory in the proximity of the corresponding branch, who could transmit the information to the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*. He wished to set up the report center for these men in Bad Elster. He would then also be in a position to inform the corresponding men by Reich telephone, and they in their turn would be in a position further to inform each of his individual branch leaders by word of mouth, so that, through this post on Reich-German soil, he could maintain centralized control over his Party by means of a system of communications.

LORENZ

No. 239

120/68346

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, June 3, 1938.

In consequence of today's announcements in the Paris press of the discussion in the Chamber Committee for Foreign Affairs, and the telephone call at midday today from Ambassador Count Welzeck, I am going to dispatch the following instructions to Count Welzeck on behalf of the Reich [Foreign] Minister:

1. It is for Count Welzeck to decide whether to carry out the following instructions officially or at this evening's social event mentioned by him.

2. M. Bonnet is to be asked:

(a) Does the account of his statements in the committee, as reported in the French press, in particular in the *Petit Parisien*, correspond to the facts?

(b) If so, did M. Bonnet add to his statements in committee that the reports from the French Ambassador here have since proved to be totally erroneous?

(c) Does M. Bonnet approve that these reports from the French Ambassador, incredible from the outset and since proved to be false, should be presented to the French public without correction, and that thus a deliberate falsification of history is committed?

It can be added that, as is already generally known, at the time of the alleged crisis a fortnight ago; it was neither the intention of the German Government to undertake any steps for mobilization, nor have any such measures been taken since.

Similarly, as is likewise known, the story of the so-called Council of War, composed of Göring, Goebbels, Ribbentrop, etc., is untrue.

(d) Will M. Bonnet publicly deny all this untruthful reporting in the French press, and, in particular, that in the *Petit Parisien*?

Should it be his intention to allow the falsifications of history regarding alleged military preparations on Germany's part to continue to thrive and become established, then we must draw our own conclusions.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 240

2004/442467-88

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the  
State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, June 3, 1938.  
(copy Pol. IV 3950)

The Hungarian Minister today asked me for information on the latest developments in the Czechoslovak question. He particularly desired to be informed of the latest *démarches* of the British Government in Berlin and Prague. I gave him a very brief summary, stating at the same time that the plan to send commissions to Czechoslovakia did not seem as though it was being pursued by any party at the moment. In the course of the talk M. Sztójay raised the specific question as to whether we still held the same opinion as we did a month ago that Czechoslovakia at present wished to provoke a war. After he had referred to this question several times I said to him that the fact of continued mobilization constituted a further grave threat; Czechoslovakia obviously felt herself encouraged by the attitude of Britain and France. On the other hand I could see no signs of her provoking a war at the moment. The Minister said this was entirely his opinion; Field Marshal Göring, too, had said to him that a war was not to be expected at the moment, but that a new situation would, of course, immediately arise should it come to a massacre of the Sudeten Germans.

WOERMANN

BERLIN, June 8, 1938.

Copy to German Legations, Prague and Budapest, for information.

ALTENBURG

## No. 241

28/19125

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

No. 155 of June 4

BERLIN, [June 4, 1938.]

Received June 4, 1938—5:37 p.m.

For information. Belgrade Minister telegraphs following, June 3: I hear from absolutely reliable source information that French are working in Prague toward stiffening Czech resistance and in Bucharest are exerting strong pressure of every kind on King Carol to ensure Rumanian consent to passage of Russian troops in event of war. It is expected here, however, that King will remain firm.

ALTENBURG

## No. 242

120/68351-52

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German  
Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

PARIS, June 4, 1938.

No. 272 of June 3

Received June 4, 1938—2 a.m.

Reference to instructions by telephone from State Secretary.<sup>98</sup>

Bonnet, Foreign Minister, asked me urgently and of his own accord to come today shortly before social meeting with him, in order, as he said, to correct the press reports of his statements at yesterday's meetings of the Chamber's Committee for Foreign Affairs. In the relevant versions published in the French press there had occurred a number of errors, misinterpretations, and transpositions which had completely distorted and falsified the sense of his statements. This could only be explained by bearing in mind how press reports of such committee meetings came about in actual practice. The Minister gives an exposé and then answers a large number of questions. Thus, for example, he himself had spoken for 4 hours in all yesterday. At the conclusion of the sitting it is left to two members of the Foreign Affairs Committee, so-called spokesmen, to communicate to the press information in broad outline concerning the substance of the meeting. After that, the news thus given was commented on in the corridors and interlarded with private information. Each newspaper

<sup>98</sup> Cf. document No. 239, p. 385.

elaborated the gist of this information in its own way and unfortunately, as in the case in point, added its own items of news or inventions.

Passing on to the incriminating part of the press report on his alleged statements, Bonnet outlined to me what he actually had said and not said. He had stated that on basis of certain rumors the Czechs had mobilized three age groups. This mobilization would in French view have rendered a conflict possible if Germany had replied to it with partial mobilization, for then France would have been obliged to mobilize and the danger of war would thereby have been brought extremely close. François-Poncet had not telephoned him anything regarding German mobilization measures. He, Bonnet, had not said anything in the Chamber Committee either about this, or the ten divisions, or mobilization measures near Dresden, or an alleged War Council in Berchtesgaden.

I answered the Minister that I could naturally not doubt his statements, but should, however, like to make certain, in view of the unanimity in the French press regarding his observations on the sequence of the military measures, whether I had understood correctly that the Minister had represented the Czechoslovak mobilization as being primary [*primär*] and had only spoken hypothetically of a German mobilization. Bonnet thereupon expressly confirmed the accuracy of this view.

I then drew the Minister's attention very urgently to the dangers of irresponsible press reports of this kind. It was a question here of the creation of a war-guilt lie and of a falsification of history which was obviously maliciously invented by ill-disposed parties in order to do us harm and represent us as being those who had wanted the conflict or who, in the event of a conflict, would be responsible for its outbreak. The wrong which had been done could only be repaired by means of a very clear *démenti*.

The Minister then showed me a *démenti* which he had prepared, and which in sharp but general terms declared the press reports to be false and products of the imagination, and he asked me what my wishes were. I explained to the Minister that with regard to the detailed and concrete reports in the *Petit Parisien*, and also the *Temps*, a more clearly worded and more detailed *démenti* was absolutely necessary, and that in addition a general *démenti* appeared to me to be required for the rest of the press.

Bonnet promised me that he would have desired *démentis* issued tomorrow.

I shall take the opportunity this evening of again firmly drawing the Minister's attention to malignancy and danger of press methods of this kind and of urging him to institute investigations into the origin of the incriminating rumors.

WELCZECK

No. 243

2369/494551

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 1. allg.

PRAGUE, June 4, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 3993)

Osusky's and Masaryk's visit to Prague.  
Idea of neutralizing the Czechoslovak Republic.

POLITICAL REPORT

Foreign Minister Krofta has informed the Minister of another country of the object of the recent visits of the Czechoslovak Ministers in London and Paris.<sup>99</sup> According to this, Osusky has, on behalf of the French Government, uttered a special warning against "playing with fire," as the military and political situation is also a difficult one for France, who does not wish to be drawn unnecessarily into conflicts on account of her alliance. Jan Masaryk stressed the military and political considerations less, in view of the fact that Britain was not bound by any treaty obligations to Czechoslovakia, but he stated that the British Government spoke with him on the possibility of neutralizing Czechoslovakia, and asked the Czechoslovak Government on its part to examine the practicability of this idea. Krofta stated that neutralization was all very well but that presumably no state would be prepared to undertake the necessary guarantee.

The idea is by no means new but has frequently cropped up, in the British press as well as the press here, and has also been mentioned from time to time by foreign diplomats and Government officials. Not so long ago Krofta put this idea to me in a very similar way to that stated above. The grounds for the appearance of the idea of "neutralization," on the pattern of Switzerland or even more of Belgium, are so obvious and also so impracticable that its further discussion is unnecessary.

EISENLOHR

<sup>99</sup> Masaryk and Osusky arrived in Prague on May 26.

## No. 244

1585/382757-68

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

A 2505

LONDON, June 8, 1938.  
(Pol. II 1775)

## POLITICAL REPORT

CONTENTS: Effect on Anglo-German relations of the Czechoslovak crisis and air rearmament.

- I. The strain on Anglo-German relations due to the Czechoslovak crisis (pp. 1-4).<sup>1</sup>
- II. Increasing sympathy for the Sudeten German demands (pp. 4-7).
- III. British anxiety complex in the debate on air rearmament (pp. 7-10).
- IV. Britain's attitude toward Germany (pp. 10-12).

## I.

During recent weeks two events in Britain's political life have—without being immediately connected with Germany—influenced Anglo-German relations in the most unfavorable way:—the Czechoslovak crisis and the air rearmament debate in Parliament.

It was obvious that the events in Czechoslovakia would react on Anglo-German relations the moment the British Government decided to act as mediator in the Sudeten Germans' struggle for equality of rights in the Czechoslovak State. This moment arrived when on May 7 the British Minister in Prague made urgent representations for a settlement of the Sudeten German question and when the British Ambassador in Berlin informed the German Government of this step.<sup>2</sup>

As the German Government shared the British Government's outlook from a material point of view and had in addition no formal objections to raise to the latter's step in Prague, complete agreement existed on both sides at the start. It was therefore well within the bounds of possibility that the British Government's wish, that Anglo-German cooperation in solving satisfactorily the Sudeten German demands might lead to mutual cooperation on a broader basis, would be no utopian dream.

In contrast to these hopeful beginnings the further course of the British efforts to achieve a compromise led to a further—if only temporary—strain on Anglo-German relations.

This unwelcome result is due to a concatenation of various circumstances: The whole body of British public opinion in its attitude

<sup>1</sup> The page references are to the original German typescript.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. documents Nos. 149 and 150, pp. 261 and 262.



toward Germany is still influenced by the union of Austria with Germany. Due to the inability of the British to grasp Continental political affairs before they have become extremely urgent, the press and the public assessed the Czechoslovak affair in the light of German action in the Austrian question; it was expected that if tension arose—which occurred meanwhile between Sudeten Germans and the Government in Czechoslovakia—Germany would annex Czechoslovakia, in the same way as Austria. The feeling, by no means overcome yet, of being made a fool of in that affair, grew up again, together with the determination not to allow, unchallenged, further alterations to the balance of power in Central Europe.

A further disturbing factor in Anglo-German relations was the fact that the crisis of May 20 to 22, brought on and desired by the Czechs, was falsified by them, by the spreading of lies about German troop movements, and laid at Germany's door, while on the other hand, the partial mobilization of the Czechs and the atrocities against the Sudeten Germans, especially the shooting of the two Sudeten German farmers near Eger, were represented as consequences of German provocation. Two days, valuable for the forming of opinion in Great Britain, had elapsed before the inquiries undertaken by the British had revealed the falsity of the Czech campaign of lies. During this time the above-mentioned British fear of a German invasion of Czechoslovakia had received such an impetus that the British Government considered it necessary, in contrast to the reserve maintained toward Berlin at first, to raise the specter of a Franco-German war with subsequent British intervention.

The justifiable reaction of the German press to such pressure, which was looked upon as blackmail, led to displeasure in those circles in Britain at all well disposed toward us and to an intensification of the anti-German campaign by the ill-disposed and intractable part of the press here.

The differences were heightened by a further circumstance which had a particularly strong effect because it occurred behind the scenes and so was beyond control:—the war panic which smote the British Embassy in Berlin. Although according to my information, Lord Halifax did his best to prepare the way for a calmer judgment of the position, the advice given to the wives of the British diplomats and journalists in Berlin to leave Germany soon on account of the danger of war<sup>3</sup> sufficed to swell the uneasiness in Britain and amplify the unfriendly echo of the German press.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. document No. 212, p. 346, and footnote 21 thereto.

## II.

The effects of the Czechoslovak crisis on Anglo-German relations have, however, luckily not been confined to this negative reaction. They are countered by a growing understanding for the German point of view. The shock of the annexation of Austria has induced a large number of politically minded Englishmen to study Central European problems more closely. They quickly came up against the Czechoslovak problem. It was perceived that 3¼ million Sudeten Germans were putting forward justifiable demands, the nonfulfillment of which might have much more serious consequences than Schuschnigg's intrigues and chicaneries had for the Austrian question. Once again the annoying feeling was experienced of being tied to the Franco-Soviet alliance and faced some day with the question whether to become entangled in a war for the sake of the indispensable French partner, without any special British interests being involved, or whether to lose this ally.

As a result of this dilemma it was decided to avoid these alternatives if at all possible. The public, accordingly, occupied itself in increasing measure with the Sudeten German question in newspaper articles, contributions, and "letters to the editor,"<sup>5</sup> without stopping short at far-reaching conclusions. The Sudeten German demands for autonomy, even in the form stated in Henlein's Karlsbad speech, are not really rejected in any quarter. Apart from this the idea of instituting a plebiscite is gaining ground (letter from Noel-Buxton and Matthews to *The Times*, which published a leading article in the same sense on June 3, which attracted much attention). Even Churchill's adherents do not shrink from the idea of an incorporation of the Sudeten German part of Czechoslovakia in Germany (Boothby's article in the *Daily Telegraph*).

But even among those prepared for the utmost conciliation there are no signs of a willingness to keep Britain out of a war at all costs on account of the Sudeten German question. It is expected of Germany that she proceeds by stages: plebiscite only if autonomy negotiations break down; annexation of Sudeten German parts to Germany only after plebiscite has taken place. Perhaps the attitude of the British public is expressed in its shortest and most succinct form in the letter to the *Sunday Times* from an otherwise unknown Mr. Young. He proposes that every Englishman should consider and answer three questions:

1) If the German "cantons" in Czechoslovakia wish to join the Reich, is Britain to interfere?

Answer: No.

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<sup>5</sup> This phrase is in English in the original.

2) If the Reich uses troops to prevent forcible reannexation of these "cantons" by the Czechs, is Britain to intervene?

Answer: No.

3) If the Reich takes military action, in spite of every guarantee that the Sudeten Germans may freely state their wishes, is Britain to fight then?

Answer: Yes.

In *The Observer* Garvin states the problem in a different manner: "Czechoslovakia has only the choice between partition or a federal state."

Most brutal but also most characteristic is the advice given to a German acquaintance by an influential Englishman: "Don't shoot Czechoslovakia, strangle her."<sup>6</sup> Or, in other words: Anything which can be got without a shot being fired can count upon the agreement of the British.

### III.

If, in the Czechoslovak crisis, Anglo-German relations only became adversely affected the moment the British Government interfered in the Sudeten German complex, this reaction was inevitable in any case immediately British rearmament in the air came up for debate in Parliament; for the entire British rearmament plan as such is based, more or less, on "defense against the German danger." It is rather the special features of this particular debate which deserve emphasis.

An observer of the Parliamentary debate on May 12 might ask himself: How is it possible that the men responsible for air armament, Lord Swinton and Lord Winterton, could be swept away within 24 hours by Parliament and public opinion,<sup>7</sup> although their report on the estimates had shown quite noteworthy achievements?

In addition, the psychological fact had to be taken into account that public indignation at the failure of air armament had already found an outlet after the publication of the Cadman Report<sup>8</sup> and that since then calm had prevailed.

The answer to the query as to the grounds for such a radical reaction of British public opinion to the Estimates Report of Swinton and Winterton can be found in the fact that Britain finds herself in a state of anxiety neurosis regarding all matters of national defense;

<sup>6</sup> This phrase is in English in the original.

<sup>7</sup> Lord Swinton resigned his post as Secretary of State for Air on May 16. His official reason was that the Secretary of State should be a member of the House of Commons. Lord Winterton was Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and had represented Lord Swinton in the House of Commons, a duty that became unnecessary with Swinton's resignation.

<sup>8</sup> The Cadman Report was published on March 8.

the question of whether in the event of war the country is sufficiently defended and provisioned to stand a war and prevent a repetition of the air attacks of the World War is occupying the minds of practically the entire population, so that a few imaginary figures on Germany's air armaments (present strength 10,000 to 12,000 aircraft!), as well as an ineffectively presented report by Lord Winterton, sufficed to put the Cabinet in great danger which could only be relieved by jettisoning the men responsible up to the present.

A further symptom specially characteristic of the anxiety neurosis which now prevails in Britain due to the air armament debate is the concentration of these armaments against Germany. Whereas formerly the defense of the country was directed against an enemy known but not mentioned by name, Germany is now *the* opponent, for whose potential repulse such heavy burdens must now be shouldered.

It cannot be said that the British public is preparing or is being directly prepared for a violent quarrel with Germany; good judges of British mentality describe this state of mind of the masses more as a fatalistic acceptance of an unalterable fact.

The extent to which the British public's inherent willingness has grown to accept the sacrifice of a war, should their Government call upon them to do so, was shown in the course of the further Parliamentary debate when the veil was lifted from the extensive economic and military mobilization measures; the Opposition ventured no word of criticism and the only objections heard were lively accusations, especially in the provincial press, of the Government's failure to envisage still more extensive measures.

Special mention must be made of the fact that not only was the extent of the Government's preparatory measures in event of war quite extraordinary (air-raid precautions down to the minutest detail, partial evacuation of town populations, introduction of conscription in case of war, completed accumulation of large stocks of food and raw materials), but that the measures demanded by the Government affect each Englishman in the very sensitive spot of his individual freedom. And in spite of this no opposition from any quarter.

The attitude of the British people to the possibility of war has changed entirely since 1936; whereas at that time, after the restoration of full German sovereignty in the Rhineland, the Members of Parliament who were dispatched to their constituencies to ascertain the public mood returned with the unanimous conviction that the man in the street would not have war at any price, today a tour of the constituencies would not even be necessary to confirm that the British people—even now, in spite of incomplete armament—are

ready for war, should their Government show them that this is necessary, in order to put an end to a state of subjectively experienced threats and uncertainty which they look upon as not to be endured forever. To regard the excitement of the last few weeks as a mere bluff might turn out to be a fatal error.

#### IV.

The recognition of this frame of mind of the British people is of direct significance for Anglo-German relations. To a certain extent it is the foundation upon which the special case of the Czechoslovak crisis has arisen. Both these questions taken together permit a judgment to be made of Britain's present attitude toward Germany. This attitude can be summed up in the following points:

1) The British people are in the grip of a profound anxiety; they doubt whether peace can be preserved. They would be prepared to undertake the sacrifice of a war if they were convinced that this is the price for the termination of the present ferment in the world and the establishment of a lasting state of peace.

2) The present Cabinet has systematically educated the British people to a state of mind prepared for war in order to be able to make all possible preparations for the successful prosecution of a war and the defense of Britain. The British Government, however, are not at present allowing themselves to be driven by public opinion but are pursuing a policy which they consider right.

3) This policy, supported by extensive rearmament, consists in avoiding war, even at a very high price.

4) The avoidance of war by attempting to bring about a settlement with Germany is the declared aim of Chamberlain's Cabinet.

5) As a solution of the Sudeten German question, regarded as particularly likely to lead to war, the British Government would presumably be willing to proceed in stages from autonomy to plebiscite and even from plebiscite to a separation of the Sudeten German provinces, provided this development is not interrupted by forcible measures on the part of Germany.

6) The British Government would like to open a way for collaboration with Germany in the Sudeten German question, which might lead to a settlement of other outstanding questions.

7) France is by no means a pleasant or congenial partner for Britain; the French system of alliance with Eastern Powers of doubtful value, and the possibility of being drawn into conflicts, is in itself repugnant to Britain. Nevertheless, if Britain were faced with the choice, whether to stay with France and be faced with the necessity of waging war, or whether to lose the French ally and avoid a war, she would certainly choose the first alternative.

Such are, in my opinion, the conclusions which have emerged regarding Anglo-German relations from the course so far of the German-Czechoslovak crisis and out of the debate on air armament.

VON DIRKSEN

## No. 245

120/68772-75

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 276 of June 9

LONDON, June 9, 1938.

Received June 10, 1938—9:10 a.m.

I. I initiated a conversation with Lord Halifax yesterday in order to explain to him the attitude of the German public and press toward the British attempts to bring influence to bear on the dispute between the Sudeten Germans and the Czechoslovak Government, and to draw his attention to the reasons for the negative attitude of the German press.

I cited the following as reasons for the agitated state of public opinion:

(1) Although the Czechs were solely responsible for the crisis of May 20-27 (mobilization, shooting dead of two Sudeten Germans, and campaign of lies about German troop movements), the world's press, particularly that of Britain, too, had divided the responsibility between the two parties and had proceeded on the assumption of a German attack on Czechoslovakia.

(2) Furthermore, despite the sole responsibility of the Czechs for the crisis, British and French official representatives had held such language in their conversations with us as if we had wished immediately to resort to war; the entry of France into a German-Czech conflict was referred to as if it were a foregone conclusion.

(3) It had caused particular amazement when we were informed, as he had informed me, that in a German-Czech conflict France would in any case resort to war against us regardless of previous Czech provocation. That went far beyond the framework of France's obligations to render assistance as stipulated in the Franco-Czech Treaty, which was only to become operative in the case of an unprovoked attack. That gave the Czech extremists carte blanche to provoke a conflict. I had therefore been instructed to ask him for an elucidation of his previous statement.

(4) A further circumstance important for our assessment of the Franco-British attempt at mediation was the information we received immediately after the critical days; this showed that various Governments had been approached by France with the inquiry how the same Governments intended to react in the event of a German invasion of Czechoslovakia. As we had not given the slightest cause for such inquiries, we were obliged to regard moves of this kind as attempts to encircle Germany.

(5) Taking it all in all we had thus the impression that the effect of the Franco-British pressure in Prague was neutralized by the fact that Czechoslovakia had been stiffened by the unconditional

pledge of assistance. It was therefore highly improbable that the Czechs would be willing to grant a sufficient degree of autonomy.

II. Lord Halifax first of all dealt with my observations in I (3). He first of all stressed the legal aspect and was desirous of obtaining an opinion from his legal advisers on the import and scope of the Franco-Czech Treaty of Alliance, or else of summoning an official of that department. He came round, however, to share my view that the French engagements were well known and clearly defined, and that to consult a legal expert would bring no further new factors to light.

He then brought up the question whether a German invasion of Czechoslovakia would be justified in the event of unprovoked acts of violence on the part of the Czechs, for example, the shooting dead of individual Sudeten Germans. He answered this question by saying that even in such a case all peaceful methods must first be employed.

I pointed out with the aid of an example to the contrary that incidents assuming the gravest proportions might develop, especially on the frontier itself, without leaving any time whatsoever for setting the diplomatic machinery in motion.

When I had then agreed with Lord Halifax that the political side of the question was the decisive one, he declared with great emphasis that he could assure me that there was no question of the Czechs' having received any sort of blank check to provoke conflicts in which they could then always count on British assistance. He was unfortunately unable to communicate to me the text of the British warnings to Czechoslovakia, but if I knew that text I should be surprised how far the British Government had gone. He begged the German Government to rest assured that their fears regarding a blank check handed to Czechoslovakia were groundless.

III. In continuation, Lord Halifax regretted the violence of the attacks directed against the British Government and press. As regards himself the attacks directed against him left him unmoved and would not deflect him from the pursuit of his aim of bringing about a settlement between Germany and Britain.

He furthermore raised the point whether the acrimony of German press attacks on Czechoslovakia could not be toned down.

With regard to the tone of the German press toward Britain, I referred Halifax to my observations in paragraph I. With regard to German press attacks on Czechoslovakia, I described it as improbable that the German press would adopt a more restrained tone owing to the indignation in Germany at the Czechs' acts of violence.

Here Lord Halifax mentioned that he would shortly be giving an address at the Institute of International Affairs, which would deal—even though in theoretical form—with the Sudeten German question and would take our attitude into account.

III. [*sic*] Reverting to our last conversation regarding the Czech demobilization, Halifax then informed me that the Czechs had released up to 50,000 men and contemplated a further comprehensive demobilization by June 20.

He could, furthermore, with certainty hold out the prospect that within a very short time Czechoslovakia would make the Sudeten Germans a very far-reaching offer of autonomy. Beneš was now convinced that this question must be settled.

I expressed my doubts as to Beneš' sincerity. Hodza was better intentioned, but not decisive.

IV. In the course of the conversation Halifax repeatedly stressed the British Government's desire for an improvement in Anglo-German relations and a settlement of outstanding questions. From his words there was clearly discernible the intention of making an approach to the German Government again, with a view to resuming within measurable time the interrupted negotiations.

DIRKSEN

### No. 246

120/68376

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 206 of June 9

PRAGUE, June 9, 1938—2:50 p.m.

Received June 9, 1938—4:20 p.m.

The Legation is receiving from the Sudeten German spas, particularly from Karlsbad and Marienbad, urgent complaints that their already catastrophic position would be worsened by the continued violent language of the German press and broadcasting stations and would lead to complete ruin. Every day numerous cancellations are received, not only from Germany but also from abroad, on account of public announcements in the Reich, since the spas are in the "War Zone" and the spa visitors are therefore in fear for their personal safety. On the other hand, visitors already at the spas conclude from the violent polemics of the German press and radio that war is imminent and cut short their stay. As a result, the number of visitors has fallen to an unprecedented extent, with a corresponding decrease in business.



From my own observations and from agents' reports, I myself consider that the picture of the situation in the spas, which actually are hardly affected by military events, is by no means overdrawn. I share, moreover, the opinion of Deputy K. H. Frank, representative of Konrad H[enlein], that the continued provocative press and radio attacks, which undoubtedly for a certain period provided a useful counteraction to Czechoslovak mobilization, are now regarded internationally as signs of Germany's aggressive intent, and thus the Czechs are regaining the sympathy even of those foreign circles which had previously condemned their conduct. From conversations with Heads of Missions here, the swing of opinion in the last few days is clearly to be observed.

I have commissioned Press Attaché von Gregori, who is leaving tomorrow for a few days in Berlin, to report verbally relevant observations to the foreign commentator.

EISENLOHR

No. 247

2369/494579-81

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

A 2562

LONDON, June 9, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 4076)

Subject: *The Times* article on Czechoslovakia of June 3.

I am enclosing a memorandum by Dr. Hesse, Press Adviser to the Embassy, on the probable genesis of the often-quoted article in *The Times*. While it is doubtless going too far fully to identify the British Government or the Prime Minister personally with the opinions expressed in the article, yet one should not reject the idea that the article reflects the point of view of authoritative circles. It would naturally be a mistake to conclude from it that the British Government has any intention in the near future of officially taking up the idea of a plebiscite.

VON DIRKSEN

[Enclosure]

MEMORANDUM

I am of the opinion that the leading article in *The Times* of Friday is based on Chamberlain's interview with representatives of the British press on Wednesday evening and that in all probability the

article, which tentatively advocates a plebiscite for the Sudeten German areas, reflects a point of view of the newspaper which agrees with Chamberlain's line of thought.

Three reasons lead me to this conjecture:

1. *The Times* had hitherto dealt inadequately with Chamberlain's statement to the press on Wednesday evening, and only on Friday morning reported in detail both on the Spanish and the Czechoslovak problem. Thus already the internal evidence supports the supposition that the attitude on Friday morning of the newspaper, which frequently and deliberately discusses an event 24 hours later than the rest of the press, is the result of Chamberlain's declaration. Moreover, it is well known that *The Times* is utilized for such semiofficial *ballons d'essai*, while, on the other hand, it is also quite certain that *The Times* would not oppose the views and intentions of Prime Minister Chamberlain in questions of foreign policy. It is especially significant that, as far as I could learn, no part of the article has been disavowed.

2. I had a conversation with the diplomatic correspondent of a well-known pro-German newspaper, the *Daily Mail*, in the course of which he spoke to me somewhat as follows: the statements which he had made in the *Daily Mail* of Thursday morning were directly based on those of the Prime Minister. He had himself been present at this interview, and he could only assure me of his impression that the Prime Minister was ready to come to an understanding on both the Czech and the Colonial questions and to make far-reaching concessions in either case. To my direct question as to what were Chamberlain's views on the problem of Czechoslovakia, he answered that it was impossible for him to repeat to me what had been said on this point. (Evidently this portion of the statement was strictly off the record.) I then asked him whether he had the impression that Chamberlain would be prepared to agree to a territorial rearrangement<sup>9</sup> in order to settle the Sudeten German question. My informant was obviously nonplussed and replied, after some hesitation, "of course"; and soon after, "of course, I am quite certain of that!"

3. Shortly afterward, I had a lengthy conversation with the diplomatic correspondent of the *Sunday Times*. He also directed my attention most particularly to Chamberlain's latest statements and said that he could not understand why we only demanded autonomy for the Sudeten Germans since it was obvious that, in virtue of the principle of nationality, a revision of the frontiers was required. He was convinced that Chamberlain would be prepared to make very extensive concessions, even in the territorial sphere, if we would only

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<sup>9</sup>The words "territorial rearrangement" are in English in the original.

say clearly and exactly what we wanted. Was there then really no possibility that someone might say something authentic beyond his own personal views on the matter? He was further of the opinion that it would be a mistake if we did not try to reach an understanding with Chamberlain, who is at the moment in so strong a position that he has even succeeded in getting the Right Wing of the Conservative Party on his side.

In my conversations with the two journalists I avoided the word "plebiscite," but find that this demand of *The Times* can quite logically follow from Chamberlain's point of view as it was described to me in the two talks. The comments in *The Times* seem to be exactly the natural sequel to the views of the Premier on the Czech question, as they have been given to me.

DR. HESSE

LONDON, June 4, 1938.

No. 248

120/68382-83

*Memorandum by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the  
Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, June 10, 1938.

Today the Hungarian Minister again made inquiries of me about the position of the Czech question. After I had given him certain information, M. Sztójay described to me a conversation which he had recently had with Field Marshal Göring on the latter's initiative.

According to the Minister's account the Field Marshal expressed himself to the effect that it would be well if Hungary were at once to take an active part in any armed conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia. It would perhaps also be of advantage to forestall the Poles who, as was well known, claimed for themselves a small portion of Czechoslovakia, before they, notwithstanding their good relations with Hungary, forestalled us both. After a digression dealing with Hungarian-Yugoslav relations, the Minister continued that, despite the Field Marshal's views recorded above, he had not expressed himself in precise terms upon the expediency of inaugurating forthwith General Staff conversations regarding the manner in which joint or parallel operations should be conducted in the event of the hostilities envisaged. According to one observation of the Field Marshal it might also be necessary for German troops to march through Hungarian territory.

The Minister's remarks resulted in the suggestion that during General Keitel's<sup>10</sup> present journey further headway might be made

\* Keitel visited Budapest on June 14 on an official visit, which lasted a few days.

with the problem raised by the Minister. He expressly requested me to submit his statements to the Reich Minister.

This I promised to do.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 249

120/68378-79

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 208 of June 10

PRAGUE, June 10, 1938—5:21 p.m.

Received June 10, 1938—7:25 p.m.

Reference to telegram No. 159 of the 9th.<sup>11</sup>

Memorandum of Sudeten German Party and accompanying letter to Hodza, though promised, are not yet in my possession, but it is anticipated that it will be possible to send them on to you today by special messenger. According to Frank's statement it contains eight Karlsbad points, not explicitly but in substance. Territorial autonomy is not mentioned but widest measure of self-administration; nothing is said about Diet [*Landtag*], but about Popular Assembly [*Volksvertretung*]. Reparation demanded but not in precise terms. Prince Hohenlohe<sup>12</sup> is to take copies to Massigli<sup>13</sup> and Vansittart and to request their support which, if skillfully carried out, I consider expedient in the light of H's . . .<sup>14</sup> impressions from his last journey to London and Paris. Frank stated that with situation as at present Sudeten German Party "must certainly negotiate honestly."

Hodza, whom I saw yesterday, gave me to understand that he was making his political destiny dependent upon outcome of these negotiations. In matter of autonomy he was ready to go to utmost limit: Germans should be administered only by Germans. He was strong enough to overcome resistance within Czech camp. He would, however, make no concession which would be equivalent to a voluntary dissolution of the . . . (group obviously missing). He intends to carry through negotiations in 14 days, dealing with all technical matters in special commission, which will have to examine how far they are practicable. It includes president of Supreme Administrative Court and specialist on domestic affairs in Beneš' Chancery.

<sup>11</sup> Not printed.

<sup>12</sup> Prince Max von Hohenlohe-Langenburg of Schloss Rothenhaus in Bohemia.

<sup>13</sup> So spelled in the original. Massigli was at this time *Directeur des Affaires Politiques et Commerciales* at the French Foreign Office.

<sup>14</sup> "Received in this form"; obviously meaning Henlein.

Basis of negotiations will be both Henlein's memorandum and draft Nationalities Statute, political part of which is to be shaped in these negotiations. Demands of Sudeten German Party were formulated in wealth of "ideological" terms. For him, however, nothing was fundamentally unacceptable, but rather on each point there was opportunity to examine practicability. He admitted aim must be to keep Germans and Czechs as separate as possible within the State, since only thus could areas of friction be reduced and collaboration rendered possible. But in practice this amounted to declaration of territorial autonomy. Prospects, accordingly, not unfavorable; Hódza's serious intentions not in doubt, as Sudeten German Party also recognize. Of course, even with happiest outcome, thousand-year-old conflict in Bohemian region would not be ended, nor would old wounds be closed.

EISENLOHR

## No. 250

1585/382769-79

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

A 2589

LONDON, June 10, 1938.  
(Pol. II 1875)

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: The Czech crisis and its effects in England.

After describing in my report No. A 2505 of June 9<sup>15</sup> the effects of the Czechoslovak crisis on Anglo-German relations, I am following it with another, which sets out in chronological order the events of these days of crisis.

On my arrival here about a month ago, I found in the British Government, as well as among the public, a marked interest in and likewise a real comprehension of the Sudeten German problem. Mixed with this was considerable disquiet and anxiety lest England, because of it, might in the near future be dragged into a perilous conflict. In authoritative circles no doubt existed that, in the event of an aggressive German move against Czechoslovakia, France would not remain neutral and that then England also, as Chamberlain in his House of Commons speech of March 24 had made unmistakably clear, would in all probability be implicated in the war.

The British Government was, therefore, resolved to exert their utmost influence in order to reach by peaceful methods a lasting solu-

<sup>15</sup> Document No. 244, p. 390, is meant, although this is dated June 8.

tion to the Sudeten German problem. It is to be assumed that these efforts corresponded to the wishes of the French Government and also that agreement was reached during the visit of the French Ministers<sup>16</sup> on the measures to be adopted by the British Government. The first moves in this direction were the *démarche* made by Newton in Prague on May 7 and the conversations of Sir Nevile Henderson on May 7 with Herr Woermann and on May 11 with the Reich Minister.<sup>17</sup> Also, during my first conversation with Lord Halifax on May 3,<sup>18</sup> he declared that England desired to contribute toward achieving a just solution of the difficult Czech problem.

Wishing to learn more of the Sudeten German problem and to gain influence over future developments, the British Government undoubtedly welcomed the visit of Henlein to London and probably even encouraged it. Konrad Henlein stayed here from May 12 to 14. His visit was due to an invitation from Group Captain M. I. [G.] Christie, former British Air Attaché in Berlin.<sup>19</sup> Henlein met a great number of politicians here, in particular Sir Robert Vansittart, Winston Churchill, Archibald Sinclair, leader of the Liberal Opposition, Harold Nicolson (National Labor Member of Parliament since 1935), and numerous other Members of Parliament belonging to the Government side. He also visited the Czech Minister here, M. Masaryk. The visit of Henlein has made a favorable impression in London. By the quiet and reasonable manner in which he put forward his point of view and stated the demands of the Sudeten German Party, he won from those with whom he conversed, as members of the Embassy have frequently been assured by persons who took part in the talks, extensive sympathy and even confidence. The press also, which paid great attention to Henlein's visit, has, throughout, reported on the visit in a friendly way and without indulging in polemics and has shown great optimism as to its possible effect on a satisfactory solution to the Sudeten German problem.

The great interest taken by the British public in the Sudeten German problem was demonstrated by the innumerable letters which were printed in the leading newspapers. Among those containing positive comments, the letters to *The Times* appearing on May 7 and 10 from Lord Noel-Buxton, member of the Labor Party with pronounced pro-German opinions, and of Sir Philip Gibbs, well-known Conservative politician and Colonial writer [*sic*], can be specially singled out. In these the writers expressed themselves in favor of

<sup>16</sup> April 27-28.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. documents No. 150 and 154, pp. 262 and 269.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. document No. 145, p. 255.

<sup>19</sup> Air Attaché in Berlin, 1927-30.

granting the right of self-determination to the Sudeten Germans. Most recent of all, the letter of the Dean of St. Paul's, W. R. Matthews (which appeared in *The Times* of June 2) and, finally, the leading article in *The Times* of June 3 should be mentioned.

As against this, Czech propaganda in the Sudeten German problem was also clearly evident. The Czech point of view was presented in a one-sided manner, at times coupled with vicious anti-German attacks in letters to *The Times* (of May 11 and 18) from the well-known anti-German journalist Wickham Steed, General E. S. Spears, Conservative Member of Parliament, and the famous Liberal historian Gilbert Murray, and in a letter to the *Sunday Times* (of May 15) from the well-known publicist Harold Temperley.

It was made known on May 20 that a "Czechoslovak Committee" had even been formed, which set itself the task of campaigning among the British public for the inviolability of Czechoslovakia. To this committee belong Lord Cecil, General Spears, Wickham Steed, Gilbert Murray, and Temperley, as well as numerous other Members of Parliament and politicians, notorious for their anti-German opinions. A list of the members of the committee is enclosed.<sup>20</sup>

About the middle of May, the anxiety over the Czech problem was further intensified by the communal elections now due, as well as by a series of uncontrollable rumors of an imminent German invasion of Czechoslovakia. The attention of the Foreign Office was more and more concentrated on developments in that country, in the fear that some unlucky incident there might precipitate a situation over which the British Government would have no more influence.

In such an atmosphere the reports of May 20 and 21 were received here. During the afternoon of May 20 Reuter reported from Prague that rumors were current there of SA and SS concentrations in the German frontier areas. At the same time, news arrived of the inquiry addressed by Sir Nevile Henderson to Herr von Weizsäcker concerning German troop movements,<sup>21</sup> which news was featured prominently by the entire press. Admittedly, the press as a whole carried the German statement that it was only a question of troop movements normal for the time of year, but in many cases, however, further reports of German troop concentrations were printed alongside, which were calculated to excite the greatest anxiety. It is hardly to be doubted that the Czech reports about such troop movements were also largely believed in Government circles here.

The excitement reached its height on Saturday, May 21, when news was received of the mobilization of a reserve class in Czechoslovakia,

<sup>20</sup> Not printed.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. document No. 171, p. 296.

of the shooting of Böhm and Hoffmann, two Sudeten Germans, at Eger, and of the reaction to this in the German press, as well as of the refusal of the Sudeten German Party to negotiate with the Czech Government until the elementary rights of the German population were restored. These reports let loose such a panic as has not been seen here since 1914. Lord Halifax, who had left to spend the week end in Oxford, came back to London on the Saturday morning. The Prime Minister announced that he would return on Sunday and called a meeting of the Cabinet for Sunday afternoon at 5 p.m.

The Press Conference in the Foreign Office on May 21, which usually takes place at 12:30 p.m., was delayed until 1:20 p.m., when a communiqué was issued. This communiqué contained the announcement that Henderson had once again requested the Foreign Ministry for assurances concerning the alleged German troop movements and that the British Government had done everything in their power with the Czech Government; the Czech Government had readily and unreservedly answered, declaring their willingness to negotiate; on the other hand, the Sudeten Germans were not prepared for negotiations until certain precise guarantees were given, which was equivalent to "putting the cart before the horse." Lastly, the communiqué referred to the statements made by Chamberlain in his House of Commons speech on May 24, in which England's attitude in the event of a conflict was set forth in detail. The communiqué is enclosed.<sup>21a</sup> The anti-German Head of the Foreign Office Press Department, Mr. Rex Leeper, prefaced his explanations in terms which hinted at his belief in the imminence of war.

An unprecedented excitement prevailed among the journalists present at the conference.

The press comments of Saturday evening and Sunday were an outcome of the atmosphere which had dominated the conference. The possibility of a German attack on Czechoslovakia was openly discussed, and it was stated as a fact that France, in this event, would mobilize. The attitude of the Czechoslovak Government was hardly criticized at all. Henderson's two *démarches* to the Reich Minister were reported in detail.<sup>22</sup> The *Sunday Times* carried a leading article, which was to establish Germany's guilt in advance should a war break out. Other newspapers mentioned extensive troop movements in Germany and in Czechoslovakia.

On Sunday at 12:30 p.m. Lord Halifax invited me to the conversation with him about which I reported in telegram No. 251.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21a</sup> Not printed.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. documents Nos. 184 and 186, pp. 311 and 315.

<sup>23</sup> Document No. 191, p. 322.



Finally, a meeting of the Cabinet took place at 5 p.m. on Sunday, to deliberate on the political crisis. On May 23, the *Daily Telegraph* managed to report of this meeting that "messages from the European capitals were given to the Cabinet, from which it appeared that the situation had appreciably improved, thanks to the energetic diplomatic action taken in Berlin and Prague by England and France, working together in the closest possible cooperation."

On Monday, May 23, Chamberlain in the House of Commons and Lord Halifax in the House of Lords made the well-known and identical statements on the week-end crisis, in which, in their endeavor not to display partiality, they treated Germany and Czechoslovakia exactly alike and unfortunately made no criticism of the attitude of the Czechoslovak Government, which had provided the real reason for the crisis.

The press presented on Monday and Tuesday a considerably more peaceful picture than on the preceding 2 days, after the first election Sunday in Czechoslovakia had passed without incident, and the British Government had had it established through their Military Attaché that, in fact, no dangerous troop concentrations had taken place in Germany. However, the more the British press recovered from the fright of the week end, the greater were the satisfaction and the pride with which they praised the masterly performance of the British Government, which through their energetic and skillful conduct of affairs had preserved world peace under the most difficult circumstances. The British reader must have gained the impression that Europe had actually stood in grave danger of war, and unfortunately there is little doubt that he considers Germany in the first instance as the guilty party.

For the first time on Wednesday, May 25, a certain reaction was noticeable in the British press, which can in part no doubt be ascribed to the complaints in the German press about the British attitude during the week end and in part to official direction. It had been recognized in responsible circles that the situation during the week end had been gauged falsely and much too pessimistically, and that talk of danger of war and preservation of peace did not correspond with the existing facts. A Reuter message, given out on Tuesday evening, paid due attention to this realization, in which it was stated that "observers in London, on a retrospective consideration of the events during the week end, attributed the relaxation of the tension not to the attitude of any one power alone but to the self-control exhibited by all concerned in a critical and inflammable situation. Germany, France, and Czechoslovakia, as well also as Poland and Hungary, had each contributed to this, and through their calm and

self-control had made this relaxation possible." The British press then published during the next few days a great number of quotations from German newspapers in which the German point of view was clearly given. Messages even appeared which corrected the panic rumors of the week end, yet the impression will undoubtedly persist among the great majority of the British public that it was owing to the attitude of Germany that Europe was precipitated into a grave political crisis.

It is to be assumed that during the height of the crisis on Saturday, May 21, when Chamberlain fixed a Cabinet meeting for the next Sunday, the responsible members of the British Government, as also the editorial staffs of the great newspapers, believed in the probability of military conflict. Moreover, there are grounds for believing that the opportunity for worsening the feeling against Germany was made use of not only by extreme enemies of the New Germany, especially in the Labor Party, but also in official quarters. In this connection, I am thinking particularly of Mr. Leeper, Head of the Press Department of the Foreign Office, whom I have already mentioned. I have no proof that Vansittart acted in like manner. Yet it is quite certain that Chamberlain and Lord Halifax have not permitted such opinions to influence them; they have had a calming effect and have in this achieved some success with the press.

It remains to examine the question how such an excitement, bordering on panic, could come about in England. One of the chief causes is the fact that the slogan governing German foreign policy—that is, to create *faits accomplis*, as in the case of the Austrian *Anschluss*—is still strongly embedded in the consciousness of the political public.

Of decisive influence, moreover, during the week end were the reports of the British Ambassador in Berlin. Sir Nevile Henderson in fact appears on the Saturday to have lost his nerve and to have thought that there was an immediate threat of a German invasion of Czechoslovakia and, with it, of a European war. The rumor that, on this day, he had advised the members of the Embassy to evacuate their women and children from Berlin,<sup>24</sup> is apparently correct.<sup>25</sup> Thus the Exchange Telegraph Company also published by teleprinter at 1:30 p.m. on May 22 a message to the following effect: some British people living in Germany have sent their wives and children home; reports that this was done on the instructions of British officials were, however, unfounded; still, on the other hand, those who asked for advice received the answer that such a step was only prudent.

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. document No. 212, p. 346, and footnote 21 thereto.

<sup>25</sup> Longhand note by Weizsäcker: "Henderson canceled this after a member of his Embassy had instigated it."

Lastly, as a regrettable sequel to the events here of May 21 and 22, it must be stated that they have further contributed to strengthen anti-German feeling among the British public. The creation of so-called public opinion does not conform in England to the rules of logic, and when "public opinion" has once taken the bit between its teeth, it is not likely to be influenced by any subsequent denials or corrections.

The manner in which the British Government and public reacted on this occasion to the supposed danger is nevertheless of considerable interest and deserves notice also with reference to possible future situations.

VON DIRKSEN

No. 251

F13/349-347

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 233

The British Ambassador, who called on me today, brought up among other matters the subject of Czechoslovakia. In this connection he referred to his conversation with the State Secretary regarding the proposed dispatch of British commissions to the Sudeten German area.<sup>26</sup> He observed, while on this point, that, judging from communications which he had received, he did not expect any success from the dispatch of such a commission and considered that it would be much better to eliminate the causes by the cancellation of the Czech mobilization. In London they had now abandoned the idea of a commission and were restricting themselves to sending to the Legation in Prague an Assistant Military Attaché and an additional helper for the Military Attaché<sup>27</sup> to establish incidents occurring within Czech territory and to report upon them. I refrained from expressing any opinion upon this and merely referred to the state of affairs regarding the Sudeten German area which had for a long time been highly unsatisfactory. Sir Nevile answered that Great Britain would do everything to bring about pacification there. Britain could not, however, proceed in the matter as she wished, as she would assume otherwise in the eyes of the world full responsibility for the Czech problem. He asked me urgently to believe in the sincerity and earnestness of the British Government in regard to what they were doing in this question. Britain was ready to do

<sup>26</sup> Cf. documents Nos. 216 and 224, pp. 350 and 365.

<sup>27</sup> Maj. R. Sutton-Pratt was sent to Prague as assistant to the Military Attaché about June 11.

everything and would listen to any suggestion from me. She would gladly cooperate with us in solving the problem.

I told Henderson that I was happy to learn this, but that unfortunately the situation in Czechoslovakia told a different story. A few days before, we had even been told of the imminent prolongation of the period of military service to 3 years. To this the British Ambassador replied that, according to his information, no final decision had yet been reached on this point. He had even heard that during the last few days the Czechs had demobilized 50,000 men.

When Sir Nevile touched upon the treatment of the Czech problem by the German press, I closed this part of the conversation with the remark that the German press was only expressing in the mildest terms the indignation felt by the German people.

I then alluded briefly to the observation made by Lord Halifax to Ambassador von Dirksen,<sup>28</sup> according to which France, no matter what provocation the Czechs offered, would always take the field in a German-Czech conflict and in that case Great Britain could not stand aside. I asked him whether this represented the real policy of the British Government. I could not think that this was so, since it would mean *carte blanche* for Czechoslovakia and the cooperation of Britain in a war of aggression waged by France upon Germany. Sir Nevile protested, apparently quite spontaneously, against this view which was based, he said, upon a misunderstanding. He would like to show me the record of the Dirksen-Halifax conversation. The British attitude would depend entirely upon events, and if a case such as that depicted above occurred, Great Britain would be faced with a new situation. Britain had done nothing and would do nothing to strengthen the Czechs in their intransigent attitude, since that was altogether opposed to British policy in the Sudeten German question.

I answered that I noted with satisfaction what he had told me and then let fall the observation that Lord Halifax, for his part, would surely not assume that the German Government would, in the face of any provocation that the Czechs might offer, fail to return an answer befitting its position as a Great Power. Sir Nevile replied that his only source of anxiety lay in the fact that today no one ever knew whether a conflict was capable of being localized at all.

RIBBENTROP

BERLIN, June 10, 1938.

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. document No. 191, p. 322.

## No. 252

120/68387-88

*The British Ambassador in Germany (Henderson) to the German Foreign Minister*<sup>28a</sup>

BERLIN, June 10, 1938.

DEAR REICHSMINISTER: With reference to our conversation this morning<sup>29</sup> I enclose the text of the passage from Lord Halifax's despatch to me reporting his conversation with Herr von Dirksen on May 22.<sup>30</sup> As you will see, Lord Halifax repeated to him the text of the actual message which I had already been instructed to convey to you from him.

Yours very sincerely,

NEVILLE HENDERSON

[Enclosure]

*Extract From a Despatch From Viscount Halifax to Sir Neville Henderson*<sup>28a</sup>

I told His Excellency that we had already telegraphed to Prague about the recent incidents and the need for exercising the greatest forbearance. I impressed upon His Excellency that precipitate German action, whatever the provocation, might compel the French to take counteraction, and I repeated to him the personal message which I had instructed you to convey to Herr von Ribbentrop about our own position. It was of the greatest importance to seek to lower the temperature and we, for our part, would continue to put pressure on Prague for the avoidance of incidents. I was convinced that we could get a settlement if we were patient, but everyone must help, and it must constantly be borne in mind that, if it ever came to a conflagration, it would be European civilization as a whole which would suffer. I assured His Excellency that, if there were any direction in which His Majesty's Government could help within the limit of our powers, we should be very glad to do so, and begged him to let him [*sic*] know if his Government had any suggestion of possible action on our part which we were not already taking.

<sup>28a</sup> In English in the original.<sup>29</sup> See document No. 251, *supra*.<sup>30</sup> See document No. 191, p. 322.

## No. 253

120/68394-96

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 236

The British Ambassador called upon me today at 12:30 p.m. at my request. I handed him a carbon copy of the letter of State Secretary Brinckmann to Sir Frederick Leith-Ross on the question of the Austrian Loans,<sup>31</sup> and in doing so remarked that on the basis of our recent conversations on this subject a proposal had been worked out which would probably be satisfactory for all parties.

After reading through the letter Sir Nevile observed that he was too unfamiliar with the subject to be able to express any opinion on the proposal; he could not, therefore, say what attitude his Government would adopt toward it.

As Sir Nevile's manner seemed expressive of certain misgivings regarding the reception of the letter in London, I said to him that this proposal represented a very special token of good will on the part of the German Government and would, it was hoped, be appreciated accordingly.

I then spoke to Sir Nevile about his private letter of yesterday to me,<sup>32</sup> in which he enclosed a copy of the despatch from Lord Halifax about the latter's conversation with Herr von Dirksen of May 21. I remarked that I had not received any clear impression from this despatch regarding the British point of view. Was it the British view that France could without further ado seize the earliest opportunity to make war, no matter what provocation the Czechs had previously given? Sir Nevile once again denied this.

To my question as to what the British standpoint really was, he answered that his Government were only afraid that a German-Czech conflict could perhaps not be localized. If Germany proceeded to sudden action in Czechoslovakia before all diplomatic possibilities of a peaceful adjustment of the conflict had been exhausted, that might lead France to intervene. In that case Britain's position would be difficult. It went without saying that the British Government would do everything to stay out of a conflict, and France would certainly do the same. His sole anxiety lay in the uncertainty as to what might arise from such a conflict and whether, amid the excitement engendered, it would be at all possible to localize it.

During the further course of the brief conversation I made it clear to Henderson that Britain must certainly not assume that the possi-

<sup>31</sup> Not printed. Sir Frederick Leith-Ross was Chief Economic Adviser to the British Government.

<sup>32</sup> See document No. 252, *supra*.

bility of France taking up such an attitude as Halifax had outlined would restrain Germany from returning an answer, corresponding to her position as a Great Power, to whatever grievous provocations the Czechs might offer. Such a French attitude seemed to me rather to be calculated to strengthen the Prague Government in their intransigent behavior.

Henderson also said that the British Government were doing everything to bring the Prague Government to reason, but in other respects the conversation went no further into details.

RIBBENTROP

BERLIN, June 11, 1938.

No. 254

397/212889-90

*Copy of Extract From a Private Letter From the Counselor of the German Embassy in the Soviet Union (Tippelskirch) to an Official of the German Foreign Ministry (Schliep)*<sup>33</sup>

SECRET

A 865/38

EXTRACT FROM A PRIVATE LETTER FROM COUNSELOR OF EMBASSY VON TIPPELSKIRCH TO LEGATION COUNSELOR DR. SCHLIEP, DATED JUNE 13, 1938

I had a lengthy conversation with the Hungarian Minister here on the Czechoslovak question. M. Jungerth-Arnóthy told me that he had discussed the matter with the Czechoslovak Minister here and also with Litvinov. M. Fierlinger, the Czech Minister, and Litvinov are in continuous touch over all happenings in Czechoslovakia. Litvinov keeps himself informed on everything, even the smallest details. He has advised the Czechoslovak Minister that the Czechoslovak Government should come to terms with the minorities. In particular, the Czechoslovak Government should first negotiate with the smaller minorities, and try to agree with them on their demands. The Czechoslovak Government should negotiate with the Germans and the Hungarians last of all. It seems to me that this is rather Machiavellian counsel, designed to put the Sudeten Germans in the wrong and place upon them the responsibility for all further happenings. Litvinov told the Hungarian Minister—and indeed somewhat categorically, as if he could give orders to Czechoslovakia—"the minorities will all receive the same treatment." This seems to

<sup>33</sup> The copy printed is from the files of the Moscow Embassy and bears the initials of Tippelskirch and other Embassy officials to whom it was circulated.

me to indicate that Litvinov sets no store on warlike developments, but wants to do everything possible to injure German prestige and put the Sudeten Germans, and Germany too, in the wrong. Speaking of the mood of the Czechoslovak Minister, M. Jungerth-Arnóthy further told me that after the French Government's statement that France would fulfill her Treaty of Alliance with Czechoslovakia, he appeared calm. The reason for this is probably that Litvinov also told the Czechoslovak Minister that there could be no doubt as to the loyal adherence of the Soviet Government to the obligations undertaken by them. In any case, not even M. Jungerth-Arnóthy could say how the Soviet Government propose to fulfill their obligations in detail. I ask you to consult again the reports of the Embassy of May 23 and 30—No. A/773, No. A/780, and No. A/796—<sup>34</sup> in connection with the foregoing.

## No. 255

120/68404

*Memorandum by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the  
Foreign Minister*

SECRET

BERLIN, June 13, 1938.

The Polish Ambassador<sup>35</sup> told me today that a conversation was still pending between him and Field Marshal Göring, for which he had applied. In the course of further conversation the Ambassador mentioned that he would at the same time by direction of his Minister, inform the Field Marshal, in reply to an earlier inquiry by Göring, that combined Polish and German economic pressure on Czechoslovakia might well have international economic and political consequences which had better not be incurred. M. Beck was grateful that we were keeping in touch with Poland as regards our Czech policy. Measures like those suggested should not, however, be framed in such a way as to produce repercussions on ourselves. A policy of economic pressure slowly brought to bear on Czechoslovakia might in any case be considered.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>34</sup> Report A/796 is printed as document No. 222, p. 363; reports A/773 and A/780 are not printed.

<sup>35</sup> Jozef Lipski.



## No. 256

625/251584-88

*Memorandum by the German Ambassador in France (Welczeck)  
for the Foreign Ministry*PARIS, June 17, 1938.  
(Pol. II 1957)

## MEMORANDUM

Bonnet, French Foreign Minister, invited me to visit him yesterday in order to undertake, in his phrase, a *tour d'horizon* and to put me in the picture as to recent measures of the French Government. I told him that I also had desired to visit him to express our wishes, given many times before to his predecessors, concerning a simultaneous call by several German ships at Tangier Harbor. I then did this also as clearly and as emphatically as possible and described the previous attitude of the officials responsible as pure chicanery, which we were no longer willing to endure. Bonnet promised to go into the matter and to do his very best to satisfy our wishes. Having regard to his conciliatory attitude, which he has also shown us on other occasions, one might assume that we would now make progress, in spite of the opposition which he is likely to encounter in this question, not only from the naval authorities but also in his own Ministry.

The Foreign Minister prefaced his remarks on the political situation by saying that he was striving for as close a contact with us as possible and that, therefore, he considered it of prime importance to keep me acquainted with his point of view regarding current political questions and with the measures taken in each case by the French Government. I knew ever since we had got to know each other how he viewed a Franco-German understanding. Quite recently he had taken the opportunity of encouraging those of his fellow countrymen, who had been invited to the meeting of the Franco-German Society, in their intention of undertaking the journey to Baden-Baden. In contrast to many others, who described such organizations as pointless and held a war to be inevitable, he considered it his principal task to assist in every way any efforts which aimed at a better understanding between Germans and Frenchmen. For only on the basis of a better comprehension of the interests of both sides and, as a result of this, of a mutual forbearance, was an understanding between the two nations possible—that understanding which was the ideal not only of all Frenchmen in responsible positions but also of nearly all statesmen in the whole world, as providing the best guarantee that peace would long be preserved.

As to the imputations made against him by the French press regarding the ten divisions concentrated by us near Dresden and other false reports, he had taken the opportunity once again of emphatically denying these rumors in the Senate and of adding that the French Military Attaché in Berlin had driven up and down the frontier zone in his car during the days of crisis and had forwarded a report that on the German side not a single man had been mobilized. He had also used this report, not only to exercise a calming influence in Prague, but also to express himself there in clear and vigorous terms which apparently had not failed in their effect. He would, if necessary, adopt an even sharper tone should the Czechs remain stubborn about settling the Sudeten German question; his only regret was that we were not prepared to sit down at a conference table with the French and the British and find a solution to the problem on a three-Power basis. I declined this with the well-known counter-arguments and added that we really could not possibly give our assent to a settlement, the working-out of which in practice no one could foresee. Bonnet mentioned also the attitude of the German press which, according to his information, magnified unduly many incidents in the Sudeten German zone and had thus excited feelings to a degree unfavorable for an attempt at an understanding. To this I answered decisively that we were of the contrary opinion, and that our love of peace was not great enough for us to endure without protest the wrongs inflicted almost daily on our fellow countrymen in Czechoslovakia. The German press printed only a fraction of these scandalous incidents and would continue to expose and pillory them as long as the Czechs permitted the Sudeten Germans to be treated in this inhuman way.

Turning then to events in Spain, the Foreign Minister remarked that all the reports in the Opposition press concerning deliveries of arms and ammunition, which had been transported allegedly even during the last few weeks through France to Red Spain, were untrue. Moreover, just recently a consignment of weapons of Italian origin had been intercepted on its way to Cerbère and sent back. One had the impression that the Spanish Civil War might end this year, perhaps even by agreement between the opposing parties, which would facilitate a reconciliation. I told Bonnet that, as far as I knew, Franco was demanding unconditional surrender from the Reds, for which they at the moment were probably not prepared. Franco would no doubt win the war quite quickly, if only all foreign volunteers on both sides were withdrawn. Bonnet mentioned, with reference to this, that the Communists living in the so-called Red Zone around Paris, of whom the great majority were foreigners, had pro-

vided a large contingent of volunteers for the Spanish Civil War. According to reports he had received, almost 80 percent of these volunteers had been killed or had died, so that this zone had luckily become much more thinly populated.

From the conversation with Bonnet, which did not bring forth anything very new, I gained the impression that the Foreign Minister attaches importance to allowing his dealings with us to appear in as favorable a light as possible.

H. WELCZECK

No. 257

120/68411-13

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, June 18, 1938.

The Czech Minister visited me today after a week's absence in his own country.

M. Mastny stated that the Hodza-Henlein negotiations were now in full swing. Henlein's memorandum was now being examined by a committee of jurists. There is no question of procrastination. It is intended to lay before Parliament with the shortest possible delay, that is about the middle of July, the results of the discussions. A number of laws would be involved. A complete and not a patchwork settlement is the aim. The question is now no longer of a National State but only of a Nationalities State. The procedure is as follows: first of all, agreement with the Sudeten Germans, then preliminary arrangements with the political parties, and, lastly, Parliamentary sanction.

For this plan to be successfully pursued, it is of course essential that the atmosphere be right. Our press, however, is always exaggerating. He, Mastny, traveling by car from the German frontier to Prague, had met in all seven Czech soldiers, without counting those in a garrison town. There was absolutely no suggestion of his country's being one of barricades. In Prague now, where he had spoken with all the leading figures, amazement was general at our inadequate support of the present Czech intentions. More than anything, the speech of the Führer's deputy last Sunday<sup>37</sup> had caused surprise. It made it harder for the Prime Minister to carry out his good intentions and rendered his position vis-à-vis the parties more

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<sup>37</sup> Hess spoke at a mass meeting at Stettin on Sunday, June 12. He alleged that the Czechoslovak Government was not in a position to protect its citizens and that, by its mobilization measures and troop movements, it constituted a threat to the peace of Europe.

difficult. The question arises, do we really wish for an understanding? The German press by its bluster by no means promotes a peaceful solution. Nevertheless, he, Mastny, was more optimistic today than a week ago.

First of all, I broached the subject of the extraordinary military measures in Czechoslovakia. M. Mastny maintained, with regard to these, that 10 days ago 49,000 men had been demobilized. Since then, the process had gone still further. The internal situation, however, had precluded an immediate annulment of all military measures directly the elections had been completed. The introduction of the 3-year term of military service, to which I drew attention, was still an open question. When the frontier fortifications were manned, due consideration would be paid to the Sudeten Germans. They would be little affected thereby.

I then pointed out to M. Mastny that, according to Czech statements, the military measures and the agreement with Henlein are to be treated very much as "robbing Peter to pay Paul" [*als Zug-um-Zug-Geschäft*]. Thus, the Sudeten Germans are apparently to purchase the withdrawal of the military by political concessions. According to some reports, moreover, the assertion that men have been demobilized is to be interpreted that, while admittedly releases have taken place, others liable to military service have been recruited. An hour after M. Mastny had left me, he informed me by telephone that, according to his most recent press messages from Prague, the entire military age group, which had been called to the colors, had now again been released.<sup>38</sup> The method of establishing order in the country by military force seemed to me the most unsuitable. On top of this, comes the arming of the Communists. The agitation in the Sudeten areas can really only be allayed by an internal reconciliation and by granting to Henlein the long overdue concessions.

M. Mastny then attempted to make out in great detail that the agitation in the Sudeten German area was artificial and to minimize it, while on the other hand placing the blame essentially on our press and on statements such as that of Reich Minister Rudolf Hess.

I replied to M. Mastny that such prevarications and attempts to minimize the situation were quite irrelevant to the generally accepted fact, which even he had not previously contested, that it was high time justice were done to the Sudeten Germans. If they paid no heed to this opinion and refused to tackle the problem with the requisite seriousness, then later on they would have to pay even more heavily for it. As for the speech of Rudolf Hess—Mastny had cited

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<sup>38</sup> This sentence is added at the bottom with an indication that it is to be inserted here.

particularly the part about the inability of Czechoslovakia to keep order in the country and the reproach that the Germans were ill-treated purely because of their nationality—I would have expressed myself in exactly the same terms, if I had had to speak. Nothing was more hazardous than to lend a helping hand to the Czech politicians who were riding for a fall—and this, too, Mastny did not dispute; Czechoslovakia must act thoroughly and must act quickly.

During the whole conversation, which touched finally on various special questions and lasted more than an hour, I maintained a perfectly dry and humorless tone.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 258

1650/392040

*The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A/843

Moscow, June 18, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 4236)

Reference to instructions of the 8th instant.<sup>39</sup>

Subject: Passage of Soviet aircraft over Rumanian territory.

I have confirmed that the Rumanian Chargé d'Affaires<sup>40</sup> here has categorically denied to another diplomat here that Rumania has granted a general right of transit by air to the Soviet Union. All that existed was the well-known civil air traffic agreement which controls the traffic on the Moscow-Kiev-Prague route. The renewal of this agreement was to be negotiated in the near future.

The Polish Embassy here knew nothing at all about the matter. The Italian Embassy here knew only that Rumania had refused to grant right of transit to Soviet Russian troops.

SCHULENBURG

[Note at bottom:] Dg. Pol. Before using this report await information requested from Warsaw and Prague, also answer from *Wehrmacht* Supreme Headquarters.

<sup>39</sup> Not printed.

<sup>40</sup> I. Popesco-Pascani.

## No. 259

F12/299-297

*Memorandum*<sup>41</sup>

[JUNE 20, 1938.]

## I.

1) In the path of further expansion and consolidation of the Third Reich, stand France, our most certain opponent, and Britain, our most dangerous enemy. Neither France nor England will cross swords with us without the other. If war comes, we shall either have to deal with both or with neither of them.

In case of war, we have to reckon as a matter of course that the United States of America and Soviet Russia will associate themselves with the *de facto* alliance against us of these two Powers, France and Britain.

Germany must brush the opposition of this Entente from her future path either by diplomacy or by war.

2) Only if the Entente attacks us, will the Third Reich consider staking its existence on a war. Our essential war aims do not lie on their territory.

But there is also a German aim in the East, which is only attainable politically if the Entente tolerates our course of action. If it interferes, then our policy fails. Our defensive sealing-off process [*Abriegelung*] in the West would have failed in its political preventive aim, and perhaps also partly in its military sense. Neither the sealing-off of the West nor the occupation of land in the East would decide the issue of this great war. The decision about our aims in the East would once again have to be fought for in the West and be confirmed by a dictated peace in Paris and London.

But we have no military recipe for defeating France and Britain. Even taking into account Italian and Japanese help, we would only be able to inflict injuries upon the limbs of our most dangerous foe, England, not strike her in the heart. The war would therefore end with our exhaustion and defeat. The common loser with us would be the whole of Europe, the victors chiefly the non-European continents and the antisocial powers.

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<sup>41</sup> The document bears a penciled note, "submitted by State Secretary to Reich Minister beginning of June" at the top, and is initialed in the margin by Erich Kordt (of the Reich Minister's Secretariat), with a direction to file, and the date, June 20. The document formed Exhibit GB.31 at the Nuremberg trials (TC-76).

3) The first care, therefore, of German policy must be to ensure that the Third Reich is not attacked by the Entente. This is a preventive task and one of defense only as regards the Entente. It has a military, industrial, financial, social, and diplomatic aspect. To diplomacy belongs the building-up of a counter-Entente. German-Italian-Japanese friendship assists this preventive aim without, however, being able to achieve it with certainty. The physical strength of the anti-Comintern group is too weak to intimidate the Entente completely.

Therefore the task of German diplomacy is to recognize clearly the limits to which German policy can be pushed for the time being without causing the Entente to interfere.

## II.

4) The most immediate problem in German policy, that of Czechoslovakia, can easily lead to a conflict with the Entente, but must not be allowed to do so. Neither France nor Britain wish to pick a quarrel over Czechoslovakia. They would both perhaps even leave Czechoslovakia to herself, if, without direct attacks from abroad and owing to internal disruptive tendencies brought about by her own fault, she were to suffer the fate she deserves. This process must, however, be a gradual one and must aim, by plebiscites and amputation of districts, at a collapse of the remaining area.

The Czech problem, on the other hand, is not yet ripe enough politically for an immediate attack, which the Entente would watch passively, even if such an attack were executed swiftly and as a surprise. Germany is not free to choose the moment when this fruit may be plucked without too great a risk. She is only in a position to organize the desired development.

For this purpose we should slowly adopt the slogan, emanating at the moment from Britain, "Self-determination for the Sudeten Germans," which we have hitherto intentionally not appropriated. The conviction prevailing internationally that these Germans have been denied the right of choosing to which country they wish to belong advantageously prepares the ground, irrespective of whether or not the chemical process of disruption of the Czechoslovak political structure can in the long run be furthered by mechanical aid or not. The ultimate fate of the rump of Czechoslovakia, however, could not yet thereby be clearly outlined, yet it would be already sealed.

5) This course of action as regards Czechoslovakia is also to be recommended because of our relations with Poland. It is inevitable that, when Germany, having dealt with the problem of the southeast frontier, proceeds to that of the frontiers on the east and northeast,

the Poles will prick up their ears. For, once the Czech question has been settled, it is generally taken for granted that Poland is next on the list. However, the later this conjecture establishes itself as an integral element in international politics the better. From this point of view, therefore, it is important to conduct German policy until further notice by means of such hackneyed and well-trying maxims as "right of self-determination" and "national solidarity" [*völkische Gemeinschaft*]. Anything else could be imputed to us as pure imperialism and would bring the opposition of the Entente into play sooner and more energetically than our strength will bear.

## No. 260

F6/0258-0257

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*<sup>42</sup>

RM 238

Ambassador Attolico called on me today at 11:30 a.m. to make the following communication:

Count Ciano attached importance to informing us of the gist of his conversations at Venice with Premier Stoyadinovich.

1) Count Ciano believes that he has ascertained that there is now a certain diminution of cordiality in the relations between London and Belgrade. Stoyadinovich and Ciano have agreed to keep joint observation upon British policy in the Mediterranean.

2) The British Government, as Stoyadinovich has confirmed, do not view any too sympathetically the far-reaching *rapprochement* between Athens and Ankara.

3) The relations between Belgrade and Paris have grown still cooler.

4) Stoyadinovich has repeatedly emphasized that he views the Rome-Berlin Axis as an actuality, and is striving to achieve cooperation with the two Axis Powers.

5) Ciano and Stoyadinovich have jointly declared their disinterestedness in the German-Czech problems. Only in the event of a direct attack by Hungary upon Czechoslovakia will the occasion arise for Yugoslavia to intervene in accordance with the Little Entente agreements. Ciano has assured Stoyadinovich that he did not believe in such a Hungarian attack.

I took note of the Italian Ambassador's communications and expressed my thanks. In conclusion, I agreed with him to publish on Friday the German-Swiss and the Italian-Swiss exchanges of notes.

The Italian Ambassador then touched briefly on the question of the

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<sup>42</sup> The date of the original is obliterated, but since the German and Italian notes recognizing Swiss neutrality referred to in the text were dated June 21 and published on June 24, the document must have been written between these dates.



so-called Southern Railway<sup>43</sup> and asked for the name of the competent expert with whom he might be able at some time to discuss the matter in greater detail.

Finally, Ambassador Attolico again referred to the treatment of the property of foreign Jews. I told him that, as far as I knew, the foreign Jews living abroad would be exempted from the property declaration. The foreign Jews living in Germany must, however, declare their property. I could not yet at the moment say to what extent this property would be subjected to any further measures. It was possible that up to a certain point an individual might . . . [text obliterated]. No promise could be made . . . [text, signature, and part of date obliterated].

JUNE 1938.

### No. 261

397/212883-88

*The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to the German Foreign Ministry*<sup>43a</sup>

A/907

Moscow, June 22, 1938.

#### POLITICAL REPORT

With reference to reports Nos. A 773, 780, 796 of May 23 and 30, 1938.<sup>44</sup>

Subject: Attitude of the Soviet Government during the Czechoslovak crisis.

The Soviet press in Moscow took up the following attitude during the Czechoslovak crisis.

*Izvestia* on May 23 quoted a Havas message from Paris of May 22 that Bonnet had spoken with Osusky, "Bonnet reaffirmed emphatically France's previous attitude with regard to Czechoslovakia."

Between May 23 and 25, two articles on Czechoslovakia were printed in Moscow newspapers in which *no* mention whatever was made of Soviet treaty obligations.

*Izvestia* of May 26 contained an article by its diplomatic correspondent, Alexandrov. In this were mentioned as the factors which had induced Hitler and his advisers at least to postpone their risky plan: (1) the timely defense measures taken by Czechoslovakia; (2) the publication of the fact that France had again clearly announced

<sup>43</sup> Cf. document No. 193, p. 325, and footnote 58 thereto.

<sup>43a</sup> This is a draft, apparently by Tippelskirch. The alterations are in his handwriting and the document bears his initial.

<sup>44</sup> See document No. 222, p. 363, and footnote 34, p. 414. This phrase is inserted in handwriting.

her determination to fulfill the obligations of the Franco-Czech Treaty, according to which it had appeared from the French declarations that, in case of need, she would not shrink from mobilization; (3) Quote:<sup>45</sup> "The fact that nobody doubted the loyalty of the Soviet Union to the obligations undertaken by it naturally played a considerable role"; (4) the British Government's warnings in Berlin.

In an article of May 30 in *Krasnaya Zvezda*, the organ of the Red Army, it was maintained that the existence of the Czechoslovak Treaty with France and of the Pact of Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union provided a serious check on German Fascism. In this connection, the newspaper quoted from the Signature Protocol of the Mutual Assistance Pact the sentence: "Both Governments recognize simultaneously that the joint obligation of mutual assistance will only be effective insofar as France gives help to one side—that which is the victim of aggression." It goes on to say that there is no doubt that the existence of a Mutual Assistance Pact between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia has had a steadying influence on the German leaders.

On June 3 *Pravda* wrote: "The attitude of the Soviet Union, which is faithful to its obligations, has never raised a doubt among the Czech people."

One can gather from these announcements, all based on official sources, that, during the first days of the crisis of May 20 to 25, the Soviet press contained no reference to the standpoint of the Soviet Government itself in the problem of Czechoslovakia. It was only after a Havas telegram of May 22 from Paris, concerning the conversation between the French Foreign Minister, Bonnet, and the Czechoslovak Minister in Paris, had been published on May 23 and a further 3 days had elapsed, that the Soviet Government decided to announce in the *Izvestia* of May 26 its own policy in the event of a conflict. In so doing, it adopted the somewhat peculiar formula that nobody doubted the loyalty of the Soviet Union in carrying out engagements which it had undertaken. That this phraseology was not accidental is seen from the fact that *Pravda* of June 3 also uses the same formula.

The surprising restraint of the Soviet press should not, however, lead to the conclusion that the Soviet Government remained inactive during the days of the May crisis. There can be no doubt that Soviet diplomacy made every effort in Paris, London, and Prague to influence the respective Governments and is likely, in accordance with its well-known policy, to have recommended an energetic course

<sup>45</sup> This word is inserted in handwriting.

of action and a firm attitude toward Germany. With all this, however, she made her own attitude dependent on the actions of the French and British Governments. And so she only proclaimed her own policy when French intentions had become known through the Bonnet-Osuský conversation, or if one prefers it, when the threatening war clouds seemed to have rolled away.<sup>46</sup>

This deduction is entirely borne out by the fact that the Czechoslovak Minister here, Fierlinger, was noticed to be depressed and perturbed during the first days of the crisis. Then, however, after a few days, i.e., when in the meanwhile the attitude of the French Government had become known and the policy of the Soviet Government, as described above, had been declared, he showed to the world an optimistic and cheerful countenance. The Czechoslovak Minister kept in constant touch with Litvinov, who followed attentively every detail of the events in Czechoslovakia. It looks as if Litvinov advised the Czechoslovak Government in these conversations as well as through the Soviet Minister in Prague that, while adopting a firm and resolute bearing, they should also aim at achieving an agreement with the minorities. Litvinov's advice was designed not so much to satisfy the just demands of the minorities as rather to create a situation in which the Sudeten Germans would be isolated and put in the wrong. Apparently<sup>47</sup> he advised Prague to grant the same concessions to all minorities and to negotiate with the Sudeten Germans last of all. The British and French *démarches* were exactly such as Litvinov desired. But apparently this did not go far enough for the Soviet Government and, because of the pressure on Prague, was not sufficiently conclusive, for the Soviet press continued to attack England and France and even Czechoslovakia, ostensibly for recognizing Franco, but in reality because Prague did not show itself sufficiently subservient to the advice proffered by Moscow.

In the course of the crisis rumors alleging military preparations on the western frontier of the Soviet Union were rife. These rumors concerned the preparation for action of aircraft formations in the Leningrad area and in White Russia and displacements of troops on the Polish and Rumanian frontiers. No confirmation has been received as yet to support these rumors. One of the Military Attachés here stated recently that no troop concentrations had taken place on the Polish or Rumanian frontier.<sup>48</sup>

The attitude of the Soviet Government during the May crisis thus showed that, in the event of a war between Germany and Czechoslo-

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<sup>46</sup> The last phrase is inserted in handwriting.

<sup>47</sup> The remainder of this paragraph is inserted in handwriting.

<sup>48</sup> This sentence is inserted in handwriting.

vakia, it would at the start be unwilling to commit itself or to show its hand. Nevertheless, there remains the well-known Treaty of Mutual Assistance between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Government, however, has painstakingly and systematically avoided hitherto any precise announcement on the fulfillment of its treaty obligations. On top of this come the difficulties arising from the geographical situation of Czechoslovakia. Litvinov has always maintained that the powers interested in the treaty obligations of the Soviet Union must themselves create the necessary conditions for these obligations to be fulfilled. Lastly, but not of least importance, Litvinov, touching on the Polish-Lithuanian dispute, replied evasively to a press representative, who had asked him how the Soviet Union could come to the assistance of Czechoslovakia, by saying "Well, some way or other will be found."

The Soviet Government, with an eye on the internal situation in Russia and fearing a war on two fronts, must hold aloof from military enterprises for the time being and is hardly likely to allow the Red Army, created for its own protection and to further world revolution, to march in defense of a bourgeois state. It follows, therefore, the proved tactics of mobilizing other powers, particularly France, against its foes, of fomenting those conflicts which do break out—as for example in Spain and China—by deliveries of war material, and of extending them as much as possible by political agitation and intrigues of all kinds.

COUNT VON DER SCHULENBURG

No. 262

1650/392041

*The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to the German Foreign Ministry*

CONFIDENTIAL

Moscow, June 22, 1938.

A/902

(Pol. IV 4420)

In continuation of report of June 18—No. A/843<sup>49</sup>—also with reference to instruction of June 8.<sup>50</sup>

Subject: Flight of Soviet aircraft over Rumanian territory.

The Polish Chargé d'Affaires here,<sup>51</sup> with whom I had discussed the alleged general Rumanian agreement to flight of Soviet aircraft over Rumanian territory, referred again to the matter today and informed me that, according to his information, such an agreement be-

<sup>49</sup> Document No. 258, p. 419.

<sup>50</sup> Not printed.

<sup>51</sup> T. Jankowski.

tween Rumania and the Soviet Union had not yet been effected. On the other hand, an arrangement had been made some time ago between Rumania and the Soviet Union, according to which thirty-six of the Soviet aircraft purchased by Czechoslovakia were allowed to fly over Rumanian territory so long as they were flown by Czechoslovak pilots and did not land in Rumania.

As regards the report of a concentration of Soviet railway construction regiments in the neighborhood of Zmerinka and Slobodka,<sup>52</sup> the Polish Chargé d'Affaires informed me that his efforts to confirm this had so far been fruitless.

SCHULENBURG

No. 263

1650/392045-46

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

PRAGUE, June 23, 1938.

A. III. 1. b. 26.

(Pol. IV 4453)

With reference to instruction of June 8 of this year.<sup>53</sup>

The Legation has not been able to obtain confirmation of the report that the Rumanian General Staff is said to have given permission, under certain conditions, for Russian aircraft to fly over Rumanian territory.

Neither was anything to be discovered here about mobilization of Soviet Russian railway construction companies on the Dniester.

In the meantime I have heard from a usually fairly reliable source that the Soviet Government have requested the Rumanian Government to agree to an increased exchange of rolling stock in the immediate future, without a closer specification of the type of wagons having to be made. Nothing is known as yet about a reply from the Rumanian Government. According to the same source Bucharest has decided, especially since the visit of the Chief of the Rumanian General Staff<sup>54</sup> to Warsaw, to adhere to its basic principle that transit of Soviet troops by land or air will not be permitted. The Rumanian Government are said to have merely declared their willingness to permit the transit of war materials in the usual peacetime quantities.

In this connection the fact is probably of interest that my informant says he has news to the effect that the Soviet Legation in Bucharest has officially stated to the Rumanian Government that the

<sup>52</sup> In Podolia, not far from the Rumanian frontier.

<sup>53</sup> Not printed.

<sup>54</sup> Gen. E. Ionesco.

military maneuvers now taking place on the Rumanian frontier have no connection with the situation which has arisen out of the German-Czechoslovak tension, but on the contrary are in accordance with the normal training program of the Red Army. The Soviet Legation in Bucharest, to be sure, expressed the wish in a note of May 23, in view of the possible developments of the German-Czechoslovak conflict, to negotiate with the Rumanian Government about those measures which must be taken by the Soviet Union to fulfill its treaty with Czechoslovakia.

But, apart from the increase in exchange of rolling stock mentioned above, they have made no concrete proposals.

The Soviet Government stated in a further note that they did not intend to take military measures to implement the treaty with Czechoslovakia without previously coming to an agreement with Rumania.

Apparently the Rumanian General Staff is inclined to believe that this statement was made in good faith.

EISENLOHR

[Marginal note:] Bring forward after one week (remarks of Warsaw and of Supreme Headquarters, the *Wehrmacht*. June 27.)  
B[USSE]

### No. 264

F6/0262-0259

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister for the Führer*

RM 239

I had a lengthy conversation at noon today with the French Ambassador, who had asked for an interview.

François-Poncet declared at the outset of our talk that the problem of what was to happen in the event of a breakdown in the negotiations between Prague and Henlein continued to disturb him. His personal view was that if it came to such a deadlock the Great Powers should express their views in principle regarding the problem. It was indispensable to Europe that a solution be found. He could envisage that one day perhaps, in spite of present tension, there might emerge from Czechoslovakia a structure similar to Switzerland, so that there would be, as it were, two great poles of neutrality in Europe.

I replied to the French Ambassador by saying that I was skeptical regarding the negotiations between Henlein and Prague so long as normal conditions had not been reestablished. Meanwhile, Prague was treating the Sudeten German area as a war zone. The unrealistic fantasies of Prague were making pacification impossible. Henlein

could not negotiate so long as he was held at pistol point. A discussion on Czechoslovakia between the Great Powers seemed to me the wrong course. I did not believe in the possibility of genuine pacification being effected from without through joint consultation between the Great Powers. Czechoslovakia herself was a product of such consultation between the Great Powers during the Peace Conference. Present conditions were the result. This experience should not be forgotten.

François-Poncet did not insist further on the idea of a conference of the Great Powers. He emphasized, however, that France was doing all she could to induce the Czech Government to find a solution of the Sudeten German problem. The Prague Government were at present also reducing their military measures considerably.

I replied to the French Ambassador that for all that, according to my information, resentment was deep-seated in the Sudeten German population, and that it would certainly be a considerable time before a calmer atmosphere could be restored. I, too, believed in the possibility of an evolutionary solution of the Czechoslovak question. A prerequisite was, however, that the Prague Government should go a long way toward meeting Henlein.

Passing on to German-French relations in general, I told François-Poncet that the crux of German-French difficulties lay in the fact that France could not give up the habit of establishing herself in positions where she herself was not vitally or directly concerned. This seemed to me to be a relic from a state of mind formerly prevalent in France, when certain circles there aimed at setting up a hegemony in Europe. What an uproar there would be in Paris if Germany, for instance, were to interfere in the French sphere of interest in Africa, and what nervousness had been caused by the presence of a few foreign volunteers on Spanish soil. Not only did France interfere in the German sphere of interest in the East, but she even concluded military alliances with the countries adjoining ours. France possessed the friendship of Great Britain; we had no objection to that, but this friendship gave France an unparalleled guarantee and a great sense of security. To go still further and to enter into military alliances with the East seemed to me unreasonable. It was a very thankless task to oppose normal evolutionary processes, and dangerous to interfere in others' vital spheres of interest by unreasonable demands and exaggerated claims for power. Herein, to my mind, lay the whole difficulty. If, as the Führer had consistently aimed at in his policy, the Great Powers would broadly agree about their mutual spheres of interest and would respect these areas, then it seemed to me an easy matter to secure an understanding.

François-Poncet rejoined that the French alliances had been taken over by the France of today as part of a historical evolution. These alliances actually existed but, as was shown by the example of Franco-Soviet relations, such alliances were also subject to evolutionary changes.

I replied to François-Poncet that this statement gave me hope that in regard to the other alliances evolution was possible, too. This applied first and foremost to those instances where Germany's vital interests were at stake. It must be clearly understood, as I had once explained to him already, that Germany would not look on inactive at ostentatious Czech acts of provocation. If, in such a case, France really intended to take action, she would be proceeding to a war of aggression which, firstly, lacked any legal basis, and secondly, was devoid of all moral justification because French democracy, in negation of its sacred principles, would be siding with an armed Czech minority against an unarmed majority, and finally, such a war was also an act contrary to reason, for France would be drawing the sword on behalf of a problem which had no military importance. But there was no doubt that Germany, in such a case, would not recoil before anything. In spite of all our love of peace, I could tell him that we were prepared for any war, if need be therefore even for a German-French war.

François-Poncet answered that he noted my remarks. They contained something like a threat. He could of course adopt the same tone, too.

I replied that my remarks did not imply any threat; on the contrary, it seemed to me both useful and conducive to peace that the French Government should clearly understand the Führer's fundamental attitude. The foreign press had recently spoken of Franco-British intervention by which war had been averted. I knew nothing of such intervention, and I should certainly have rejected it in the most decisive manner if it had taken place. I could only continue to point out that a settlement of the Sudeten German problem depended solely on Prague.

François-Poncet stated at the close of our conversation that he would ask us not to take things always so seriously and tragically. He was disquieted by the many instances of tension in Europe. If such tension should at some time recur he asked that the questions might be discussed with him, for, after all, that was what he was there for. He was convinced that many points of difference could be disposed of by discussion. France was prepared to make great sacrifices for peace. But that was contingent on France's dignity



not being hurt. She had at heart a solution of the Czech problem, but she must not be called upon to lose face before the world.

RIBBENTROP

BERLIN, June 23, 1938.

No. 265

1650/392042-43

*The German Minister in Rumania (Fabricius) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

2183/38

I A 13

BUCHAREST, June 23, 1938.

(Pol. IV 4441)

Subject: Military-political.

The German Consulate at Czernowitz reports the following on the 22d instant:

From a reliable source I hear as follows:

1) About 10 days ago two Russian aircraft landed in the Bukovina, one at Kimpolung, the other at Storozhinetz. There was no question of an emergency landing, as both aircraft took off again immediately people approached the scene. Military circles suspect that both these aircraft have landed spies; up to the present, however, it has not been possible to find them.

2) Considerable elements of the Rumanian General Staff have been in Czernowitz for about a week; these gentlemen are under close observation. They make frequent visits to the frontier and the neighboring country. Nothing definite could be discovered about the object of their visit. It is presumed, however, that the presence of these gentlemen is connected with Russian troop concentrations on Rumania's northern frontier.

Reports that considerable Rumanian units are concentrated on the Czech frontier are not authentic; however, it is certain that numerous call-ups have taken place in the Bukovina and leave has been suspended for reserve officers. Military maneuvers, some on a considerable scale, are taking place daily in the neighborhood of Czernowitz.

FABRICIUS

## No. 266

120/68453-56

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 301 of June 23

LONDON, June 23, 1938.

Received June 24, 1938—9:30 a.m.

Yesterday afternoon I had the conversation as arranged with the Prime Minister, Chamberlain, and thus continued a talk which he had begun on June 15th after a lunch given by Lord Halifax.

1) Both in the first and in the second conversation Chamberlain showed special interest in the Czechoslovak question and the possibilities of eliminating this source of danger to European peace. This gave me the opportunity once more urgently to emphasize our point of view, which had already been explained to Lord Halifax the last time during my conversation of June 8th (telegram No. 276 of June 9).<sup>55</sup> In so doing I specifically pointed out that responsibility for the crisis rested with Czechoslovakia; that the British and French Governments had precipitately held language to us inappropriate to the situation; that the Czechs might easily regard the support promised them as *carte blanche* for all sorts of provocative acts, and would still further postpone the grant of a comprehensive autonomy to the Sudeten Germans.

For his part Chamberlain emphasized the earnest will of the British Government, by intensified and continued pressure on Prague, to bring about a settlement of the Czech crisis, and to secure the desired autonomy for the Sudeten Germans. These efforts would be energetically pursued by the British. He added that the Czechs had been left in no doubt that the prospective help from France must not tempt them to provocative action.

I replied that, despite a certain relaxation in tension as compared with the days in May, the situation in Czechoslovakia must perforce cause grave concern and must certainly lead to a fresh crisis within a measurable period of time, unless the coming weeks and months were utilized to satisfy the legitimate desires of the Sudeten Germans.

The Prime Minister said repeatedly that it would be possible within a period of 6 to 8 weeks to determine whether a final settlement would be reached or would fail.

2) During the entire course of the conversation Chamberlain emphasized that he was working for an Anglo-German settlement and

<sup>55</sup> Document No. 245, p. 396.

was striving for the clearing up of outstanding questions. The first step to be taken in this direction was the settlement of the Czech crisis. His whole attitude indicated that for the moment he does not intend to propose any resumption of the conversations held at the beginning of March.

3) Chamberlain spoke with considerable apprehension of the situation in Spain. He contested the doubts I expressed as to the prospects of a mediatory effort; the sacrifices were so great and war-weariness so widespread, that perhaps, after all, the moment would come some day soon when mediation would be welcomed by both sides. He added that the role of mediator was particularly suited to the British character. From his remarks I gained the impression that he had some plan for mediation in mind, but so far had not yet got to actual details. He foresaw the continuation of the civil war until well into the autumn at least.

4) Chamberlain then evinced special interest in the situation in the Far East and the possibilities of terminating the Sino-Japanese War. In his opinion the Japanese Government were now more ready for conciliation, even though a settlement of the conflict would in any case take a long time. Furthermore, he was interested in the problem of population pressure in Japan and its potential effects.

As regards the Sino-Japanese conflict, I based my remarks on the instructions received from you; in discussing population pressure in Japan I pointed out that this would be relieved by economic development of the areas acquired on the mainland, even without settling Japanese peasants there; moreover, Japan's need for expansion would always be decisively affected by the attitude of the great manufacturing countries toward Japan's need to export.

5) Finally, I drew Mr. Chamberlain's attention to the temper of the British public, among whom was a widespread belief that war was imminent, so that even orders to German firms were often being discontinued because the customer feared that war might break out in the meantime. I added that the spread of such an attitude was serious, even if the Government were confident of holding the reins firmly in their hands. Chamberlain admitted the existence of such an attitude and ascribed it to a general feeling of insecurity, as well as to the Czechoslovak crisis, and to the knowledge that, as a result of the development of aerial warfare, Britain was no longer an island.

I replied that perhaps the propaganda for air-raid precautions was partly responsible for the prevailing pessimistic mood; for this reason it was to be hoped that the people would be reassured as soon as possible and that insecurity and doubt would not penetrate further into individual families and schools; I quoted various instances of this.

6) I had a lengthy conversation with Chamberlain at our first meeting about conditions in the Soviet Union. He agreed in outspoken terms with my critical exposition of economic conditions in Russia and the growing internal tension, which had greatly weakened the country. His dislike of the Soviet Union was unmistakable.

DIRKSEN

No. 267

1650/392044

*The German Minister in Rumania (Fabricius) to the German Foreign Ministry*

No. 2193/38

BUCHAREST, June 24, 1938.

I A 13

(Pol. IV 442)

Subject: Soviet Russian aircraft for Czechoslovakia.

Urdareanu, the Court Minister, states most definitely that the King has violently rejected a recent proposal from Czechoslovakia to fly aircraft from Soviet Russia over Rumanian territory.

He told the General Staff that, in consideration of Rumania's treaty obligations to Poland, such aircraft, in no matter what form, even when camouflaged as Czech aircraft, were not to be allowed through. The most extraordinary requests had been conveyed to Rumania in this connection.

When I asked what Rumania intended doing if, in spite of this, aircraft were to cross Rumanian territory in nonstop flights by night, the Court Minister replied: "In that case we will fire on them."

In reply to my discreet question as to whether Rumania possessed sufficient antiaircraft guns on the frontier in order to open fire, he smiled and said that unfortunately this was not the case, and he was forced to admit that it was not easy for Rumania to shoot down foreign aircraft with her own fighters.

Nevertheless, I had the impression that Poland is exerting great pressure on the Rumanians to prevent transit flights if possible.

FABRICIUS

[Longhand notes:]

1) Replies not yet to hand from Warsaw, Prague, and the *Wehrmacht*.

2) For attention of Pol. I Mil. (has already been read over the telephone to Counselor of Legation von der Heyden-Rynsch).

3) After 1 week. B[USSE,] June 30.

## No. 268

2129/464439

*Circular Despatch From the German Foreign Ministry to Certain German Missions Abroad*<sup>58</sup>

SECRET

BERLIN, June 25, 1938.

(Pol. I 1442 g)

I enclose *for confidential information* a memorandum on the treatment up to the present of the German-Czechoslovak Arbitration Treaty of 1925.

The memorandum shows the reasons for which a denunciation of the Arbitration Treaty has always so far been avoided. Even now such a denunciation is not intended here. I would ask, however, that in conversations on the Czechoslovak question, the subject of the validity of the Treaty should, if possible, not be discussed. If this subject should be broached by the other side, I ask you to say that the applicability of the Treaty originating in the Locarno period is very doubtful in the present circumstances. This is due to the fact that in its original form the Arbitration Treaty was closely linked with the League of Nations. Therefore it is impossible to see how it could still be operative after the final withdrawal of Germany from the League of Nations.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>58</sup>This is the covering note forwarding copies of the document printed as document No. 269, *infra*. This despatch was sent to the German Embassies in London, Paris, and Rome (Quirinal), and to the German Legations in Brussels, Bern, Budapest, Belgrade, and Bucharest.

## No. 269

1613/386814-19

*Memorandum for the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*<sup>57</sup>

(Pol. I 1442 g)

THE HANDLING TO DATE OF THE GERMAN-CZECHOSLOVAK TREATY OF  
ARBITRATION OF 1925

When, on March 6, 1936, at the time of the reoccupation of the Rhineland, we formally renounced the Locarno Rhine Pact, the question arose as to what effect we wished to attribute to this action on the other parts of the Locarno Treaties connected with the Rhine Pact, namely, the Treaties of Arbitration with France, Belgium, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. These Treaties of Arbitration were not mentioned in the official notification to the Locarno Powers on the termination of the Rhine Pact.

At that time the decision was taken by us internally to regard the Franco-German and the German-Belgian Treaty of Arbitration as terminating simultaneously with the Rhine Pact, because the connection between these two Treaties of Arbitration and the Rhine Pact was so close that to treat them differently would in itself have been contradictory. With regard to the Treaties of Arbitration with Poland and Czechoslovakia, which are not so closely connected with the Rhine Pact, it was then decided to treat them as being unaffected by the Rhineland action, i.e., as continuing to be valid. The decisive consideration for this resolution was that it was not expedient to widen unnecessarily the range of problems raised by our Rhineland action.

Outwardly, that is vis-à-vis Poland and Czechoslovakia, this German point of view was not expressed in any special notification, but tacitly expressed for the first time by conclusive action on the occasion of the technical consideration of the two Arbitration Treaties. For in April 1936 the 3-yearly mandate of the neutral members of the Conciliation Commission established under the German-Czechoslovak Treaty of Arbitration expired. The Czechoslovak Legation had already proposed by *note verbale* on February 18, 1936, to extend

<sup>57</sup> This copy of the memorandum has the following longhand marginal note on page 1 initialed by Weizsäcker:

"NOTE: The Führer has been informed. He agrees and is of the opinion that measures such as the Czech partial mobilization constitute a violation of the Treaty. The subject of the validity of the Treaty should, moreover, be left out of the discussion if possible.

Herewith to Ministerial Director Gaus.

Under State Secretary Woermann.

Information of some Missions might be considered."

The memorandum is also initialed by Ribbentrop. The last paragraph is crossed out in pencil.

these mandates for a further 3 years. On March 31, 1936, we replied by *note verbale* that we agreed to the proposed extension of the mandates. In the same way, in August 1937 we sent to the Polish Government a technical communication on the appointment of a new German member of the German-Polish Conciliation Commission, and later referred again expressly to the Locarno Arbitration Treaty during German-Polish negotiations on Upper Silesian questions.

On the other hand, when the French Embassy approached us with a *note verbale* on May 11, 1936, about the renewal of the mandates of the members of the Franco-German Conciliation Commission, the French Ambassador was informed verbally that in our view the Franco-German and also the Belgian-German Treaty of Arbitration had been affected by the denunciation of the Rhine Pact "and that therefore we could not agree to the proposed renewal of the mandates for the present." The French Embassy protested in writing against this attitude, but we adhered to our view. In relation to Belgium the question has not so far been officially raised.

From a report on general political discussions with Beneš and Krofta, submitted by Minister Eisenlohr at the end of last year,<sup>58</sup> it appeared that from the Czech side intentional emphasis was being put on the continuing validity of the German-Czechoslovak Treaty of Arbitration. This gave rise to deliberations in the Foreign Ministry at the beginning of 1938 whether the Treaty of Arbitration could play a part in the further development of German-Czechoslovak relations, and what this part should be. At that time there was a certain possibility of reopening the question of the continuing validity of the Treaty. We could have made use of the argument that the Treaty was linked with the League of Nations in individual, but by no means essential provisions, but that by her declaration of December 12 last year Germany had finally rejected a return to the League of Nations. After the matter had been submitted to the Führer, however, it was decided not to close the question in this way, because the denunciation of the Treaty would without doubt be regarded by world opinion as a political preparation of active plans against Czechoslovakia, especially as, in our denunciation, we would have had to make known that we were not prepared to conclude with Czechoslovakia a new Treaty of Arbitration purged of the provisions of the League of Nations.

Nevertheless, Minister Eisenlohr was instructed at the beginning of February<sup>59</sup> to avoid recognizing the continuing validity of the Treaty afresh in further conversations in Prague and making any

<sup>58</sup> Cf. document No. 38, p. 79.

<sup>59</sup> This instruction is not printed.

use of the Treaty as an important factor for German-Czechoslovak relations.

A new factor in the treatment of the question arose in connection with our action in Austria. When on March 12 this year Reich Minister von Neurath made his well-known statement on behalf of the Führer to the Czechoslovak Minister, that the action taking place in Austria was in no way directed against Czechoslovakia, M. Mastny referred to the Führer's earlier offer to conclude long-term nonaggression treaties with Germany's neighbors. Reich Minister von Neurath answered that, in his opinion, such a nonaggression pact was not necessary in the relationship between Germany and Czechoslovakia, as the Arbitration Treaty of 1925 guaranteed by France was still in force between us. This statement was announced by Chamberlain in the House of Commons on March 14 this year.

From the foregoing procedure it is obvious that, should the question become acute, Czechoslovakia could substantiate with strong arguments our express and repeated recognition of the continuing validity of the Treaty of Arbitration.

The Treaty of Arbitration places both States under the strict obligation to submit points of controversy of all kinds either to a court of arbitration or to a conciliation commission. The political significance of this obligation lies above all in the fact that France and Czechoslovakia have, in the separate Treaty concluded between them at Locarno, expressly confirmed a violation of Germany's obligations under the Treaty of Arbitration as a *casus foederis*. It cannot be overlooked that the Treaty of Arbitration might have unfavorable repercussions in a conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia, especially insofar as Germany's disregard of it would provide a convenient formal legal basis for French intervention.

A formal denunciation of the Treaty of Arbitration would be less advisable under the present circumstances than at the beginning of the year. However, it is worth mentioning at a suitable opportunity that the applicability of the Treaty of Arbitration originating in the Locarno period is extremely doubtful in the present circumstances. This already arises from the fact that the Treaty of Arbitration is closely connected in its form with the League of Nations. Therefore it cannot be seen how it can still function after Germany's final withdrawal from the League.

BERLIN, June 13, 1938.



## No. 270

F17/307-309

*Confidential Report by Dr. Albrecht Haushofer<sup>60</sup> to the Foreign Minister*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

For the personal use of the Reich Foreign Minister.<sup>61</sup>

BRITAIN, JUNE 1938

Since Italy's Abyssinian Campaign of 1935-36 caught Britain unawares, the question of British preparedness for war has increasingly overshadowed all other political questions in Britain. Three years of armament propaganda in conjunction with events in Spain, China, and Central Europe have sufficed to transform a people permeated with pacificism into one quite prepared for war. In midsummer 1938 the danger of war and readiness for war are the dominating motives of political life in Britain.

In 1936 the three "have nots" were to a certain extent considered equally as opponents. In 1938 the Japanese danger is believed to be postponed. Japan is thought to be "firmly pinned down in China" for years, perhaps for decades. Italy is considered to be in need of peace; Mussolini's personal position in internal affairs to be weakened (toleration of the *Anschluss!*). There remains, therefore, only the German Reich as a serious opponent, the only one by which Britain feels threatened, not so much in her overseas possessions as—through the *Luftwaffe*—in the mother country itself.

As Britain only stands to lose and not to gain by a war, a war that has to be fought must be felt by people and Government to be inevitable. The search for a genuine compromise with Germany (somewhat on these lines: German predominance (not conquest!) in southeast Europe, frontier revision by plebiscite, West African colonies, Four Power Pact, limitation of armaments) has not yet been abandoned. A certain measure of friendly feeling toward Germany has not yet disappeared among the British people; the Chamberlain-Halifax Government sees its personal future most closely bound up with the success of a genuine settlement with Rome and Berlin (and with the removal of Soviet influence from Europe; hence the otherwise incomprehensible attitude in the Spanish bombardment question; Chamberlain wants Franco to win and that quickly!).

<sup>60</sup> Dr. Albrecht Haushofer, son of the well-known geographer, was lecturer at the *Hochschule für Politik*, Berlin. He had connections with the *Dienststelle Ribbentrop*.

<sup>61</sup> A note in Ribbentrop's handwriting reads: "Führer."

But the belief in the possibility of understanding between Britain and Germany is fast disappearing. Behind the national program of National Socialism (with which there is a wide measure of reconciliation) a new imperialism is sensed.

*Here the Czech question is assuming the significance of a decisive test case.*

It is quite clear to Government and public opinion in Britain that the Czech National State within the present frontiers of Czechoslovakia is a thing of the past. Neutralization abroad (renunciation of the Soviet Alliance!), solution by autonomy at home is considered necessary, and separation of the frontier areas by plebiscite possible, if the Czechs offer further obstruction (that they were "taken in" by the Czechs in May has since been realized in London). But only on this condition, that Germany is willing to consider a *solution by degrees* in the Czech question, is another world war considered avoidable.

A German attempt to solve the Bohemian-Moravian question by a military coup would, in the present circumstances, mean for Britain (and in the opinion of Britain, for France, too) *immediate war*. In such a war, the British Government would have the whole British people behind it. It would be waged as "a crusade for the liberation of Europe from German militarism." In London there is the conviction that it would be won with American help (the full implementation of which is reckoned with in a matter of days and weeks, not months)—to be sure at the cost of an incalculable spread of Bolshevism in the non-Anglo-Saxon world.

A. HAUSHOFER

JUNE 26, 1938.

[Marginal note in English in Ribbentrop's handwriting:] "Secret Service Propaganda!"

### No. 271

1339/353309-10

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

PRAGUE, June 27, 1938.

(Pol. IV 4486)

Subject: Alleged statements of the Polish Deputy Foreign Minister on Poland's attitude to a German-Czechoslovak conflict.

According to a hitherto reliable source the Polish Deputy Minister, Count Szembek, is said to have recently spoken somewhat in the fol-

lowing terms to a Ukrainian correspondent on Poland's attitude in the event of a German-Czechoslovak conflict.

"For the present Poland had not yet been able to adopt an attitude to the German-Czechoslovak conflict in a form which committed her in foreign eyes, because it has not yet been possible to see whether, and if so to what extent, the other states would take sides with one or the other party. Of course, Poland would in no case consent to the passage of the Red Army through her territory. Neither could she declare herself the ally of Germany, because she was not certain of the full intentions of the Reich regarding those territories in which Poland was interested. Only in the event of the spheres of political and economic interest between Poland and Germany in Central Europe, and in the East as well, being clearly defined, could Poland adopt a definite attitude in this conflict. Poland will not obstruct in any way the efforts of the German districts in Czechoslovakia toward a *rapprochement* [*Annäherung*], or even for complete union, with Germany, if the present frontiers between Germany and Poland are declared inviolable and if all plans for mutual collaboration and for political security are reconciled. The Polish Government has not announced its attitude to the German-Czechoslovak conflict for the further reason that public opinion in Poland is Francophile. Only the evident danger from Russia warrants the policy pursued by the Polish Government in relation to Germany."

EISENLOHR

No. 272

120/68464-67

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 311 of June 28

LONDON, June 28, 1938.

Received June 29, 1938—10:30 a.m.

I. Lord Halifax asked me to come and see him today to discuss a very difficult and delicate question, as he called it, for which, moreover, he was not really the competent authority. He mentioned it indeed exclusively from the political point of view, as it was of considerable importance for the shaping of Anglo-German relations.

He said that pressure was being put on him, or the wish expressed, by the most varied influential circles in England, that he should inquire into the fate of a number of Austrian personalities, for whom a lively interest existed or anxiety was felt in the circles in question here.

It was a question of different groups of personalities:<sup>61a</sup>

1) Political figures or officials: Schuschnigg, Hornbostel, Colonel Adam, and Ludwig.

2) The so-called Legitimists: Minister von Wiesner, Baron Werkmann, Duke Max of Hohenberg, and Prince Ernst of Hohenberg; for the latter there was special interest in British circles because he was married to an Englishwoman.

3) Scholars: Professor Schrödinger, Dr. Matejka, Professor Robert Eisler, said to be an authority in the sphere of comparative religion and to whom a Chair in England had been offered; further, Professor Loewy, said to be a former Nobel Prize winner, and finally, Professor Mark. The Chancellor of the University of Oxford<sup>62</sup> had appealed to him in the case of the last two.

He was fully aware how difficult this question was also for the competent German authorities; it was far from being his intention to interfere in any way in the internal affairs of a foreign country; he was merely acting for political reasons in order to bring about better relations and to remove disturbances in the relationship between Germany and Britain; he therefore wished to point out that it would make a powerful and extraordinarily favorable impression if it were possible to receive reassuring information on the fate of the personalities mentioned.

I answered Lord Halifax that he had indeed broached a very difficult and sore question. The individual fate of the persons mentioned by him was not known to me; I only knew that many of the personalities in question had not only been extremely bitter opponents of Germany and the National Socialist movement, but that over and above this they were suspected of having been guilty of punishable offenses. In the latter case proceedings must naturally take their course. I had by chance heard something about one or other of the personalities in question, as, for example, that even before the *Anschluss* the Duke of Hohenberg had mutilated the insignia of the German Reich displayed on the Consulate in Vienna; that in earlier attempts by the British with regard to Professor Schrödinger it had been established that he was politically deeply implicated and did not deserve special consideration. Meanwhile, I would transmit the information he had given me to the Foreign Ministry, and inform him of the result of my inquiry.

Lord Halifax pointed out that with regard to various Austrian personalities conversations had already taken place between Sir Nevile Henderson and Reich Minister von Ribbentrop and also State Secretary von Weizsäcker. Lord Halifax expressed with special em-

<sup>61a</sup> See vol. I, chap. II.

<sup>62</sup> Lord Halifax himself was Chancellor of the University of Oxford, so perhaps the Vice Chancellor is meant.

phasis the desire that the persons mentioned by him should suffer no disadvantages as a result of the fact that interest was being shown in them by Great Britain. No single one of them had even the slightest idea that this subject had been mentioned by him in a conversation with me.

In conclusion, I pointed out to Lord Halifax that the campaign carried on during the last few days in the British press, spreading the myth of the Austrians' disappointment over the *Anschluss*, was hardly calculated to assist such efforts of British circles in favor of prominent Austrian personalities of the former regime. The real purpose of this campaign was doubtless to alienate the Sudeten Germans from Germany, but the result on public opinion directly concerned Austria.

II. Lord Halifax then mentioned the present state of the negotiations between the Sudeten Germans and the Czech Government. He expressed his warm satisfaction over the fact that recently the German press had shown such moderation toward Czechoslovakia; the conclusion of the German-Czech economic agreement was also much to be welcomed. He had used his influence with Prague to achieve a similar moderation on the part of the Czech press.

When asked what information I had on the state of negotiations between the Sudeten Germans and the Czech Government, I answered that all I knew was that the offer made so far by the Czechs was inadequate.

Thereupon Halifax remarked that he, too, was disappointed over the slow course of the negotiations and had also stated this expressly to Prague. He had further pointed out that the present period of relaxation should be taken advantage of for doubly intensive negotiations. There was certainly no doubt about Hodza's willingness to reach understanding, but he also believed that Beneš wished to bring about a settlement. Recently he had asked the Czech Minister here, Masaryk, straight out, whether Hodza and Beneš were pulling together in the Sudeten German question; Masaryk, who wanted a settlement, had answered that this was certainly the case.

I expressed considerable doubts as to the good faith of Beneš; he had recently spoken as if he foresaw an immediate conflict with Germany, which in its early stages must mean a defeat for Czechoslovakia, but in its subsequent course a brilliant victory. The Czech Legion Generals also inspired no confidence in the Sudeten Germans.

Lord Halifax then mentioned the possibility whether the following procedure could not be adopted in the event of agreement being reached on a number of points in the negotiations, but not at once on other individual points: that part of the negotiation on which

agreement had been reached should immediately be put into practice while awaiting agreement on the points still outstanding. Such a procedure would assuredly bring about a considerable lessening of the tension.

I answered that I did not know what tactics the Sudeten German leaders intended to adopt on individual points in the negotiations. I could imagine, however, that they would raise strong objections to Lord Halifax's suggestions; for it was all too probable that the points not cleared up would be subject to endless delay.

Lord Halifax thought that naturally pressure would be exerted by Britain whenever possible to have these points settled, too, as soon as possible.

Finally, Halifax asked me about the result of my conversation with Chamberlain. I gave him briefly the contents and then passed on to the remarks I had made to Chamberlain about the war psychosis which was widespread in Britain. I quoted individual examples and drew the conclusion that, in view of the great significance of British public opinion, the prevalence of such a mood was serious, however firmly the Government held the reins in their hands.

Lord Halifax admitted the undesirability and seriousness of such a state of public opinion, but said that, as far as air-raid precautions were concerned, Britain had only taken those measures which had also been taken in Germany.

I answered that this was quite possible, but that in Germany this result had been achieved without disturbing public opinion.

Please send telegraphic instructions on paragraph I.

DIRKSEN

### No. 273

2129/464422-26

#### *The German Foreign Ministry to German Missions Abroad*<sup>63</sup>

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, June 28, 1938.

(Pol. I 498 g. Rs.)

For Heads of Missions personally.

Hitherto the Foreign Ministry, in conjunction with the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht*, has represented the view that in times of peace general collaboration of German Missions abroad, espe-

<sup>63</sup> Sent to German Embassies in Ankara, Buenos Aires, London, San Sebastián, Moscow, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Rome (Quirinal), Tokyo, Warsaw, and Washington; and to German Legations in Asunción, Athens, Belgrade, Bern, Brussels, Budapest, Bucharest, The Hague, Helsinki, Copenhagen, Kaunas, Lisbon, Montevideo, Oslo, Prague, Reval, Riga, Sofia, Stockholm, and Teheran.

The copy printed is that sent to Rome. It is stamped "German Embassy, Rome, June 30, 1938."

cially the Consulates, in obtaining military intelligence was not, as a general rule, to be contemplated, but was the business of the respective Service Attachés. In view of the recent developments, however, this view can no longer be maintained in its entirety; especially is it to be taken into account that most states are more and more adopting the practice of no longer revealing or of strictly concealing their peacetime establishments or essential parts of them. This applies above all to the introduction and organization of modern weapons and types of equipment and to administrative measures in the individual sections of [their] armed forces; for example, changes of station, transport by rail, motor vehicle, and ship as well as troop movements, mechanization of horse-drawn units in the army, movements of battleships in territorial waters in the navy, and in the air force the construction of new airfields as well as data on civil aviation. As such measures and questions are not made public as formerly by publication of estimates, Parliamentary debates, or press announcements, it is becoming increasingly difficult for our military authorities to follow the peacetime establishment and equipment of foreign armies and to keep up to date on statistics. This is true for the whole armed forces, as well as for the individual services, army, navy, and air force.

In all these questions the cooperation of our Consulates is of special value, for here it is a question of a mass of detail, a considerable part of which cannot be concealed locally but strikes the trained eye immediately and needs no expert espionage activity to discover. What is seen and heard only needs to be reported. In this connection careful study of the provincial press is especially indicated.

It is of even greater importance to establish at the right moment whether, at certain moments of political tension, military preparations of greater or less extent are being taken. All states have the most varied phases of military preparedness, from the cancellation of leave through many stages to openly declared general mobilization. The smaller and more localized the extent of such measures, the more difficult it is to recognize them from outside. But experience shows that even the most inconspicuous measures quickly get around locally by word of mouth. It is hardly possible to hide anything from local gossip that in any way affects and changes the normal course of daily life.

It need then hardly be emphasized what valuable help our Consulates can render. Now and then, of course, noncareer Consulates [*Nichtberufskonsulate*] can also render such services. In the foregoing observations, however, only career Consulates [*Berufskonsulate*] are envisaged. Objections to the Consulates being used for the

purpose of obtaining military intelligence can, moreover, be refuted all the more, because foreign powers also are beginning to entrust their Consulates more and more with such tasks. We need only refer to a very recent case, when the Consul of a foreign power in Munich informed his Mission in Berlin in very good time of military preparations against Austria.

On the other hand, it must certainly not be forgotten that the position of confidence, which our Consuls must achieve in their posts, must not in the interests of their actual duties and the relations of the Reich with the country which is their host, be lightly jeopardized. Moreover, their security is specially endangered by the fact that they enjoy no extraterritorial rights. To preclude as far as possible the dangers existing in this respect, the Foreign Ministry, in conjunction with the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht*, has therefore decided on the following regulation:

In those countries to which German Service Attachés are accredited it is a fundamental task of our Consulates to collaborate in the above-mentioned sense in the obtaining of military intelligence in normal times and especially in times of tension. In so doing, however, the Consul may not use any means not in keeping with his position, and may only report what he sees openly or hears in conversation. The extent to which in an individual case a Consulate may be called upon for such duties must, moreover, be left to the judgment of the Head of the Mission, who, after hearing the Service Attaché, gives his decision on the basis of the special circumstances of the country in question, and issues corresponding instructions to the Consul.

In the work to be undertaken by the Consulates in the light of this, cooperation with the Service Attachés is essential, as their judgment on military requirements is decisive. The requirements of the Foreign Service, however, do not permit of the Service Attachés' entering into direct contact with the Consulates and giving them instructions. In the same way it appears unsuitable that the Consuls should report directly to the Service Attachés. So far as wishes of the Service Attachés are submitted, they are rather to be transmitted to the Consuls only through the Head of the Mission or his specially designated deputy (Commercial Attaché or such), while it must be left to the judgment of the Head of the Mission or his deputy whether he considers further transmission indicated. In the same way Consuls are to address their reports in such cases to their parent Missions, who will then see to their further circulation.

It must also be taken into consideration that the forwarding of reports which are concerned with military matters, even if they are



in individual cases of a harmless nature, may only be done through safe channels. This applies without exception in normal times; in times of tension it must be left to the judgment of the Head of the Mission in each case, whether the speedy forwarding of information is of such importance that the normal security measures can be disregarded.

I request you to inform career Consuls under your jurisdiction to this effect, verbally only, to acknowledge the receipt of this instruction, and to report on your experiences at the end of the year.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 274

1613/386828-30

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy in Poland  
and the Legation in Czechoslovakia*

IMMEDIATE  
SECRET

BERLIN, June 30, 1938.  
(e.o. Pol. I 1486 g (IV))

The Foreign Ministry has received in confidential form from a special source information according to which on June 18, 1938, the Czechoslovak Minister in Warsaw handed to the Foreign Minister in Warsaw an invitation to the Polish Government to open negotiations between Poland and Czechoslovakia.

According to this, the Czechoslovak Government is said to have undertaken to deliver to the Polish Government armaments and raw materials to a maximum value of 5 milliard zloty. The Czechoslovak Government are said to be willing to relieve the Polish budget of all expenditure for State defense for a period of 5 years.

It is further proposed that the Polish Government should give guarantees in the name of the Polish State and the Bank of Poland. Payment for deliveries is to start only after 5 years and is to be completed in 10 years. In addition, the Czechoslovak Government grant to their Polish minority all rights to independent political, cultural, and economic development. In return for this the Polish Government are to renounce autonomy and independence of the Polish minority in Czechoslovakia. According to the proposal the Czechoslovak Government will route their exports through Gdynia.

At the same time they propose to subject the customs and railway tariffs to speedy revision. If the Polish Government accept the invitation to a discussion, the Czechoslovak Republic will submit the draft of a new trade and payment treaty with a most-favored-nation clause. The Czechoslovak Government will propose in concrete form:

- 1) the conclusion of a political treaty of friendship and assistance;
- 2) a political understanding in Central European questions with the participation of third states.

Please investigate this strictly confidential information and report on the result.

For the Minister:  
BISMARCK

No. 275

2134/467081-82

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

SECRET

BERLIN, July 1, 1938.

The Italian Ambassador today asked me somewhat unexpectedly what attitude the Hungarians were actually taking in the German-Czechoslovak problem.

As I could not see exactly what Attolico was driving at, I answered that of course the Hungarian revisionist aspirations toward Czechoslovakia were known. But what practical policy is to be adopted by Hungary, if it came to a conflict with Czechoslovakia, did not seem to me to have been decided yet in Budapest itself.

Then Attolico gradually produced a statement made to him by the Rumanian Minister<sup>64</sup> here and which he described as strictly confidential. What the Rumanian had mentioned to him were the anxieties on account of Czechoslovakia, not only for the future of Czechoslovakia as such, or on account of the general danger of war, but because of an alleged German intention to make use of Hungarian territory in case of conflict. This would bring Rumania into the proximity and under the possible threat of German troops. This threat might become especially serious if Russia showed intentions of marching through Rumania in order to render help to the Czechs.

I described the Rumanian fears as imaginary.

Attolico asked especially that no use should be made of his information.

From the course of the conversation I would assume that Attolico had discussed with the Rumanian the attitude of the Little Entente in a German-Czech conflict, and at the same time had probably also stated that in this case Italy would stand aside.

Submitted to the Reich Minister:  
WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>64</sup> Radu Djuvara.

## No. 276

2134/466992

*Memorandum by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 1, 1938.

During his visit today the British Ambassador inquired about the state of the Czech-Sudeten German negotiations.

I answered that I was not properly *au courant*, either. It was known that we had no finger in the pie. My impression up to the present was that the Czechs were putting more and more questions to the Sudeten Germans, without the Czech Government so far having given the slightest indication whether or to what extent it intended to satisfy the Sudeten German wishes. The practical effect of the so-called British and French pressure on Prague, repeatedly mentioned by Henderson, seemed to me so far to be nil. I must describe the state of the negotiations, as far as I knew it, as highly unsatisfactory.

Henderson did not contradict this opinion and acknowledged the calmer attitude of the German press recently.

I took advantage of an opportunity in the conversation to tell Henderson that the British Foreign Service and Intelligence Service were now being assiduously described by the Czechs as the instigators of the panic in the second half of May. Henderson expressed the view, as he had previously done, that the rumors of German troop concentrations on May 20 had been spread in Czechoslovakia for the express purpose of serving as a pretext for planned partial Czech mobilization.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 277

2369/494631-36

*The German Ambassador in Poland (Moltke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

PV 47/7.38

WARSAW, July 1, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 4623)

Subject: Attitude of Poland in the Czechoslovak question.

## POLITICAL REPORT

In a conversation which I had a few days ago with Beck, the Foreign Minister, I tried to ascertain his present attitude to the Czechoslovak question. As usual, when he wishes to avoid definite

statements, M. Beck said a great deal without saying anything of importance. Nevertheless, some of his remarks are perhaps of interest.

It was clear from the start that his unfriendly attitude to Czechoslovakia is unchanged. He spoke in particular with his usual bitterness about M. Beneš, whose successes in the special sphere of Geneva he recognized, but whom he did not consider capable in the present situation of finding a solution suitable to the psychology of the minorities. If they had not even succeeded in satisfying the Slovaks there was little prospect that the Prague Government would come to an agreement with the more distant minorities. In the Polish minority area, too, the situation had not improved in the last few weeks, and it was hardly a sign of good will if the new minority statute was always being postponed.

M. Beck characterized the present situation as follows: There was no doubt that the Czechs had forfeited a good deal of the sympathy in the world which they had previously enjoyed. The conviction, too, that the Versailles settlement had not been a happy one, was on the increase. On the other hand—M. Beck added with evident emphasis—he had the definite impression that the determination to defend this abortion even in the face of powerful attacks was far stronger in the world and had many more supporters today than even a few weeks ago.

It was not evident whether this fact, specially stressed by M. Beck, has also caused a change in the Polish attitude. In this connection, M. Beck referred to the statement, appearing in the *Evening Standard* a few weeks ago, according to which he was alleged to have told me that, in the event of a German-Czech conflict, Poland would be found on the side of France. He had immediately denied this statement, admittedly only in Britain, because it had appeared there, but he had simultaneously given a similar declaration in Berlin—an assertion which, as far as I know, is not true.

When asked about Slovakia and its relations with Poland, M. Beck said that the Slovaks had developed their own nationality in the last 20 years, and that they asked for nothing better than to retain this acquisition; whether within the framework of the Czechoslovak State or in some other way was a matter of less importance to them. They certainly had no pleasant recollection of their onetime attachment to Hungary; but since then Hungary had also learned many lessons. The relations of the Slovaks to Poland M. Beck described as predominantly cultural. The similarity between the languages was greater than that between any other Slav peoples. Further, the Slovaks had a very special confidence in Poland. (It struck me that

the otherwise usual reference to the fact that Poland had no aspirations south of the Carpathians was lacking this time.)

If one attempts to form a picture of Poland's probable attitude in the event of a German-Czech conflict from the foregoing indications, as well as from other observations and information, it might take more or less the following form:

It is very improbable that military intervention by France would persuade Poland to place herself as a matter of course on the side of Czechoslovakia. Treaty obligations do not exist, and it cannot be doubted that the repeated French *démarches* have resulted in no promises being made by the Polish Government. As long as the outcome of the war is in doubt, Poland will avoid ranging herself against Germany, as this might endanger not only the prospect of recovering the Teschen territory, but in the end even the Corridor. Even in the event of Britain's coming to the aid of the French, Polish intervention on the side of the Allies is not to be reckoned on as a certainty.

On the other hand, however, it is not to be assumed that Poland will prematurely declare herself on the side of Germany. Such a step would involve far too great a risk in the East as well as in the West for Poland to dare to take it. Rather, it is probable that at first a neutral attitude will be adopted here, in order to wait and see on which side the scale tips. Instead of the Teschen territory, East Prussia or German Upper Silesia might perhaps also be attractive as the prize of victory, and a precipitate espousing of the German cause could easily bring all these chances to naught, quite apart from the fact that in this case the Soviet Union, which, though militarily weakened, is nevertheless still regarded as a factor to be taken into consideration, might also become a danger for Poland.

It looks as if the objections to immediate military intervention simultaneously with Germany have recently become stronger. As is known, the Poles carried out a partial mobilization on the Czech frontier as early as April of this year, and only canceled these measures at the beginning of May. At that time they were obviously expecting immediate German action against Czechoslovakia and were apparently resolved in this case on themselves immediately occupying the Teschen area so as not to have to accept it from German hands, encumbered with embarrassing conditions. It appears as if this plan of parallel action has now also been abandoned, and probably in the first place on account of world reaction against acts of violence, again emphasized on this occasion by M. Beck, and on account of the increasing risk resulting from them. From hints by the British Am-

bassador here,<sup>65</sup> it can be assumed that M. Beck has given him the desired assurances in this respect.

If it is to be expected that Poland will at first remain neutral in a German-Czech conflict, then it is self-evident that the maintenance of this neutrality will be influenced by the general political situation and especially by Germany's military prospects. As long as only France intervenes actively on behalf of Czechoslovakia, neutrality will be more benevolent than if Great Britain, too, intervened, or if a far-reaching isolation of Germany is strikingly obvious from the start. It can be assumed with certainty that at least the passage of Russian troops will be prevented on the grounds of this neutrality. This is borne out by Beck's policy, the aim of which is to weld together under Polish leadership the Baltic States in a "neutral *cordon sanitaire* for Europe." It is also an intolerable thought for Polish policy, as well as for Polish public opinion, that Soviet troops should set foot on Polish soil. Another question is whether Poland also can and will prevent under all circumstances the passage of Soviet troops through Rumanian territory. It is to be assumed that the Poles—as formerly—will do everything to persuade the Rumanians to resist the passage of Soviet troops, and it is also to be assumed that they are resolved to give the Rumanians far-reaching help to this end. But finally, success depends on the will to resistance of the Rumanians themselves and in this respect certain doubts are justified.

It remains to be tested whether we have a chance of influencing the Polish attitude by concessions of some kind. Firstly, an extension of the 1934 agreement could be considered, or going beyond that, an express and solemn guarantee of the Polish western frontier; further, a binding assurance with regard to the Teschen territory, perhaps also recognition of Polish interests in Lithuania or in the Soviet Ukraine.

It is beyond doubt that the Poles will take advantage of every opportunity, especially of every weakness on the part of Germany, to obtain new guarantees and assurances in the above-mentioned important spheres of interest. But Poland will, even when she has obtained such advantages, always act exclusively according to her own interests. It would be wrong to count on a *quid pro quo*, which could be relied on in a serious situation.

VON MOLTKE

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<sup>65</sup> Sir Howard Kennard.

## No. 278

139/125324-29

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*<sup>66</sup>

RM 245

The British Ambassador, who had expressed the wish to be able to speak with me briefly before his visit to London, visited me in the country at 5 o'clock today. Sir Nevile Henderson stated that, according to recent information, the Prague Government were seriously endeavoring to be accommodating. I replied that this was not our impression. Sir Nevile then asked how we envisaged the solution of the Sudeten German question. Could such a solution be found in autonomy for the Sudeten Germans, or was our view that a union [*Anschluss*] with the German-inhabited areas should take place?

I replied that I could give him no answer to this question. It seemed to me important that no outside attempt should be made to force an unsatisfactory solution on the Sudeten Germans. In this connection I made to him statements similar to those made to François-Poncet on June 23, 1938, and again referred to the history of the rise of the Czechoslovak State, which, artificially created from outside, had produced unsatisfactory results, so that a repetition of such methods must be avoided. In my opinion, only the Sudeten German people, through their leader Henlein, could decide what form a *modus vivendi* with Prague must take. According to information in our hands, however, the rulers in Prague did not seem so far to show a reasonable attitude. Sir Nevile Henderson answered that British pressure in Prague would still continue. He would ask us earnestly to have confidence in Chamberlain and Halifax and to wait and see whether British influence would prevail in Prague. If Beneš were not prepared to conciliate, then Britain would take no further interest. I told the British Ambassador that the latest news from Czechoslovakia was highly unsatisfactory. The Sokol and other associations seemed to have been attacked by a kind of megalomania. In schools and among the soldiers, insulting songs about the Führer were being sung. If things went on in this way I foresaw serious developments. Hitherto, Germany had regarded all provocations with the supreme calm of a Great Power. But there could be no doubt that our hearts were with our 3½ million fellow countrymen, and we would not leave them in the lurch. I then made the same observations on the general political situation to the British Am-

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<sup>66</sup> Another copy of this memorandum (1613/386858-63) bears the penciled instruction, "We ought really to inform the Missions concerned," initialed B[ismarck], July 6, and bears the alterations necessary to turn it into a despatch.

bassador as I had made to the French Ambassador, and pointed out the necessity of limiting and respecting spheres of interest. Germany—as is known—had no desire to incorporate any foreign people, but intended to exercise her natural influence economically as well as politically in her southeastern sphere of influence. I hoped that the German point of view would soon be recognized in other countries as justified and that thus the last relic of the Versailles mentality would vanish. My conversation with François-Poncet had given me the hope that we were on the way to reason. British statesmen must admit that Germany, the strongest Great Power in Europe, had pursued a policy of compromise toward Britain such as no other Great Power had ever done before, and indeed the Führer had not only proclaimed this policy in words but proved it by deeds. It was regrettable that Britain was not pursuing the same policy toward Germany. As we knew from definite sources, British policy had tried to make difficulties for us in Austria, too. If Britain would give up the habit of directing her policy according to sentimentalities of the moment, and if she would concentrate on her vital interests, it seemed to me that a settlement, such as I was convinced Chamberlain and Halifax were also striving for, was quite possible. In spite of the great disappointments which we had experienced in the past, an agreement on a grand scale could then be achieved.

Henderson replied that he agreed with my view, insofar as German policy was concerned. He would never have taken up his post if he had not been sure of Chamberlain's support for a policy of reconciliation. When the Führer had last received him, he had said that after a settlement of the Austrian and Sudeten German questions the way would be open for an understanding on the colonial question and a general Anglo-German agreement. The Austrian question was settled. If the Sudeten German question could be settled without war, there would be nothing more in the way of a final agreement between our two countries. But it was necessary that the Czechoslovak question should be settled without war. He asked me if I believed in such a possibility. I answered the British Ambassador's question in the affirmative, but pointed out that a great change in the mentality of the Prague rulers was essential. For a better knowledge of this mentality I could recommend a closer study of the history of the creation of the Czechoslovak State and the behavior of the Czechs during the Russian revolution. The Czechs were brutal, narrow-minded, and sullen, but, after all, also cowards. In the military sense, Czechoslovakia presented no problem for Germany. If the Czechs were so insane as to let it come to war, then Germany was prepared for any war. The events of May had proved how peace-



loving the Führer was. I had to remind him, however, that one day the limit would be reached. Then Germany would shrink from nothing. It seemed to me grotesque if a major European war, in which Britain and Germany would have to cross swords, should arise over such a problem. Henderson mentioned that Walpole had once had to declare war on Spain against his will. I said to Sir Nevile that presumably at that time it had only been a question of a partial engagement. In a new conflict, however, the existence of Germany and the British Empire would be at stake. I considered Chamberlain and Halifax as statesmen of too great insight not to see the problem in exactly this light and to act accordingly. Henderson said he would report to Chamberlain and Halifax.

He then read to me part of a telegraphic instruction from Halifax concerning the Evian Conference.<sup>67</sup> The instruction was to the effect that the German Government were to be informally sounded whether they would if necessary be prepared to cooperate with the other powers in the refugee question. In this connection Henderson explained that the Jewish question was one of the greatest problems of the twentieth century. No country wanted to accept the German Jews, especially those without means. But as Germany wanted to get rid of her Jewish population the question arose whether Germany might be prepared to cooperate in facilitating the export of capital.

I answered the British Ambassador that I must decline on principle to cooperate in the German Jewish problem. It was a question of an internal German problem, outside every discussion. I must answer in the negative the question whether we would facilitate export of capital, as a transfer of capital amassed by the Jews, especially since the war, was impossible. The question of Jewish emigration was being examined by us. As, however, other countries refused to receive them, the matter was rather difficult. Henderson returned to Lord Halifax's suggestion and asked if he could not report something positive at home about cooperation with Germany. I replied that I saw no possibility of cooperation. Henderson then turned the conversation to a number of former Austrian nationals who had been arrested. I answered the British Ambassador that I had already received from Lady Londonderry a list of such arrested persons, in whom apparently Lady [*sic*] Chamberlain and Lady Halifax were also interested. To me such interest was incomprehensible. The British Government had never lifted a finger for the victims of the Schuschnigg régime. Schuschnigg had four hundred National Socialist dead

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<sup>67</sup> An intergovernmental committee of representatives of thirty-one nations, invited by the United States Government, met at Evian from July 6 to 13 to discuss the problem of refugees from Germany and Austria.

and many thousands of wounded on his conscience. The British Government had never shown the slightest interest in this. To us, however, one National Socialist Styrian peasant was of more importance than a dozen Austrian aristocrats. He could therefore imagine the feelings with which we received such British request lists. Finally I said: I hoped that no anti-German propaganda will result from the Evian meeting. In that case it would react very disadvantageously on the German Jews.

RIBBENTROP

BERLIN, July 3, 1938.

No. 279

440/221170-87

*Memorandum by an Official of the German Ministry of Economics  
(Wohlthat)*

PERSONAL

BERLIN, July 4, 1938.

Field Marshal Göring's Office.

W. XV/28/1938

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: I enclose a memorandum on conversations which I had in Great Britain in the last few weeks. I have sent a copy of these memoranda to Herr von Ribbentrop with personal greetings from individual Englishmen.

Heil Hitler!

Yours sincerely,

H. WOHLTHAT

[Enclosure]

*Memorandum on Private Conversations During the International  
Whaling Conference, June 1938, in London*

W. XV/23/1938

#### A. POLITICAL QUESTIONS

1) *Morrison, Minister of Agriculture*, said that the British Government specially welcomed the participation of a German delegation. Cooperation between British and German delegates had made possible the success of the last conference. He was counting on German support again, so that at this year's conference the *Japanese Government*, too, might be induced to take part in an international agreement on whaling.

He regretted that during the last year tension had arisen between the two Governments, which had recently been intensified by the treatment of the question of the Austrian Loans. However, he thought that the existing differences could be removed if suitable people spoke

on both sides. In spite of the growing opposition in Parliament, Neville Chamberlain and Lord Halifax, as well as other members of the British Government, were determined to preserve peace in Europe.

2) *Sir Horace Wilson*; Secretary of State to Neville Chamberlain [*sic*], Economic Adviser to the Cabinet.

We agreed that relations between the two countries have considerably deteriorated during the last year. In spite of this, our personal conversation was friendly. Sir Horace Wilson regretted the considerable differences of opinion between the two States. For a year the views of the two Governments had become more divergent, instead of coming closer together. In his opinion, however, many misunderstandings could be cleared up between leading personalities by recognizing each other's point of view. He asked whether the Führer wanted to bring non-German elements under German sovereignty. Where were the future frontiers of Germany? I explained the psychological attitude of several leading personalities, who had themselves been Germans living outside Germany. The question of uniting the Germans, who lived in a solid settlement area in the middle of Europe, would be regarded by people who had spent many years of their youth in Austria and by the British public in a different way. Even in Germany a distinction must be made between the ordinary German national feeling and the particular attitude of the German Austrian to the question of Greater Germany. The Germans in the old Austro-Hungarian Empire were in large measure in sympathy with Greater German ideas. From the Napoleonic wars to the Peace Treaties of 1919 the Germans played the leading part in the group of States which today form Central Europe. Within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy the new National States developed into national groups and entities within a century. The Germans in Austria-Hungary had always been conscious of belonging to Germany, even if the Hapsburg Monarchy had, in Southeast Europe, prevented them from uniting with Germany. After the revolution of 1848 over one hundred German deputies from German Austria and Sudeten Germany had appeared in the Frankfurt Parliament, demanding the formation of a Greater Germany and offering the Imperial Crown to the King of Prussia. The Prussian King refused the Imperial Crown at that time because he feared a weakening of the Prussian State. In the dispute between Prussia and Austria in 1866 the question of leadership in Germany had been decided. Bismarck, however, was aware of the role of Germans in Austria-Hungary and had always striven for an alliance between Germany and Austria. After the 1914-18 war the parts of the Austro-Hun-

garian Monarchy were given independence in the form of National States, whereby the Germans in German Austria formed a miniature German State, and those in Bohemia were incorporated into Czechoslovakia. The struggle to join the Greater German Reich on the part of the two German groups in Austria and Sudeten Germany has a long history, and seems natural to the Germans. The leading German personalities regard the unification of the people as their main task; the State is a function of the people. As is natural in a monarchy, Bismarck gave the State the leading part. In the concept of National Socialism the people as a whole have the leading part.

*Sir Horace Wilson:* Neville Chamberlain regarded the European situation very calmly. They now hoped to be able to settle the Spanish question first. No opinion should be offered on the extent to which the Spaniards in Catalonia and Castille were Bolshevik or democratic. The Soviet Russians would certainly take advantage of any unrest. All the other powers, however, had been troubled by the Spanish quarrels for so long that there was a general desire for an end of this state of affairs, even among the Spaniards themselves. A clearing up of the Spanish question would also considerably lessen the tension between France and Italy, and make the British agreement with Italy effective. As a result of the general European situation, Great Britain had had to adopt a policy of close cooperation with France. In view of their sensitive nature and their tendency to act in accordance with their emotions the French could only be attached to Britain's lead through the feeling of security which Great Britain gave France. Close relations with France had not prevented Great Britain from making strong representations in Prague, which had not been without effect. Neville Chamberlain wanted to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Sudeten German demands. Events in Russia during the last year and the real significance of Russian power for French, Czech, or in fact European politics could not be appreciated reliably from Great Britain. It was apparently a question of a personal policy of Stalin toward a class of society consisting of thousands of Russians, who, as members of the Communist Party, had gradually changed their attitude to the Soviet Russian State. Even if this had not so far led to a political combination against Stalin, he had apparently feared such a turn of events. It could be assumed that views subversive to the State existed among some individuals or groups. Economic development in Russia was making only slow progress, it was true, but an increase in total production could be noted. This altered the people's demands and attitude toward the Government. It was unlikely that Russia would intervene in the Far East. China would no doubt be supported by the Rus-

sians, but the Russian Army was hardly in a position to wage open war against Japan. The Japanese, however, had become so deeply involved in the struggle with China that a considerable weakening of Japanese economy was noticeable. A termination of the conflict was in the interests of all. The repercussions on international trade in the Far East could not yet be completely estimated. Even if one did not need to assume that trade was falling away altogether, the promising start which trade with China had shown had been destroyed.

Great Britain had been ready to support China's economic rehabilitation with generous credits. Even if the Chinese had given part of the orders based on the credits to Germany, Great Britain welcomed this, as this trade was to the advantage of the Chinese market as a whole.

Besides the setback to world trade in the Far East the violent fluctuation in economic conditions in North America are particularly unwelcome. The difficulty still exists for Britain of accepting American exports of raw materials, which must be disposed of in direct competition with the products of the British Dominions, while British export trade is largely dependent on the American market.

In my opinion the conversation was supposed to give the impression that the British Government were prepared to recognize Germany's position in Central Europe, and also the inclusion of the Sudeten Germans within the German frontiers, if the German Government would state what are the limits to the expansion of German sovereignty. The British are also prepared, in my opinion, to accept German economic supremacy in the markets of North, East, and Southeast Europe, as they understand that the production of raw materials and food in the Baltic countries and Southeast Europe make possible a natural exchange with German industrial products, and that these countries are largely dependent for their foreign trade on Germany as the greatest consumer nation in Europe. The "nuisance value" of Germany's position as a Great Power is so great that the British are prepared to accord Germany a special position. A satisfactory solution of the colonial question also seems possible, if, in conjunction with the legal question, a practical proposal for German colonial areas can be made. If limitation of armaments could not be discussed during the last few years, as Germany was aiming first at a certain position comparable to that of France, the time has now come, in the British view, when a start could be made.

3) *Sir Louis Greig and Sir Samuel Hoare*: Sir Louis Greig spoke frankly about the personal question in the Anglo-German talks. Germany could hardly expect to find again such a favorable compo-

sition of personalities as at present existed on the British side. Neville Chamberlain considered it his duty to prevent a war, which threatened present European civilization with incalculable danger. His first action, after taking up office, had been the attempt to discuss the German problems with a German statesman. Chamberlain was convinced that British public opinion would support him, if a peaceful solution of the German problem were made possible, even at the cost of sacrifices and concessions on Great Britain's part. In this he did not allow himself to waver even in face of the growing opposition in Parliament and public opinion. Lord Halifax was a completely independent political figure, who did not have to take into consideration, in his politics, electors or political events of the past. Lord Halifax had also had an excellent training in the various great tasks which he had undertaken during his life and was a suitable person to find a solution to complicated problems. There were also in the British Cabinet and among the Secretaries of State a number of other men who appreciated Germany's position. The question was whether Germany was ready to negotiate at all, and if so, whether she would nominate as negotiators those men with whom the British were in sympathy, a fact of great importance for the final result in view of British mentality.

4) *Butler* (Parliamentary [Under] Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, younger member of the Conservative Party, very sympathetic impression. Animated discussion at the German Embassy reception, well disposed toward Germany): Stressed the readiness to give far-reaching recognition to the German points of view individually and to limit reciprocally British and German claims in the political reshaping of Europe. On the British side the wish exists to learn the extent of the German claims. In order to preserve general peace, Great Britain is ready to treat the Sudeten German question, too, in accordance with German wishes. Also in world trade, according to the British view, the interests of the three main participating Powers, the British Empire, the United States, and Germany are to be delimited, so that war need not arise out of the struggle for raw materials and selling markets.

5) *Lord Riverdale* deplored the marked deterioration in political relations between the two countries and the threat to existing economic cooperation. He considered an official Anglo-German conversation impossible at present, as the atmosphere was too bad. For example, a visit by Göring, which he had contemplated last year, was at present impracticable. Neville Chamberlain was being very vehemently attacked, even by members of the Conservative Party, as he still considered a peaceful settlement with Germany possible.

British public opinion had been impressed by events in Austria in a way which could hardly be imagined. Even if on May 21 there had been no grounds as far as Germany was concerned for the fears that Germany would occupy Czechoslovakia militarily, world opinion had considered such a step on Germany's part possible. If Neville Chamberlain and his friends should be forced out of the Government, those circles would probably come into power who would pursue a determined policy against Germany. Lord Riverdale said it was of decisive importance that at least the economic talks between the two countries should be carried on in their present form, so that the political talks could later be resumed on this basis.

6) *Sir Campbell Stuart*: very influential as one of the proprietors of *The Times*. He stressed his efforts, in agreement with his friends in the Government, to maintain a calm tone in *The Times* reports, in order to keep open the possibility of Anglo-German *rapprochement*. There was no doubt that British public opinion had been more deeply influenced by the occupation of Austria than appeared on the surface. In contrast with the mass of the population, authoritative circles in Britain were very unresponsive to propaganda. The British public was not sure whether in future Germany might stage a surprise military occupation not only of Czechoslovakia but of a whole series of small European states. The statements of German personalities and propagandists on this subject had formerly not been taken seriously in Britain. Events in Austria have had the effect in Great Britain that these people, formerly considered irresponsible, were now thought to be right. Even if the Führer probably had a clear picture in his mind of the limits he set for the sovereignty of the German Reich, no one in England was yet clear on this point. From this arises a feeling of uncertainty, which the Government must dissipate. This uncertainty has led to the formation of a political group which believes in the inevitability of war with Germany, and attacks Neville Chamberlain and his friends on account of their peace policy. As far as one can judge today, Germany could have no better partner for negotiations than Neville Chamberlain. He urged me to meet the interested British Ministers, and hoped that the German Government would permit such journeys. He doubted whether the British Ministers could commit themselves so far in their official capacity to the German Ambassador, whereas they would definitely be ready to speak at such a discussion.

7) *Politicians in the Reform Club*. A large section of the British public is convinced that war with Germany is inevitable. Friends of Germany find it difficult to justify a friendly attitude to Germany. The British maintain that as late as 1936 they prevented the French

from taking any serious step against Germany. Influential circles are speaking of a new Napoleonic problem in Central Europe. Events in Austria have acted as an exceptional shock to British public opinion. The military occupation and the mistakes in the treatment of the Austrians have produced an ever worsening impression as the weeks go by. So great is the tension felt in some sections of the British public that people are saying, if there must be a war, let it rather come as soon as possible. The British are convinced that together with the French and other European states, among whom Russia is counted on the side of France, and America, they will win a war against Germany and possibly Italy. This also applies if in the Far East Japan joins Germany and Italy. Possible clashes in Czechoslovakia would in view of this general attitude only serve as a motive for the general conflagration. Men like Churchill and Eden were opposed to negotiations with Germany and favored a preventive war. Neville Chamberlain, Lord Halifax, Sir Samuel Hoare, Sir Thomas Inskip were for peace. In spite of this an understanding between Great Britain and Germany was still possible today, and there was no doubt that this would assure for Germany a great position in Europe. The return in principle of the colonies was here of great importance as a question of prestige for final equality of status.

If limitation of armaments could not yet be put into operation, an armaments agreement between Great Britain and France on the one side and Germany and Italy on the other might be initiated by the Governments informing each other of certain plans and figures. In view of the modern development of world economy it is desirable that German influence should extend over a wider field of European economy. In the present state of world trade it was more difficult to find a final solution of questions of easing the control of foreign holdings and exchange equalization than in 1937. Even now, however, it was possible to envisage an easing of the situation of the countries with controlled foreign holdings.

WOHLTHAT

W. XV/24/1938

#### B. ECONOMIC QUESTIONS

1) *Sir Frederick Leith-Ross*. We discussed the Austrian Loans and the attitude of the British Government, which Sir Frederick illustrated by reference to the exchange of correspondence. He thought that agreement on the following basis was possible: payments for interest on the guaranteed loans, lowering of interest on



the nonguaranteed loans by negotiation with the Council of Foreign Bondholders; payment of interest on the guaranteed loans, insofar as the British holders of securities claim payment from the British Government. Lowering of interest on the Dawes and Young Loans could not be arranged with the British Government, but must be discussed with the Lever Committee of Creditors. During the discussions in December last, the British Government influenced the creditors and they agreed to a certain reduction in interest, although they were not prepared to adopt the rates proposed by Germany: 5 percent for Dawes, 4 percent for Young, and 3 percent in the case of private debts. He expressly pointed out that in the clearing there was no question of a threat by the British, but it was an automatic development provided for in the agreement. The German representative had obviously made statements to him which went further than the German Government later conceded. He was personally very disappointed with his stay in Berlin and regarded the decision to set up a clearing as a misfortune for both sides. He asked me, however, to do, in an unofficial way, everything I could take upon myself. After discussion with Ambassador von Dirksen on June 15 and 16 Sir Frederick Leith-Ross paid his first visit to the Embassy, and this led to the resumption of the talks.

*Sir William Brown*, Secretary of State at the Board of Trade and *Sir [Horace] Hamilton*, at present Secretary of State at the Scottish Office, expressed the same views as Sir Frederick Leith-Ross.

2) *Ashton Gwatkins* [*sic*] (Foreign Office) mentioned Southeast Europe, following a remark of mine about increased British activity in credit dealings with Turkey and Rumania. The British regard the German system of clearing agreements as the decisive means of gaining influence over the different countries and forget the significance of the underlying economic agreements. I pointed out that clearing as such is only a technical measure rendered necessary also in Southeast Europe by the international indebtedness of these countries. If one seeks a way out of exchange control in Southeast Europe, one must begin here, too, with a practical treatment of international debts, especially toward France. It is quite possible to transform the system of international payments in Southeast Europe. In any case, the national banks of individual countries are too weak to finance agriculture in harvest time and between the harvests. British efforts to advance credits to Southeast Europe would only oblige the countries in question, when it came to repayment, to sell their products at prices prevailing in the world market even at times when these prices were unfavorable. The French had suffered a failure with their political loans and I would be sorry to see the

British now stepping into France's place. Germany's position in Southeast Europe, so clearly developed during the last few years, was based on the natural conditions of exchange of commodities in Central Europe. Direct British credits could help these countries only to a limited degree, because they would be tied to the movement of goods which these countries could sell in the world market. Co-operation between Great Britain and Germany would be a much more profitable use of British financial resources. As the greater part of the trade of these countries is directed to the German market, a freer form of clearing could be developed from the present bilateral system of clearing agreements, if, for example, payment could be effected on the basis of the credit balance of the agricultural countries, standing to their account in the *Verrechnungskasse* in Berlin, at the time of the sale of the harvest. The British, who themselves recognize the difficulties of the policy introduced by them, asked for the opportunity to discuss this problem further in Berlin in a few weeks.

3) *Quinton Hill*,<sup>68</sup> head of the Department of Overseas Trade. Quinton Hill discussed the present export-credit drive by Britain in Turkey and Southeast Europe. The talks with Tatarescu, in conjunction with Argetoianu's visit, were concerned with Rumania's credit worthiness. Rumania can no longer obtain deliveries of war material from France on credit. Supplies from Germany, paid for in the normal way, have increased in the last few years and this has linked Rumania to Germany.

I explained to the British that the repayment of purely commercial credits, granted to Turkey and Rumania, depended on the prices at which these countries could sell their agricultural products in the markets of the world. In comparison with the standard of living in Southeast Europe production costs were too high. British loans had a strong political bias and were regarded in this way. The British thought that a discussion with Germany on general world selling conditions would be in the interests of both countries. Germany was the biggest European market for the trade of the Dominions, the British transit trade in foodstuffs and raw materials. The German market is more important for the British Empire than the American market, and for the economic development of the Dominions takes second place to Great Britain herself.

4) *Sir Otto Niemeyer* (Bank of England). Economic conditions in America have suffered such a severe setback in the mining, automobile, and building industries, that is, in the key industries, that the idea has again cropped up that currency speculation would im-

<sup>68</sup> Mr. T. St. Quintin Hill is meant.

prove prices and revive business by depreciating the dollar. This would also mean a relief for America's high domestic debts. The British, however, do not believe that Roosevelt will again devalue the dollar against gold. In any case, American economic policy is, in the British view, too divided, which is explained by America's natural situation as partly an industrial country and partly a country exporting agricultural raw materials. Russian exports of gold to London have made a deep impression and in 1938 will probably exceed the 1937 total of 30 million pounds. Russian production of gold has assumed greater proportions since Stalin, in contrast to Lenin, who was opposed to gold production, realized that with gold, as with other Russian products, he could not only buy goods but also acquire a position in the world's gold market. The stocks of gold amassed in Moscow are the cause of the instability of the rates of exchange, when large gold holdings are suddenly sold in the London or New York markets. These gold reserves, however, can also be the starting point for a new Russian currency and foreign trade policy.

German policy in the matter of the Austrian Loans is also followed with concern by the Bank of England, as it might endanger all the efforts made in the last few years to clear up the question of debts and interest.

5) *Frank Cyril Tiarks* (J. Henry Schröder and Co.) and *Right Honorable Robert Henry Brandt* [*sic*] (Lazard Brothers and Co.). Both bankers are especially interested in the carrying out of the "Standstill" Agreement. The fact that the British Government had had to inaugurate a clearing agreement with Germany proved that the London banks regarded Germany's foreign exchange position as catastrophic, as it could not be without its effects on the other Western European creditor nations. If Germany's foreign exchange position deteriorated, the "Standstill" Agreement, which had been working successfully for 7 years, would be endangered. The banks wanted to await the outcome of the Government promises and did not want to approach the Reichsbank or the German "Standstill" Committee. The German negotiations had caused deep unrest in the City. On June 17 the Treasury asked for information on the credits which the City had given or was ready to give in connection with current German business. In spite of the deterioration of Anglo-German relations both gentlemen emphasized that Neville Chamberlain was seeking a peaceful solution. The press did not give a true picture of British public opinion. The German Government and the German Propaganda Ministry must not let themselves be misled into thinking that the press and public opinion could be directed and judged as in

Germany. At the present moment, public opinion in Britain was making it easy for the Government to get the credits necessary for rearmament voted in the House of Commons. The British public is convinced that it must bear the burden of taxation for rearmament, as, in consequence of Germany's policy, limitation of armaments among the Great Powers is impossible. In future Anglo-German talks, limitation of armaments will be one of the main points. There is no doubt that in a crisis with Germany the City would follow unconditionally the policy of the British Government. In the last year, and especially in the last few weeks, Germany had lost many friends in the City. Several of the big British banks were convinced that it would come to war with Germany.

6) *Arthur Guinness* (Guinness, Mahon & Co.). Germany's best friends in the City have been deeply annoyed by the conduct of the negotiations in the question of the Austrian debt. The letter of the Association of British Chambers of Commerce with its unusually firm language had followed spontaneously. The Government had had no previous knowledge of it. Businessmen are prepared to put their personal interests in trade with Germany in the background, if the question of the Austrian Loans is not settled correctly and fairly. Germany could not take over Austria's holdings of foreign exchange and refuse the responsibilities. Apart from the legal situation a practical solution must be found. The confidence which has existed between the two countries during the last few years as a result of the administration of the payment agreement has, in the British view, now been shattered by Germany. If the treatment of the loans were to lead to a compulsory clearing, a permanent limitation of the movement of commodities must be reckoned with, which would also have an unfavorable effect on the payment of interest. However, it is considered better to oppose the German treatment of the Austrian Loans.

WOHLTHAT

W. XV/25/1938

#### C. STATEMENTS BY THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR IN LONDON

At a banquet at which I sat next to him, the *Japanese Ambassador* said that in China Japan had engaged on a task which overemployed her forces to the full. The military leaders had not followed the advice of the Foreign Minister in Tokyo. The struggle in China had assumed proportions which no one had intended. An end of hostilities could not be foreseen. Disorganization in the occupied areas of China had reached such a pitch that reorganization of conditions would take years. There was such tension in Japan's State finances,

currency, and taxation that social repercussions were inevitable. The population was so oppressed by losses caused by the war that the political differences which always existed between the parties, economic and financial circles on the one side and military circles on the other, would lead to political crises. Tendencies in this direction had already been evident during the last few years, especially in the mutiny of the division in Tokyo. (Speaking of this mutiny, a high-ranking Japanese had said in 1937 that all officers had been interrogated individually for weeks on end, and the impression had been gained that the influence of Russian propaganda on the mutiny was not out of the question. The mentality of Japanese Nationalists had been exploited by the propagandists in the most cunning way. All the officers were shot.)

WOHLTHAT

W. XV/26/1938

## D. RECRUITMENT OF THE BRITISH ARMY

Arthur Guinness has learned from a high-ranking officer on the British General Staff that the *training methods* in the Army must be changed. For a few weeks now young men of better class have been volunteering, instead of the unemployed who usually form the larger proportion of those entering the Army as a result of British recruiting. The present recruits represent a selection from a section of the population which volunteered in 1914 when Kitchener appealed for the "First Million."

WOHLTHAT

## No. 280

397/212878-80

*Draft Memorandum by the Counselor of the German Embassy in the Soviet Union (Tippelskirch) for the German Foreign Ministry*

A/964

MEMORANDUM ON THE ATTITUDE OF THE SOVIET UNION IN THE  
CZECHOSLOVAK CRISIS

In the Diplomatic Corps here rumors have appeared that the Soviet Union has promised Czechoslovakia extensive military help in the event of a war with Germany, and that the French Ambassador in Moscow has succeeded in defining the help to be given to Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Union in the event of a war with Germany.

Rumors emanate from Warsaw to the effect that Stalin told Mr. Davies, the American Ambassador, in the course of the well-known

conversation in the Kremlin on June 5, 1938, that, in virtue of the Soviet-Czechoslovak Pact, the Soviet Union would if necessary render help to Czechoslovakia and, in particular, would send aircraft. I learn from the Polish Embassy here that on his way back to the United States Mr. Davies spent a short time in Warsaw and there spoke with several people, chiefly with American journalists, on his conversation with Stalin.

It is possible that the rumors circulating here arose in this way.

I learn from several of my colleagues that Soviet Embassies and Soviet Legations—presumably acting on instructions from Moscow—are now stating that the danger threatening Czechoslovakia in May was averted by the decisive attitude of the Soviet Union. Potemkin,<sup>69</sup> who during the actual crisis confined himself to describing the situation to a diplomat as serious, later told a Scandinavian Minister who inquired about the attitude of the Soviet Union in the event of war between Germany and Czechoslovakia, that the Soviet Union would render help to Czechoslovakia. In his well-known speech on foreign policy, delivered in Leningrad on June 23,<sup>70</sup> Litvinov asserted that it must be known to the whole world that the Soviet-Czechoslovak Pact fulfilled its function of lessening the danger of war and had been the most important, if not indeed the only factor, which had brought about a relaxation of the tense atmosphere dangerous for Czechoslovakia.

The tone of the Soviet press, which for a long time had repeatedly pointed out an imminent aggressive intention on the part of Germany toward Czechoslovakia, was very reserved during the actual Czechoslovak crisis; any commitment of the Soviet Union in the event of war was voided. The Soviet attitude in the Czechoslovak crisis was similar to that during the Polish-Lithuanian controversy.<sup>71</sup> After a settlement between Poland and Lithuania had been achieved, the Soviets claimed the credit for having saved Lithuania from a Polish invasion. The attempts made by Czechs and Soviets to give, after the event, a new and false interpretation to the course of the Czechoslovak crisis or to the part played in it by the Soviet Union have found no belief in the Diplomatic Corps in Moscow. The opinion continues to prevail here that, in view of the tense internal situation and from fear of a war on two fronts, the Soviet Union wants at

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<sup>69</sup> Soviet Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>70</sup> Extracts from this speech, a general survey of Soviet foreign policy, are printed in *Documents on International Affairs*, 1938, vol. 1, p. 315 (published by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London).

<sup>71</sup> In March 1938 the Polish Government forced the Lithuanian Government by means of an ultimatum and troop concentrations on the frontier to restore normal diplomatic relations which had not existed since the dispute over Vilna in 1920. Normal relations and communications were restored on March 19.

all costs to avoid being drawn into war. It can be assumed that in the event of a German-Czechoslovak war the Soviet Union will at first adopt an attitude of wait and see. The fact that the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia are separated from each other by Poland and Rumania gives the Soviet Union great opportunities for maneuvering and the possibility of directing her policy in different directions. She can, for example, use the fact that there is no common frontier between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia as a convenient pretext for nonintervention or limited help.<sup>72</sup> Stronger Soviet intervention is only to be reckoned with if Germany, in a possible war, is faced with a coalition of superior powers, and if the Soviet Government becomes convinced that the outcome of the war will be unfavorable for Germany.

The attitude of the Soviet Union to the pacts with France and Czechoslovakia has recently, especially in the course of the Czechoslovak crisis, undergone a change. When the Soviet Union concluded the pact with France and Czechoslovakia, she thought that by so doing she could protect herself from possible German attacks. For this reason the Soviet Union tried to supplement the political treaty with France by military agreements, and also to extend it into a military instrument. In the course of the recent crisis, the Soviet Government has been forced to realize that the treaties no longer operate in her favor, as she originally intended, but on the contrary impose on her embarrassing obligations.

v[ON] T[IPPESKIRCH]

JULY 5 [, 1938].

No. 281

1585/382797-801

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A 2940

LONDON, July 5, 1938.  
(Copy Pol. II 2096)

Subject: The psychological effects of British fear of war, especially in the economic sphere.

In my reports on the week-end crisis and the following period I pointed out several times that the British public has become familiar with the thought of imminent war. Especially in my reports on the

<sup>72</sup> At this point the following words in the original typescript have been struck out: "She can, however, also exert pressure by troop concentrations on the Polish and Rumanian frontiers, by demanding the right of transit through Rumania on the basis of the League Covenant, or by the threat of occupying Bessarabia."

increase of British air armament and on the proposed introduction of general conscription at the outbreak of a war, I have called attention to the fact that the only criticism leveled against the British Government by the public is that the measures taken *do not go far enough*. Only when one knows how great is the individual Englishman's dislike of everything connected with conscription, can one gauge the extent which the anxiety must have reached to silence completely opposition to these decisive measures.

I should like to illustrate how deeply this feeling is rooted in the conscious and subconscious mind of the British people by a few observations which have been made in the economic field:

The representatives of big German firms have pointed out to me that in the last few weeks the placing of orders for German goods has diminished in a striking way. Observations by the branch of Siemens-Schuckert here during the last few months have shown that an appreciable decline in orders to Germany (about 25 percent less than normal) has set in, which is only partly explained by economic causes, but for which, rather, political factors and others depending on the prevailing mood are largely responsible. These reasons are more or less openly admitted by interested parties who do not wish to give their orders to Germany. The following may be deduced:

Orders are no longer being placed in Germany

(a) out of fear of a war in the near future, the outbreak of which would prevent deliveries;

(b) from the anxiety lest measures within Germany might prevent the suppliers from delivery;

(c) from dislike of German export methods (promotion of exports), which are regarded as "unfair," because they squeeze out British goods in the home as well as in the foreign market.

The relations between Germany and Czechoslovakia are adduced as a reason for the widespread fear of the imminent outbreak of war (against Germany). One frequently encounters the view that the Sudeten German problem would be solved only by force. The fact that speeches of authoritative German personalities are frequently reported in the British press only in an incomplete and distorted form contributes to this view. In addition, warnings have been issued by the Government and other official British bodies on the danger of war, admittedly with the intention of rousing the British citizen from his lethargy and inciting him to take part in the voluntary defense organizations (Air Raid Precautions, Women's Auxiliary Service, etc.). In the absence of compulsory service in peacetime, these organizations must be formed exclusively by voluntary participation. Experience has shown that the Englishman joins such



organizations voluntarily only when his country is in danger. Therefore it may be necessary to paint such a danger for implementing rearmament and air-raid precautions.

The fear that internal German measures could prevent deliveries is shown by the fact that bans on deliveries, as, for example, that ordered by German authorities against the Jewish Loewy Engineering Co., London, have led to a holdup in the execution of orders. The boycott of the Loewy Engineering Co. by instructions to German industrial undertakings is widely known. That such measures could be taken, a fact which is incomprehensible for the British mentality, arouses distrust and leads to reserve in placing orders in Germany.

The propaganda against German export policy, which was especially intensive during the last few months and which is still going on, is being skillfully exploited not only by the "Buy British" movement in Britain, but industry, for example the motorcar industry, is using this propaganda to hold Germany responsible also for the decline in British export trade and for other happenings, e.g., for dismissals of workers in British motorcar factories. Lately, too, the alleged increasing export of "subsidized" German goods to Empire countries is pointed to, which is said to be "extremely" damaging for British industry. This argument carries weight, because the Englishman—although he does not willingly admit it—instinctively feels that his influence in the Dominions is no longer very strong. It is especially difficult for German counterpropaganda to use reasonable arguments against these emotional reactions.

In this connection British propaganda against Germany's economic expansion in the Balkans and in the Near East also deserves to be mentioned. In connection with the Anglo-Turkish credit agreement it has been widely realized that these agreements are directed against German trade. For example, it transpires here that in future Germany will only be able to obtain Turkish "Chromium Ore" through the Anglo-Turkish Commodities Ltd., that is, only with British consent. (A report on this, not yet seen here, is said to have reached Berlin from our Embassy in Ankara.)

Up to now, the British War Office ordered pharmaceutical products for the Army from Germany in large quantities. As I hear from representatives of *I. G. Farbenindustrie*, these orders are being transferred more and more to the U.S.A., although it is well known here that the quality of these preparations is inferior. The reason given for this transfer of orders is the possibility that the outbreak of war would make further supplies from Germany impossible.

The German Travel Agency, as well as the firm of Th. Cook, has given the information that since Whitsun British tourist traffic to Ger-

many has decreased by 60 percent, and in places by 75 percent. In particular, many Englishmen are no longer visiting Austria, because they fear being cut off from home should war break out.

Until recently the big British tourist agencies frequently booked special trains on the German railways for week-end tours organized by them. From an inquiry made during the last few days at the agencies in question, it was established that the minimum number (300 people) had not even approximately been reached. Only fourteen people booked at all the agencies together.

A member of my staff, recently transferred here, who is looking for a flat, told me that in two cases hopeful transactions over renting a house broke down when the owners of the house (holders of the lease) learned that the tenant was a German. The head of a firm of house agents openly asked the wife of this member of the Embassy: "What will you do with the house, if war breaks out?"

I do not report these happenings because I really think that the British Government are deliberately preparing for a war, which in their view is unavoidable and imminent. On the contrary, I am convinced that Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, Lord Halifax, the Foreign Secretary, and a number of leading members of the Cabinet earnestly desire to initiate a policy of appeasement with Germany. The Prime Minister's clear sense of practical politics saves him from a policy of fatalism. Proof of this is his speech delivered at Kettering on the 2d of this month, prompted by his sincere concern about the preservation of peace.<sup>73</sup> Neville Chamberlain has succeeded in restoring British finances without exhausting the financial resources of the country. In the last 5 years before he became Prime Minister, Chamberlain not only submitted a balanced budget, but over and above this was able to set aside financial reserves. He owes his extraordinary career to this outstanding achievement. He will resist to the uttermost any attempt to destroy this success for the prosperity of the British people by a policy leading intentionally or unintentionally to war. From circles close to him, I know how clearly he realizes that the social structure of Britain, even the conception of the British Empire, would not survive the chaos of even a victorious war. Chamberlain is committed to the idea of European settlement with all the obstinacy which is characteristic of his family. He knows very well that Anglo-German agreement is the keystone of such a European settlement. In spite of these considerations, however, the mood amounting to a psychosis, prevailing in wide circles of the unpolitically minded British people, is worthy of attention,

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<sup>73</sup> This speech is printed in *The Struggle for Peace*, by the Right Honorable Neville Chamberlain, M.P., p. 237.

if only for the reason that, in the event of a change of Cabinet, which would bring Eden and the Labor Party [*sic*] into office, such a mood might become more real.

VON DIRKSEN

No. 282

C34/006304-12

*General Strategic Directive*<sup>74</sup>

TOP SECRET—MILITARY

BERLIN, June 18, 1938.

L I a

ONLY TO BE SEEN BY OFFICERS

WRITTEN BY AN OFFICER

1ST DRAFT FOR THE NEW DIRECTIVE (contains 3 parts):

PART 1

GENERAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1) There is no danger of a preventive war by foreign states against Germany.

Germany has not committed herself to any military alliance which would automatically draw Germany into a warlike conflict between foreign powers.

The settlement of the Czech question by my own free decision stands as the immediate aim in the forefront of my political intentions. I am resolved, as from October 1, 1938, onward, to make full use of every favorable political opportunity for the realization of this aim.

Friends, interested parties, and enemies could thereby be brought in and other powers remain indifferent, although they could not be included with absolute certainty in any one of these categories beforehand.

I shall, however, only decide to take action against Czechoslovakia if, as in the case of the occupation of the demilitarized zone and the entry into Austria, I am firmly convinced that France will not march and therefore Britain will not intervene either.

2) The preparations by the *Wehrmacht* must cover:

(a) Thorough preparations for action against Czechoslovakia (Operation "Green"), see Part 2.

(b) The maintenance of the existing Operation "Red" (strategic concentration with the main effort against the West), see Part 2.

(c) Special preparations mainly in the form of studies and planning within the Supreme Headquarters, see Part 3.

<sup>74</sup> This is a document drafted for Hitler's signature by the General Staff, and is taken from the Schmudt file produced as document No. 388-PS at the Nuremberg trials.

(d) Preparatory measures, in the event of German territory being suddenly violated unawares and with hostile intent by a foreign power, see No. 3.

3) If during peacetime German territory is suddenly violated by surprise and with hostile intent by a foreign power, then armed resistance will be offered *without any special order being given*.

The various branches of the armed forces must therefore authorize their competent commanders on the frontier or on the coast to adopt in such an event on their own authority all measures necessary for resisting the enemy attack (see R.V.G. § 2(4)).

In such an event, however, the German Reich frontier may on no account be crossed by our troops or aircraft, or any foreign territory violated, without orders from me.

It will not be regarded as a violation of German territory (see first paragraph of this number) if individual sentries or patrols cross the frontier unintentionally, or accidentally, or through the over-eagerness of a subordinate commander, or if aircraft fly over it owing to faulty navigation, or warships sail into German territorial waters with obviously no hostile intent.

4) This directive deals with the uniform *preparation* for war and the general strategic considerations applicable to the *outbreak* of hostilities.

It will be supplemented as required in the individual strategic concentrations by regulations dealing with matters of a special and administrative nature and war economy.

The directives necessary for the conduct of the war itself will be issued by me in each case.

Z[EITZLER]  
K[EITEL]

## PART 2

### STRATEGIC DEPLOYMENT

#### I) *Action against Czechoslovakia (Operation "Green")*.

The directive issued under O.K.W. No. 42/38 Top Secret—Military, L I of May 30, 1938,<sup>75</sup> remains in force. Regulations dealing with matters of a special and administrative nature and war economy relative to Operation "Green" have still to be issued.

#### II) *War on two fronts with the main effort in the West (Operation "Red")*.

Since even a war started against us by the Western States *must*, in view of the present situation, begin with the destruction of Czecho-

<sup>75</sup> Document No. 221, p. 357.

slovakia, the preparation for war *from the point of view of a strategic deployment* with the main effort by the Army and *Luftwaffe* against the West is no longer the primary one.

The preparations made for this operation ("Red") to date are nevertheless to stand. In the case of the Army, they contribute toward camouflaging and screening the other strategic deployment, and in the case of the *Luftwaffe* serve as a preparation for the shifting of the main effort from East to West, which may suddenly become necessary in certain circumstances, and they also serve as preliminary work for future possibilities of war in the West.

It is left to the Commander in Chief of the Army to decide how far the Army strategic deployment "Red," prepared by the O.K.H. for the commencement of the new mobilization year 38/39, is to be issued to subordinate commands.

The tasks devolving upon the Navy in Operation "Red" will be the same as in the case of an extension of Operation "Green" to include the Western European States. Preparations by the Navy are therefore to be continued with the same objective as hitherto.

Z[EITZLER]

J[ODL]

K[EITEL]

L I a  
2D DRAFT

BERLIN, July 7, 1938.

### PART 3

#### FACTORS AFFECTING THE SITUATION

##### 1) *In connection with "Green."*

It cannot be foreseen how the political situation will develop during the execution or at the conclusion of "Green."

The *Wehrmacht* will therefore confine itself to preparing the measures mentioned in Part 1, No. 3, Operation "Green" and Operation "Red."

It appears, however, advisable to initiate at least theoretical planning and calculations for several possible eventualities, in order not to be unprepared from the theoretical point of view.

These deliberations would have to cover:

(a) What would have to be done if—contrary to our expectations—other States, after all, intervene against us during the execution of "Green."

(b) What should be done on the conclusion of "Green."

*Reference (a).* If France intervenes against us during the execution of "Green," the measures provided for Operation "Green" will

come into force. In this connection it is primarily a question of holding the western fortifications until the execution of Operation "Green" permits the release of forces.

If France should be supported in this by Britain, this will have less effect on land warfare at first. It is, however, the duty of the *Luftwaffe*, the Navy, and the O.K.W. (War Economy Staff, *Abwehr*, W.N.V.) to initiate forward planning for their respective spheres.

Among the Eastern European Powers intervention by Russia is the most likely. This will probably consist in the beginning of mere reinforcement of the Czech Air Force and armaments. Due consideration must also be given to what methods are to be employed if Russia should come to the point of starting a naval and air war of her own against us, or even wish to penetrate into East Prussia via the Baltic States.

In the event of an attack on us by Poland we must hold the eastern fortifications and East Prussia with the Frontier Guard and other formations until the conclusion of Operation "Green" gives us freedom of movement once more.

*Reference (b).* If Operation "Green" still takes place during this mobilization year, then we must be in a position to put a provisional strategic concentration into operation soon after the conclusion of "Green."

In connection with the latter, further to what has been said in Part 1, No. 3, it will at first be of importance to guarantee with the aid of the *Wehrmacht* the protection of German frontiers, including recent additions, and still retain the bulk of the Army in the field and the *Luftwaffe* at our disposal.

It would have to be possible to put any such future strategic concentration "frontier protection" into operation for the various fronts separately.

### *II. Independently of Operation "Green."*

If a Polish-Lithuanian conflict should break out, Germany will not refrain from occupying the Memel territory by sudden action.

The projects for this eventuality are to be based on the directive issued on March 18, 1938 (O.K.W. No. 472/83 g. Kdos. L I a).<sup>76</sup>

### *III. General.*

The various branches of the *Wehrmacht* are permitted to consider matters over and above what has already been said in paragraphs I and II. These, however, may only be carried out as theoretical

<sup>76</sup> Not printed.

studies within the Supreme Headquarters and without the participation of subordinate authorities.

Z[EITZLER]  
K[EITEL]

No. 283

631/252301-02

*The German Ambassador in France (Welzeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A 2745

PARIS, July 7, 1938.  
(Pol. II 2113)

In continuation of report of June 15—(A 2418).<sup>77</sup>

Subject: Franco-Polish relations.

Poland's conduct on May 21 caused France great anxiety. The French Government were not satisfied with the Polish declaration that in the event of a direct attack on France Poland would comply to the full with her obligations as an ally, but that in the event of France's rendering assistance to Czechoslovakia she would reserve her attitude in accordance with Polish interests. They declared to Warsaw that France must see clearly how far she could count on Poland in the event of complications in Central Europe, and pressed for a precise definition of the Polish standpoint. The Polish Ambassador in Paris<sup>78</sup> has been in Warsaw twice since the end of May.

In the meantime, France has been observing attentively the reactions of the individual countries to the conception of a bloc reaching from Helsinki to Bucharest and allegedly fostered by Beck, the Polish Foreign Minister. The fact that the Polish plan has had a cool reception almost everywhere and can scarcely be realized within measurable time is noted here with a certain satisfaction, because it is hoped that Poland will now once again show more understanding for Franco-Polish cooperation in Central Europe. The Polish Ambassador had a conversation with Bonnet, the Foreign Minister, directly after his return to Warsaw. As I hear from a generally well-informed quarter, the Ambassador's statements were in form very conciliatory, but are said in content to have in no way dissipated the French misgivings. According to this source, in spite of French insistence Poland has avoided also in the last conversations defining beforehand in unequivocal terms her attitude in the event of France's going to the help of Czechoslovakia. These reports are

<sup>77</sup> Not printed.

<sup>78</sup> Juliusz Lukasiewicz.

confirmed by the leading article in *Le Temps* of July 5 and by an article in the *Agence Economique et Financière* of July 4, which I enclose herewith.<sup>79</sup> The *Agence Economique et Financière* maintains that after May 21 the suggestion was even made to the French Government for the denunciation of the Rambouillet agreements (September 1936),<sup>80</sup> of such importance to Polish rearmament. They did not pursue this idea any further, however, because they did not wish to offend the Polish Army, which continues to be attached to the alliance with France. During his visit in 1936 Marshal Rydz-Smigly gave calming assurances regarding Czechoslovakia, and even stated that Poland would permit Soviet aircraft to fly over Polish territory in the event of assistance being given to Czechoslovakia. This assurance was not, however, endorsed by Beck, the Foreign Minister. The newspaper asserts that Poland has now caused her Ambassador here to give the assurance that she would not attack Czechoslovakia. To this extent a certain amount of progress has been achieved. No positive declaration was, however, yet forthcoming as to what Poland would do in the event of complications in Central Europe.

French policy will doubtless continue to try to induce Poland to adopt a more friendly policy toward Czechoslovakia by constantly drawing attention to the "German danger," as is the case in the enclosed articles. Nevertheless, as long as Colonel Beck remains Polish Foreign Minister the prospects of these efforts, which have been continued for years, may well be regarded as not very hopeful even in French Government circles. In spite of their ever present distrust of Beck's policy the French Government have apparently, however, no intention of making trouble for Beck personally or causing such to be made in order thereby to effect a change in Polish policy. Bonnet, the Foreign Minister, is said only recently to have expressly refused to exert French influence in Warsaw in this direction.

H. WELCZECK

No. 284

2134/467252-54

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

SECRET

BERLIN, July 7, 1938.

The Hungarian Minister today gave me an account of a political conversation he had with Field Marshal Göring two days ago. M.

<sup>79</sup> Not printed.

<sup>80</sup> The agreements by which credits up to 2 milliard francs were granted by France to Poland for rearmament purposes.



Sztójay described it as a continuation of previous inquiries by the Field Marshal.<sup>81</sup>

Whereas F. M. Göring had told Sztójay some time before that Stoyadinovich was prepared to negotiate with Kanya concerning the questions of minorities, freedom to arm, and frontier guarantees, the matter was regarded somewhat differently from Budapest. Sztójay has now told Field Marshal Göring that on May 21 Stoyadinovich made it known in Budapest that he was prepared to negotiate with Hungary outside the framework of the Little Entente concerning questions of minorities and freedom to arm. There was no mention then of questions of frontier guarantees or of neutrality. On May 31 Stoyadinovich was informed that the new Hungarian Minister,<sup>82</sup> who would be arriving in Belgrade shortly, would start conversations regarding the first two topics (minorities and freedom to arm).

In the conversation with Field Marshal Göring Sztójay then took up the former's previous observation that in the event of a German-Czech conflict Hungary could presumably take part herself and receive her share, but she ought not to rely on Germany's pulling the chestnuts out of the fire alone. Sztójay claims to have replied that Hungary was prepared to join the struggle to the best of her ability and she was also too proud to accept anything as a gift. In addition, Germany had hitherto proceeded warily with regard to the prerequisite for this, namely, military arrangements. During his visit General Keitel told the Hungarian War Minister that in the event of Hungarian political participation it would certainly be necessary to talk over military matters beforehand. The way this was to be dealt with was, as Sztójay informed Field Marshal Göring, a subject for conversation during Horthy's forthcoming visit.<sup>83</sup>

According to Sztójay's description, Field Marshal Göring then stated that, just as Germany would have to be the object of Czech provocation before any action could be taken against the Czechs, so Hungary could follow suit without any risk after a few days, if she for her part had been provoked by the Czechs. According to Sztójay's account Field Marshal Göring said nothing about the urgency of the whole matter.

Sztójay then informed the Field Marshal that Kanya would now like to initiate via other channels (Italy is obviously meant here) the conversation on a possible Yugoslav promise of neutrality which had never materialized via Berlin.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. document No. 248, p. 401.

<sup>82</sup> Baron Bakách-Besseney, whose appointment dated from July 11, 1938.

<sup>83</sup> Horthy visited Germany August 21-25.

Sztójay claims to have dealt skeptically with an inquiry by the Field Marshal whether Hungary might not be able to induce Rumania to remain neutral. Rumania would not act independently, but on parallel lines to Yugoslavia.

As regards Poland Sztójay told the Field Marshal that Hungarian-Polish relations were good. In the conflict in mind Poland would demand, apart from the territory populated by persons of Polish origin, at the most, minor frontier rectifications on the old Hungarian frontier. "Cooperation between Poland and Hungary in the conflict envisaged was not entirely out of the question." Thus far the description of the conversation which the Hungarian Minister had with the Field Marshal.

On my inquiring what grounds the Hungarian Government had for the assumption which Sztójay lastly expressed to the Field Marshal, Sztójay was unable to give any further information. I described German-Polish relations to Sztójay as being good; nevertheless, we had not discussed this question with the Poles so far, and would not be desirous for the time being of making Hungary our spokesman in Warsaw—a certain readiness so to act was discernible in Sztójay. We should, however, be interested in what Hungary for her part knew and learned in the matter.

Sztójay also asked me whether the rumor circulating here was correct to the effect that a foreign Ambassador here—this must surely have referred to Henderson or Poncet—had received the following information at the Foreign Ministry: If the requisite Czech concessions to the Sudeten Germans were not made by the end of August, a new situation would arise, in which we should make fresh decisions.

I characterized the rumor to the Hungarian as untrue.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 285

139/125336

*The German Ambassador in France (Welzeck) to the  
State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

PARIS, July 8, 1938.

DEAR WEIZSÄCKER: While I was having a meal yesterday with Bonnet, the Foreign Minister, at a small party, he requested me to call on him during next week in order to talk over the situation once again. I assume that this conversation will take place at the beginning of the coming week. Now that I know the contents of the latest conversation between the Reich Minister and

François-Poncet of the 23d of last month<sup>84</sup>—instruction of July 2, Pol. I 1531 g—I propose employing at the same time the communication I had already made to the Foreign Minister here on May 25—telegraphic report of May 26, No. 259<sup>85</sup>—and giving him a powerful “injection” once more, strongly urging him to exert his influence in Prague energetically in the interests of maintaining peace. I regard this “injection” as all the more necessary, since I hear from a member of the British Embassy here, whom I know well, and who is, moreover, acquainted with all the details of the conversation mentioned at the beginning which took place in Berlin on June 23, that the French have recently considerably slackened their efforts to induce the Czechs to show a more conciliatory attitude toward the Sudeten Germans.

With kind regards, Heil Hitler!

Yours,

WELCZECK

No. 286

2134/466934

*Memorandum by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 8, 1938.

The American Ambassador<sup>86a</sup> called on me today in connection with current matters. The conversation turned to the present quiet attitude of the press toward the Czechoslovak question. As in the case of the Netherlands and Belgian Ministers<sup>86</sup> yesterday, I left the Ambassador in no doubt as to the fact that the calm tone of the press must not lead to the conclusion that we were reassured concerning the attitude of the Prague Government toward the Sudeten Germans. Wilson then compared Beneš' delaying tactics with his methods of suppressing facts, which were well known to me and himself from our both having taken part in the Disarmament Conference. With regard to British influence in Prague, I told Wilson that there was absolutely no sign of the Czech catastrophe-politicians [*Katastrophenpolitiker*] being discouraged. It had never been stated publicly in Britain, or even in France, that the Czechs must not go beyond a certain limit of patience if they did not wish finally to gamble away the support of the Western Powers in the event of a conflict. Wilson entirely agreed with this and remarked that British

<sup>84</sup> Document No. 264, p. 428. The instruction to Missions embodying Ribbentrop's memorandum is not printed.

<sup>85</sup> Document No. 210, p. 343.

<sup>86</sup> Hugh R. Wilson.

<sup>86a</sup> Dr. C. van Rappard and Vicomte Davignon.

policy had been like this for the last 10 years. They certainly did not want a war, but neither did they do what was really necessary to avoid it.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 287

1339/353315-16

*The German Ambassador in Poland (Moltke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

P I 1 b/7.38

WARSAW, July 9, 1938.  
(Pol. V 5350)

POLITICAL REPORT

Contents: Beck, the Foreign Minister, on the Czechoslovak question.

In continuation of the conversation on the minorities problem today M. Beck turned to political questions. He first drew attention to the rumor appearing in French newspapers for some days past that Poland intended to modify her attitude toward Czechoslovakia. It was partly maintained also that Poland had already assumed certain commitments vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia. The same rumor was being hawked around in diplomatic circles in Prague; the Soviet Legation even held that a treaty to this effect had already been concluded. As this rumor was growing, and he assumed that it had either come to our notice or else would still do so, he attached some importance to assuring us right from the start that these assertions were entirely without foundation. The Polish Government had not modified its attitude toward Czechoslovakia, nor did it intend to do so. He requested me to communicate this to Herr von Ribbentrop, the Reich Minister.

M. Beck did not give any further details of the rumors to which the above-mentioned *démenti* referred. I had the impression, however, that it is a question of rumors of similar offers of a treaty, as are mentioned in the instruction from Berlin of June 30—Pol. I 1468 [1486] g<sup>87</sup>—and on which I will furthermore report again at a later date.

M. Beck turned again to the situation in Czechoslovakia in the course of the conversation, and emphasized that the negotiations between the Prague Government and the Polish minority had not yielded the slightest result. There was absolutely no question of any tangible concessions at all. He discerned great danger in Czech delaying tactics and had expressed his anxiety most emphatically in

<sup>87</sup> Document No. 274, p. 447.

Paris and London. Furthermore, he could confirm that both the French and the British Governments had made a firm *démarche* in Prague once more.

In conclusion, M. Beck also mentioned that the idea of neutralizing Czechoslovakia, which he had previously regarded as closed, had recently been discussed again. He was wondering who would undertake the guarantee of this State. He regarded the idea as equally impracticable as the plan to turn Czechoslovakia into a second Switzerland, for which all the prerequisites were lacking, in particular the desire on the part of the separate nationalities to form one such community.

MOLTKE

No. 288

340/198877

*Memorandum by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, July 12, 1938.

With regard to the Czech affair, I explained to Herr von Ribbentrop on the 9th instant that the military schemes which are being hatched in our country will lead to a situation where we shall be confronted from abroad with the question whether we have warlike aims in view or not. In my opinion that very state of affairs will then result which Herr von Ribbentrop himself wishes to avoid, namely, the alternative of either going through with the whole business or else making an awkward retreat. With the aid of a certain communication from the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht* concerning preparations for this summer I substantiated my statements more fully, and explained that in the Czech affair we must shortly make new decisions now that the surprise factor had already been gambled away. In my opinion the situation must be made plain to the Führer.

The Reich Minister agreed with what I had said.

With the aid of new material I repeated similar statements to Herr von Ribbentrop today.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 289

442/221387-89

*The German Ambassador in France (Welzeck) to the  
State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

PARIS, July 12, 1938.

DEAR WEIZSÄCKER: During my conversation with Bonnet yesterday, which lasted for more than an hour, I gained the impression that despite my very energetic remonstrance the Foreign Minister was not fully conscious of the gravity of the situation with regard to the Czechoslovak question. I have not seen him in such an optimistic mood for a long time, and when I finally asked him the reason for his optimism he told me, while at the same time repeatedly stressing the confidential nature of our conversation, that a highly respected Frenchman, who was shrewd and of sober judgment, had been received by the Führer at Berchtesgaden on the 27th of last month for a conversation lasting about an hour and a half and had returned with the best of impressions. The Führer had assured him that we had no territorial aspirations in any direction and all we wished to do was to live in peace and friendship with all our neighbors, including the Czechs. This desire was particularly strong vis-à-vis the French, with whom we had no differences. If a *rapprochement* and understanding with France had not yet taken place, then this was primarily because there were still too many Communists in the French Government. (Here Bonnet interjected that the Führer was hardly correctly informed on this point.) The Führer had spoken almost the whole time himself and left the impression that he wished now to devote himself more to his great tasks within the Reich. Counselor of Legation Schmidt had acted as interpreter and had been brought from Rome specially for this purpose. On my inquiring who the person was, Bonnet answered hesitantly: General Le Rond. I do not know whether you are correctly informed regarding this man who, first as commissioner for our eastern territory occupied by the Poles after the collapse, and then as President of the Interallied Commission at Oppeln during the occupation of Upper Silesia, oppressed and harassed the Germans in an outrageous manner. Moltke, who was employed with our Mission at Oppeln at that time, can give you the best information about him. Colonel Baron von Bernewitz, whose address is Berlin W 15, Xantenerstrasse 9; Telephone, Oliva 3141, with whom I have been friendly since the time we were lieutenants together in Berlin, and who was Military Attaché in Tokyo before the war at the same time as Le Rond, always claimed in those days to know from the best sources that Le Rond was a militant Freemason

and a full-blooded Jew. He is known here as a member of the Intelligence Service.

Le Rond claims to have been well acquainted with Field Marshal Göring for a fairly long time; the Field Marshal had in fact introduced him to the Führer.

During the occupation of Upper Silesia, as the representative of Upper Silesian industry and agriculture, I negotiated with Le Rond on numerous occasions and had sharp clashes with him. As you know, I was obliged to leave the country for a time after the two attempts made on my life and the looting of my old castle by the Poles with the aid of the French occupation troops. But this is merely by the way.

Soon after Locarno Le Rond established relations with Jewish and intellectual circles in Germany. I once met him at Kühlmann's<sup>89</sup> ten or twelve years ago, where ladies from Upper Silesia present refused to shake hands with him. He was regarded at that time as a spy by those people who knew him better.

His report on his conversation has plainly made a deep, optimistic impression on Bonnet. The French, of course, are very willing to hear what they want to. In any case the tones of the pipes of peace have on this occasion drowned the trumpet of war which we have sounded from time to time. It should be noted down as the first success that General Vuillemin,<sup>90</sup> as Bonnet told me, will shortly accept the invitation from our Air Ministry as a return visit for that of General Milch last year. The Foreign Minister expressed himself as particularly satisfied at the result of the conference of the *France-Allemagne* at Baden-Baden.<sup>91</sup> Herr Bräuer,<sup>92</sup> who is bringing this letter to Berlin, will give you further details.

Kind regards,

Heil Hitler!

Yours,

H. WELCZECK

<sup>89</sup> Probably Dr. Richard von Kühlmann, a former State Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>90</sup> The French Chief of the Air Staff.

<sup>91</sup> The *Comité France-Allemagne* was the chief organ working for collaboration between France and Germany. Its director was Comte Fernand de Brinon.

<sup>92</sup> Counselor of the German Embassy in Paris.

## No. 290

1579/382066-67

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. 2824

LONDON, July 14, 1938.  
(Pol. II 2212)

## POLITICAL REPORT

With reference to instruction Pol. II 1804 I of June 20.<sup>93</sup>

Subject: British attitude toward the Soviet treaties with France and Czechoslovakia.

As I have already reported in connection with other matters, the British Government's attitude toward the Franco-Soviet Pact is today more critical than before. I know from a reliable source that on the occasion of the Franco-British conversations at the end of April of this year the British gave the French clearly to understand how desirable it would be from the point of view of the whole situation in Europe to allow French ties with Soviet Russia to fade more and more into the background. This tendency gained further ground during the Czech crisis, which made it obvious here, too, that Germany was taking very particular exception to the ties between Czechoslovakia and Soviet Russia. Prime Minister Chamberlain's statements to me, which I have reported elsewhere,<sup>94</sup> show what a low opinion the British Government has of Soviet Russia. One encounters again and again among the British public the view that Soviet Russia has cut herself off from power politics by Stalin's purges. The contemptuous treatment which Kagan, the Soviet Russian representative, was obliged to endure in the Nonintervention Committee is a further sign of the desire on the part of the British not to repeat the mistake of March 1935,<sup>95</sup> and to exclude Soviet Russia from any discussion on a European settlement.

VON DIRKSEN

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<sup>93</sup> Not printed.

<sup>94</sup> Cf., e.g., document No. 266, p. 432.

<sup>95</sup> Mr. Eden visited Moscow March 28-31, 1935, after the denunciation by Germany of part V of the Treaty of Versailles.



## No. 291

139/125341-42

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 232 of July 14

PRAGUE, July 14, 1938—7 p.m.

Received July 14, 1938—9 p.m.

With reference to telegram of the 13th, No. 178 (Pol. IV 4710).<sup>96</sup>

I. Hodza—Sudeten German Party discussions have reached most critical stage. Up to end of June Sudeten German Party was merely asked for information on significance and extent of their proposals without any previous exchange of views or statement of the Government's attitude. On June 30 Sudeten German Party received partial drafts of Nationalities Statute and also entirely inadequate draft of Language Law. Sudeten German Party's written counterstatement already drawn up but not yet submitted to Hodza, since latter held back other part of Nationalities Statute until day before yesterday. On the other hand, above-mentioned counterstatement already submitted to Vansittart and Bonnet by Sudeten German Party. Documents following by next courier to Berlin.<sup>97</sup> Hodza wishes to discuss results of deliberations by Government coalition on Tuesday with Sudeten German Party and then bring Government bill before Parliament as soon as possible. Sudeten German Party has warned him forcefully against unilateral enactment of bills which are inadequate and have not been approved by it. Hodza therefore has in mind possibly merely skeleton law or resolution, which is to tie down the Government Party to a desire for reform in principle. In Dr. Kier's<sup>98</sup> opinion present Czech bills do not contain 75 percent, but at the best only 20 percent of safeguard demanded for equality of status. Compromise impossible for this reason. Chief obstacles Czech refusal to recognize equal language status and distinct character of the people [*Volkspersönlichkeit*]. Main reason is fear of Germany and anxiety lest further concessions should pave way for disintegration of State and a German attack.

II. Public opinion still not prepared for concessions by party press. Administrative practices tightened up if anything. Military precautionary measures recently introduced.

III. Krofta officially optimistic, considers extent of concessions

<sup>96</sup> Not printed.

<sup>97</sup> At this point there is penciled the word "when?" probably in Weizsäcker's writing.

<sup>98</sup> A former Austrian Nazi with connections with the Sudeten German Party, who worked at the *Institut für Öffentliches Recht und Völkerrecht* in Berlin.

planned to be exceptional and has obviously not realized the gravity of the situation. Newton, too, is of the opinion that Czechs' intentions are good and that the Sudeten Germans should exercise moderation. He is against recognition of distinct character of the people [*Volkspersönlichkeit*], because this means federalization; in any case understands nothing of details and psychological aspect of nationalities dispute. Kundt considers a useful result of negotiations possible in the winter at the earliest under pressure of economic distress on Czechs. Influential Czech has given me a similar verdict. In my opinion strong joint pressure by Germany, Britain, and France would be required in the present state of affairs in order to open the Czechs' eyes. Otherwise, renewed aggravation of internal situation likely.

EISENLOHR

No. 292

139/125346-48

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 15, 1938.

The British Ambassador called on me today after his week's stay in London and spoke in calm but serious tones about the political situation.

His résumé of the official British view yielded nothing fresh: No one in Britain wanted war; Chamberlain and Halifax, who was in complete agreement with him, were working doggedly at the task of making the Czechs see reason and alter their policy. In the same way they were determined to continue the unpopular task of bringing about a *rapprochement* with Germany. However, both were anxious about its success. Developments were moving toward a crisis. I told Henderson in reply that I missed two things in his account, namely, details of the effect of British influence in Prague and, furthermore, an explanation why it had not been definitely stated either in London or in Paris that there were limits to British and French patience with the stubborn and dangerous methods of the Prague Government.

With regard to the latter point, Henderson did indeed object that it was not possible to warn Prague properly in public without giving encouragement to the Sudeten Germans at the same time. My repeated remark that it was absolutely necessary in the interests of peace to discourage the Czech crisis-makers and catastrophe-politicians [*Katastrophenpolitiker*] was nevertheless accepted without demur by Henderson, who also did not question my doubts as to the effectiveness of Newton, the British Minister in Prague.

As he has done previously, Henderson then asserted that the British Government could not meddle with the details of the negotiations between Hodza and Henlein without assuming too great a responsibility. The Ambassador acknowledged my observation that in the event of a real crisis Britain would have to bear a much greater responsibility still, nor did he deny my further statements that it would be better for Britain at the present stage, when the contesting parties in the Czech State were massing their forces, so to speak, to control them at the starting point and put them in their proper place. With the aid of the telegraphic report No. 232 from Herr Eisenlohr<sup>99</sup> and the article on page 16 of *The Times* of the 13th instant, I told Henderson that an effort ought to be made to realize that the Czech offer today represented not 75 percent, but a mere 20 percent of what might reasonably be expected and why this was so. As soon as I was in possession of further material I would be glad to give him proof of this. If it was stated semiofficially—Henderson himself described the afore-mentioned article in *The Times* as approximating very closely to the official view—that the apparently imminent legislation in Prague would at any rate be a considerable advance, to which further measures could be added later, a heavy responsibility was thus already being taken. By this very means the British Government was frustrating all moderating influence on Prague, and I could not but warn them urgently against this. They seemed to think in London that it was a sort of mathematical game, while in the settling of the Sudeten German problem it was a matter of human beings and a preeminently psychological task. Who could restrain the Sudeten Germans when something was imposed upon them which they had not approved and could not approve? The German Government, too, cooperation with which Henderson again asserted was desirable, was not in a position to keep a firm hold on the Sudeten Germans and above all stand security for them. Only the concessions which had been due from Prague for the last 20 years could be of assistance here. I went on to express the opinion that perhaps the German press had made a mistake in being so quiet during recent weeks. It seemed to me as though M. Krofta and others still did not realize to what extent they were playing with fire.

Henderson listened attentively to all this, made several notes and stated, with the request not to let it go any farther, that in London they were displeased with both Prague and Paris. The British Government were hoping during the impending Royal visit,<sup>1</sup> at which Lord Halifax would also be present, to be able to exert influ-

<sup>99</sup> Document No. 291, *supra*.

<sup>1</sup> The King and Queen, with Lord Halifax, visited Paris July 19-22, 1938.

ence on Paris. However, Henderson mentioned at the same time without special emphasis, but quite definitely, that the determination of the British public if necessary to resort to arms if a European war should break out was perceptibly stronger during his visit this time than it was on the last occasion.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 293

1613/386887

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 2. allg.

PRAGUE, July 16, 1938.

SECRET

(Pol. I 1620)

I learn from a reliable source that a person in touch with circles closest to President Beneš recently made the following statements:—

1. On May 21, 2,000 Russian aircraft were ready for action.
2. At present there are in Czechoslovakia 400 Russian aircraft whose crews have been incorporated into the Czechoslovak Army.
3. If war breaks out the Sudeten German area is to be laid waste and the forests set on fire.
4. Prague is to be evacuated with the exception of about 250,000 persons who could take refuge in air-raid shelters.

I pass this information on to you with the greatest reserve and request you to forward it to the War Ministry.

EISENLOHR

No. 294

139/125362-63

*The British Ambassador in Germany (Henderson) to the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*<sup>a</sup>

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
BERLIN, July 18, 1938.

MY DEAR STATE SECRETARY: You will remember that on Saturday night I sent you a message to the effect that Mr. Newton was sending observers at once to the areas in which it was alleged that a partial Czechoslovak mobilization was taking place. The observers com-

<sup>a</sup>This letter is in English in the original.

pleted their tour of the district on Sunday and have now submitted the following telegraphic report from Nachod:

"We have visited the areas Ticin,<sup>4</sup> Trautenau, Braunau, Nachod; there is no evidence of the presence of troops other than normal garrisons. Frontier posts and fortifications manned on May 21 are now weakly garrisoned by skeleton formations. Roads are entirely free of road blocks other than permanent communication controls. There is no evidence of transport requisitions. We have authority for saying that no troops have marched through Braunau, and the whole area so far visited shows no signs of the activity alleged to be in process. Soldiers of the 22d and 48th Infantry Regiments and of the 2d Mountaineer Regiment are on normal Sunday leave."

Yours sincerely,

NEVILLE HENDERSON

This report can be relied upon and I sincerely hope that you will be able to prevent the press from adding to the difficulties of a situation, already difficult enough. N. H.<sup>5</sup>

No. 295

F20/125

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, July 18, 1938.

The Italian Ambassador desired to learn from me today what the British Ambassador had discussed with me on the 15th instant.<sup>6</sup> I gave Attolico the substance of the conversation.

Attolico followed up my information with the remark that it might well be that his fellow countrymen who had been here recently, such as General Russo, General Pariani,<sup>7</sup> and others, were of the opinion that France would not resort to military intervention in a German-Czech conflict. He, Attolico, did not actually know what the opinion of his own Government was regarding this, but he *personally* was of the opinion that these fellow countrymen he had mentioned were mistaken, for in the case in question France had only the choice between intervention and the complete renunciation of her position as a Great Power. The latter, however, would not happen.

<sup>4</sup> Presumably a misprint for Jičín, which, like the other places mentioned, lies near the frontier in northeast Bohemia.

<sup>5</sup> The postscript is in handwriting in the original.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. document No. 292, p. 488.

<sup>7</sup> General Pariani, the Italian Chief of the General Staff, visited Germany in early July, being received by Hitler on July 11. General Russo, Chief of Staff of the Fascist Militia, visited Germany on July 15 on a week's visit to Lutze, Chief of the Staff of the SA.

[Longhand note:]<sup>8</sup>

For Reich Minister only.

Attolico remarked also that we had certainly made our intentions regarding the Czech State perfectly plain to the Italians. He was also sufficiently acquainted with the time limit to take perhaps another 2 months' holiday now, but certainly no more.

As an instance of the views of other Governments, Attolico mentioned that the Rumanian Government had refused the request for leave made by its Minister in Berlin.

### No. 296

139/125358-60

#### *The German Ambassador in Italy (Mackensen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

ROME, July 18, 1938—10 p.m.

No. 192 of July 18

Received July 19, 1938—1:20 a.m.

Top secret. During conversation with Imredy today, in which Kanya also joined later, had impression that chief reason for state visit to Rome,<sup>8a</sup> which was due to Hungarian initiative, was Hungarian desire for speedier establishment of personal contacts between new Hungarian Prime Minister and Duce.

Czaky, Kanya's *Chef de Cabinet*, stressed in ensuing conversation Hungarian desire to clarify, beyond all doubt, what attitude Mussolini would adopt in a case where Hungary might be obliged by force of circumstances to resort to military intervention against Czechoslovakia in connection with an armed clash between Czechoslovakia and a third power. Question was of greatest importance since public opinion in Hungary would sweep away any Government which was content to look on inactive in such an event. Besides, he knew from an absolutely reliable source that Poland would intervene immediately in such an event; thus for this reason alone no Hungarian Government could remain purely passive. Reason alone demanded that the possibility of such complications should be reckoned with, since Hungarian Government no longer had any doubts that Beneš, confident of French assistance, wished to bring about such complications

<sup>8</sup>This note is in Welzsäcker's handwriting. The memorandum also bears an arrow in pencil pointing to this passage and a note in Ribbentrop's writing, "Führer's folder" [*Mappe Führer*].

The whole document was submitted in evidence at Nuremberg (2800-PS).

<sup>8a</sup>Imredy, the Hungarian Prime Minister, and Kanya, the Foreign Minister, visited Rome July 18-20.

Imredy, Kanya, and the Regent, Horthy, were to visit Germany August 21-25.

by means of provocative acts with which he was already working against Hungary today.

As early as 1934 Mussolini had made it quite clear that if in such an event Yugoslavia should march into Hungary, Italy would be at her post. It had now to be established whether alteration in Italo-Yugoslav relations had changed this attitude of Mussolini's or whether, as before, he was still prepared to advocate the point of view that any possible military action by Hungary against the Czech State, even if the latter did not attack but Hungary herself was the first to take action, would not constitute an unprovoked attack on Yugoslavia, and was, moreover, prepared to draw from this view the conclusion that immediate military action must be taken by Italy against Yugoslavia.

On my remarking that it was surely of primary importance that Hungarian Government should not from the outset base its policy internally on the necessity for immediate military action against Czech State, but better still choose moment in such a way that Yugoslav Government should be spared dilemma of having to choose between obligations toward Little Entente and her desire (certainly evinced by Stoyadinovich) to steer Yugoslavia clear of military complications over Czechoslovakia, Czaky replied with considerable gravity that, in view of the prevailing mood in Hungary, any Hungarian statesman who hesitated at such a time would be shot down. Naturally the Government would, when the moment came, do its utmost to choose the best time for active intervention. However, its freedom of action was limited. With the request for it to be treated as strictly confidential, Count Czaky hinted in this connection that Regent himself would scarcely yield to restraining influences at such a juncture, and made veiled suggestion that his visit to Berlin might give the Führer opportunity of exerting influence accordingly.

MACKENSEN

### No. 297

289/183261

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 19, 1938.

I requested the British Ambassador to call on me today in order, in continuation of our conversation of the 15th instant<sup>9</sup> and on the basis of material received in the meantime concerning the now defined Czech program of legislation, to explain to the Ambassador how

<sup>9</sup> Cf. document No. 292, p. 488.

completely inadequate Czech concessions were in actual fact. I adhered in the main to our directive of today to our Missions—Pol. IV 4828<sup>10</sup>—and endeavored primarily to make it plain to the Ambassador that in the forthcoming Prague laws there was not even a hint of any attempt being made to bring about what he himself had previously described as indispensable—for instance, to Herr Woermann—namely, the transformation of Czechoslovakia into a Nationalities State.

The Ambassador listened to my exposé without demur and only in the case of points 6 and 8 of the well-known eight demands of Konrad Henlein, namely, reparation for inflicted wrongs and profession of German ideology, did he for his part make certain reservations.

Henderson said he wished this same day to forward this information to Lord Halifax, who was at present in Paris. He again showed signs of considerable anxiety and expressed the opinion that we were without any doubt heading for a crisis. I admitted that this was so in the event, particularly, of British policy not succeeding in diverting Prague from its mistaken and dangerous course.

When Henderson asked me whether the German Government for their part would be reassured if Konrad Henlein for his part reached agreement with Hodza, I replied without hesitation that that was, of course, understood.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 298

139/125367-70

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy  
in Great Britain*

Telegram

BERLIN, July 19, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 4828, Ang. II)

For information and guidance for conversation.

Konrad Henlein, leader of the Sudeten German element, put forward, as is well known, eight demands to Czechoslovak Government on occasion of speech at Karlsbad on April 24, 1938, the fulfillment of which might form the basis for peaceful existence side by side of German and Czech peoples within framework of Czechoslovak State. These demands were:

1. Establishment of complete equality of German national group with the Czech people.

\* Document No. 298, *infra*.



2. Recognition of the Sudeten German national group as a legal entity for the safeguarding of this position of equality within the State.

3. Confirmation and recognition of the Sudeten German settlement area.

4. Building up of Sudeten German self-government in the Sudeten German settlement area in all branches of public life, insofar as questions affecting the interests and affairs of the German national group are involved.

5. Introduction of legal provisions for the protection of those Sudeten German citizens living outside the defined settlement area of their national group.

6. Removal of wrong done to the Sudeten German element since 1918, and compensation for damage suffered through this wrong.

7. Recognition and enforcement of the principle: German public servants in the German area.

8. Complete freedom to profess adherence to the German national entity [*Volkstum*] and German ideology.

Since May 23 informatory conversations have taken place between Sudeten German Party and Czechoslovak Government which have been handled in a dilatory manner by the latter and without any concrete examination of material. From the Sudeten German Party side detailed explanatory comments on Karlsbad demands were submitted, to which Czechoslovak Government has now replied with drafts of Nationalities Statute (including administrative reform) and new Language Law. According to reports available so far, Government bills, which are shortly to be laid before Prague Parliament, reveal absolutely no trace of any real attempt to deal with Sudeten German demands. Draft of statute constitutes scarcely more than an outwardly not unskillful amalgamation of laws and regulations already in existence, which have not only proved inadequate in practice but also have partly brought about present untenable position.

Regarding the details of the treatment of the eight demands by Czechoslovak Government following comment must be made:

*Ref. 1:* Full equality of status continues to be refused. Czechs cling to idea of National State of which they claim leadership. National groups are regarded as minorities and treated as such. Apart from fact that Sudeten Germans laid claim to be regarded as independent national group and not as minority, it should be pointed out that, according to previous experiences, absolutely all regulations for the protection of minorities made by a dictated peace, which ignore the principle of equality of status, have failed wherever national groups living together in compact settlements are involved.

*Ref. 2:* Demand for recognition of Sudeten German national group as a legal personality continues to be disregarded.

*Ref. 3:* Absolutely nothing is being done to meet desire for confirmation and recognition of Sudeten German settlement area.

*Ref. 4:* Statute does not take into consideration demand for building up of self-government in the Sudeten German settlement area. Reorganization of the administration is only contemplated insofar as limited rights of self-government are to be granted to the provinces of Bohemia, Moravia-Silesia, and Slovakia which are in existence at present. Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia, in which the chief German settlement areas are situated, however, possess Czech majorities, so that Germans can be outvoted on all important questions. Bill does indeed provide for establishment of national *curiae* in provincial diets and also in district and communal self-administrative councils, but nevertheless does not grant them any legislative rights. Their powers are to be limited to the issue of "more detailed regulations" to state and provincial laws insofar as they apply to a few matters concerning members of the nationality involved (e.g., conduct of communal affairs, social questions, matters relating to associations, agricultural questions, etc.). Besides this, the right of assent to regulations in cultural, national, and educational matters within the scope of the provincial diet is reserved for the *curiae*. The latter means in practice that differences between nationalities at present in evidence in the central Parliament will henceforth be transferred to the subordinate organs of government as well.

*Ref. 5:* With regard to protection for Sudeten Germans, who are living outside the compact German settlement area, existing inadequate regulations are not being augmented.

*Ref. 6:* There is no mention of reparation in the bill.

*Ref. 7:* Recognition of principle "German public servants in German territory" is restricted to civil service, whereby it remains undefined where boundary between civil and other service actually lies under jurisdiction of National Defense Law. As regards military service the practice of defaming Germans, as hitherto, is obviously to be retained. Bill, moreover, contains clauses which in "special" cases, which are not specified in detail, give Government complete freedom in making appointments to official posts. Finally, a start on creation of a body of German officials is only to be made for the present in the case of new appointments. Present intolerable state of affairs, whereby Germans are governed in their own territory by Czechs, would therefore be retained for years to come.

*Ref. 8:* Nothing is being done regarding demand for full liberty to profess adherence to German national entity and German ideology. It is, nevertheless, evident from numerous speeches and published pronouncements by leading Czech personages that there is a complete lack of understanding for this claim.

As regards draft of new Language Law it can be established that equality of status is not granted here either; instead, the privileged position of the Czechoslovak language is expressly laid down once more. Previous regulation, whereby equality of status of German and Czech languages recognized if more than 20 percent of either

section of population are living in one district, is modified so that in future 15 percent is sufficient to determine this. This scarcely constitutes an advantage for Germans, while Czechs domiciled in region populated by Germans, whose numbers have in many cases risen to between 15 and 20 percent by means of artificial immigration of officials, settlers, etc., would derive main profit from this.

Altogether, bills prove that Czechoslovak Government is not willing to abandon previous intransigent attitude toward Germans. In fact, they refuse on practically all important points to grant full equality of status with the Czechs to the 3½ million strong German national group, which, together with the region populated by latter, was incorporated into Czechoslovakia against its will in 1919.

Directive with detailed political and legal opinion on Czechoslovak bills on nationality problem is reserved for a later date.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 299

289/183265-67

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 338 of July 19

LONDON, July 19, 1938.

Received July 20, 1938—9:30 a.m.

During my conversation today with Cadogan, the Under Secretary of State, I spoke to him concerning the present situation in Czechoslovakia. Employing the material forwarded in telegram No. 229 of July 15<sup>11</sup> I gave him a detailed description of the extremely unsatisfactory state of the negotiations in Prague and the completely inadequate concessions which the Czech Government had made to the Sudeten Germans so far. Even from the formal point of view the action of the Czech Government left something to be desired; the Sudeten Germans had not even been brought in for discussion of their proposals nor a comprehensive communication made on the Czech project. A compromise on the basis of the proposals by the Czech Government announced so far was out of the question, since it corresponded to scarcely 20 percent of the demands put forward by the Sudeten Germans. Suitable preparation of public opinion in Czechoslovakia for this by the press was completely lacking; military precautions were being introduced. Czech Government circles were seeking by feigned optimism to gloss over the actual unsatisfactory state of affairs.

<sup>11</sup> Not printed, but cf. document No. 298, p. 494.

Sir Alexander Cadogan, who had made detailed notes on my statements, replied that he sincerely regretted this unpleasant situation; the British Government was striving continuously, almost daily, to hold the Czech Government to a speedy and generous method of conducting negotiations; he was not acquainted with the individual points and the present discussion of them by both parties. He would, however, press once more in Prague for all possible speed, since the British Government were fully aware how important it was to reach an agreement as soon as possible.

Cadogan then turned to last Saturday's D.N.B. reports of Czech military measures and gave me a report to read from the two British observers stationed in Czechoslovakia,<sup>12</sup> who had inspected the parts of the frontier region mentioned in the D.N.B. report and had come to the conclusion that there was no sign of military preparations there; they had met near Braunau soldiers of the 24th and 48th Czech Infantry Regiments who were on Sunday leave. In this connection Cadogan requested that influence should be brought to bear on the organs of the German press as far as possible so that they should exercise the greatest caution in circulating alarming reports, since the public throughout the world was extremely nervous and easily excited. The observers' report has also been forwarded to the British Embassy in Berlin.

I replied that in the parts of the frontier region not visited by the observers military measures could have been taken which had escaped their notice; that such preparations had been planned was evident from the information I had given to him, which had already reached Berlin a few days before the Saturday in question. Furthermore, we could not be deprived of our right to report Czech military measures as soon as information about them reached us. This was one of the lessons we had learned from the Czech week-end crisis.

Cadogan again expressed the hope that the tense situation in Prague might soon be relaxed.

I would be grateful for telegraphic instructions on the evidence which led to the D.N.B. report.

DIRKSEN

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. document No. 294, p. 490.

## No. 300

1650/392051-55

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Poland (Wühlisch) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

P VII 47/42/7.38

WARSAW, July 19, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 4850)Reference to instruction of 8th of last month, Pol. IV 3906.<sup>13</sup>

Subject: Flights by Soviet aircraft over Rumanian territory.

I hear from a reliable and usually well-informed source that the question of the flight of Soviet Russian aircraft over Rumanian territory was the subject of discussions between the Polish and Rumanian military authorities at the last visit of the Rumanian General Staff to Warsaw.<sup>14</sup> The Chief of the Rumanian General Staff is said to have stated that Rumania could not forbid aircraft ordered by Czechoslovakia in Russia to fly over Rumanian territory, just as the Greeks were allowed to bring the aircraft they had bought in Poland through Rumanian territory to Greece. It is said that General Smigly-Rydz was inclined to make the best of this not very satisfactory answer, but Foreign Minister Beck did not agree to the matter's being dealt with in such a way and made energetic representations in Bucharest against Soviet aircraft flying over Rumanian territory, which, however, have so far remained without effect.

I hear that up to the present about forty aircraft of Soviet Russian manufacture, flown by Czech pilots and provided with Czech markings, have been flown from Russia to Czechoslovakia via Rumania. Furthermore, a Japanese Foreign Ministry courier is said to have seen twelve Czech pilots in Kiev on July 10 who were waiting for aircraft to be delivered to them in order to fly them to Czechoslovakia.

I enclose a report from the Air Attaché on a conversation with the Rumanian Military Attaché<sup>15</sup> here about this subject.

WÜHLISCH

<sup>13</sup> Not printed. Cf. document No. 263, p. 427.

<sup>14</sup> General Ionescu visited Warsaw for a week from May 30.

<sup>15</sup> Maj. N. Baiculescu.

[Enclosure]

*Memorandum by the Air Attaché of the German Embassy  
in Poland (Gerstenberg)*

WARSAW, July 19, 1938.

Enclosure 1) to report 23/38 Warsaw/Berlin.

Subject: Passage of Soviet aircraft and troops through Rumania to Czechoslovakia.

On July 19 I had a lengthy discussion with the Rumanian Military and Air Attaché here who had just returned from leave in Bucharest. The following resulted from this talk:—

*Ferrying of Soviet Aircraft:*

I received confirmation that Soviet aircraft purchased by the Czechs have flown over Rumania in several installments since the end of May. The total number of aircraft involved is about thirty-five. The types were not known to him.

Rumania had made it a condition that the aircraft purchased should be provided with Czech markings, Czech crews, and no arms when being transported. The Rumanians enforced these terms by obliging one aircraft of each installment to make a landing.

There was no excuse for preventing the passage of the purchased aircraft, as Polish aircraft, too, have been flown to Bulgaria over Rumanian territory.

*Railway Bridges:*

It is said that the bridge at Tiraspol is at present the only railway bridge over the Dniester. The other two bridges at Rybniza and Mohilev are stated to be destroyed on the Rumanian side. However, the Russians could only erect bridges with Rumania's consent.

He did not know whether Russian railway troops were carrying out maneuvers on the Dniester.

*Transport of War Materials:*

The Rumanians are believed to have permitted hitherto only the transport of spare parts for the aircraft purchased.

*Passage of Troops:*

In event of war the passage of Soviet troops for the support of Czechoslovakia would be opposed by Rumania just as she would oppose the passage of aircraft, because Rumania is bound by her treaty with Poland.

Rumania, however, could only oppose the Russians with success if she were not alone.

Opposition could only be contemplated at all if the potential war situation in Eastern Europe were not hopeless for Rumania from the start.

The opinion of the Military Attaché on this point was that the passage of Soviet troops in large numbers through Rumania would be impracticable from a strategic angle and would take far too much time; it is therefore improbable.

*Soviet Maneuvers in the Ukraine:*

In the opinion of the Rumanian Military Attaché the Russian maneuvers in the Ukraine do not signify anything out of the ordinary.

They are similar to those which took place 3 years ago in White Russia. He considers it improbable that the number taking part is 2½ million.

*Commencement of Duties in Rumania:*

I am postponing taking up duties in Bucharest until July 28 (10-12 days) in order to check the above data. General Negrescu's Commission<sup>16</sup> also returns on this date.

GERSTENBERG

No. 301

139/125364-65

*The State Secretary (Weizsäcker) to the British Ambassador  
in Germany (Henderson)*

BERLIN, July 20, 1938.

MY DEAR AMBASSADOR: I thank you for your letter of July 18,<sup>17</sup> in which you communicated to me the result of the evidence obtained by the British observers regarding military movements on the German-Czechoslovak frontier. The negative result of the tour by the observers concerned is in marked contrast with information available here, which is based partly on reports from eyewitnesses in the regions concerned, and partly on observations which anyone was in the position to make from across the German frontier. From this the fact of a fresh reinforcement of the Czech garrisons in the frontier region is established beyond all doubt, even though it must also be admitted that this was not done in the space of a few hours, as in May, but was spread out over several days and was thus less con-

<sup>16</sup> General Negrescu was head of the Supplies Department of the Rumanian Air Force. He visited Berlin early in July, together with the head of the Rumanian Antiaircraft Defense, to inspect German aircraft factories and Air Force stations.

<sup>17</sup> Document No. 294, p. 490.

spicuous. I should like to add that the Czech regular Army, as is generally known, has been almost in a state of full mobilization since May, the calling up of reservists being therefore only necessary on a small scale. Furthermore, the afore-mentioned movements were for the most part completed by July 17, the day when the British gentlemen made their tour, so that on this day troop movements could hardly have been observed any more from the main roads.

In contrast to the report made by the British observers, it is quite certain from the above that a reinforcement of the garrisons in the Czech frontier zone did take place.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 302

139/125376

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, July 20, 1938.

The British Ambassador yesterday expounded the following thesis to me for the second time within a few days:

In states under authoritarian rule like Germany everything depends on the decisions of the one leading personage. In previous posts, e.g., in Belgrade, where similar conditions prevailed, he had been, and he could say this without wishing to boast, on such intimate terms with the King that he could at any time make his views known direct to the deciding authority. He definitely believes that if he, Henderson, were to have the opportunity to speak with the Führer personally, he could induce the Führer to take a more favorable view of British policy than the Führer apparently held at present. He believed that the positive desire to settle the present Czech crisis by peaceful means, and by building upon this to effect a comprehensive improvement in Anglo-German relations, would certainly be in accordance with the Führer's intentions also. His idea was to use his influence to this effect, if the Führer spoke with him.

On neither of the two occasions on which the Ambassador expressed himself in similar terms did he expressly request to be received in audience by the Führer. His suggestions cannot, however, be interpreted otherwise.

To be submitted herewith to the Reich Minister.

WEIZSÄCKER



## No. 303

340/198879-80

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, July 20, 1938.

Reich Minister von Krosigk<sup>18</sup> requested me to call on him today in order to obtain information for the assessment of the tasks of finance policy for the immediate future, which he in fact wished to secure from Reich Minister von Ribbentrop. As Herr von Ribbentrop is not available for consultation at present, Herr von Krosigk fell back upon me.

With regard to the Czechoslovak question, which was the subject of our conversation, I informed Herr von Krosigk that, on instructions from the Foreign Minister, the Foreign Ministry had to use strong language to the effect that the German-Czech affair was no concern of the Western Powers; if they intervened by force, then this would be regarded as a war of aggression or conquest, which would result in a most decisive defeat. Herr von Ribbentrop had also used this language vis-à-vis the French and British Ambassadors weeks ago.

Certainly in my own view, as I told Herr von Krosigk, the matter would not quite work out as was generally expected, namely, that in the event of a German-Czech conflict the question as to what France and Britain will do will arise first and will have to be answered. Rather would other matters such as military preparations force an alternative upon us at an earlier stage, which would either mean that we should have to go through with the whole business or else make an awkward retreat. I should also have liked to impress this personal opinion of mine on Herr von Ribbentrop, who naturally also wished to avoid such an alternative, but I did not know how the Führer regarded the matter. It was maintained that it had been reported to the Führer that we were in a position to endure a war of very long duration and to feed ourselves from the regions situated to the east of Germany. I was unable to judge who was responsible for advising the Führer on these questions. Field Marshal Göring had recently had a conversation with the Führer. I was not able to reply to Herr von Krosigk with any certainty whether Herr von Neurath had also conferred with the Führer.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>18</sup> The Minister of Finance.

## No. 304

340/198882

*Record by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) of a Conversation With the Foreign Minister<sup>18a</sup>*

BERLIN, July 21, 1938.

In two discussions Herr von Ribbentrop earnestly enjoined me to ensure that the Foreign Ministry speaks clearly and firmly about the Czechoslovak question to all and sundry. If necessary we would run the risk of a full-scale war with the Western Powers even now and win it, too. The French must be decisively beaten in a large-scale battle in western Germany. We were provided with raw materials for a war of no matter what duration; Göring was directing aircraft production in such a way that we were superior to all opponents.

At this I remarked that it was necessary to speak to third parties in such a way as to obtain credence. And even if it was our business to fool foreign countries, it was nevertheless our duty not to dupe one another. I did not believe that we should win this war. It was a fundamental truth that a country can only be conquered if it is either occupied or starved out. It was utopian to wish to bring about this state of affairs with aircraft; I did not therefore understand how the war was to be won, and I was just as incredulous about our powers of endurance.

Herr von Ribbentrop then admitted that consideration might also be given to postponing the war against Czechoslovakia and, during the clash with France and Great Britain, expected at some time or other, i.e., in a few years' time, disposing of the Czech problem simultaneously in the form of a secondary theater of war. Regarded from the military point of view, he believed that time was on our side.

I supplemented these observations with my previous proposal to accelerate the process of the chemical dissolution of the Czech State by means of economic pressure. I added, however, that, as previously discussed, there could be no surprise action by Germany, since everyone knew about it; it was merely a question of finding the right answer, which would not prejudice later decisions, to imminent inquiries from foreign countries as to the reason for our military preparations. Ribbentrop did not question this.

<sup>18a</sup> This document is unsigned, but the last line has been added in handwriting which has been identified as Weizsäcker's.

## No. 305

289/183280

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, July 22, 1938.

The British Counselor of Embassy<sup>19</sup> paid me a short visit today, in order—as he said—to tell me the following on behalf of his Ambassador as a result of our recent correspondence (see appendix):<sup>20</sup>

If certain military preparations had been made by the Czechs, this could be credited to the great awe in which the Czechs held the striking power and preparedness of the German Army.

I called Mr. Forbes' [*sic*] attention to the ambiguity of this statement and agreed the following points, jointly with him:

That, even in the British view, a state of partial mobilization prevailed in Czechoslovakia;

That the Czechs perhaps feigned fear of Germany;

That the British Government, however, did not wish to ascribe to us any ill intentions toward Czechoslovakia, and had no intention of finding excuses for this partial Czech mobilization.

I answered a further remark by Forbes about how valuable it would be if our press could maintain calm in the Czech question, by saying that I hoped that the Czech Government would make possible such an attitude of calm on our part.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 306

1650/392057

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, July 22, 1938.

(Pol. IV 4922)

The Hungarian Minister inquired today what information we had on the Czech Nationalities legislation. I put him *au courant*, on the lines of the recent circular instruction.<sup>21</sup>

M. Sztójay further remarked that somewhat divergent views were held in Budapest on the probable attitude of Russia to a German-Hungarian-Czech conflict. The Hungarian Legation in Moscow reported that Russia would undertake military intervention. From Warsaw and the Baltic States came reports that Russia would

<sup>19</sup> Sir George Ogilvie-Forbes.

<sup>20</sup> Appendix not printed. The letters referred to are those printed as documents Nos. 294 and 301, pp. 490 and 501.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. document No. 298, p. 494.

not be in a position to participate. In Budapest the opinion was that Russia would at any rate assist with aircraft. It was assumed that these aircraft would be flown over Rumanian territory ostensibly as unarmed machines bought by Czechoslovakia, manned by Czech crews. I suggested to the Minister whether the Rumanian Government should not, perhaps through Warsaw, be taxed with their attitude to the whole question of the passage of aircraft and troops. The Minister seized on the suggestion.

WEIZSÄCKER

[Longhand note:] To the Director of Pol. IV. Resubmit with the reports on Russian aircraft flying over Rumania, recently laid before the Secretary of State, as soon as they are returned. H[EINBURG.] 24.

## No. 307

139/125386

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

SECRET

BERLIN, July 22, 1938.

*Gauleiter* Forster visited me today to report briefly on his stay in England.<sup>22</sup> He mentioned a great number of prominent British people with whom he had been in contact. Halifax was the only one he had not met, and the Poles had been responsible for this. It had been impressed upon him by all quarters in Britain that a German attack on Czechoslovakia would mean war with Britain. He, Forster, had gone to Berchtesgaden with this impression and had returned from there converted.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 308

1234/336588-92

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 363 of July 22

PARIS, July 22, 1938.

Received July 22-23, 1938—12 midnight.

(Copy to Pol. II 2264/38)

The visit, concluded today, of the British King and Queen to Paris passed off with outward splendor and without incident or discord.

<sup>22</sup> Forster, the *Gauleiter* of Danzig, left England on July 15 after a private visit of about a week.

The "Entente Cordiale" was approved and sealed with the enthusiastic acclamation of press and people with practically no opposition.

Politically the visit has brought nothing new, in particular no new obligations for either ally, as is emphasized, obviously correctly, both in French and British quarters. The following facts, however, stress its political importance.

1. In the after-dinner speeches of the King and the President of the Republic, the common ideals of democracy, the identical conception of human values, and the benefits of individual freedom were emphasized. The formation of an ideological front, thus expressed, is, however, narrowed down by the mutual affirmation that the "Entente Cordiale" between the two Powers in no way excludes other friendships. The preservation of peace *by means of international agreements* in the political and economic field, and by *respect for international laws* is described as essential.

2. During the visit, lengthy political discussion took place between Halifax and Daladier-Bonnet in the Foreign Ministry without interpreters or officials of the Quai d'Orsay. The communiqué issued on this states that the Ministers again affirm their common determination to pursue further their policy of settlement and compromise; they had established that the complete conformity of their views, as reached during the French Ministers' visit to London on July 28 and 4,<sup>23</sup> continued to be upheld to the full.

According to Bonnet's statements to representatives of the diplomatic press, Spanish, Mediterranean, and Central European questions were the predominant subjects of the discussion. In the Czech question the French and British attitude was confirmed on the lines of former statements, in particular those by Daladier on July 12<sup>24</sup> and by Chamberlain on March 24. The discussion on this apparently referred largely to the recent Daladier-Chamberlain correspondence;<sup>25</sup> when asked by his French colleagues about relations with Italy, Halifax is said to have stated that the entry into force of the Anglo-Italian Agreement depended on a settlement of the Spanish problem, and that Great Britain attached as great importance to

<sup>23</sup> Thus in the original. This must be an error in typing or enciphering. The visit of April 28-29 is obviously meant.

<sup>24</sup> In a speech in Paris on July 12 Daladier described France's engagements to Czechoslovakia as "*inéluctables et sacrés*," while at the same time welcoming the conciliatory spirit shown the Czechs and expressing his hopes for a peaceful settlement. Extracts from the speech are printed in *Documents on International Affairs*, 1938, vol. I, p. 216 (published by Royal Institute of International Affairs, London).

<sup>25</sup> On July 18 Mr. Chamberlain, replying to questions in Parliament, stated that he and M. Daladier had recently exchanged private letters which involved no new commitments, but confirmed the close accord existing between the two Governments.

the conclusion of a Franco-Italian Agreement as to the coming into force of the Anglo-Italian Agreement.<sup>26</sup> In the discussion on relations with Germany the visit of Captain Wiedemann to London and the proposals submitted by him played a large part.<sup>27</sup> Halifax, as is emphatically stated by the French, informed his French colleagues frankly and in detail, simultaneously with his report to Chamberlain dated from Paris, of the contents of Captain Wiedemann's communications. Information on these communications varies. It is agreed that Captain Wiedemann imparted to Halifax the Führer's view that no fundamental differences existed between the German and British peoples, and that he desired a peaceful solution of the Sudeten German problem.

It seems to me particularly important that those taking part in the discussion—as reports from different sources agree—considered and seriously discussed the overfamiliar plan of a *règlement général* for the cultivation of relations with Italy and Germany.

Relevant to this is also the French affirmation, made in the course of the talks, that any Anglo-German *rapprochement* must entail a corresponding Franco-German understanding.

3. Ministerial discussions on the occasion of the royal visit have led to the decision to exert renewed French and British pressure on Prague, with a view to bringing about a just solution of the Sudeten German problem with far-reaching fulfillment of the Sudeten German demands. After the first talk Bonnet received the Czechoslovak Minister and informed Halifax of the result of this conversation, when the discussions were continued on the day before the end of the visit. In weighing up the prospects for a peaceful settlement of the Sudeten German problem the French show a deliberate optimism.

4. The conclusion of the visit and the consecration ceremony at the War Memorial afforded an opportunity for a talk between the British Minister for War<sup>27a</sup> and General Gamelin, which will be continued in Paris after the visit.

5. The King's invitation to Lebrun to pay a return visit to London at the beginning of next year is especially appreciated and regarded as a favorable omen for the continuation of the Entente.

The general impression is that of a magnificent and convincing demonstration of the Anglo-French Entente Cordiale, which, concluded 35 years ago, tested in war, then becoming cool and exposed to severe strain, is, however, now at last sealed afresh under the

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<sup>26</sup> Concluded April 16, 1938.

<sup>27</sup> Wiedemann, Hitler's A.D.C., visited London on July 19 and had informal talks with Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Halifax.

<sup>27a</sup> The Right Honorable Leslie Hore-Belisha.

heavy pressure of the rise of Germany and the political activity of Italy. Even if this Entente today appears ready to stand trial by fire, nevertheless we must not overlook the divergences and differences of opinion existing in the relationship of the two countries, as well as their internal and social-political difficulties, which may be kept in check at any rate as long as anxiety continues about foreign political dangers and about imagined external pressure. Detailed appreciation of the visit is reserved for a written report.

WELCZECK

No. 309

1613/386908-09

*The German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram\*

TOP SECRET

No. 350 of July 22

LONDON, July 22, 1938—10:26 p.m.

Received July 23, 1938—1:30 a.m.

(Pol. I 1677 g (IV))

When I was saying good-by today in the Cabinet Office before going on leave, Chamberlain asked me to come and see him, without previous appointment, to tell me that it was his own and the Cabinet's wish, as it had always been, to bring about improvement and consolidation of mutual relations by discussions with Germany. The statement he made on March 23 in the House about the interruption of the negotiations taking place at that time was merely a confirmation that continuation of negotiations in the atmosphere then prevailing was pointless. Then the Czech crisis and consequent tension followed. He hoped that an opportunity would soon be found to renew the discussions.

Chamberlain further mentioned the present situation in Czechoslovakia and expressed his fear of a deadlock or a temporary breakdown in the negotiations. He asked that, if this happened, Germany should not lose patience. The British Government had already prepared for the possibility of the failure of the talks, and had contemplated measures to persuade the Czechoslovak Government to overcome this deadlock. He also mentioned in passing the possibility of putting into force a temporary agreement valid for a limited time. I had the impression that, in case the negotiations broke down, increased pressure on Prague by Great Britain, coupled with positive proposals, was contemplated.

\* The gist of this telegram was sent to Prague for information on July 23, 1938 (telegram No. 188).

The Prime Minister went on to say that he counted on a peaceful settlement in Czechoslovakia and did not assume that the Czech authorities would lay themselves open to the accusation of having used force. However, should subordinate bodies resort to attacks, he asked the German Government to remain calm in this case and to exhaust all possibilities for a peaceful settlement; he himself had been violently attacked by the Opposition for not having instigated military reprisals after British ships in Spanish ports had been bombed. Nevertheless, the later course of events had justified his moderation. The bomb attacks had ceased.

I replied that our behavior during the May crisis had provided the best proof of our calm and self-control. I told him that the program of reform proposed to the Sudeten Germans by the Czechoslovak Government was completely unacceptable, and illustrated this to him by reference to your telegraphic instructions. From my conversations with Chamberlain and members of the Foreign Office during the last few days, I gained the impression that the statute proposed by the Czechoslovak Government is regarded here as insufficient. The dispatch of a Sudeten German agent, proposed by me in telegram No. 342 of July 20<sup>29</sup> was urgently necessary in order to explain the position to influential personalities here.

Prime Minister several times expressed his satisfaction with the information received from Captain Wiedemann, as well as with the talk he had with him.

DIRKSEN

### No. 310

139/125396

*The German Minister in Belgium (Richthofen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

CONFIDENTIAL

No. 38 of July 23

BRUSSELS, July 23, 1938—1:20 p.m.

Received July 23, 1938—3:45 p.m.

The King summoned me today, as he will be absent in August, in order, as he said, to express personally his thanks for what I had done to further relations between Belgium and Germany. In the course of the conversation the King mentioned the Czechoslovak problem and expressed his deep concern over the situation. He asked me several times if I really believed that the situation would develop without war. I repeatedly pointed out that the course of developments depended on Prague and on whether the realization that some-

<sup>29</sup> Not printed.



thing serious must be done for the Sudeten Germans gained ground there. Powers must use their influence on Prague to stop acts of provocation in future, in regard to which we must retain our freedom of action. King showed understanding, and compared our policy to that of a motorist who is driving along quietly, but is exposed to the possibility of an accident being caused by something coming out of a side street. King also expressed indignation over international press, which democratic regimes were powerless to control. It is in keeping with the King's pessimism that the Chief of the General Staff,<sup>80</sup> as he told me a few days ago, has been asked by the King not to spend his leave abroad, as he intended, but at home.

RICHTHOFEN

### No. 311

28/19094

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

No. 187 of July 24

BERLIN, July 24, 1938—2:14 p.m.

Received July 24, 1938—4 p.m.

Embassy London has proposed urging Henlein to send representative to London for purpose of further enlightening influential persons in London.<sup>80a</sup> He would bring with him detailed statement on attitude to Czech draft and could explain document verbally. Please hand this proposal on and report by telegram the decision of Sudeten German Party.

HEINBURG

### No. 312

139/125411

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 25, 1938.

In an after-dinner conversation between the Ambassadors of Italy, Britain, and France here, and in the presence of the Yugoslav Minister (whose impression of the conversation is already known to us), François-Poncet, according to Attolico, expressed the view that we would be at war in 3 weeks. At any rate, he was pessimistic as is also reported from another source (we know that he reported to Paris

<sup>80</sup> Lt. Gen. E. M. van den Bergen.

<sup>80a</sup> Cf. document No. 309, p. 509.

that it was no longer a question of "whether" but of "when"). In the conversation the British Ambassador also described the situation as serious, but did not take a fatalistic view. According to Attolico's account, Beneš' idea of obtaining consent for a plebiscite in the Sudeten German area was again discussed without, however, any of the participants being able to believe that Beneš could make such a concession.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 313

2184/466995-97

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 25, 1938.

The British Ambassador today asked to speak to me urgently, as he had a communication to make from his Government.

As the danger of a deadlock in the Sudeten German question, and accordingly of a solution by force, appeared imminent, the British Government had formulated the following plan. They intended to send Lord Runciman<sup>21</sup> to Czechoslovakia as an unofficial mediator between Sudeten Germans and Czechs; there he would have to act as adviser to the two conflicting parties. Whereas the British Government had so far refrained from making concrete proposals for a solution of the Sudeten German question, Runciman's task would be to examine the facts and seek a peaceful solution. The British Government wanted to publish the plan at the beginning of the present week, that is very soon, and out of consideration for the Czechoslovak Government to represent their step as one arising from Czech initiative. The British Government were informing us confidentially of their plan. They hoped that we, too, would use our influence with the Sudeten Germans so that they would accept Runciman's mission. Otherwise, the British Government would make a direct approach to the Sudeten Germans. The British Government would attach great importance to stating, when this was made public, that all concerned welcomed the plan. The German Government could facilitate the work of the mediator by openly encouraging his activities and by not obstructing his task in the press. A speedy

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<sup>21</sup> The dispatch of Lord Runciman had been discussed during Lord Halifax's visit to Paris. In the House of Commons on July 26 Mr. Chamberlain announced the proposal for the dispatch of Lord Runciman to Czechoslovakia as "an investigator and mediator . . . not in any sense an arbitrator" between the Czech Government and the Sudeten German Party, describing him as acting "only in his personal capacity." (See Hansard 5th series, vol. 338, pp. 2956-2959.)

answer from the German Government would be welcome in London. If it were not possible for us to give an answer soon, the British Government might have to publish the plan without having the German answer, as they feared leakages.

I then asked the Ambassador a few questions, namely: whether, after delegating the proposed mission to Lord Runciman, the British Government would cease their activity in Prague. Henderson repudiated this and said that, on the contrary, London would continue to exert pressure, especially to put through those demands in Prague which Runciman could not achieve alone. Henderson could not answer my question about the staff which Runciman was likely to take with him. Henderson's remarks proved above all that the British Government, in their anxiety over the further development of the Sudeten German affair, now think that they can no longer withhold their influence in shaping the matter, even in minute details, and that they hope to find in Runciman a pliable go-between, in order not to have to bear the responsibility themselves for individual proposals, a responsibility which, hitherto, they have always declined. Henderson did not say that the French Government had agreed to the plan, but I assume that this is so. It could not be deduced from Henderson's remarks whether other governments had been consulted. I naturally told the Ambassador that for my part I could make no statements on behalf of the German Government. Hitherto we had always adopted the attitude of not wishing to interfere too closely in the negotiations between Henlein and Prague. If a voluntary agreement were reached between the two, we would certainly welcome this, if it were achieved without pressure on the Sudeten Germans. On this hypothesis, I personally, and without anticipating the view of the Reich Government, assumed that the Government would not oppose the plan.

The attitude of our press would, as always, adapt itself to the practical progress of the negotiations between the Sudeten Germans and Prague.

The Ambassador himself, however, did not believe either that the German Government would expressly recommend the Sudeten Germans to accept mediation by Runciman.

In conclusion, I told the Ambassador that the Reich Foreign Minister was in the country; it was difficult to say how soon I would be in a position to give him an answer.

Submitted to the Reich Minister,  
with the request for directions as to whether and what I am to reply to the Ambassador. The British idea obviously cuts both ways.

However, I cannot see how it can directly be opposed. I am inclined to think that, if we take any attitude at all, the answer should be somewhat on the lines of my own statement. Moreover, I told Henderson straight out that the matter had already leaked out in the press, so that if need be we could also say that we did not wish to express retrospectively any opinion on an action which was already known.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 314

139/125415

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 355 of July 25

LONDON, July 25, 1938—11:20 p.m.

Received July 26, 1938—1:25 a.m.

Learn from reliable source that main topic of deliberations during Paris visit was dispatch of British special envoy to Czechoslovakia, whose main task is said to be to bring about solution of Sudeten German question. French and British Governments said to have made representations in Prague on July 20 and 21, in which complete inadequacy of existing proposals was most urgently pointed out to Czechoslovak Government.

Today's press shows consideration for our attitude in the Sudeten question in an almost surprising way. From a conversation which I have just had with Horace Wilson I gather that British Government firmly convinced of necessity of much further-reaching concessions by Czechoslovakia. Lord Runciman is apparently being considered as envoy, functioning with the authority of Britain and France. Negotiations appear to meet with resistance from Prague Government. At any rate, neither Cadogan nor Wilson, whom I saw this afternoon, mentioned the plan to send an envoy.

KORDT

## No. 315

139/125410

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 26, 1938.

Telephone message to the Reich Minister in continuation of the memorandum on the British Ambassador's inquiry of July 25<sup>32</sup> regarding the Runciman Mission:

Now that the press has published full details of the Runciman Mission as confirmed by the British Government, it might be well to answer the British Ambassador somewhat as follows: The German Government does not wish to comment on the projected dispatch of Lord Runciman, especially as his mission has already been announced publicly.

WEIZSÄCKER

To the Reich Minister's Secretariat with request for further transmission to Sonnenburg.<sup>33</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 316

139/125418-19

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 26, 1938.

The French Ambassador, who called on me today, described the result of his recent conference in Paris as follows:—

On behalf of his Foreign Minister he desired to assure us once again of the French Government's best intentions to contribute to a peaceful solution of the Czech problem, satisfactory to all parties. The dispatch of Lord Runciman to Prague was the result of full understanding between the British and French Governments. In the Czech question the latter was inspired with the same zeal as the British Government. It had made the same very urgent representations and the same attempts at pressure in Prague, and would continue to act in conformity with London in these matters. This task was not simple; Berlin must not think that Prague had swallowed the Runciman Mission easily.

Poncet then went on to say that France had followed with satisfaction the understanding attitude of our press toward the British royal visit, and was convinced that we understood the constructive

<sup>32</sup> Document No. 313, p. 512.

<sup>33</sup> Ribbentrop's country house near Küstrin.

cooperation between Britain and France, which was directed toward peace. Wiedemann's and Dirksen's recent talks in London<sup>84</sup> had also had a good effect, although too much significance should not be attributed to them. The French Government was also well aware of the ceaseless activity on our western frontier, where we were constructing defenses day and night, and from which France drew her political conclusions, even if such defenses could not be brought into a state of full effectiveness in a short time. The situation still appeared today to French policy as extremely tense. We had perhaps a few weeks before us which must be used to the full to avoid a dangerous crisis. Great Britain and France were ready to enter into an exchange of views with us, but not in the form of a conference. It would, however, be a good thing to learn from us in discreet conversation how we imagined that influence could advantageously be exerted in Prague, and what means were available for this. If this course were followed, the Czech problem, which today is an apple of discord, might perhaps become the starting point for better understanding and collaboration with Germany.

I first took up François-Poncet's remarks on our western defenses and asked him if he perhaps wanted to draw the conclusion that Germany was politically aggressive, if we likewise put ourselves on the defensive on the other side of the Maginot Line. Poncet did not press the matter further. I then told the Ambassador that German policy had so far deserved the greatest credit for peaceful development, in that it had not merely refrained from all military action—of which we had sometimes been accused. Still further, it had permitted the Prague Government to negotiate fully and directly with Henlein, and had not—as there would have been ample justification for doing—intervened in these negotiations, which were at a standstill. It deliberately held aloof and would probably express no opinion on the Runciman Mission either. The key to the situation did not lie by any means in such negotiations and diplomatic attempts at assistance by the British and French Ministers in Prague. The whole problem would suddenly be set in motion, when London and Paris summoned up the courage to state publicly that there were limits to French and British patience and that Prague would be left in the lurch if it continued to act as it was doing. We knew very well those circles in Prague who were heading for a crisis. However peaceful the aims of the French and British Governments, they would not be working for peace until Paris and London had put a stop to the activities of those Czech agitators.

<sup>84</sup> See document No. 308, p. 506, and footnote 27 thereto.

I had to refute another remark by Poncet on the emotional trends of German politics, and I then told him that I would inform the Reich Minister of his statements.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 317

289/188288

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 26, 1938.

The Belgian Minister<sup>34a</sup> today explained to me his views on the German-Czechoslovak problem saying that, even with the best will on both sides, he did not think a solution could be achieved, which, on the one hand, would preserve the Czechoslovak State in its present frontiers and, on the other hand, would give satisfaction to the Sudeten Germans. He meant to say by this that the matter could not end without war.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 318

189/125420

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, July 26, 1938.

When the British Ambassador called on me today under the impression that we had arranged a rendezvous, I told Henderson that I could not at present give him an answer to his question of yesterday on the Runciman Mission, but I must point out that the whole affair had appeared fully in the press.

On instructions from the Reich Minister I later told Henderson by telephone that the Reich Minister too had been very much surprised that the matter had appeared in the press and had been confirmed by the British Government before we were informed. These were methods which we did not like. We declined to state our own attitude to the dispatch of Runciman and could only regard the Mission as a purely British affair.

Henderson thought that there was no need for him to transmit this telephone statement of mine to London, as it was covered by my earlier statement. I then persuaded the Ambassador to pass the information on, after all, as my answer represented the statement of the Reich Foreign Minister.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>34a</sup> Vicomte Davignon.

## No. 319

139/125424-25

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

No. 259 of July 27

PRAGUE, July 27, 1938—6:36 p.m.

Received July 27, 1938—8:25 p.m.

For State Secretary.

At farewell audience the Italian Minister<sup>85</sup> without instructions from me expressed his regret to the President that the latter did not maintain closer contact with me. Thereupon Beneš, through Facendis, invited me to visit him. Audience took place today and it was established by both sides that contact had lapsed merely for lack of concrete reasons. I expressed concern lest the great opportunity of establishing internal peace by granting equal rights to the Sudeten Germans, and of creating an important prerequisite for better relations with Germany, might be lost as a result of Czech nervousness and the narrow-minded attitude of the parties. I had been greatly discouraged by what I had so far heard of the attitude and proposals of the Government. As a result of Czech attitude a solution is now hardly regarded as probable by public opinion either here or in Germany. It was to be hoped that the Runciman Mission would be the means of removing the basis of this dangerous fatalism. Beneš answered very gravely that he fully shared my anxiety. Runciman was arriving within the next few days. The British Government had put out feelers beforehand and the Czech Government had given its consent. The visit might last for weeks, but he would not let Parliament go into recess while it lasted. He hoped that they would succeed in finding with Runciman general basis for agreement with Sudeten German Party. Details of procedure could be established later. In no circumstances would he allow negotiations to break down or come to nothing. At all costs basis for further development of peaceful internal cooperation must be found. Further conciliatory measures toward the Sudeten German Party would be infinitely easier if Germany were to make a gesture, which would lessen the Czechs' terror of threats. Germany was so strong and great that she could make this gesture. When I answered that we regarded the treatment of the Sudeten German question as a test case, and we could not contemplate such a gesture before a favorable outcome of the negotiations was in sight, Beneš said "officially" he thought the time had come to clear up simultaneously the whole complex, that is, the in-

<sup>85</sup> Signor de Facendis was succeeded by Signor Fransoni on August 22, 1938.



ternal political situation, as well as their relationship to us. We had found this possible with regard to Poland,<sup>86</sup> it must also be possible with regard to Czechoslovakia. He was convinced that in this case our relationship with Czechoslovakia must take a closer and more lasting form than that with Poland. This could not be done all at once, but the foundations for it should at least be laid now. The Western Powers, as well as the rest of Europe, were certainly interested, but he imagined the discussion as a direct one. For the national consciousness of the Czech people was so firm that it need have no fear for its national character in good relations with Germany; to remain opposed to Germany was in the long run impossible for Czechoslovakia.

Details of execution were not mentioned. I made no comment, but can only recommend that we strike while the iron is hot. The psychological conditions for a decisive relaxation of tension and a new order seem to me to be present here after the excitement of the last few months and in view of the uncertainty about the future.

EISENLOHR

### No. 320

289/183295

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 260 of July 27

PRAGUE, July 27, 1938—8:06 p.m.

Received July 27, 1938—9:50 p.m.

The British Minister yesterday asked Kundt, deputy of the Sudeten German Party, to visit him, so that he could, with Hodza's knowledge, inform him of the sending of Runciman, after the Czechoslovak Government had agreed the day before yesterday to the proposed mission.

Newton described it as Runciman's task to examine the problem and the reasons for the divergence of opinion as regards the solution, as well as to mediate by means of his advice and influence. It was important that every assistance should be accorded him, and that the various points of view and the difficulties should be put to him frankly and exhaustively by all influential persons and from all well-informed sources. Runciman was completely independent of the British Government, as of every other Government.

<sup>86</sup> I.e., by the Nonaggression Pact of January 26, 1934, and by the declaration of November 5, 1937, regarding the mutual protection of their respective minorities.

Kundt replied that the Sudeten German Party (group missing)<sup>86a</sup> any individual who was investigating the position objectively in order to contribute toward a positive solution.

It would seem to follow from the British Minister's procedure that the British Government regards the Sudeten German Party as a partner enjoying equal rights when dealing with the Czechoslovak Government. Should Runciman prove to be impartial, and a person well qualified for the task, his influence may be extremely great, as the Czechoslovak Government cannot venture to oppose his vote for fear of losing the support of the British Government.

EISENLOHR

### No. 321

2004/442500

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*<sup>87</sup>

CONFIDENTIAL

PARIS, July 27, 1938.

A 3040

(Pol. IV 5009)

Subject: Lord Runciman's Mission.

The following intelligence from the best British sources has been reported to the Embassy by a reliable confidential agent:

There has been an impression in Great Britain during the last few weeks that the danger periods for the outbreak of a conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia over the Sudeten German question are at the end of the harvest and during the Reich Party Conference respectively, that is, at the end of August and the beginning of September and, later, the moment of completion of the German western fortifications, which is assumed to be approximately in October. The outbreak of the conflict might occur as the result of an outburst of disorder in the Sudeten German territory of Czechoslovakia, in the event of nothing being done for the settlement of the Sudeten German question, or if the Czech Parliament imposes a Czech settlement on the Sudeten Germans without the latter's prior consent.

The Runciman Mission has been decided upon because of these considerations. It will now spend at least a week studying the subject-matter of the Sudeten German question, with which it has hitherto been somewhat unfamiliar, and will later go to Prague with the task of drawing up a plan for the settlement of the Sudeten

<sup>86a</sup> Apparently "would assist" is missing.

<sup>87</sup> This report was forwarded on August 4 to the Embassies in London, Rome, and Warsaw, and to the Legations in Prague, Budapest, Bucharest, and Belgrade, for confidential information. The copy printed is that sent to Budapest.

German question if, as is anticipated, an agreement between the Czechs and Sudeten Germans is not reached.

H. WELCZECK

No. 322

1916/480828

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

PRAGUE, July 28, 1938—2:55 p.m.

URGENT

Received July 28, 1938—4:20 p.m.

No. 262 of July 28

(Pol. IV 5061/38)

In continuation of telegram 259.<sup>38</sup>

For State Secretary.

Hodza, whom I visited today in order to take leave of him before going on holiday, informed me as follows:

1) He had been apprised of the content of my conversation yesterday with Beneš, and had earlier expressed to the President his approval of the latter's observations. These were tantamount to declaration of readiness for radical revision of relations with Germany in the fields of domestic and foreign policy.

2) He welcomed the sending of Runciman which might "at the eleventh hour" find a way out of a position which had become impossible. He would do all he could to win in Runciman—not in the interests of either camp, but in the interests of peace and the future—an ally against the small-minded.

3) He was acquainted—apparently from a British source—with the content of a Weizsäcker-Henderson conversation.<sup>39</sup> The estimate agreed by them, that the Czech offer to date only went up to 20 percent of the way toward meeting the Sudeten German demands, he acknowledged as correct. The offer must and would be enlarged very considerably. Today he would acquaint Kundt with the projected scheme of organization, and on Sunday or Monday with the projected spheres of authority of the *Landtage*. In the field of language rights, also, there would be concessions.

The draft of the statute published yesterday<sup>40</sup> is therefore already out of date.

EISENLOHR

<sup>38</sup> Document No. 819, p. 518.

<sup>39</sup> Presumably that recorded in document No. 292, p. 488.

<sup>40</sup> A summary of the Government proposals had appeared in the semi-official *Prager Presse* on July 27. It was alleged by the German press that this disclosure was deliberate and intended to present the Runciman Mission with a *fait accompli*.

## No. 323

F17/303-306

*The British Foreign Secretary to the German Foreign Minister*<sup>41</sup>FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W. 1,  
July 28, 1938.

MY DEAR HERR VON RIBBENTROP: I have just received from Sir Nevile Henderson the message which you sent to him in response to the communication which I had instructed him to make to the German Government, explaining the circumstances in which Lord Runciman has undertaken the role of investigator and mediator in the negotiations at present proceeding between the Czechoslovak Government and the leaders of the Sudeten Party. I had asked Sir Nevile Henderson when making this communication to you to express the hope that the German Government would give Lord Runciman all the assistance they could in his difficult task, by advocating publicly and through the press patience and moderation in all circumstances. I am glad to see that the German press has given a not unfavorable reception to Lord Runciman's appointment, and I confidently hope that I may count upon Your Excellency's collaboration to ensure the maintenance of an atmosphere of calm and confidence which is essential for the success of Lord Runciman's Mission.

I am very sorry that reports of Lord Runciman's appointment should have appeared in the press before Sir Nevile Henderson's communication reached you. These reports, I need hardly say, were not the result of any official announcement from here but were published without authority. I made a point of communicating with the German Government at the earliest possible moment after I had heard from Prague that the Czechoslovak Government desired that an investigator and mediator should be appointed.

I was somewhat disappointed to learn from Sir Nevile that you had expressed the view that the German Government must reserve its attitude and treat the matter as one of purely British concern. As our two Governments are united in desiring the peaceful solution of the Sudeten problem, I would venture to hope that the German Government will see their way to encourage and assist the present undertaking. You will no doubt have had the opportunity to read a speech I made in the House of Lords a few days ago, in which I tried to give my reasons for hoping that we were now adopting the best method of obtaining such an agreed solution, and avoiding really

<sup>41</sup> This letter is in English in the original and bears the handwritten note: "For translation, Führer's folder [Mappe F.]."

great dangers. But it goes without saying, as I pointed out in my speech, that the chances of success must largely depend upon the conditions and atmosphere in which this attempt is made, and the degree of official and public support that it can enlist.

It cannot be denied that the continued tension caused by the Czechoslovak problem is creating a state of uncertainty and nervousness throughout Europe, and if all concerned do not work together to reduce this tension it is no exaggeration to say that the peace of every one of the Great Powers of Europe may be endangered. If, on the other hand, this problem could be peacefully and equitably settled and normal relations thereby reestablished between Germany and Czechoslovakia, we might confidently trust that the anxieties which at present weigh upon us might be relieved, and the way made clear for further constructive policies to the benefit of both our nations.

I am writing to you thus frankly and fully because, as we have more than once said to each other while you were in London, we both desire to see the relations between Great Britain and Germany established on a basis of mutual confidence and cooperation, and the present situation seems to me to give a great opportunity for doing something to realize the hope that we both entertain.

Yours very sincerely,

HALIFAX

No. 324

139/125432

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, July 28, 1938.

The British Ambassador yesterday happened to speak to me about our present military preparations, giving them, however, the description: understandable defense measures.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 325

1613/388930

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, July 29, 1938.

(Pol. I 1769)

I asked Herr Eisenlohr today to keep us as far as possible carefully and promptly informed of the progress of the mission and Runciman's conversations and intentions so that, even before Runci-

man's plans see the light of day, we may have the opportunity to exert our influence on the Sudeten Germans and possibly on London. Herr Eisenlohr should not seek direct contact with Runciman, but if it is offered, he should not, however, avoid it. German cooperation with the Runciman Mission is out of the question. Naturally Runciman must not be allowed to forget that the Czech question will take a dangerous turn if his proposals do not satisfy the Sudeten Germans.

In the matter of Herr Eisenlohr's leave, I agree with him that it would be most practical if he remained in Czechoslovakia for the present; thus he could certainly go to Marienbad or Karlsbad<sup>42</sup> and put in an appearance periodically in Prague, so as to maintain the necessary contacts.

WEIZSÄCKER

[Penciled note initialed by Ribbentrop:]<sup>43</sup> Runciman is to us a private British subject. Eisenlohr should be merely an observer and keep himself otherwise completely in the background. In no case should he take part in any affairs connected with the Runciman Mission. If the British Government has anything to communicate to us, that can only be done by London, even unofficially, but never by Runciman via Eisenlohr.

### No. 326

2134/467096

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, July 29, 1938.

After the British Ambassador had explained to me on the 25th instant his Government's wishes with regard to the treatment of the Runciman Mission,<sup>44</sup> the Italian Ambassador called on me and immediately asked what the Englishman wanted with me. I passed it off with some noncommittal phrase on that occasion. Now today Attolico wanted to take me to task. My reserve on the previous occasion disconcerted him in view of the very necessary frankness in our dealings.

I thereupon gave Attolico my opinion on the matter pretty comprehensively. The fact that Runciman was being sent had already been made known that very morning through the British newspapers. I could not help it if he did not read the papers. I had not, however, acquainted him at that time with the substance of my conversation

<sup>42</sup> Marginal penciled note: "Yes. R."

<sup>43</sup> Ribbentrop's penciled instructions were embodied by Weizsäcker in a telegram sent to Eisenlohr—No. 190 of August 1.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. document No. 313, p. 512.

with Henderson about the terms of reference of the Runciman Mission, because I was in the habit of informing my own Minister first in these matters and only then the Italian Ambassador.

Attolico thereupon withdrew his complaint and the conversation resumed its usual friendly course.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 327

139/125458-59

*The British Ambassador in Germany (Henderson) to the  
State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*<sup>45</sup>

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
BERLIN, July 29, 1938.

DEAR STAATSSSEKRETÄR: I venture to send you an extract from *The Times*, concerning Mr. Montague's observation during the debate in the House of Commons on July 27 about "bombs to Berlin." The German press is always talking about "Fair Play." Was it fair play to make such a history of this remark without giving the explanation and the apology?

I should have thought it would have been more useful to draw attention to Lord Halifax's remarks in the House of Lords on the same day about the necessity for a calm atmosphere in the negotiations for a settlement of the Czech-Sudeten problem. I enclose likewise a verbatim extract thereof. Lord Halifax puts the point very clearly and I venture to express my sincere hope that the German press, instead of making a mountain of a molehill, will find His Lordship's observations worthier of serious consideration than an ill-advised interruption on the part of an irresponsible individual.

Yours very sincerely,

NEVILLE HENDERSON

[Longhand postscripts:]

Would it be possible to make the real facts known to the Führer?

N. H.

The attitude of the press is quite contrary to the Führer's attitude as indicated by Capt. Wiedemann. N. H.

[Penciled note:] Personally reported on to the RM.

W[EIZSÄCKER], August 3.

\* This letter is in English in the original. The extract from *The Times* and that from Lord Halifax's speech are not reproduced here. In the supplementary questions arising out of a Parliamentary question on civil aviation on July 27, Mr. Montague, Labor M.P. for Islington West, had said, "If it will be possible to carry 20 passengers to Berlin, will it also be possible to carry 20 bombs to Berlin?" Mr. Montague subsequently apologized and withdrew his supplementary question.

## No. 328

139/125446

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, July 30, 1938.

The Italian Ambassador told me on the telephone today that, according to a report from the Italian Embassy in Paris, the German wish for a peaceful settlement of the Czech problem had been discussed during the conversations between Daladier, Halifax, and others in connection with the Wiedemann visit to London. The German project provided for a conference of the four Great Powers, Britain, France, Germany, and Italy, should the occasion arise. If the outcome were favorable the solution found was to be confirmed by a nonaggression pact vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia. The plan for a treaty for qualitative limitation of air armaments following on the Wiedemann visit had also been discussed. Attolico wished to learn from me whether there was anything in the affair. In reply I told the Ambassador, who himself admitted it as true, that it was a matter of the wishful thinking of Anglo-French policy—what one wishes, one readily believes. I had not the slightest knowledge of any such suggestions being made by Captain Wiedemann in London.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 329

340/198888

*Memorandum by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, July 31, 1938.

In the course of a conversation at Sonnenburg today, I gave the Reich Minister the following outline of my ideas on future political developments:

I explained that the attention of the world is at present focused to such a great extent on the Czech problem, and will continue to be even more so, that there could no longer be any talk of a surprise factor. I believed, therefore, that the Führer would not be in a position, for the present, to resort to a *coup de force*, and he certainly would not take this decision, until the tide had receded.

WEIZSÄCKER



## No. 330

139/125457

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, August 2, 1938.

I told the British Ambassador today, in connection with his letter of July 29 concerning the Montague incident,<sup>47</sup> that I regarded his letter as a private communication and not as an official document. If I had taken the latter course, a sharply worded reply was to have been expected, which could hardly be his intention.

The Ambassador hurriedly confirmed that it was a private letter. The matter was thus settled.

WEIZSÄCKER

Under State Secretary and H. Braun von Stumm<sup>48</sup> have been informed.

## No. 331

340/198890

*Memorandum by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) of a Conversation With the Foreign Minister*

Today I handed the Minister the enclosed note on the circular instruction on the Czech question drawn up by Herr von Ribbentrop<sup>49</sup> and circulated today and added the following verbally and in a friendly way:

This instruction could go out with a new introduction: "I ask you to make use of the following points of view in diplomatic talks." On the other hand, the instruction is not suitable to convince our Missions. Our Heads of Missions would believe the thickly laid on arguments just as little as I do. Neither was intervention by the Western Powers to be discounted in a conflict with Czechoslovakia, nor was our armament relatively as strong as in 1914, nor had we a recipe for the decisive defeat of the British and French. Many other passages might also have question marks. Herr von Ribbentrop might dictate to his Ambassadors how they should speak, but he should give up the attempt to make fools of them [*verdummen*].

In this conversation, too, I mentioned in passing that the Führer will not undertake the proposed coup against Czechoslovakia at a politically active juncture such as the present.

AUGUST 2, 1938.

<sup>47</sup> See document No. 327, p. 525, and footnote 45 thereto.

<sup>48</sup> Head of the section of the Foreign Ministry Information and Press Department responsible for the *Deutsche diplomatisch-politische Korrespondenz*.

<sup>49</sup> Document No. 332, *infra*.

[Enclosure]

139/125467

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, August 2, 1938.

To the Reich Minister.

The circular instruction regarding conversations on the Czechoslovak question has been issued for dispatch.<sup>51</sup> On reading through the circular, especially in its present sharper form, I nevertheless make the suggestion that it be submitted to a further revision and for the following reasons:

The Foreign Ministry can and must expect from its Heads of Missions that they use the same language abroad as the Reich Minister uses at home to foreign diplomats here. It can even demand that they use this language without knowing exactly the considerations which underlie the guidance for conversations. If these considerations are mentioned for the instruction of Missions, they should, in my opinion, contain a simple explanation of the principles on which the guidance for conversations has been based. In order to give real weight to the attitude of our Missions, these should be as convincing as possible. In this respect I would, for example, not include in the instruction the absolute guarantee of nonintervention by the Western Powers in a German-Czech conflict, nor the expectation of a crushing defeat of the Western Powers. I think, too, that a sharper differentiation between what is intended to serve as a guidance for conversation and what is for the information of Missions would be necessary.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>51</sup> See document No. 332, *infra*.

## No. 332

139/125472-75

*The Foreign Minister to German Missions Abroad*<sup>52</sup>

BERLIN, August 3, 1938.

(Pol. I 1770 g (IV))

(final draft)

To all Missions in Europe, the German Embassies in Ankara, Washington, Tokyo, and the German Legation in Cairo.

I expect our Missions abroad to conduct conversations on the Czechoslovak question with a firmness which in every way bears out the protection promised by the Führer to German groups on our frontiers, and which is in keeping with the position of Germany as a European Great Power of 75 million inhabitants in close alliance with the Great Powers Italy and Japan.

*A peaceful solution of the Sudeten German question is Germany's wish.* Our behavior during the events of May and our attitude of supreme calm in face of the fantastic extravagances [*Donquichoterien*] of Prague has borne witness to this. Our efforts in the future will also be directed to this end. Should Czechoslovak policy continue to be conducted with such narrow-minded lack of appreciation of realities, a new situation might arise which would render intervention by us a matter of compulsion. I do not of course need to emphasize specially that such a conflict with Czechoslovakia presents no military problem for the German Army and the German *Luftwaffe*, for Czechoslovakia would be overthrown at one blow. Such a procedure is *not* Germany's wish, but might one day come about in the event of intolerable Czech acts of provocation.

As you know, intensive foreign propaganda has for some time been spreading the fable that France would intervene in such a case and that Great Britain could not stand aside. This propaganda leaves us completely cold, and I ask you not to let yourselves be influenced by it in any way. I am convinced, and have repeatedly given expression to this, that no third power would be so foolhardy as to attack Germany in such a case. I expect you to express this in your conversation, naturally, as being your own conviction also.

Intervention, for example by France, would mean nothing short of an offensive war deliberately directed against Germany. Such a war would not only lack any treaty foundation, but it would also

<sup>52</sup> An earlier draft of this instruction also exists (139/125468-71). It is on the same lines, except that the special position of Hungary in an otherwise exclusively German affair is mentioned.

In paragraph 5 the words "through the strength of the *Luftwaffe*" are missing in the earlier draft.

have no moral justification, as French democracy, contrary to its sacred principles, would be defending the dictatorship of an armed Czech minority over an unarmed non-Czech majority. Furthermore, such a war would also be contrary to reason, for France would be drawing the sword for a problem which is of absolutely secondary strategic significance for the Franco-German balance of power. Finally, the responsibility for the launching of another war between Great Powers would fall with all its consequences on the aggressor nations.

Moreover, Germany's present military might, which surpasses that of 1914 through the strength of the *Luftwaffe*, would in itself be a sufficient deterrent. Nothing, in fact, would be more mistaken than the speculation that, in defending the rights of the Sudeten Germans we would allow ourselves to be in any way misled or intimidated by the possibility of a conflict with the West. If occasion arises, leave no doubt that—if attacked—Germany, relying on her own strength and on her political friendships, would shrink from nothing, and would not scruple to use her whole military might. The whole German people would rise as one man. Any aggressor would run his head against the enormous mass of Germany's western defenses, begun after the reoccupation of the Rhineland and now to be completed in a few months, only to meet with the strongest army and air force in the world. Any potential opponent of Germany still knows from the World War what this would mean. Then Germany was still isolated, today things are different.

In the East, Germany has quite different safeguards. According to all available information, Russia is not in a position to undertake large-scale military intervention. The interests of Poland and Hungary in the Czechoslovak question are similar to ours, and, as things are, the other Balkan States would play no active part. The basic principle of our policy in Europe, however, is and will remain the Rome-Berlin Axis, representing in its common destiny more than an alliance, and the political triangle, Berlin-Rome-Tokyo. Italy as well as Japan is definitely on our side. Germany would thus be in a position, if she were attacked from the West—presumably in common with her friends—to turn the whole devastating weight of her national strength against such an aggressor. State in your conversations calmly and in suitable terms that, while we love peace, we are today so prepared as to be able, if need be, to bring such a war to a victorious end. Should this be regarded as a threat, then point out that we do not seek such a quarrel and that the Führer's unequivocal policy bears positive witness to our intentions toward France and Britain. In view of the warmongering of the Western

democracies, therefore, this is merely a *declaration* which can only be in the interests of peace, by making clear from the start to any potential opponent of Germany the Führer's fundamental ideas and the possibilities of the development of German power.

I would also ask you on this occasion to contradict further false statements of the foreign press, which are being continually and deliberately launched, and according to which Anglo-French intervention in Berlin averted war in May. Nothing is known to me of such intervention; had it taken place, I would have rejected it most energetically. The Foreign Ministry merely indicated clearly to the French and British Ambassadors during their inquiries in May that for a settlement of the Czech chaos one must look not to Berlin but exclusively to Prague.

If, as appears from the foregoing, the wish to intervene in the event of a German-Czech conflict really does not exist at present among the Western Powers, it is nevertheless the most important task of our policy, and thus also of the appropriate diplomatic Missions abroad, to intensify the existing general disinclination to attack Germany, and to exercise a damping or deterrent influence on any firebrands in the democratic camp. A clear indication of the *enormous risk* incurred by such Powers in intervening in a conflict, i.e., in the launching of a world war, in the absence of any real threat to their own vital interests, is in this case the best policy. Of course the love of peace of which we have given proof is always to be referred to, and it is to be pointed out that, after the reasonable solution of the Sudeten German problem sought by us, Germany is to be regarded in Europe as a satisfied [*saturiert*] nation, apart from the still open colonial question.

I have already on different occasions during the last few months used similar language to the British and French Ambassadors. I ask the Missions to act likewise and to use the information contained in the foregoing instructions *in fitting manner*.

RIBBENTROP

## No. 333

139/125462

*The British Prime Minister (Chamberlain) to the German  
Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen)*<sup>53</sup>

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

10 DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL,  
August 3, 1938.

MY DEAR AMBASSADOR: Since the conversation that we had before you proceeded on leave,<sup>54</sup> some development has taken place in regard to the matters we discussed together. In particular, Lord Runciman has, by arrangement with the Czechoslovak Government, proceeded to Prague to act as mediator and conciliator. I would have liked to have discussed that appointment with you but at the time of our meeting it had not yet been made. I hope and believe that the work that Lord Runciman may be able to do in Czechoslovakia will perhaps prove a real contribution to the solution of that problem that is causing us all anxiety. We here, of course, know him better than those outside this country, but I am satisfied that he does possess in real degree just those qualities of firmness and wisdom that may enable him to make a contribution at this time of great value.

I much hope you may have had an opportunity of speaking to Herr Hitler of the main points that we covered in our conversation, and I hope you may have been able to place him in possession of the way in which my own mind was moving in regard to them.

If it is possible to find with good will a settlement of the Czechoslovak question that does substantial justice to all sides of the problem, I feel that nothing would more materially facilitate the establishment of that understanding between our two countries that we both desire.

In this connection, since I am writing, may I say that I very much hope, if you get an opportunity of speaking to Herr Hitler, you will ask him to give full consideration to the contents of the personal letter that Lord Halifax recently addresses [*sic*] to Herr von Ribbentrop in regard to Lord Runciman's Mission.<sup>54a</sup>

Yours sincerely,

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN

<sup>53</sup> This letter is in English in the original.

<sup>54</sup> See document No. 309, p. 509.

<sup>54a</sup> Document No. 323, p. 522.

## CHAPTER V

### EVENTS LEADING TO THE SEPTEMBER CRISIS

No. 334

FR/0291-0290

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 248 A

Ambassador Attolico visited me in the country on July 26 and made the following communication to me:

Mussolini had informed Prime Minister Imredy during his visit to Rome that he was convinced that France and Britain would not fight in the event of a German-Czech conflict. Italy would support German policy to the full. As long as the conflict remained localized, Italy would remain "at the ready." France would have to take this Italian attitude into consideration. If France mobilized, Mussolini would also order mobilization, in order to bring about France's demobilization. But should France resort to warlike measures against Germany, Mussolini would attack France. Germany and Italy were so closely linked together that their relationship was equivalent to an alliance. For the moment no written agreements existed; but this would be rectified, perhaps very soon, and indeed in a form which would demonstrate that the two peoples were coming ever closer together.

Ambassador Attolico continued that in his opinion a German-Italian agreement might take somewhat the following form: In the preamble the lasting friendship of the two peoples and their present inviolable frontier must first be mentioned. Further, he thought of introducing a passage in the preamble stressing German-Italian cooperation in the Danube basin, such as had already been agreed to between Italy and Poland.<sup>55</sup> Article 1 of the treaty could contain agreement for general consultation, article 2 the promise of diplomatic support in the case of a threat to one of the treaty partners, article 3 the obligation to assistance in the face of an unprovoked attack, as Mussolini had stated in his Genoa speech, and article 4 an arrangement for General Staff conversations.

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<sup>55</sup> After Beck's visit to Rome in March 1938.

I told Ambassador Attolico that I pictured the framework of the treaty in a similar way and would also prepare a draft. The further treatment of the matter is to be discussed after my return from leave.

RIBBENTROP

BERLIN, August 4, 1938.

No. 335

2369/494684

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 2. h.

PRAGUE, August 4, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 5207)

Subject: Reception of Lord Runciman.

As already reported elsewhere, Lord Runciman arrived in Prague on the 3d instant and was officially received at the station by representatives of the President, the Government, and by the Mayor of the City of Prague.<sup>65a</sup> Deputies Kundt and Dr. Sebekovsky were also present to welcome him on behalf of the Sudeten German Party.

I have the honor to report as follows on the events leading up to the participation of the Sudeten German Party representatives in the reception: The British Minister here had on his own initiative informed the Sudeten German Party by letter at what time and at which station Lord Runciman would arrive. In reply to an inquiry then addressed to the British Minister by the Sudeten German Party, Mr. Newton recommended that Herr Kundt and Dr. Sebekovsky should be present to welcome Lord Runciman. At the same time the Minister expressed his readiness to undertake personally the introduction of the two gentlemen.

The reception then passed off as follows: the Chief of Protocol, who appeared at the station as the representative of the President of the Republic, was presented to Lord Runciman by the British Minister. In his turn the Chief of Protocol then introduced the representatives of the Czechoslovak Government and the Mayor of the City of Prague to the British visitor. On the other hand, the Sudeten German representatives were presented by Mr. Newton. In his greeting, Deputy Kundt confined himself to saying: "I bid you welcome in the name of the Sudeten German people."

HENCKE

<sup>65a</sup> Dr. Zenkl.



## No. 336

139/125483-84

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 271 of August 5

PRAGUE, August 5, 1938—9 p.m.

Received August 5, 1938—11:20 p.m.

In continuation of telegraphic report No. 268 of August 4.<sup>58</sup>

1) For cooperation with Runciman the Sudeten German Party has formed:

(a) Political staff under leadership of K. H. Frank, to which the members of the Sudeten German Party delegation for nationality negotiations belong.

(b) Social staff under leadership of Prince Ulrich Kinsky, the big landowner.

2) On August 4 a discussion, lasting one hour, took place for the first time between the political staff of the Sudeten German Party and Runciman. At the beginning Runciman emphasized that he had undertaken the mission on the following assumptions:

(a) Complete impartiality and the opportunity of forming his own judgment.

(b) Consent of both parties.

Runciman wants, as an honest broker, to achieve a compromise, and would be satisfied if he succeeded in bringing about a partial solution by bridging the differences. Kundt, leader of the Sudeten German delegation, stated that between German and Czech views there existed one important gulf and that was the problem of National State—Nationality State. Even for a partial solution it was a prerequisite that Germans and Czechs should reach a common viewpoint on this. Runciman requested the delegation to submit a straightforward statement of Sudeten German wishes and demands, and asked for a memorandum on fundamental differences by Monday.

3) At Runciman's suggestion, the political staff of the Sudeten German Party and Runciman's colleagues met on August 4 in the evening for a discussion lasting over five hours, at which the Sudeten German Party demands were discussed in detail. Ashton-Gwatkin has been instructed to prepare a memorandum on this meeting and submit it to Runciman tomorrow. He wants to give it beforehand to the Sudeten German Party for perusal.

<sup>58</sup> Not printed.

The staff of the Sudeten German Party handed to Runciman's colleague, Messing, the Karlsbad speeches of June 7, Nationality post-cards, and previous Sudeten German Party literature.

4) Runciman told the staff of the Sudeten German Party that he attached no real value to negotiations with other racial groups. He wished to concern himself mainly with the German-Czechoslovak problem; however, he thought it possible that in the course of the negotiations he would not be able to avoid talking with other racial groups. Special report on this follows.

HENCKE

No. 337

139/125485

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division I (Heyden-Rynsch)  
for the Foreign Minister*

MEMORANDUM

(e. o. Pol. I M 2824 g)

Drafting Officer: Counselor of Legation Baron von der Heyden-Rynsch.

On the occasion of a party at the British Military Attaché's, the British Ambassador discussed the Czech problem in detail with Captain Bürckner, head of the Foreign Section<sup>57</sup> [*Abteilung Ausland*], whom he knows from the naval talks in London. Henderson repeatedly emphasized on this occasion that Great Britain would not think of risking even one sailor or airman for Czechoslovakia, and that any reasonable solution would be agreed to, so long as it were not attempted by force. Captain Bürckner listened without comment. When Captain Bürckner remarked in conclusion that we, too, would welcome a peaceful solution, the Ambassador indicated by an unmistakable gesture that he doubted this. With that the conversation ended.

In his report Admiral Canaris<sup>57a</sup> will inform the Führer of this conversation, and has asked that the Reich Minister be informed.

VON DER HEYDEN-RYNSCH

BERLIN, August 6, 1938.

<sup>57</sup> I.e., of the *Amtsgruppe Auslandsnachrichten und Abwehr* (the Intelligence Directorate of the O.K.W.).

<sup>57a</sup> Chief of the German Secret Service.

## No. 338

837/197412

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division I (Heyden-Rynsch)  
for the Foreign Minister*

## MEMORANDUM

(e. o. Pol. I M 2823 g)

Drafting Officer: Counselor of Legation Baron von der Heyden-Rynsch.

According to information from the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht* an order has been given, because of Czech military aircraft flying over the German frontier area, that all military aircraft flying over the German frontier for the obvious purpose of reconnaissance (photographic, etc.) are to be fired on with live ammunition.

By way of explanation, it may be added that at present this order has only a theoretical significance, since antiaircraft batteries capable of opening fire have not been installed, except in prohibited areas declared as such. In consequence, Admiral Canaris will today submit a proposal to the Führer that antiaircraft batteries should be set up on certain sectors of the German-Czechoslovak frontier. In addition, it will be suggested that a press announcement to this effect should be made.

VON DER HEYDEN-RYNSCH

BERLIN, August 6, 1938.

## No. 339

2369/494698-700

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 2. h.

PRAGUE, August 6, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 5247)

In continuation of previous report of the 5th of this month.<sup>58</sup>

Subject: Discussions between Sudeten German Party and Lord Runciman.

The one-hour conversation which took place on the 4th of this month between Lord Runciman and the political staff of the Sudeten German Party was divided into a half-hour discussion between Lord Runciman and the Sudeten German Party delegation in the presence

<sup>58</sup> Document No. 336, p. 535.

of an interpreter, and a further talk lasting for half an hour at which Lord Runciman's staff<sup>59</sup> was called in.

Lord Runciman first emphasized that the conditions on which he had undertaken the mission had been:

- 1) the guarantee of his independence and free judgment.
- 2) the consent of both parties.

He wanted to study the problem in its entirety and, having completed his study, to offer his services as a mediator and an honest broker. In reply to this, Deputy Kundt, as spokesman of the Sudeten German Party delegation, stated that the Sudeten German Party in principle welcomed anyone who devoted himself to an unbiased and objective study of the problem. Thereupon Lord Runciman invited the delegation to submit frankly and without reserve the wishes and claims of the Sudeten German Party. Lord Runciman further stated that he did not wish to limit participation to the official delegates of the Sudeten German Party, but was prepared to receive other Sudeten Germans whom the Sudeten German Party might recommend to him. But in the first place he aimed at the working out of a political proposal for a settlement in collaboration with the Sudeten German delegation.

From Lord Runciman's remarks his general policy, directed toward achieving a compromise, was evident. He used the phrase that he would be satisfied if he succeeded in achieving partial solutions by bridging the differences. Deputy Kundt stated to Lord Runciman that there was only one single essential difference between the Sudeten German and the Czech point of view, which was characterized in the opposing conceptions of Nationality State and National State. Yet any partial solution presupposed a common Czech-German conception. Lord Runciman was very much interested in this, and requested from the Sudeten German Party a memorandum on the fundamental differences by Monday.

The 5-hour discussion on the evening of the 4th instant between the members of the political staff of the Sudeten German Party and Lord Runciman's colleagues took place at the suggestion of Lord Runciman, who wished more detailed information on the basic differences. In this conversation questions of proportion (civil servants, allocation of State contracts, etc.) were discussed in detail. When Ashton-Gwatkin, the British member [*sic*] of Lord Runciman's staff,

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\* Lord Runciman's staff consisted of Mr. F. Ashton-Gwatkin, head of the Economic Relations Department of the Foreign Office, Mr. Robert Stopford, Mr. Geoffrey Peto, formerly Lord Runciman's Parliamentary private secretary, and Mr. Ian Henderson, the British Consul at Innsbruck, who was appointed as special observer with the rank of Second Secretary at Reichenberg (Liberec). They were later joined by a civil servant, Mr. David Stephens.

asked why the Nationality Statute proposed by the Czechoslovak Government was useless, he was referred for proof to the publication of the Sudeten German memorandum. It was demonstrated in detail to the British members that the putting into effect of the Sudeten German proposals would neither make Czechoslovakia a federal or any other kind of federative State, nor would it mean the destruction of the State, facts which the British finally admitted. Kundt pointed out with emphasis the existing divergence between the Czech and Sudeten German points of view in the question of the Nationality Statute. Ashton-Gwatkin, the member of the British Staff, will prepare by Saturday a memorandum on the minutes of this discussion, which will be made available beforehand for perusal by the Sudeten German Party.

In the course of the discussion, Peto, Lord Runciman's secretary, showed great understanding for the Sudeten German Party's attitude of dislike for the Jews in Czechoslovakia, whom he described as not comparable with British Jews.

Six copies of each of the following documents were handed to Lord Runciman's colleagues:

- 1) Sudeten German Party's memorandum of June 7, in German,
- 2) Sudeten German Party's memorandum of June 7, in English,
- 3) Konrad Henlein's speech at the Karlsbad Party Rally, in English,
- 4) Dr. Sebekovsky's speech at the Karlsbad Party Rally, in English,
- 6) Nationality postcards,
- 7) *Die Tschechoslowakei im Spiegel der Statistik* by Erwin Winkler,
- 8) The pamphlet "Words and Deeds."

HENCKE

No. 340

1613/386954-56

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

A. III. 2. h.

PRAGUE, August 6, 1938.

(Pol. I 1867 g (II))

Subject: Information from Great Britain and France on the Czechoslovak problem.

Deputy Kundt, the president of the Parliamentary Club of the Sudeten German Party, who, as is known, has been designated by Konrad Henlein as the leader of the Sudeten German delegation in the negotiations, has given me confidentially the following political

information, which he has received from an agent. This agent—moreover a non-Aryan—whom Herr Kundt describes as a tested and reliable informant is, because of his long legal cooperation, a good friend of the French Professor Brunet, who enjoys a reputation in France as a minority politician and who was at one time Under Secretary of State in the French Ministry of Finance, when Bonnet, the present Foreign Minister, was at its head. Professor Brunet, who for 20 years has been closely acquainted with the Sudeten German problem, and who on various occasions has shown remarkable understanding for the German group [*Volksgruppe*], is in his turn a friend of M. Bonnet. Professor Brunet has made use of the agent for requests and information which he wishes to pass on to Kundt or the Sudeten German Party. Apart from his connection with Professor Brunet, the agent also has access to the present British Minister of Transport<sup>60</sup> and other British politicians.

The agent was recently in Paris and London and had exhaustive conversations with Professor Brunet and his British friends, among them also the British Minister of Transport. As a result of his talks with Bonnet, the Foreign Minister, and Daladier, the Prime Minister, Professor Brunet informed him that the French Government was considering sending him (Brunet) to Prague if occasion arises, to work alongside Lord Runciman as French mediator. Brunet instructed the agent to obtain Kundt's view on this. The agent gave as his own opinion that presumably Kundt's view would be that the present moment was not suitable for sending a mediator. Herr Kundt had concurred with this view.

The British Minister of Transport and other British politicians had expressed themselves to the agent on the political situation in the following terms:

The Führer and Reich Chancellor, supported by a strong party majority, doubtless intended at present to preserve peace. Influential circles in Great Britain regarded him as the most important figure since Napoleon, who, with extraordinary skill, understood how to recognize and exploit every weakness of his opponents. In spite of all negotiations and fundamental readiness for peace, however, the Führer would not be deterred at the crucial moment from doing what he considered to be for the advantage and expansion of the power of the German Reich. All the agreements should not blind people to the fact that he was firmly resolved to carry out the program he had laid down.

As for the attitude of Poland, it is thought in Paris and London that in May of this year the Polish Government hinted in Berlin

<sup>60</sup> The Right Honorable Leslie Burgin.

that, in the event of an *Anglo*-German conflict, Poland would be on the side of the opponents of the Reich.

Hungary was being closely watched. The overthrow of the Government was not regarded as improbable.

Rumania was showing a strong desire for independence. In this connection the British Minister of Transport referred to Great Britain's recent financial commitments in Rumania.

The Sudeten German question was not ultimately an economic problem. In the view of the British Government, effective support of Sudeten German industry could considerably ease the situation.

Great Britain certainly did not want war. However, should it be unavoidable, she would prefer it not to happen for a year, even better, for 2 years. In Great Britain among other things an 80 percent loss of the aircraft available on the outbreak of war was reckoned with within 3 months. Experimental aircraft were no longer being built singly, but in series of up to 40, in order to speed up the construction of the necessary new types.

HENCKE

### No. 341

397/212868

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram<sup>a</sup>

No. 272 of August 7

PRAGUE, August 7, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 5244)

The Polish Minister<sup>62</sup> here gave me the following information, which had reached him from Czech Socialist quarters, and for the truth of which he could not vouch:

At the instigation of the Runciman Mission, Alexandrovsky, the Soviet Minister in Prague, called on President Beneš a few days ago and assured him that the Soviet Union would fulfill her obligation<sup>62a</sup> to render aid in a German-Czech conflict, even in the case of hostile developments in the Far East.

HENCKE

<sup>a</sup> This telegram was circulated to the Embassies in Washington, Rome (Quirinal), Paris, London, Tokyo, Moscow, and Warsaw, and to the Legations in Budapest, Belgrade, and Bucharest.

The copy printed is that sent to the Moscow Embassy and bears penciled notes in Schulenburg's hand.

<sup>62</sup> Dr. Kasimir Papée.

<sup>62a</sup> Marginal note by Schulenburg: "Which? specify?"

## No. 342

337/197411

*Minute by an Official of Political Division I (Heyden-Rynsch)*

## MINUTE

(zu Pol. I M 2823 g)

Drafting Officer: Counselor of Legation Baron von der Heyden-Rynsch.

The Führer has decided that the proposal of the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht* to move a few antiaircraft batteries up to the Czech frontier shall be put into effect. He has not agreed to a public announcement of these measures.<sup>63</sup>

According to Supreme Headquarters' verbal explanatory statement, the deployment of antiaircraft defense units will not assume very great proportions and is, moreover, within the framework of measures actually contemplated at a later date.

VON DER HEYDEN-RYNSCH

BERLIN, August 8, 1938.

## No. 343

337/197402, 197405-06

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the Foreign Minister*<sup>63a</sup>

VERY URGENT

BERLIN, August 9, 1938.

I herewith submit a letter of August 3 from Mr. Chamberlain,<sup>64</sup> the Prime Minister, to von Dirksen, the Ambassador, and the draft of an answer from Dirksen to Chamberlain. Herr von Dirksen has by taking advantage of an opportunity which presented itself, submitted the documents to me from his place of leave with the request that I should examine them and, if necessary, make proposals for their alteration.

An answer had probably best not be given to the last paragraph of Chamberlain's letter, in which he requests that Herr von Dirksen should take up with the Führer Lord Halifax's letter to the Reich Foreign Minister.

Herewith submitted to the Reich Minister with the request for a decision.

WOERMANN

<sup>63</sup> Cf. document No. 338, p. 537.

<sup>63a</sup> A marginal handwritten note by Woermann directs that a copy be sent to the London Embassy.

<sup>64</sup> Document No. 333, p. 532.



[Enclosure]

*Draft of Letter From the German Ambassador in Great Britain  
(Dirksen) to the British Prime Minister (Chamberlain)*<sup>65</sup>

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

AUGUST 7, 1938.

MY DEAR PRIME MINISTER: I thank you very much for your kind letter of August 3rd concerning the Czechoslovak question and the mission of Lord Runciman to Prague. Though I had not the pleasure of meeting Lord Runciman during my stay in London I am convinced that he has all the qualities needed in the difficult task which he has undertaken. So far as I was able to observe his mission was greeted by the German press and public opinion with full sympathy.<sup>66</sup>

Before leaving Berlin yesterday I had a long talk with Herr von Ribbentrop. I shall see the Führer next week in Berchtesgaden who was up to now in Bayreuth and stayed only a few hours in Berlin. As I am going in a few days for a cure to Bad Reichenhall, which is in the vicinity of Berchtesgaden, I shall have full opportunity to speak to him and give him further details concerning the points we covered in our conversation, of which he has—of course—received a telegraphic and a written report immediately after our conversation had taken place.<sup>66</sup>

(On the occasion of my conversation with the Chancellor I shall mention—as you suggest—the personal letter Lord Halifax addressed recently to Herr von Ribbentrop in regard to Lord Runciman's mission.)<sup>67</sup>

Yours sincerely,

VON DIRKSEN

<sup>65</sup> The original is in English and bears a penciled marginal note: "final draft."

<sup>66</sup> This sentence is deleted in pencil.

<sup>67</sup> Parentheses are inserted in the original in pencil.

## No. 344

2369/494787-90

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 2. h.

PRAGUE, August 10, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 5360)

With reference to report A. III. 2. h. of August 10, 1938, and in continuation of an additional report of August 9 of this year.<sup>70</sup>

Subject: Negotiations between Sudeten German Party and Lord Runciman.

On August 9 of this year a renewed discussion took place between the Sudeten German Party's delegation and Lord Runciman's staff. His Lordship was present during the greater part of the conversation. The course of the conversation is to be seen from the enclosed memorandum which a member of the Legation drew up on the basis of information from Deputy Kundt.

Details of the meeting which took place on the 9th of this month between Lord Runciman and the Czechoslovak Prime Minister are not yet known.

HENCKE

[Enclosure]

## MEMORANDUM

In accordance with instructions I made inquiries of the Sudeten German Party delegation as to the course of the negotiations of August 9. Lord Runciman was himself present at this discussion, it was said, in order to invalidate the rumors circulated by British journalists that he did not consider the negotiating delegation of the Sudeten German Party of equal status with Konrad Henlein and K. H. Frank. Immediately he appeared he declared that he would also be very glad to make the acquaintance of such people as the Sudeten German Party should introduce to him. Kundt handed over the enclosed short memorandum in English.<sup>71</sup> Runciman stated that he had exerted his influence on Hodza in order that the conversations between the Sudeten German Party and the Coalition should be resumed; in connection with which he mentioned—obviously under

<sup>70</sup> Not printed. The report A. III. 2. h. of August 10 forwarded copies of memoranda giving details of the conversations on August 4 between Lord Runciman's staff and the Sudeten German Party, and the grounds of disagreement between the Sudeten German Party and the Czech Government (2369/494775-86).

<sup>71</sup> Not printed.

Hodza's influence—the Parliamentary Committee. At this juncture Kundt set forth the progress of the negotiations since May:

(a) The Sudeten German Party submitted proposals to Dr. Hodza verbally on May 29 and in writing on June 7.

(b) Dr. Hodza's promise *in the name of the Government* followed on July 15:

- 1) That the Sudeten German Party's memorandum ranked equal with the proposals of the Government as a basis for negotiations.
- 2) Hodza promises written statement of Government's attitude to Sudeten German Party's memorandum.

To date, the Government's proposal has not arrived in its final form, nor has the Government's statement of their attitude to the Sudeten German Party's proposals. Kundt further declared that there was no question of negotiations with a committee of Coalition deputies, as the Sudeten German Party was the representative body of the Sudeten Germans and hence, correspondingly, only a committee of the political Ministers could be considered as opposite party for negotiations. It was no Party matter, but a matter between the Sudeten Germans and the system which was represented by the political Ministers. Negotiations with the Coalition deputies would only be possible if the latter were given general plenary powers by the Government. But any such action would be unconstitutional. Besides, the Sudeten German Party had Dr. Hodza's promise that the first meeting with the political Ministers would be resumed. (Kundt said this in the knowledge that Hodza wished to speak to him today, Wednesday. Malypetr<sup>72</sup> has the same intention. Kundt avoided this conversation, which should already have taken place on Tuesday, in order first of all to acquaint Runciman with the position.) Kundt then asked Runciman whether he wished to influence the *modus procedendi* between the Sudeten German Party and the Government, or wished to hand over the initiative to these two themselves. Runciman adopted the view that if a settlement could be obtained it was unimportant who took the initiative. He was ready to intervene providing he was invited, if possible by both sides, to take this action. Should this not be the case his position in this matter would naturally be a difficult one. Kundt emphasized that for the Sudeten German Party the opposite negotiating party could only be the Government, as it was they who were responsible for the system. He further explained that signs of an increased tension of atmosphere had been present for the last fortnight: the

<sup>72</sup> Jan Malypetr, member of the Czech Agrarian Party; Minister of Interior, 1922-25; in 1928 became Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies; Prime Minister, November 1932-November 1935; then re-elected Speaker of Chamber of Deputies.

attack on Eichholz, the Sudeten German Party deputy in Prague;<sup>73</sup> the stabbing of a Sudeten German Party man in Hartmanitz; agitation in German territory by the Beneš deputy, Dr. David, in conjunction with the district prefect [*Bezirkshauptmann*] in Dux; the shots fired at German agricultural workers, etc.; the arms depots of Czech civilians in German territory, and the military training of Czech men and women by Czech military personnel. The Germans felt that their lives were in danger; it was therefore understandable if the German population demanded self-protection organizations from the Sudeten German Party or an international protective body. This statement resulted from the feeling of European responsibility. Runciman answered these statements by saying that his mission was in the service of European peace. (According to the declarations of the Sudeten German Party delegation, the British all maintained "a diplomatic and extremely attentive expression" during these observations by Kundt.) Peto afterwards told Kundt that his observations had been brief and to the point. This was also the reason why, at Runciman's departure, Runciman declared to Kundt: "You are 'Doctor' Kundt, are you not?" Thereupon Kundt answered: "No, just Kundt." To which Runciman remarked: "You have spoken like a professional lawyer." Kundt answered: "*Advocatus populi.*" At this point Runciman withdrew. It is alleged that he had wished to do this an hour before, but had been held by Kundt's representations on the para-military incidents.

In the subsequent conversations Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin asked Kundt what he thought of the possibility of a solution. Kundt answered: "That is to be obtained only by means of foreign political pressure. The Czechs will only become reasonable if the British and, by their agency, the French, express their intention of not sacrificing soldiers' lives for the stupidities of Czech policy. The Czech press, including the Beneš press, was persuading the Czechs that Britain would help in any contingency. It must plainly be stated that she would not help." Gwatkin answered: "British help is, however, not *so* certain."

Kundt further informed me that in his view the final decision of the British Government depended on the opinion which Runciman formed as a result of the conversations here. It was extremely problematic whether Britain could convince France also.

In the course of the conversations Lord Runciman had further proposed to Kundt that the entire negotiations should be taken up from the beginning again. Thereupon Kundt expressed the point

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<sup>73</sup> A Slovak municipal official slapped Eichholz's face after a dispute in the Masaryk Station at Prague on August 5.

of view that this would be possible if, in the course of the newly commenced negotiations, the promises were kept which the Government had already made to the Sudeten German Party.

DR. OSKAR MITIS

PRAGUE, August 10, 1938.

No. 345

621/250598-601

*The German Ambassador in France (Welzeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A 3236

PARIS, August 10, 1938.  
(Pol. II 2462)

With reference to report telephoned to Herr Woermann, Under State Secretary.

Subject: Conversation with M. Bonnet, the Foreign Minister.

The Foreign Minister asked me to visit him yesterday in order to discuss the political position with me in the usual manner, and to put me in the picture regarding the attitude of his Government to current questions. Bonnet observed by way of introduction that he was accustomed to think openly, as it were, when with me, for certain of his communications were of a confidential nature and only intended for me and for my superiors. He believed that, by employing the utmost frankness, he could contribute toward the creation of an atmosphere of confidence between Germany and France. The game of hide-and-seek led nowhere.

Bonnet began his observations with the statement that the report of deliveries of arms to Red Spain across the Pyrenean frontier, and of the dispatch of 8,000 volunteers, alleged to have been conveyed across French soil to Red Spain on the basis of an agreement between Chautemps and the Ambassador of Red Spain in Paris—a report at first brought out by the *Agenzia Stefani* as a telegram from Paris, and to which he had already issued a *démenti*—was pure invention from beginning to end. He had summoned the representative of the *Agenzia Stefani* here in order to question him, and the latter had solemnly declared to him that for weeks he had not sent off such a message or anything similar. Hence Bonnet considered that this had been fabricated in Rome and had been furnished with a Paris stamp. He was abstaining from adding a comment to this but only wished to point out the clumsiness of the "fabricator" who had named Chautemps of all people, the chief protagonist of the policy of nonintervention, as the party who had negotiated with the Spanish Ambassador here. Unfortunately the Spanish Ambassador

had left for Moscow on August 1, and Chautemps lay ill in a small mountain health resort. All these fabrications of rumor and imagination would be robbed of point if the London resolutions were put into effect. The long silence of Salamanca was somewhat disquieting after Barcelona had agreed more than a fortnight ago. This was also incomprehensible inasmuch as Franco had repeatedly stated that he no longer needed the German and Italian volunteers, and was strong enough, with his 700,000 trained men, to conduct the war to a victorious conclusion without foreign help. His, Bonnet's, point of view regarding the Spanish question remained unchanged, in spite of all persecutions by the Left and other domestic difficulties. He firmly adhered to the policy of nonintervention, and would welcome any *régime d'ordre* in Spain.

As regards the attitude of the German and French press, he could affirm with satisfaction that our press agreement was working out favorably, and that at the present time there was a sensible relaxation of tension extending to most fields. People were particularly impressed by the intelligent appreciation in the German press of the visit of the British King. If I had any complaints regarding the newspapers here which he was in a position to influence, he was always at my disposal; but he did not wish to conceal that he could undertake no action against Left Wing newspapers of the caliber of the *Humanité* and the *Populaire*.

The Foreign Minister then turned to the Sudeten German question and the mission of Runciman. He had already been invited by the British Government on June 25 to state his views regarding the latter, and in spite of the opinion, partly represented in his own Cabinet also, that the matter in question constituted an intrusion into the domestic affairs of Czechoslovakia, he at once agreed. The Russians had even twice sent M. Souritz<sup>74</sup> to him unsuccessfully to advise him strongly against the sending of Runciman, who was not only adviser but, in the final analysis, arbitrator in the Sudeten German-Czech conflict. He, Bonnet, however, still considered the sending of Runciman to be right and proper, in spite of the fact that the Czechs sought to represent him as a pronounced friend of Germany. We would have to go to the extreme bounds of compromise in the Sudeten German question, even though this did not suit the Czechs. Looked at theoretically, the following possibilities might result from Runciman's visit:

- 1) Both parties, the Czechs, as well as the Sudeten Germans, might be satisfied with the solution. This possibility was, however, as good as excluded.

<sup>74</sup> Russian Ambassador in Paris.

- 2) The Czechs might be agreeable, the Sudeten Germans not. Then ways and means of reaching an agreement would have to be sought,  
 3) the Sudeten Germans might be agreeable, the Czechs, however, not. Then the Czechs would have to be induced to accept Runciman's plan notwithstanding.

In general I maintained a receptive attitude to Bonnet's observations, but repeatedly pointed out that I personally approached all Czech promises with the greatest skepticism, and that only a radical solution would ensure a lasting peace in the heart of Europe, while any compromise solution would always tear open again the old wounds. In spite of all my references to the grave consequences which might result from further Czech provocation, the Foreign Minister displayed pronounced optimism. He described to me in this connection the extraordinarily favorable impression which General Le Rond had received during his visit to Berchtesgaden,<sup>75</sup> and during which the possibility of a peaceful solution of the Sudeten German problem had been very much in the foreground. The Foreign Minister concluded by expressing his desire, which he had repeatedly put to me, that the clarification of the Sudeten German question might become the prelude to conversations on all pending questions in which we were interested.

Finally, I would like to correct the statement of *Le Journal* by saying that not a word was spoken of the Russian-Japanese conflict during the conversation, and that I expressed no opinion on the Runciman Mission.

H. WELCZECK

No. 346

139/125506-08

*The British Foreign Secretary (Halifax) to the British Ambassador in Germany (Henderson)*<sup>76</sup>

MEMORANDUM TO HIS MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR, BERLIN

1. The Prime Minister and I have been reflecting upon the conversation which I had with Captain Wiedemann last month, with particular reference to the steps which the German and British Governments might be able to take not merely to ensure<sup>76a</sup> the best possible relations between their two countries but also to bring about such an appeasement of the international situation as would make for an all-round economic and political improvement. We have real-

<sup>75</sup> Cf. document No. 289, p. 484.

<sup>76</sup> Text in English in the original.

<sup>76a</sup> Presumably "ensure" is intended.

ized, as we feel sure the German Chancellor must, that progress on these lines is hindered by the present state of tension that surrounds the Czechoslovak question.

2. As the German Chancellor will be aware, we have recognized that there is a real problem here. He will know, too, that we have not been concerned to express any opinion as to the lines upon which the question ought to be settled. Our interest in the subject is based upon our conviction that it is a potential source of danger to European peace, and we have been anxious to assist in finding a peaceful solution. Accordingly, we have consistently exercised our influence at Prague to facilitate the early discovery of such a solution which of course must be one to give satisfaction to the legitimate aspirations of the Sudeten section of the population. Lord Runciman's Mission as an independent investigator and mediator will, we hope, prove what it was intended to be, namely, a practical and effective factor in enabling such a solution to be arrived at, and we were particularly pleased to note that Lord Runciman received a warm welcome from all parties in Czechoslovakia. The fact that this Mission was made the subject of no hostile comment in Germany had encouraged us in the view we had already formed from my conversation with the German Chancellor last year and from what Captain Wiedemann had said to me quite recently, that Herr Hitler, like His Majesty's Government, desired to see the Czechoslovak question settled appropriately, but by peaceful and amicable methods.

3. This hopeful attitude on our part has been shaken recently by the behavior of the German press, which, as it seems to us, has been going out of its way to whip up public opinion to a state of dangerous exasperation over every incident, occurring either in Czechoslovakia or on the frontier.

4. On the top of this, and following upon the decision to complete the system of western fortifications in the shortest possible time, comes the news that it is intended to bring an unusual number of formations of the German Army up to war strength for special training next month and to prolong thereafter the service of men who would normally be released. Although the British Military Attaché has been very courteously informed of these measures, he has not been given any explanation of their necessity at this particular-juncture other than that they are intended to test the efficiency of the war organization.

5. Our comment on this must be that such abnormal and unusual efforts made at such a moment cannot fail to be interpreted as a threatening gesture toward Czechoslovakia. In our view they will be bound to increase the feeling of tension throughout Europe gen-



erally and may well lead to such a deterioration in the situation as might compel the Czechoslovak Government to regard themselves as menaced and to feel impelled, therefore, for their part, to take whatever precautionary measures may be open to them. The result of all this upon the Runciman Mission could hardly fail to be disastrous. The almost certain consequences would be that all chance of successful mediation would be destroyed and the efforts of the British Government to find a peaceful solution would be brought to naught. A situation might rapidly arise in which—to quote the words I used in my letter of July 28 to Herr von Ribbentrop<sup>77</sup>—“It is no exaggeration to say that the peace of every one of the Great Powers of Europe might be endangered.”

6. We have no doubt that some, at any rate, of these considerations must be in the mind of the German Chancellor, and that he has taken his decisions for reasons that seem to him good.

7. Yet we do not hesitate to ask him to consider again whether it is really necessary to run such grave and incalculable risks and, incidentally, to endanger and perhaps even destroy the prospects of a resumption before long of the conversations between our two Governments.

8. So far as we know, no irrevocable steps have yet been taken, and we therefore would appeal to Herr Hitler not to do anything which might sterilize Lord Runciman's Mission and prematurely and unnecessarily create a fresh crisis in Europe. It seems to us that it should be possible for the Chancellor so to modify his military measures as to avoid the danger that we foresee, and we would accordingly urge him with all possible earnestness to take this course.

HALIFAX

AUGUST 11, 1938.

### No. 347

F17/284-86

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann)*

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, August 12, 1938.

The British Ambassador notified me that he intended visiting me at 7:30 this evening and added that the matter in question was serious. He called on me at the appointed time and stated that he had today received two copies of a memorandum from Lord Halifax<sup>78</sup> by special courier and had been instructed to have one copy trans-

<sup>77</sup> Document No. 323, p. 522.

<sup>78</sup> Document No. 346, *supra*.

mitted to the Führer and the other to the Reich Foreign Minister. It concerned the German military measures now in progress. I interrupted the Ambassador at this point and told him I was astonished he should touch on this matter as, indeed, the British Military Attaché was accurately informed as to the setting up of reserve formations, etc. Henderson said that this was known to his Government and was also mentioned in the memorandum which he asked me to read. After the reading of the memorandum I told the Ambassador that I was not the person to whom the document was addressed, but that, for myself personally, I must flatly reject his step. The Ambassador asked in this connection how I interpreted the word "reject." I replied that I interpreted it as meaning to decline to conduct a conversation with him regarding German military measures. I could easily counter by questioning him on the British air maneuvers.

The Ambassador then made a few further observations regarding the purport of the memorandum. Germany had a perfect right to take such military measures as she pleased. However, what caused the British Government anxiety and had led them to take this step was the time chosen and the effect which our military measures must have on Czechoslovakia. I repeated that I must flatly decline a discussion on this subject. The Ambassador for his part then drew attention to the fact—as I had already done at the beginning—that it was the Führer to whom the document was addressed. He hoped, nevertheless, that the Führer would find an opportunity to modify the military measures now in progress in accordance with the wishes expressed in the memorandum. In this connection I repeated that I could naturally make no statement on behalf of the Führer, but that I was convinced that there could be no question of any action of this sort.

I then asked the Ambassador what were the real circumstances regarding the transmission of the memorandum to Lammers, the Reich Minister. The Ambassador said that he had complied with the instructions given him by Lord Halifax to cause the memorandum to be transmitted to the Führer by calling on Lammers, just before visiting me, and handing him the copy intended for the Führer. I expressed to the Ambassador my extreme astonishment at this procedure.

Sir Nevile Henderson said in conclusion that it was Lord Halifax's wish that the step should remain absolutely secret. No one had been informed of it, not even the French Government. Finally, the Ambassador again touched on the rumors circulating in the Diplomatic Corps. He said that M. François-Poncet was decidedly uneasy but

had not mentioned details. His conversation with the Czech Minister had followed similar lines.

WOERMANN

BERLIN, August 12, 1938.

No. 348

337/197353-54

*Unsigned Foreign Ministry Minute on the British Memorandum of August 12, 1938*

[c. AUGUST 12, 1938.]

1) *The external form of the new British document.*

a) The paper handed over is not in the form of a memorandum directed to the Führer or the Reich Government, but is, as the heading expressly states, a memorandum directed to the British Ambassador. The fact that it bears the signature of the British Foreign Minister tallies with this.

b) It does not follow from the wording of the document that the memorandum directed to the Ambassador, that is, the instruction as such primarily intended for him, was to be handed over to the German authorities. On the other hand, the Ambassador stated by word of mouth, when handing it over in the Foreign Ministry, that he had received two copies of the memorandum with the instructions to have one delivered to the Führer and the other to the Reich Foreign Minister.

2) *The textual character of the document.*

As regards contents the document has not the character of a diplomatic intervention, but the character of a personal appeal to the Führer which, from its wording, does not originate with the British Foreign Minister alone, but with the British Premier and Foreign Minister jointly. It makes no demands and avoids the form of direct threats. It expresses, however, and indeed in the most urgent manner, the request to modify the measures ordered without signifying in detail what these modifications should be.

3) *The manner of executing the démarche.*

a) The Ambassador carried out the *démarche* by first delivering to the Reich Minister, Lammers, the copy intended for the Führer, and only later handing over in the Foreign Ministry the copy intended for the Reich Foreign Minister. It is not clear whether he was instructed from London to carry out the *démarche* in this manner, or whether this procedure was adopted on his own initiative.

b) In accordance with existing usage we cannot simply deny a foreign Ambassador the right of carrying out the instructions of his Government directly with the Head of State. We can, however, demand that he should in such cases *first* address himself to the Foreign Minister or his office, and acquaint them with his intended step, so that the Foreign Minister may have the opportunity of obtaining a decision from the Head of State as to whether he wishes to accept the intended direct *démarche* or not. Nor can the Ambassador excuse himself by the fact that he did not deliver the document directly to the Führer, but to the head of the Reich Chancellery. On the contrary, this makes his oversight still more serious, as he cannot even adduce in his defense the argument that, owing to the especial urgency and importance of the matter, and owing to the personal absence of the Reich Foreign Minister, he had been forced to insist on an immediate and direct conversation with the Führer personally.

## No. 349

28/18778-80

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 281 of August 12

PRAGUE, August 12, 1938.

With reference to report A. III. 2. h. of August 10.<sup>79</sup>

1. Discussions between Sudeten German Party delegation and Lord Runciman were continued on August 11. Runciman requested explanations to Sudeten German Party's memorandum of August 9 (to be compared with report A. III. 2. h. paragraph 2 of August 10). Further, as Runciman had expressed the wish to make contacts with Sudeten German circles outside of the delegation, the names of persons suitable for this purpose were mentioned to him. Runciman attached special importance to meeting Henlein. On instruction of K. H. Frank, delegation at first answered evasively. Today, however, meeting was proposed for middle of next week in the country.

K. H. Frank today pays Runciman courtesy visit.

Next discussion between Sudeten German Party delegation and Runciman presumably on August 16.

2. On August 10 conversation took place between Kundt and Premier regarding *modus procedendi* for further negotiations. Hodza, who made an attempt to push the negotiations off on the

<sup>79</sup> Document No. 344, p. 544, and footnote 70 thereto.

Parliamentary committee, finally recognized Kundt's view that only a committee of political Ministers could be considered as opposite party to the Sudeten German Party in the negotiations. Kundt further insisted that, for the time being, only the basis for the solution of the Sudeten German problem should be discussed and not questions of detail.

On August 11 the conference took place between the Sudeten German Party delegation on the one side and the committee of political Ministers and the Coalition committee on the other. Hodza read out the Government's statement of attitude to the Sudeten German Party's memorandum of June 7, the contents of which did not go beyond the Government's proposals (Statute and Law for Organization of Self-Administration) and was therefore unsatisfactory. The Premier expressed his hope for the reconciliation of the opposing viewpoints.

Next session contemplated for August 17. Sudeten German Party delegation wishes to deliver Hodza on the 17th a reply in writing to the Government's statement of attitude regarding Sudeten German Party's memorandum of June 7. Prospects of the final written draft of this statement of attitude have been held out by the Premier. It is alleged that this reply will be made available to Runciman beforehand—on August 16. By introduction of a special exchange of documents regarding its memorandum of June 7 the Sudeten German Party pursues tactical design of drawing out negotiations.

3. The Hungarians were today received by Runciman and they handed over a detailed memorandum. The Poles have so far not approached Runciman. Contrary to telegraphed report No. 274 of August 9,<sup>80</sup> Slovaks have drawn up and signed draft of bill of autonomy but have not yet sent it to Parliament. Reasons for this are said to lie in differences of opinion inside the Slovak People's Party.

4. Ashton-Gwatkin informed me at a party where we met that Runciman welcomed fact that direct and objective discussions between Government and Sudeten German Party were now initiated, and that agreement had been reached regarding terms of reference of negotiations. Runciman would for the time being not intervene in these discussions. Rumors that His Lordship intended going to London to make a report were incorrect.

HENCKE

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<sup>80</sup> Not printed.

## No. 350

139/125522-24

*Foreign Ministry Memorandum*

SECRET

BERLIN, August 13, 1938.

## MEMORANDUM

This morning Dr. Kier,<sup>81</sup> who was announced by a telegram from the Prague Legation, called at the Foreign Ministry. As is known, he has been appointed by the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*, in concurrence with the Foreign Ministry, as adviser in constitutional law to the Sudeten German Party during the present negotiations with the Czech Government.

Dr. Kier referred in his report to certain factual and personal contradictions which had arisen of late, and which he feared would embarrass the Party in their negotiations with the Czech Government and with Lord Runciman. For 8 weeks Karl Hermann Frank had completely isolated Konrad Henlein from the members of the negotiating delegation—that is, first and foremost, from Kundt. During this time no one besides Karl Hermann Frank knew the whereabouts of Henlein. This, however, he did not disclose, so that during the whole intervening period neither Kundt nor members of the negotiating delegation had the opportunity to expound their views on the state of the negotiations to Henlein himself. These reports, in fact, passed exclusively through Frank. It was not known in what form this was done.

At the internal discussions Frank adopted a completely negative point of view. He dropped such remarks as: "It is all the same what is negotiated. Everything will turn out differently." In addition he repeatedly expressed the view that in his opinion and "according to certain special information" in his possession there could be no question of a settlement of the Sudeten German question except by force. The other members of the executive of the Sudeten German Party had not yet succeeded in inducing Frank to give further indications as to what this special information concerned, to which he had already made repeated reference. They had the impression—especially Kundt—that, as far as they were concerned, if this information actually had serious foundations, further negotiation was naturally pointless. They, of course, fear that, in view of the express readiness to negotiate which the Czechs had emphasized since the arrival of His Lordship in Prague, Runciman and others would soon gain the impression that the Sudeten Germans did not desire a peaceful settlement, and would therefore automatically place on

<sup>81</sup> See footnote 98, p. 487.

their shoulders the responsibility for a breakdown of the negotiations. Hence it would follow that—contrary to what Kundt had hitherto attempted—the Sudeten German Party were trying, by continuing negotiations and by ever renewed emphasis on their readiness to negotiate, not to prejudice the solution of the Sudeten German problem in any way and hence, also, not to compel the Reich to take decisions perhaps at a time undesirable to it.

It seems to Dr. Kier necessary that, in order to reestablish a uniform line of policy in the present extremely difficult position, it should be ascertained whether instructions formerly given to the effect that the Sudeten German Party were to negotiate were still valid, and what lay behind the special information and instructions to which Karl Hermann Frank referred, and which seemed to lead in another direction. Dr. Kier personally takes the view that the Czechs are not to be given the opportunity of placing on our shoulders the responsibility for a possible breakdown of the negotiations. He is, moreover, of the opinion that, even with a 100 percent fulfillment of the eight demands laid down by Henlein at Karlsbad, there still remain sufficient points of tension between the Czechs and Germans to serve as a pretext for a settlement by force at any time if necessity should so demand.

BERLIN, August 13, 1938.

### No. 351

139/125497-98

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

No. 283 of August 13

PRAGUE, August 13, 1938—2:15 p.m.

Received August 13, 1938—2:40 p.m.

For the Under State Secretary personally.

Lord Allan of Hurtwod,<sup>82</sup> who is at present in Prague, yesterday invited K. H. Frank, Kundt, and a few other Sudeten German Party politicians to an exchange of views. Frank and Kundt informed me of its content independently of one another as follows:

Lord Allan repeatedly addressed the urgent request to Frank that the Sudeten German Party should, during Lord Runciman's stay in Prague, avoid anything which might lead to conflict as regards domestic or foreign policy. If Germany should attack Czechoslovakia

<sup>82</sup> Lord Allen of Hurtwood (cr. 1932); member of executive, League of Nations Union; treasurer and chairman of Independent Labor Party, 1922-26; director of *Daily Herald*, 1925-30.

while Runciman was negotiating, Britain would take military action against Germany. Lord Allan professes to have made the same declaration to Ribbentrop, the Foreign Minister, a few days ago. Lord Runciman had further stated that in the event of a failure of the Runciman Mission the question would arise of a four-power conference between Germany, France, Britain, and Italy for the solution of the Sudeten German problem. According to Kundt's observations, which went beyond the statements of Frank, Lord Allan had set forth in this connection the alternatives: four-power conference or war, which last, however, Great Britain did not want. Lord Allan wished to know from Frank what position the Sudeten German Party took up with regard to the idea of a four-power conference. Frank had answered that this was a question beyond the competence of the Sudeten Germans and only concerned the Great Powers. He was, moreover, skeptical as to whether a four-power conference could accomplish anything more than Lord Runciman had. In this connection Kundt asked Lord Allan for information as to whether Britain intended, and was in a position, to carry her point regarding settlement of the Sudeten German problem against other interested states, also, during the four-power conference. Lord Allan's answer had merely been: "Britain's military might grows stronger from month to month." Frank had finally declared to Lord Allan that the Runciman Mission represented the last attempt to bring about a Sudeten German-Czech settlement; if, however, it was unsuccessful, the Sudeten Germans would be forced to lay claim to the right of self-determination and to demand a plebiscite. His Lordship did not discuss further this remark.

Frank urgently requested that more detailed information on the conversation between the Reich Minister and Lord Allan regarding the Sudeten German question should be made available to him through the Legation by telegram.

HENCKE



No. 352

139/125499

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 284 of August 13

PRAGUE, August 13, 1938—2:45 p.m.

Received August 13, 1938—4:40 p.m.

In continuation of telegram No. 281 of the 12th.<sup>83</sup>

1) K. H. Frank stated during courtesy visit to Lord Runciman yesterday that Henlein wished to meet him on Thursday, August 18, at Prince Max Hohenlohe's<sup>84</sup> seat, Schloss Rothaus [*sic*]. During the conversation, which lasted three-quarters of an hour, basic questions of the Sudeten German-Czech complex of problems were further discussed. In the course of the conversation Runciman asked Frank whether differences of opinion existed between the Sudeten German Party delegation and the Party executive. Frank categorically affirmed complete agreement.

2) The Sudeten German Party have not yet received written statement of Czechoslovak Government's attitude to Sudeten German Party's memorandum. The Sudeten German Party delegation will submit their answer to this, if at all, to Runciman on Tuesday, August 16, and to the Government committee on Wednesday, August 17, but only verbally.

HENCKE

No. 353

2369/494792-93

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

PRAGUE, August 13, 1938.

A. III. 1. b. 27

(Pol. IV 5412)

With reference to telegram No. 272 of the 7th of this month.<sup>85</sup>

Subject: Statement made by Soviet Minister in Prague to the President.

The reports which have reached the Polish Minister here, according to which the Soviet Minister in Prague has declared to the President and the Czech Government that the Soviet Government would,

<sup>83</sup> Document No. 349, p. 554.

<sup>84</sup> See footnote 12, p. 402.

<sup>85</sup> Document No. 341, p. 541.

in the event of a war with Germany, honor her obligation of assistance, have also been confirmed by another source.

Thus, a few days ago, the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister<sup>86</sup> informed the Polish Minister that the Soviet Minister had recently assured him repeatedly of Moscow's loyalty to the alliance. I have also heard of such moves by the Soviet Minister from another source which has hitherto proved reliable. According to this source M. Alexandrovsky even reproached the Czechoslovak Government with displaying too little determination in the conflict with Germany. Such an attitude was not in keeping with the facts of the situation and would not be understood by public opinion in the Soviet Union. It was dangerous that a mediator from the British Government, who were in no wise interested in a success on the part of France, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union, should be allowed to interfere in these matters during the period of embittered conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia. Add to this that, in the last resort, not only Czechoslovakia but also the Soviet Union would be endangered, for Poland would certainly take the side of Germany if the Allied Powers continued to display such indecision.

The Czechoslovak Government replied to these *démarches* by saying that in their attitude toward Germany they were thoroughly conscious of their obligations to their allies, and were directing every effort toward creating the necessary conditions for bringing mutual assistance into effect in case of war. As an instance, traffic communications between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union would, with the help of France, be assured by treaties which would be concluded in the near future between Czechoslovakia and Rumania.

HENCKE

#### No. 354

139/125500-02

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, August 13, 1938.

This afternoon I invited the British Ambassador to call upon me and spoke to him in the following terms, in accordance with my instructions:

With a view to avoiding complications, the Reich Foreign Minister requested him to refrain in the future from any repetition of the incorrect method which had been adopted for delivering the memorandum destined for the Führer. The method chosen was not usual here. The Ambassador had, of course, the right to propose an audi-

<sup>86</sup> Dr. Kamil Krofta.

ence with the Führer. The way to the Führer, however, lay solely through the Reich Foreign Minister. He (Henderson) said he wished to say to me in confidence, asking that it might be passed on to the Reich Foreign Minister, that he, too, did not consider the method correct. Yesterday, owing to the instructions which he had received by telephone, he had been pressed for time and had in consequence at once telephoned to Reich Minister Lammers and had then gone to see him. He had, in any case, already intended to draw the attention of Lord Halifax by means of a private letter to the fact that the method adopted was not correct. An explanation of the procedure lay in the fact that it amounted to a kind of reply to the Führer for the Wiedemann visit in London, which had also not followed the usual diplomatic course. Originally Lord Halifax had intended to instruct him, the Ambassador, to bring the matter before the Führer himself by word of mouth. This, however, had subsequently been abandoned, as this form of procedure would have attracted too much attention. Finally, Sir Nevile said to me that in future he would adhere to the correct method.

I then said to the Ambassador, speaking very seriously, that for the Führer, who at the moment was inaccessible, to take cognizance of the memorandum had been rendered entirely superfluous by the fact that he would already have learned of it from a London Havas report of the Luxembourg wireless station. He had described the document to me as a particularly secret communication intended for the Führer, which had not even been imparted to the French Government, and now the Havas Agency reported its contents from London. We absolutely failed to understand these methods. I gave Henderson the Luxembourg announcement to read. While still reading it, he at once said the announcement could not in any circumstances refer to the step which had been taken yesterday. Considerations of time rendered it quite impossible. He also knew that in London the matter had been surrounded with the greatest secrecy and that only Lord Halifax and perhaps a very few of his colleagues had been informed about it. After a further examination of the report he said that from the subject matter, too, it could have nothing to do with yesterday's step. The first two sentences of the report obviously referred to the inquiry which the Embassy had addressed to the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht* through the British Military Attaché and to the answer which they had given. The following sentences obviously contained conjectures. He had told nobody here about the information which the Military Attaché<sup>87</sup> had received

<sup>87</sup> Col. F. N. Mason-MacFarlane. For the German account of this information, see document No. 358, p. 566.

from Supreme Headquarters and he had expressly imposed the duty of silence upon his Military Attaché even vis-à-vis the French Military Attaché. He could only imagine that the report had reached Paris from London and that indiscretions had then been launched from a French source via London. But in any case, he deeply deplored the affair. He realized how greatly such reports increased the difficulties. In this connection he expressed himself in the most drastic terms regarding his views upon the value of the press. I answered the Ambassador that his version did not seem to me entirely certain, but that, be that as it may, it was another case of a press maneuver directed against Germany. He, of course, knew the view that we took of these repeated attempts from London to make mischief.

WOERMANN

No. 355

139/125520-21

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the  
Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, August 14, 1938.

Submitted to the Reich Minister.

Dr. Kier,<sup>90</sup> who is not himself a Sudeten German, plays the role of an observer, who is not involved in the disputes within the ranks of the Sudeten Germans. His judgment of the situation can be regarded as reliable. As recorded by Dr. Schmidt, representative of the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*, who was present at the conversation with Dr. Kier, it corresponds with the view of the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*.

I make the following proposal:

- 1) If Henlein considers it right to communicate with other members of the Sudeten German Party and the negotiating delegation only through the agency of Frank, we here ought not to interfere.
- 2) Hitherto the negotiating delegation has received instructions, transmitted by the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*, to give the impression of conducting negotiations seriously. These instructions must be adhered to alike for the negotiations with the Czechoslovak Government and for the conversations with Runciman. Dr. Kier might be empowered to turn this to account in dealing with the Sudeten Germans.
- 3) A difficulty lies in the fact that Dr. Frank pretends to be in possession of special, apparently divergent instructions, so that possibly a further clarification from higher quarters would be necessary. For this purpose, however, Dr. Kier should not be employed as agent. If necessary, the results of this appropriate ruling must be

<sup>90</sup> See footnote 98, p. 487.

communicated to the persons concerned by *Obergruppenführer Lorenz*.

4) In the telegram now before you, No. 283 from Prague,<sup>91</sup> Frank asks for a communication about the conversation between yourself and Lord Allen. I request instructions upon this to be transmitted by telegraph to the Prague Legation for Frank.

WOERMANN

No. 356

337/197358-59

*Draft of Telegram From the German Foreign Ministry to the German Ambassador in Great Britain (Dirksen)*<sup>91a</sup>

Telegram

No.

BERLIN, August , 1938.

The British Ambassador handed over a memorandum<sup>91b</sup> on Friday evening<sup>92</sup> in which Chamberlain and Halifax addressed an appeal to the Führer to modify the contemplated autumn military maneuvers of which the British Military Attaché here has recently been informed. The Ambassador carried out this *démarche* by first of all calling on Lammers, the Reich Minister, and handing him a copy of the memorandum for the Führer, and then, later, by delivering to me the copy intended for the Reich Foreign Minister. He told me verbally at the same time that he had been instructed to transmit a copy to the Führer and a second copy to the Reich Foreign Minister.

At the instance of the Reich Foreign Minister I asked the Ambassador to visit me during the afternoon of today, Sunday, and declared to him that the procedure he had followed of first addressing himself to the Head of the Reich Chancellery and then, only afterward, to the Foreign Ministry—in fact, of addressing himself to the Reich Chancellery at all without passing through Foreign Ministry channels—was not correct, and that the Foreign Minister requested that, in order to avoid complications, he should refrain from such a procedure in future.

(Here might be inserted the step which we have taken in consequence of the Havas Agency's announcement.)<sup>92a</sup>

(Here Henderson's answer might be inserted.)

Please call on Lord Halifax or his deputy and make a similar communication to him.

<sup>91</sup> Document No. 351, p. 557.

<sup>91a</sup> This draft, initialed by Ribbentrop, formed the basis for the actual telegram signed by Woermann, document No. 357, *infra*.

<sup>91b</sup> Document No. 346, p. 549.

<sup>92</sup> i.e., August 12.

<sup>92a</sup> For details of this announcement, made over Radio Luxembourg, see document No. 357, *infra*.

At the same time please also mention in the course of the conversation that we were surprised that Chamberlain, in a private letter addressed by him to von Dirksen, the Ambassador, on August 3,<sup>93</sup> had among other things expressed the desire that Herr von Dirksen should request the Führer, if he saw the latter, to give his full attention to the contents of the private letter recently addressed by Lord Halifax to the Reich Foreign Minister. We were of the opinion that this was an encroachment upon our internal relations with the Head of State, an encroachment which we regarded as the more inadmissible, in that it implied to a certain extent that our Head of State was not kept sufficiently informed by the Reich Minister.

Please maintain strict secrecy regarding the British step here and our step there.

R[IBBENTROP]

No. 357

139/125513-16

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy in  
Great Britain*

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, August 14, 1938.

For the Chargé d'Affaires personally.

On Friday evening British Ambassador handed in a memorandum in which Chamberlain and Halifax addressed urgent appeal to Führer to modify the planned military measures of which British Military Attaché<sup>93a</sup> here has recently been informed. Ambassador's *démarche* took form of first calling on Reich Minister Lammers and handing him a copy of the memorandum for the Führer and then later handing me the copy intended for Reich Foreign Minister. On that occasion he informed me verbally that he had been instructed to transmit one copy to the Führer and the second copy to the Reich Foreign Minister.

As instructed by the Reich Foreign Minister, I invited the Ambassador yesterday, Saturday afternoon, to call and explained to him that we did not consider the procedure followed by him, of first addressing himself to the Chief of the Reich Chancellery and only after to the Foreign Ministry, to be correct and that, in order to avoid complications, we wished that he would in future abstain from such procedure.

<sup>93</sup> Document No. 333, p. 532.

<sup>93a</sup> Col. F. N. Mason-MacFarlane.

I request you as soon as possible to call upon Lord Halifax or his representative and make a statement in that sense.

I would observe, solely for your personal information, that Henderson showed complete understanding that method adopted was not correct. He did not fully reveal how far the form of carrying out his instructions to transmit the memorandum to the Führer had been prescribed in detail by London. He explained his mode of procedure by pressure of time and pointed out rather in the course of conversation that step represented a kind of answer to the declarations made by Wiedemann in London, which also had not followed the usual diplomatic channels.

In carrying out your instructions I request you to mention quite casually that we were surprised that in a private letter addressed by him on August 3<sup>94</sup> to Ambassador von Dirksen, Chamberlain had among other things made the request that Herr von Dirksen might, when he saw the Führer, ask him to give his full attention to the contents of the private letter recently addressed by Lord Halifax to the Reich Foreign Minister. We were of opinion that this was an encroachment upon our internal conduct of affairs with the Head of the State, an encroachment which we regard as all the more inadmissible as it contained in some measure the imputation that the information furnished to the Head of State by the Reich Foreign Minister was inadequate.

During the conversation on Saturday afternoon I further drew Henderson's attention to the fact that early on Saturday a Havas report was circulated from London, which we had first received over the Luxembourg radio, according to which British Government had been making inquiries in Berlin about German military measures. Report then continued that according to "official statements, so far unconfirmed, representatives of British Government had expressed the opinion that a dispersion both in space and time of the individual maneuvers was desirable in view of the tenseness of the international situation."

Impression here was that report represented an indiscretion, albeit incorrect as to facts, over Henderson's step, which he himself describes as very secret. Henderson took the view that considerations of time and content made it impossible that report could relate to his step; it represented rather an indiscretion launched from French sources in connection with the inquiry addressed by British Military Attaché to Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht*. I replied to Ambassador that, however that might be, we

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\* See document No. 333, p. 532.

were now faced with another attempt from London to make mischief. Kindly give expression to this in London.

Please keep British step here and your own step strictly secret.

WOERMANN

No. 358

139/125526, 125529

*Memorandum From the War Ministry With Covering Note From the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

SECRET

BERLIN, August 15, 1938.

With reference to the British memorandum of August 12 the annexed memorandum has been prepared by the War Ministry, from which it is clear what communications of a military character were made to the British Military Attaché at the beginning of this month.

WEIZSÄCKER

[Enclosure]

MEMORANDUM

Gen. St. d. H.  
3. Abt. Att. Gr. I.

BERLIN, August 4, 1938.

The British Military Attaché, Colonel MacFarlane, called and made the following statement:

His Ambassador had asked for information on what scale the calling up of reservists would take place in the autumn, or to what extent plans for exercises had been prepared, which in their execution might give the impression of mobilization measures.

The Military Attaché received the reply from the deputy head of the Third Section, Colonel Fretter-Pico, that for this year the main exercises would be based on a rehearsal of calling up reservists of certain individual divisions and also, in continuation of this, on combined divisional exercises in the troop-training areas.

For reasons connected with training it was necessary this year to rehearse these details with a number of formations, particularly in former Austria, where we must gain experience in the functioning of the machine to assure ourselves of smooth working in combined action.

To the Military Attaché's question in how many divisions drafting would be carried out, it was replied that the plans were not yet settled, but that out of consideration for industry and for the



harvest calling up of reservists would certainly not take place in more than seven or eight divisions.

The Military Attaché drew attention to the dangerous nervousness which must certainly be expected to arise in other countries when the calling up of reservists was known and carried out, and observed that, while as a soldier he fully understood the necessity for practicing the calling up of reservists for the purpose of training, on the other hand in his view and in the view of his Ambassador it would entail a heavy psychological burden upon other countries and would hamper the British efforts to bring about a settlement in Czechoslovakia.

Colonel Fretter-Pico explained to the Military Attaché that the carrying out of the calling up of reservists in certain divisions was merely a measure forming part of the military training system, and that it seemed hardly possible to us that any psychological disturbance of public opinion in other countries could result from the adoption of such simple and, for the training of a newly formed army, perfectly normal measures.

The Military Attaché finally declared that he fully understood the aim of the measures planned to be purely normal military training and that he intended to inform his Ambassador to that effect.

By order:  
VON ALBEDYLL

Certified true copy: VON TIPPELSKIRCH.<sup>94a</sup>

### No. 359

1613/386974-77

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 2. allg.

PRAGUE, August 15, 1938.  
(Pol. I 1928 g (IV))

Subject: Political reports from the Czechoslovak Ministers in London and Paris.

From a source hitherto found reliable I have received confidentially the following information regarding the contents of certain political reports from the Czechoslovak Ministers in London and Paris which I pass on with all reserve:

In connection with the sending of Lord Runciman to Prague, the Czechoslovak Minister in London, Masaryk, has reported that His Lordship, like most British Conservatives,<sup>94b</sup> holds much the same opinion about the Czechoslovak question as Chamberlain. Accord-

<sup>94a</sup> A general Staff Officer in the Ministry of War, not to be confused with the Counselor in the German Embassy in the Soviet Union.

<sup>94b</sup> Lord Runciman was a Liberal, not a Conservative.

ing to this view, a kind of territorial autonomy might be given to the Germans. If, however, it were possible to make do only with the concessions that Prague is willing to make, the British Government would also have to agree to that if only to meet the wishes of France. It is further known that Lord Runciman will not until his return to England allow anything to be revealed as to his views on the settling of the conflict. He would eagerly collect all necessary material, and that both from the Czech Government and from the Sudeten German Party.

It further appears from a report of Minister Masaryk that the British Labor Party and a section of the Liberals continue to be in favor of defending the interests of Czechoslovakia. Notwithstanding this, Masaryk in his last report warns his Government against excessive optimism and against reposing their confidence in Britain. He enumerates the circumstances which might produce a material change in Britain's attitude, including

1. her own anxieties over the colonial problem and
2. the possible strengthening of Germany, for instance by securing Italy as an ally, which would create a risk for Britain of being in fact involved in a war with Germany on account of the Sudeten German question.

It further appears from the reports of Masaryk that President Beneš, together with his friends, Herriot, Blum, and Litvinov,<sup>95</sup> is occupied with the idea of the creation of an ideological front to fight against Germany. At the same time the British, and in some measure the French Government, too, do not show any wholehearted readiness to share the plans of Beneš. In response to energetic pressure by Beneš upon Masaryk to secure active intervention by the British Opposition against the opportunist policy of the Government, Masaryk communicated in a letter of July 31 last that, even if the plan of a preventive war against Germany entirely harmonized with the views of the British Opposition, Chamberlain and Halifax can beat the trumps in the hand of the Opposition by means of convincing counterarguments. In the sole interests of Britain they were at pains to localize the German-Czech conflict. If Britain, so they thought, were to take up irrevocably a manifestly irreconcilable position toward Germany, she would before all else invite the risk of Germany liquidating the Anglo-German agreement on naval armaments. This threat, even if it is not yet openly used, restrains the British Government from adopting a one-sided attitude in this conflict.

<sup>95</sup> Herriot was President of the French Chamber of Deputies; Blum, former French Prime Minister and Minister of Finance; Litvinov, Soviet People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

Moreover, the British Government have not yet lost hope of reaching an understanding with Germany in regard to other questions and, finally, in a question of such great importance as the Russian one. Finally, Masaryk expressed the opinion that the British were in any case too egotistical and, therefore, at the present they could not be entirely trusted, although, as it seemed, complete agreement had been reached between them and the French in the Sudeten German question. Masaryk expressed his regret that it was not possible to fulfill all the wishes of Beneš, although he had an almost complete success to report in the matter of attracting an important section of the British press to the side of Czechoslovakia.

My informant further claims to have learned of the contents of a letter from the former Premier Herriot to Beneš, in which Herriot informed Beneš that, in view of a conversation with Daladier, he could not reproach the French Government with indecision in the German-Czechoslovak conflict. The French Government was unswervingly on the watch in the interests of Prague. But the irresolute attitude of Britain and the whole involved political situation compelled Paris to make certain concessions to Germany which Britain held to be necessary. Herriot emphasized that until now it was unfortunately not known what attitude Italy would adopt if Germany were attacked by the Allied Powers. France was still suffering from the results of the treacherous policy of Laval,<sup>96</sup> which enabled Italy to grow stronger with the assistance of France in order then to throw herself on the side of France's enemies. Herriot again confirmed that the French Government intended to cover an important part of the expenses entailed upon Czechoslovakia by the last mobilization and that the French Government was searching for a way which would enable it to render assistance without this being publicly known.

The Czechoslovak Minister in Paris reports to Beneš in a private letter—Osusky has already made a practice of reporting to President Beneš without using the Foreign Ministry as his channel—that during a conversation with General Niessel<sup>97</sup> he had pointed out certain weaknesses in the French Army. General Niessel held that the formation of a coalition of France, Britain, and the Little Entente was quite indispensable for resolute action against Germany. The assistance of the Soviet Union was not to be counted upon, as the role of Poland was not yet known.

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<sup>96</sup> Laval was Prime Minister and Foreign Minister from June 1935 to January 1936.

<sup>97</sup> Gen. Henri Niessel, a retired French officer, who had been chief of the French Military Mission in Poland, 1920-22.

The condition of the French Army was at the moment inferior to what it had been before the formation of the Popular Front.

The gravity of the danger must first be made clear to the French people, for union to be restored and for the spirit of the Army to be revived. In Niessel's view it is a matter of the first importance to reach an understanding with Italy, for only if Italy were on the side of France would it be possible to deal with Germany or to have a final settlement with her.

HENCKE

No. 360

2129/464499-500

*The German Minister in Bulgaria (Rümelin)<sup>98</sup> to the German Foreign Ministry<sup>99</sup>*

SECRET

A 444/38

SOFIA, August 15, 1938.

(zu Pol. I 1922 g (IV))

Kisseiwanoff,<sup>1</sup> the Prime Minister, told me quite frankly as long ago as last spring, when during a conversation I objected to the rumor-mongering about May 21, that Stoyadinovich had informed him that it was impossible to help Czechoslovakia, and that he—Kisseiwanoff—shared this view.

The Prime Minister also said that if the question were allowed to mature, the outcome of the Sudeten German problem would be the same as that of the former Austrian question. This opinion of the Prime Minister, which from our point of view is very positive, is generally held here in Bulgaria, indeed all the more so as, despite their common racial origin, the Czechs are unpopular here and are honored with the designation "the Jews among the Slav peoples." Finally, the Bulgarians are impressed by the dynamic force of our foreign policy, as was specially shown by the enthusiastic approval accorded here to the Austrian *Anschluss*.

I do not know what the Bulgarians think about the prospects of the opponents in a world war arising out of the Czechoslovak question, but I have the feeling that they do not believe in such a war. I think I cannot only confirm the supposition that Bulgaria would not participate in a war, but also add to it by saying: "not in a war against us."

<sup>98</sup> Dr. Eugen Rümelin, German Minister in Sofia, March 1923–May 1939.

<sup>99</sup> This despatch was circularized to Missions abroad on August 24, 1938.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Georgi Klosselwanoff, Bulgarian Prime Minister and Foreign Minister from 1935 to 1940.

On the other hand, Bulgarian policy will shun any commitment which brings her into opposition with Great Britain. Alien as British ways, culture, and speech are to the Bulgarian—he does not know what to make of the British—even today he still respects British world power which, backed by American help, he considers would be decisive in any future war.

The King<sup>2</sup> has spoken with me quite frankly and repeatedly on this subject. He is of the opinion that, once Anglo-German antagonism ceases, there will be no further political problem in which we have an interest, which cannot be solved peacefully and in our favor.

It may be that historical memories of the past and of the Gladstone era play their part in the Bulgarian attitude to Great Britain. In any case this is an attitude which will have to be taken into account.

RÜMELIN

### No. 361

139/125525

*The German Minister in Rumania (Fabricius) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 158 of August 15

BUCHAREST, August 15, 1938—1 p.m.

Received August 15, 1938—2:30 p.m.

Foreign Minister Comnen informed me that the King had instructed him to express urgently to Beneš and Krofta, through Rumanian Minister in Prague, Rumania's wish that solution of Sudeten German problem, satisfactory to Germany, should be achieved. Instruction carried out by Minister. I could learn nothing from Comnen about answer of Beneš and Krofta.

Used the opportunity to put before Rumanian Foreign Minister substance of last secret instruction<sup>3</sup> by Reich Foreign Minister on guidance for my conversation. Comnen stated he understood seriousness of position; he would again speak with the Czechs in Bled.

FABRICIUS

<sup>2</sup> King Boris III succeeded his father on October 3, 1918.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 332, p. 529.

## No. 362

337/197385-86

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

LONDON, August 15, 1938—10:25 p.m.

No. 383 of August 15

Received August 16, 1938—2:10 a.m.

Have handed the statement as directed<sup>2a</sup> to the acting Under Secretary of State, Sir Orme Sargent, as Lord Halifax and Cadogan<sup>2b</sup> are absent from London.

1) Sir Orme in the first place confirmed that Henderson had been definitely instructed to transmit memorandum, which was intended as personal message to Führer, direct to Führer by quickest way possible. When I pointed out that Reich Chancellery and Foreign Ministry were adjacent to one another, so that the message would have reached the Führer just as quickly by the usual channel, Sargent attempted to explain Henderson's method of procedure by reference to the Ambassador's privilege of having immediate access to the Head of the State. In reply to my counterargument that according to this theory the German Ambassador in London could address himself to the King without having recourse to the Foreign Secretary, Sir Orme requested me "not to aggravate the difficult question of Protocol." He would bring my statement to the notice of Lord Halifax, who was coming to London tomorrow for one day.

2) Sargent represents Chamberlain's letter to Ambassador von Dirksen as a continuation of the conversation with the Prime Minister which Herr von Dirksen had requested before his departure. I interrupted Sargent with the correction that not the German Ambassador but Mr. Chamberlain had initiated this conversation without warning. Sargent continued, the Prime Minister had written to give Herr von Dirksen information about the Runciman plan, about which he had not yet been able to speak during the conversation, as everything was still in the balance. To my observation that it was "a question of (group mutilated) in our internal conduct of affairs with the Head of the State, and that it contained the imputation that the Head of the State received inadequate information," Sargent made no reply, but observed that no answer had yet been received to the letter of Lord Halifax to Reich Minister von Ribbentrop.

<sup>2a</sup> See document No. 357, p. 564.

<sup>2b</sup> Sir Alexander Cadogan, Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

3) The British Government first learned through Under State Secretary Woermann of the Havas report which he had heard from the Luxembourg wireless station. In itself the report was hard enough to understand. In the first paragraph a *Times* representative is cited as authority, and it is not certain who is meant by "British representatives" in the third paragraph. The report is in no way connected with the Henderson step. Perhaps an observation to the same effect may be meant which Henderson made a few days earlier in Berlin at lunch with Ambassador von Dirksen. I pointed out to Sargent that confidential conversations between Ambassadors, and in like manner official *démarches* of a delicate nature, were not fit matters to be passed on to the press. Sargent expressed his great regret at the slip and authorized me to transmit this statement to my Government.

The conversation closed with some remarks of Sargent's on the mission of Runciman, who was honorably striving to fulfill his difficult task "in a spirit of European outstrip [*sic*]."

TH. KORDT

### No. 363

2389/494823-27

*The German Minister in Rumania (Fabricius) to the German Foreign Ministry<sup>4</sup>*

Nr. 2890/38

BUCHAREST, August 17, 1938.

I A 13

(Pol. IV 5549)

Subject: Rumania in the event of a German-Czech conflict.

#### POLITICAL REPORT

The attitude of Rumania in a German-Czechoslovak conflict would, as far as can be foreseen, be as follows:

In any war in which she is involved, Rumania stands only to lose, she has nothing to gain. She is satiated within her frontiers, one might say oversatiated. This applies vis-à-vis Hungary as well as vis-à-vis Russia and Bulgaria. The territory of the State, covering 294,000 square kilometers, is if anything too sparsely populated with its 18½ million inhabitants, so that a loss of manpower as a result of war casualties would mean a severe setback for the country. Even at present sufficient agricultural labor can hardly be found in harvest time, so that soldiers have in many cases to be made available for the carrying in of the crops. The question is already constantly

<sup>4</sup>This document is initialed in the margin by Ribbentrop and Welzsäcker, and is stamped to the effect that the Führer had been informed of its content.

being discussed by those statesmen who are concerned with the national economy, whether it is expedient for Rumania to continue industrialization at the same tempo as hitherto, as this would mean a loss to agriculture of the labor so absolutely necessary to it. There is the additional fact that Rumania, if she can remain neutral, can make enormous profits by supplying the belligerents with mineral oil, pit props, grain, fats, etc.

If wisdom alone decides, Rumania will therefore have to make every effort not to be drawn into a conflict. And, according to statements repeatedly made by Rumanian statesmen, Rumania will try to follow this course. She will also endeavor to prevent the passage of Russian troops, if such a step is planned at all, and, like her ally Poland, will, in theory, resist the passage of Soviet aircraft. The fact that she does not possess the necessary anti-aircraft defenses to ward off a powerful force of Soviet Russian aircraft flying to Czechoslovakia is quite another matter, as is also the fact that, out of fear of being involved in the conflict, she might not have the courage to take open belligerent action by employing fighter squadrons against Soviet aircraft violating her territory.

This intention on the part of Rumania to remain neutral, which undoubtedly exists, might be altered by two circumstances. One would be, if the League of Nations declared Germany to be the aggressor. If, in that case, France and Britain decided on belligerent action or sanctions against Germany, Rumania, who is still faithful to the League of Nations, would associate herself with them. There is the additional fact that King Carol holds the conviction that, if Bolshevism does not emerge as the victor from a European or world war, it will be Great Britain whose power will in the end be victorious; therefore in his view it is advisable to be on the side of Great Britain.

The other circumstance would be the case of Hungarian intervention in the conflict. Rumania would be unwilling to fight against Hungary, but in the event of Hungary's attacking Czechoslovakia, she would fight or at least mobilize against Hungary. Rumania would do this in fulfillment of her obligations arising out of the Little Entente, therefore, of course, only in the case of an "unprovoked" attack by Hungary on Czechoslovakia.

I am of the opinion—I may add in parentheses—that then Yugoslavia would align herself with Rumania, and even that, should M. Stoyadinovich or Prince Regent Paul try to oppose this—the opposition in Yugoslavia is powerful and political murder is always possible—Yugoslavia would mobilize against Hungary.



In my opinion, therefore, it would be extremely advantageous for the localizing of such a conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia if Hungary's military aid, should this be necessary, were kept in reserve as long as possible.

King Carol, who is anxious to preserve peace for his country, has, as I have reported elsewhere,<sup>4a</sup> again instigated *démarches* vis-à-vis Beneš and Krofta recommending urgently to them the satisfactory settlement of the Sudeten German problem. I am firmly convinced that the representation of the danger to peace arising from an unsatisfactory solution of the problem is not without its effect on the Rumanian King and his Government, and that it will lead to further serious warnings to the Czech ally. This method will suffice only as long as the German-Czech conflict has not broken out openly.

For, from that moment onward, Rumania will adopt a waiting attitude until the special circumstances described above occur, which would result in this country's intervention.

There is the firm conviction here that France, by virtue of her Treaty of Alliance with Czechoslovakia, but also apart from this for reasons of prestige and "honor," cannot do otherwise than take up arms if Germany attacks Czechoslovakia. It is also firmly established in the minds of Rumanian statesmen that in this case Britain would not leave her French ally in the lurch. M. Comnen recently confirmed this to me verbally as his firm belief. It is generally thought here that French intervention is a certainty, despite the realization that this will bring about a European catastrophe.

The Jewish and Jewish-controlled Rumanian press will, of course, immediately range itself against Germany. As the press censorship will never dare, as can already be seen now, to ban articles favorable to the Czech and French allies, but will suppress utterances hostile to these countries, it will be extremely difficult for us to influence public opinion.

Men who dare to advocate our cause wholeheartedly and openly do not exist. Goga is dead and Codreanu in prison.<sup>5</sup> The "Iron Guard" is condemned to complete silence and is nonexistent at present.

Only rapid successes by us in battle, inactivity on the part of France and Britain, and the neutrality of Hungary can, in my opinion, prevent Rumania from committing the folly of allowing

<sup>4a</sup> See document No. 361, p. 571.

<sup>5</sup> M. Octavian Goga, Prime Minister from December 28, 1937, to February 10, 1938, died on May 7, 1938. His National Christian Party had been strongly anti-Semitic. M. Codreanu was leader of the Fascist "Iron Guard" and had been arrested on April 17, 1938, after the discovery of an Iron Guard plot to overthrow the Government.

herself to become involved in an armed conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia.

FABRICIUS

No. 364

28/18758

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Consulates at Brünn, Pressburg, and Kaschau*

Telegram

SECRET

PRAGUE, August 17, 1938.

To be decoded by the Head of the Mission personally.

Foreign Ministry informs us that authorities here wish if possible to secure evidence in your Consulate which would prove illegal activity on the part of the Consulate. Please destroy at once all incriminating evidence, especially any with military content. Branches under your jurisdiction are to be instructed accordingly, if necessary, through safe channels. Confirm by telegram that this has been carried out by August 20.

HENCKE

[Longhand note initialed by Hencke:] Note: Consul Lierau has been informed verbally. Consular Branch, Eger, to be informed on August 20, 1938. Herr Stechele<sup>5a</sup> informed verbally.

No. 365

139/125533

*The Chief of the Reich Chancellery (Lammers) to the Foreign Minister*

SECRET

BERLIN, August 17, 1938.

Rk. 384 A g.

DEAR HERR VON RIBBENTROP: I have today submitted to the Führer the "Memorandum to His Majesty's Ambassador, Berlin,"<sup>6</sup> handed to me by the British Ambassador on August 12 for transmission to the Führer. As the British Ambassador sent you a copy of the memorandum, as you informed me by telephone on August 12, I am not sending you the original.

The Führer has told me that he does not intend to take any action on this memorandum, but wishes to discuss the matter again with you.

<sup>6</sup> German Vice Consul at Eger. Dr. W. Lierau was Consul at Liberec (Reichenberg).

<sup>a</sup> Document No. 346, p. 549.

If the British Ambassador should again mention the subject to me, I shall merely tell him that the treatment of the matter is within the competence of the Foreign Ministry.

Heil Hitler!

Yours sincerely,

LAMMERS

No. 366

2369/494799-808

*Letter From the Representative of Konrad Henlein in Berlin  
(Bürger) to the Foreign Ministry*

FRIEDRICH BÜRGER,  
REPRESENTATIVE OF  
KONRAD HENLEIN.

BERLIN-ZEHLENDORF,  
Spandauerweg 162,  
August 17, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 5474)

To Counselor of Legation DR. ALTENBURG,  
*Foreign Ministry, Berlin.*

DEAR COUNSELOR: Enclosed for your confidential information are three reports which have reached me from Prague. Apart from yourself only one Government department has received these reports.

Heil Hitler!

Yours sincerely,

BÜRGER

[Longhand note:] The enclosed reports go direct from Bürger's office to the *Abwehr* (Admiral Canaris). They will not be passed to the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*. The contents represent the views of Karl Hermann Frank. Herr Bürger asked for specially confidential treatment. A[LTENBURG] August 17.

[Enclosure 1]

REPORT

In Prague at the present moment the following political events are of interest: on Thursday the delegation of the Sudeten German Party resumed the talks with the Government (Hodza, Frank, Derer, Cerny and six leaders of the Coalition parties), which continued as is known without result.

Simultaneously, talks go on all the time with Lord Runciman's staff or with Lord Runciman personally, and the British are informed accordingly of the conversations with the Government. One

already forms the impression that the British Mission is beginning to doubt its ability to achieve a peaceful solution.

The Sudeten German Party's tactics consist in cramming the British with information and with very copious documentary evidence in the form of memoranda, articles, and published literature.

At the first preliminary discussion on the trend of the information, K. H. Frank stated as the slogan of the delegation:

"It is the duty of the Sudeten German Party to convince His Lordship that the nationality problem in Czechoslovakia cannot be solved within the State, and that the Czechs are in no way prepared to make concessions of a kind that could lead to a real pacification of the State. His Lordship must take away with him the impression that the situation in this State is so confused and difficult that it cannot be cleared up by negotiation or diplomatic action, that the blame for this lies exclusively with the Czechs, and thus that the Czechs are the real disturbers of peace in Europe."

Hitherto the Sudeten German Party has turned greatly to our advantage the incidents in the German area (clashes, arrests, murder of Baierl,<sup>7</sup> etc.) and in particular the manifesto of the Czechoslovak Officers' Association,<sup>8</sup> published yesterday.

In order not to give rise to the impression that the Sudeten German Party is playing a double game and that the delegation is not in harmony with the Party leaders, but in particular because Runciman's wish to meet K. H. Frank was learned in a roundabout way, K. H. Frank visited Lord Runciman yesterday (Friday) in the Alcron Hotel and had a three-quarters-of-an-hour conversation with him.

In this conversation Frank again expressly proclaimed the full accord between delegation and Party leaders, explained the necessity for a full, fundamental, and speedy solution on the basis of the eight Karlsbad points, and defined the whole action as *the last attempt* of Sudeten Germanism to reach a peaceful solution within the State.

Lord Runciman then expressed an urgent desire to meet Konrad Henlein as soon as possible and wanted to have a meeting with him as early as Sunday (August 14) or Monday (August 15). As in view of this the original intention of introducing Konrad Henlein only at the final and decisive moment cannot be altogether adhered to without appearing rude or suspicious, Konrad Henlein will there-

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<sup>7</sup> Baierl was a Sudeten German workman killed in a brawl between German Social Democrats and members of the Sudeten German Party at Glaswalder in northern Bohemia on August 8.

<sup>8</sup> An appeal published in the *Officers' Gazette*, the organ of the Czech Officers' Association, calling on all its members to stand firm. "There must be no retreat from the position in which we can live and work, defend ourselves and fight. . . ."

The manifesto was banned by the Government censorship.

fore meet Lord Runciman on Thursday, August 18, at 12 o'clock midday in Schloss Rothenhaus near Görkau (Max Hohenlohe).<sup>9</sup> We consider this meeting as rather decisive.

From last night's conversation with Lord Allen of Hartwouth<sup>9a</sup> [*sic*], a politician specially interested in the case, one might almost get the impression that he was the second envoy sent by the British Government who, now that Lord Runciman's Mission is regarded in London with the greatest pessimism and skepticism, had been sent here to prepare, even now, *the next step*, namely, the four-power conference. (Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy.) (See special report.)<sup>10</sup>

As Lord Allen left for a conference with Reich Minister von Ribbentrop, K. H. Frank yesterday requested in a cipher telegram sent via the Legation the substance of the Allen-Ribbentrop conversation, as a knowledge of this, insofar as it concerns Sudeten Germans, appears absolutely necessary.

AUGUST 13, 1938.

[Enclosure 2]

REPORT OF AUGUST 10, 1938

M. Milčoch<sup>11</sup> of the Czech Traders' Party [*Gewerbepartei*] held a Party press conference in Olmütz on Sunday, August 7. According to his statements, diplomats and politicians had not been so active since May 21 as now on August 7. The Government were undergoing a serious crisis and, if the international situation were somewhat more favorable for Czechoslovakia, the Government would long since have resigned.

Lord Runciman's main task was to spin out the discussions and to gain time. Whereas, when he arrived, a three or four months' stay in Prague was mentioned, it is now spoken of only in terms of as many weeks.

Military measures on the part of Germany disturbed the Czechoslovak Government in an extraordinary way. The members of the Government, moreover, are in agreement on at least one point; that the problems at issue cannot be solved without resort to war. The armed conflict cannot be postponed much longer.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. footnote 12, p. 402.

<sup>9a</sup> See footnote 82, p. 557.

<sup>10</sup> Printed as enclosure 2.

<sup>11</sup> Rudolf Milčoch was leader of the Czech Traders' Party and Minister of Commerce since December 1937.

With regard to the solution of the nationality problem there exist on the Czech side the following three trends:

1) Hodza is said to go farthest toward meeting German demands. He would be ready to give the shirt from his back and is also said to favor negotiation with the Sudeten German Party on the Karlsbad demands, if only to prevent war.

2) President Beneš is seeking a middle course between the Karlsbad demands and the Government offer.

3) General Krejčí<sup>12</sup> takes the view that nothing should be conceded to the Germans. General Krejčí bases his opinion on the reports reaching him from all over the State. From these reports there appears a contradiction between the action of the Government and public opinion which increases day by day. The Czech people are said to demand the adoption of a policy of the strong hand. Voices are even heard demanding the introduction of dictatorship. The mood is decidedly belligerent and an important section of the Czech public would be glad if the armed clash were already over. There are continual references to the parts played by Belgium and Serbia in 1914.

Between the opinion of the masses and the methods of the Government stands Parliament. In this connection the mention of Malypetr<sup>13</sup> as the coming man is becoming more frequent.

Our informant had the impression from the Olmütz conference that the various Government communiqués were merely designed as preparations for war. M. Milčoch, however, showed no reaction to a remark made to this effect.

Speaking of the forthcoming budget, Milčoch said that ordinary expenditure would be higher by at least 1½ milliards. This is to be met by raising the duty on turnover, as well as the tax on beer and liquor.

On August 9 a further conference of Coalition journalists, under the chairmanship of Legation Counselor Dr. Šrom, took place in the Společenský.<sup>14</sup> Šrom stated that German radio and newspaper propaganda against Czechoslovakia had assumed hitherto unknown proportions. It was seriously to be feared that Germany was preparing for something, the blame for which must at all costs be laid upon Czechoslovakia.

In connection with Imredy's and Horthy's visit to Germany<sup>15</sup> it was stated that the Reich Chancellor on this occasion wanted to give Hungary the same frontier guarantees as Mussolini had already done. Krofta has canceled his visit to America because he must go to Bled on August 19 for the meeting of the Little Entente. Šrom said in

<sup>12</sup> Chief of the Czechoslovak General Staff.

<sup>13</sup> See footnote 72, p. 545.

<sup>14</sup> I.e., the Společenský Club in Prague. Dr. Šrom acted as official spokesman of the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry in their dealings with Lord Runciman.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. footnote 8a, p. 492.

conclusion that Prague hoped the Far Eastern conflict would be settled peacefully.

CONVERSATION WITH LORD ALLEN AND MR. CATCHPOOL ON AUGUST 12, 1938, AT THE APARTMENT OF DR. ROSCHE, HOTEL DE SAXE, PRAGUE, FROM 6 TILL 8:45

Present for the Sudeten German Party: Karl Hermann Frank, Kundt, Peters, Rosche, and Sebekovsky.

KUNDT stated at the beginning that the problem could not be solved in domestic politics, but that political pressure from abroad on the Czechs is necessary.

Britain and France must tell the Czechs, not only privately but before the whole world, that Great Britain and France did not intend to sacrifice a single soldier for the stupidity of Czech policy.

Kundt then expounded the views of the Government and the Sudeten German Party, and the gulf existing between the proposals of the Government and the Sudeten German Party.

In conclusion he summed up: if the Czechs do not show reason, then a solution by political pressure from abroad is the only possible one.

LORD ALLEN described Lord Runciman's efforts to find a solution in domestic politics.

Britain thinks that peace is endangered if the problem cannot be solved in domestic policy. If Lord Runciman's negotiations are disturbed by explosions within the State or by Reich-German troops crossing the Czechoslovak frontier, Great Britain would be obliged to intervene. He, a friend of Germany, had told Ribbentrop this. If we assume that Lord Runciman cannot solve the problem as one of domestic politics, then he will draw up a report which will be made known publicly. Then there is only the choice between war or a four-power conference (Great Britain, Italy, France, Germany), which would deal with Runciman's findings.

Lord Allen at first evaded answering Frank's question whether it was true, as the Czechs say, that Great Britain had told the Czechs that Reich-German troops were on the march, a statement which had given rise to May 21. When Frank again asked whether Lord Halifax had called the Czechs' attention to this, Lord Allen said that he could not speak for Halifax. As far as he had spoken with personalities of the British Government, the latter believed in the peaceful intentions of the Sudeten Germans and the German Reich. He asked whether the Sudeten Germans were agreeable to a four-power conference.

FRANK stated that the four-power conference would be faced with the same problems as Lord Runciman and probably, on the basis of Lord Runciman's proposed report, would achieve exactly the same result as he. It must, therefore, because of the entirely different interests of the Great Powers in Central Europe, be regarded from the start with special skepticism. Moreover, the summoning of a four-power conference was no longer a matter for the Sudeten German Party but for the Great Powers.

ROSCHÉ pointed out that there were different trends of internal politics among the four Powers.

KUNDR asked if Britain thought that she could induce France to force a reasonable solution on the Czechs.

LORD ALLEN stated that Great Britain had formerly neglected her armaments, but her military strength was now growing month by month, and in consequence she could exert decisive influence on a solution. When asked by Kundt what would happen if the Czechs also rejected a proposal of the four-power conference, Lord Allen said that one could only judge the next step ahead. The first step, Lord Runciman's activity, must not be disturbed, if war were to be avoided. If it failed, then there would be the choice between war and a four-power conference. He asked the Sudeten Germans to have patience; Great Britain recognized with astonishment the patience they had hitherto shown.

KUNDR remarked that the Sudeten Germans had been patient for 20 years, and would continue to be patient. But he must ask Great Britain to act quickly, for otherwise the population in its despair might lose patience.

FRANK concluded with the remark that there still remained the possibility of a plebiscite as a peaceful solution.

### No. 367

F18/375-378

#### *Unsigned Foreign Ministry Memorandum*

TOP SECRET

(Pol. I 678 g. Rs.)

#### MEMORANDUM

The political talks expected as a result of the Hungarian visit will probably deal mainly with the question of Hungary's relations with the Little Entente States, especially Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. On this question the following can be said:

At the audience given by the Führer and Reich Chancellor to Daranyi, the Hungarian Prime Minister, and Kanya, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, on November 25, 1937, the main topic of conversa-



tion was Hungary's relations with the States of the Little Entente, in particular with Yugoslavia. According to the memorandum drawn up on the audience, M. Kanya stated, "Hungary is ready to promise Yugoslavia not to resort to war over her territorial claims if Yugoslavia will grant cultural autonomy to the Hungarian minority." The Führer welcomed this proposal heartily and answered: "As the Little Entente cannot be broken up, the attempt must be made to weaken its internal links; and an agreement such as that outlined by M. Kanya seems the proper means for this." He, the Führer, expressed his readiness to discuss this proposal with Stoyadinovich, who was shortly coming to Berlin, and to give it his support.

On the occasion of the audience given by the Führer and Reich Chancellor to Dr. Stoyadinovich, the Yugoslav Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, on January 17, 1938, Yugoslav-Hungarian relations were mentioned. According to the memorandum the Führer stated: "A Yugoslav-Hungarian *rapprochement* appeared possible to him and would be greatly furthered by benevolent treatment of the Hungarian minority. If Yugoslavia attached importance to reaching a clear understanding with Hungary and wanted to extend this understanding in such a way as to give it the character of a treaty, and if a guarantor were needed, Germany would be ready to undertake this position as guarantor. He had in mind an absolutely binding guarantee, which would also apply in a military sense, should Hungary violate the Yugoslav frontier. He asked the Prime Minister to think over this offer. He was not asking for an answer today, and would not take it amiss if no answer were given."

Stoyadinovich answered—also according to the memorandum—"the Hungarian minority in Yugoslavia is quite satisfied at present. He would also continue to make efforts to meet their wishes. Whatever action he took vis-à-vis Hungary must be within the framework of the Little Entente. He had striven against any extension of the Little Entente into a general pact of assistance, but the Hungarian question was the crux of the Little Entente Alliance. He thought that the Hungarians, too, understood this attitude of his."

The Hungarian Minister here has been informed of this conversation.

According to the report of our Legation in Budapest, dated March 7, M. Kanya assured our Minister that during his Berlin talks he had made a *more* far-reaching proposal to Field Marshal Göring as well as to the Führer. He had offered final renunciation of the territory ceded to Yugoslavia in the Peace Treaty, that is, recognition of the present frontier, in return for a *promise of neutrality by Yugoslavia to Hungary*, and had suggested a German guarantee for

this agreement. M. Kanya gives an assurance that in this connection he did not—contrary to the memorandum—discuss with the Führer “cultural autonomy for the Hungarian minority.”

On March 31 and April 1 the Hungarian Minister here mentioned this matter again, and made a verbal inquiry at the Foreign Ministry as to what developments there had been in the meantime or what was still intended, and finally, whether Germany had refrained from informing Stoyadinovich of Hungary's offer of recognition of the present Hungarian-Yugoslav frontier in return for a Yugoslav promise of neutrality.

Our Minister in Belgrade was later instructed to sound Prime Minister Stoyadinovich again regarding the matter. The Minister reports that Stoyadinovich, however, showed no willingness to do anything in the matter. He pointed out that he could make no promise regarding the guarantee of the Hungarian-Yugoslav frontier, which he considered assured in any case. Moreover, he could not undertake any commitments which might bring him into conflict with Yugoslavia's representatives to the Little Entente States.

The Minister further inquired whether Germany was ready to commence General Staff talks, which would prepare the attitude of both sides on certain points if common military action against Czechoslovakia eventually became necessary. No answer was at first given to the Minister on this point. On the occasion of General Keitel's visit to Budapest,<sup>16</sup> however, the question was discussed by him and the Regent. Then it was established that talks on military operations could take place only when the political aims were clear.

During the visit of the Hungarian Ministers Imredy and Kanya to Rome from July 18 to 21, Hungary's relations with the Little Entente States, in particular Yugoslavia, were discussed. M. Kanya told our Chargé d'Affaires in Budapest that Italy appeared to be convinced of her ability to draw Yugoslavia more closely into Axis politics, and that therefore a lively interest was shown in a far-reaching normalization of Hungarian-Yugoslav relations. On the other hand, the formation of a special Rome-Belgrade-Budapest group had not been mentioned at all. The statement that Yugoslavia was prepared to conclude a treaty of friendship with Hungary was, in his opinion, untrue; he thought it out of the question that Stoyadinovich had ever considered such an idea. His, Kanya's, greatest desire, of course, was a normalization of Hungarian-Yugoslav relations, but unfortunately he had not yet made any progress in the minority question.

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<sup>16</sup> June 14.

The Italian Ambassador here has given the information contained in the enclosed memorandum<sup>17</sup> on the Rome talks. This memorandum is supplemented by a report of the Embassy in Rome, according to which the Italians promised the Hungarians to use their influence not only in Belgrade but also in Bucharest, for the neutrality of Rumania and Yugoslavia in the event of an armed conflict between Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

In these circumstances we can assume that, in the event of an unprovoked attack by Hungary against Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Rumania will hardly be able to withdraw from their treaty obligations toward Czechoslovakia. In consequence, the Hungarians could only be given the same advice as they had received in Rome, to await Czechoslovak provocation as a pretext for war in the event of a German-Czech conflict, and to prepare the way for the Rumanians and Yugoslavs to evade their treaty obligations. Hungarian help, which would bring new opponents to our group, would be no gain for us.

BERLIN, August 18, 1938.

No. 368

139/125534

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

SECRET

BERLIN, August 18, 1938.

The British Ambassador, who called on me today concerning the arrest of a British Consulate official in Vienna,<sup>18</sup> also touched upon the British note<sup>19</sup> which was recently handed over here. I gathered from Henderson's words that he definitely expected an answer soon. Sir Nevile told me unofficially that he had yesterday reported to Halifax as follows:

The German answer would represent the German military measures as normal and, if they caused uneasiness when regarded in conjunction with the political situation, then the political situation would be blamed. The latter in its turn could only be improved by a change of front on the part of the Czechs.

I told the Ambassador that I was not in a position to make any statement on the further treatment of the note by the German Government.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>17</sup> Not printed.

<sup>18</sup> Capt. T. Kendrick, head of the British Passport Control Office in Vienna, was arrested on August 17 on suspicion of espionage.

<sup>19</sup> i.e., the Halifax memorandum (document No. 346, p. 549).

## No. 369

139/125535-37

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV (Altenburg)*

## MEMORANDUM

## SECRET

During his visit yesterday evening, Hencke, Counselor of Legation, Prague, informed me that President Beneš had made the following statement to Kundt, the chairman of the Sudeten German negotiating delegation, through Krečič, the President of the Supreme Court:

Hodza's previous proposals to the Sudeten German Party were inadequate; he did not identify himself with them, but intended rather to take action himself. His plan was as follows:

- 1) The immediate introduction of equality of status for the German language in the historic provinces (Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia).
- 2) Determining the proportion of civil servants in the Sudeten German area, and to speed this up, the introduction of German officials in superior ratio.
- 3) Decree for a budget law in which special provision should be made in the State budget for the Sudeten German areas.
- 4) The raising of a loan for the indemnification of certain damage in the Sudeten German area.

In return for these concessions Beneš demanded from the Sudeten Germans a 2 months' truce, especially in the press, in order to create an atmosphere which would make possible speedier progress in the negotiations. Moreover, he expected the negotiating delegation of the Sudeten German Party to comply with his request to visit him and to cooperate in a practical way. He intended to form select committees to carry out the negotiations; he hoped that if after 2 months the settlement he aimed at had taken effect the Secret Police could be withdrawn from the Sudeten German area.

As reported by Legation Counselor Hencke, Deputy Kundt asked to have until Friday to consider the President's proposals. Kundt now assumes that at today's meeting between Henlein and Lord Runciman at Prince Max Hohenlohe's country house, Lord Runciman will become the advocate of Beneš' proposal. Kundt would like to inform Henlein of the Beneš proposal before his meeting with the Englishman and at the same time to give him an indication of how authoritative circles in Berlin think about the proposal.

In reply to Legation Counselor Hencke's statement on the matter the Reich Minister answered more or less as follows:

He did not like being approached so often by the Sudeten German Party for advice. Henlein had already received clear instructions, and therefore it was not fitting that one gentleman or another kept appearing from Prague at short intervals to obtain decisions on individual questions. Henlein and his people must learn to stand on their own feet. The answer to the Beneš proposal was contained in the general instructions given to Henlein, namely, always to negotiate and not to let the link be broken, on the other hand, always to demand more than could be granted by the other side.

In the case in hand he saw a danger of Henlein's being pinned down, if he admitted Beneš' proposal as a workable basis for negotiations. Such acceptance of the suggestions of the Czechoslovak President would in all probability lead to the matter's being described in the Czech and British press as a magnanimous offer by Beneš which had been accepted by the Sudeten German Party, and from these conclusions the attempt would immediately be made to force Henlein to abandon his eight Karlsbad points. This must be avoided at all costs. The discussion must be conducted in such a way that Beneš is free to carry out the measures proposed by him, and which the Sudeten German Party, too, hopes will lead to an improvement of the atmosphere. But the demand for fulfillment of the eight Karlsbad points remains as before and is in no way affected by this proposal.

Concerning what the Sudeten German Party will do in return for the President's offer, the Party is ready to cooperate as before. As far as the 2 months' truce is concerned, this does not depend on the good will of the Sudeten Germans alone.

ALTENBURG

BERLIN, August 18, 1938.

No. 370

2367/489526

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union (Tippelskirch)  
to the German Foreign Ministry*

A/1186

Moscow, August 18, 1938.  
(Pol. I 1954 g)

Subject: Delivery of Soviet aircraft to Czechoslovakia.

A member of the Italian Consulate General in Odessa has ascertained the following regarding the entry of Czechoslovak Air Force pilots into the Soviet Union:

For about three to four months ten Czechoslovak Air Force pilots with a major in charge have been entering the Soviet Union in

mufti via Rumania by the Kineschma-Tiraspol-Odessa route. The journey takes place regularly once a week and is always made by the same persons. The member of the Italian Consulate General himself traveled twice with the Czechoslovak pilots. Affixed to their suitcases are visiting cards, the bottom part of which, probably giving their military rank, has been cut off. A Rumanian *gendarmerie* officer in Tighina,<sup>20</sup> whom the member of the Italian Consulate General knows quite well, confirmed that the persons in question were Czechoslovak Air Force pilots with a major in charge, who go to the Soviet Union every week. Since, according to statements by the Rumanian *gendarmerie* officer, the pilots never leave by rail, it can be assumed with certainty that they fly aircraft from the Soviet Union to Rumania.

Please treat the source as *confidential*.

VON TIPPELSKIRCH

### No. 371

2369/494831-33

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. III. 2. h.

PRAGUE, August 19, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 5561)

With reference to another report of the 19th instant, paragraph 2.<sup>21</sup>  
Subject: Discussion on Sudeten German Party memorandum of June 7, 1938.

Deputy Kundt has given a member of the Legation more detailed information concerning the discussion which took place during the meeting between the Sudeten German Party delegation and the political Ministerial Committee on the 17th instant, in connection with the reading out of the Sudeten German reply to the Government's opinion on the Sudeten German Party memorandum of June 7. I have the honor to submit the enclosed memorandum on this.

HENCKE

<sup>20</sup> Otherwise known as Bender, a frontier town on the Dniester.

<sup>21</sup> Marginal comments: "This report cannot be traced either in the Registry or in the *Tel[egramm]kontr[olle]*. [initial illegible] August 26." "Herr Schroeder please [inform] V.D.M.St. A [ifenburg] August 23."

[Enclosure]

## MEMORANDUM

The third plenary meeting between the Government and the Sudeten German Party delegation took place in the late afternoon of August 17, 1938. Deputy Kundt gave me the following information concerning this session:

Those present included Prime Minister Hodza, the Ministers Franke, Dérer, Cerny<sup>22</sup> and the whole of the Sudeten German Party delegation. The representatives of the Coalition Club were missing; the reason for this is still not known. Dr. Hodza at once called upon Deputy Kundt to speak on the Prime Minister's opinion of August 11. The impression made on the Czechs is said to have been extremely effective. Dr. Hodza gave merely a brief reply and, obviously clutching at a straw, seized with pleasure on the formal statement that the Sudeten German Party was still prepared to discuss matters with the Government. Hodza endeavored merely to prove that by her constitution and laws Czechoslovakia was not a National State, and that the difference between a National State and a Nationalities State existed only in theory. The only important point was the Prime Minister's statement that the well-known manifesto of the Czech officers<sup>23</sup> was the fault of one man alone, who had apologized to the Government. This man had not realized the repercussions his "article" would have. It had not been a manifesto by the officers at all. Ministers Dérer and Franke thereupon acknowledged the sincerity and frankness of Kundt's statements, avoided discussing the problems, and asked the question direct whether the Sudeten German Party was prepared to compromise. Kundt adopted the following point of view: he did not dwell on the individual statements by Dr. Hodza and the Ministers, and declared these to be subjects for further discussion. He merely made it quite clear that the Sudeten German Party's proposals were not merely theoretical and that their experiences over the last 20 years forced the Sudeten Germans to regard Czechoslovakia as the National State of the Czechs. Kundt stated, nevertheless, that the Sudeten German Party was still ready for discussions with a view to finding a common point of view. With regard to Konrad Henlein's eight Karlsbad demands, there could in principle be no compromise. This word was simply inapplicable, for compromises were only possible within the limits of one definite point of view; thus the first task was to find a common point of view. If the Sudeten German Party had been prepared to compromise in its demands it would have increased its proposals

<sup>22</sup> Ministers of Education, Justice, and Interior, respectively.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. document No. 366, p. 577, and footnote 8 thereto.

by 100 percent. In its sincerity it is demanding only the minimum of what is absolutely necessary to ensure a just regime in the State, and thereby for European peace. Details regarding its implementation can be discussed, but first of all a common point of view must be found in accordance with whose principles the settlement is to be made. On the score of sincerity there could be no question of a compromise, which gives us and the world the illusion of a solution which is not one at all, or at the most will only hold good for a short time and then will once more give rise to a domestic and external political situation, perhaps in an even worse form than today. The only solution which can be considered is one which, by transforming the State, will create a regime which will permanently ensure internal and international peace.

The Ministers showed that they were satisfied with this reply. Prime Minister Hodza summed up by stating that neither the Sudeten German Party's concrete proposals in detail nor the Government's proposals were final, and that there was a willingness on both sides to conduct negotiations for the purpose of arriving at "a common point of view regarding the solution of the nationalities problem with regard to its fundamental questions."

Regarding the continuation of the negotiations on this matter, it was agreed that the further *modus procedendi* should be discussed by Dr. Hodza and Deputy Kundt during the next few days.

PRAGUE, August 18, 1938.

### No. 372

2369/494837

*Minute by an Official of Political Division IV (Altenburg) for the Under State Secretary (Woermann)*

(Pol. IV 5572)

In accordance with the instructions forwarded by the Reich Minister to Secretary of Legation Brückelmeier,<sup>24</sup> I yesterday informed Herr Schmidt of the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* that for his part the Reich Minister is not willing to intervene in the difference of opinion between Kundt and Karl Hermann Frank; it was Konrad Henlein's business to assert his authority and establish a unified policy in the controlling body of the Sudeten German Party. The Reich Minister was leaving it to *Obergruppenführer* Lorenz to speak with Karl Hermann Frank himself, or through *Obergruppenführer* Behrens, and to draw his attention to the general guiding principles which determine the conduct of the Sudeten German Party in its

<sup>24</sup> Brückelmeier had recently joined the Foreign Minister's Secretariat.



negotiations with the Czechoslovak Government. The Reich Minister believed that this conversation would be sufficient to establish the requisite unity in the Sudeten German camp. If *Obergruppenführer* Lorenz desires over and above this that the Reich Minister should himself speak with Karl Hermann Frank, then he will not refuse to grant this request.

Submitted herewith through Dg. Pol. to U. St. S. Woermann.

ALTENBURG

BERLIN, August 19, 1938.

No. 373

139/125538-40

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 291 of August 19

PRAGUE, August 19, 1938—5:30 p.m.

Received August 19, 1938—9:45 p.m.

In continuation of telegram of the 13th, No. 284.<sup>25</sup> During current week following negotiations or discussions on Sudeten German problem took place:

1) On August 16 discussion between Sudeten German Party delegation and Lord Runciman: Lord Runciman was informed of contents of reply prepared by Sudeten Party to Prime Minister's statement on Sudeten Party memorandum of June 7 (cf. paragraph 2). Lord Runciman expressed anxiety lest way to further discussions between Government and Sudeten German Party thereby blocked, and suggested adjournment. Kundt replied to effect that Sudeten German Party reply left way open for opportunity for further discussion on fundamental questions.

2) On August 17 negotiations between Ministerial Committee and Sudeten German Party delegation: Kundt read out Sudeten German Party reply to Prime Minister's written statement on memorandum of June 7 which had been forwarded to Sudeten Party on August 13. Kundt's statements contain criticism, correct in form but severe in content, of methods of negotiation hitherto, and decisive rejection of Government proposals under review. Present gap between points of view on both sides is described as not bridged and therefore discussion of detailed questions, desired by all Governments, as pointless. In spite of this Sudeten German Party delegation declared its readiness for continuation of comprehensive negotiations as to how, by means of a systematic transformation of the State on the

<sup>25</sup> Document No. 352, p. 559.

basis of Karlsbad demands, nationalities problem, and thereby crisis in domestic and foreign political affairs in the State could be settled. Prerequisites for this were concrete proofs of good intentions, not only by Government but also on part of Czech press and Czech organizations.

During the ensuing discussion which the Czech Ministers started on that subject Kundt rejected compromise, emphasizing that eight Karlsbad points represented minimum Sudeten demands.

Summing up, Prime Minister established fact of readiness on both sides to continue negotiations with object of arriving at "common point of view regarding solution of problem of nationalities with regard to its fundamental questions." Further *modus procedendi* is to be agreed upon between Kundt and Hodza in next few days. Detailed material in writing is following by courier.

3) On August 18 Konrad Henlein's exchange of views with Lord Runciman.—Conversation took place privately between Henlein and Runciman, and Prince Hohenlohe acted as interpreter. Latter gave me briefly following information during dinner at British Legation.

Henlein explained Sudeten German point of view in dignified and convincing manner and Sudeten Party's readiness in principle for settlement, if demands met. Contrary to expectation Lord Runciman did not mention Beneš' proposals reported verbally, for discussion of which Henlein was prepared—on lines of instructions forwarded. On the other hand, Runciman produced Hodza's letter in which appointment of seven German postmasters and two district prefects [*Bezirkshauptleute*] is contemplated for Saturday. Henlein disposed of this with a smile. During stay at Schloss Rothenhaus eyewitnesses gave account of incidents at Brüx, which made great impression on Lord Runciman. Runciman caused one of his assistants to request the Prime Minister firmly by telephone to stop acts of violence immediately, and dispatched two of his assistants at once to Brüx to investigate on the spot, whither Hodza, too, ordered high Government official to go. According to account by Hohenlohe and K. H. Frank of their impressions, favorable result for Sudeten Germans expected from exchange of views. Prince Hohenlohe will report verbally to State Secretary on details of conversation on Saturday.

4) At dinner at British Legation on August 18, to which most of the Heads of Missions in Prague, Sudeten German aristocrats, and some high officials of the Czech Foreign Ministry were invited, the British Minister expressed anxiety regarding further course of the negotiations. Lord Runciman intended to have detailed discussions with Czechs during next few days. Runciman said not

a word about problem to foreign diplomats and myself. On the other hand Lady Runciman revealed in conversation remarkable understanding for Sudeten Germans and spoke of Bolshevik influence in Czechoslovakia. *Ministerialrat* Cermak,<sup>26</sup> who was also present, observed, in these words, "Runciman abuses us dreadfully."

5) Frank has promised further information for this afternoon. Supplementary telegraphic report reserved till later date.

HENCKE

No. 374

340/198886

*Unsigned Minute, Probably by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

During a conversation with Reich Minister von Ribbentrop on August 19 he explained to me that the Führer was firmly resolved to settle the Czech affair by force of arms. He described the middle of October as the latest possible date because of technical reasons governing air operations. The other powers would certainly not make any move and, even if they did, we should accept their challenge and defeat them also. I refuted this whole theory, as previously, and remarked that we must reach the political stage of a falling off in British interest in the Czech affair and also of British tolerance before we could take up the matter without running an unjustifiable risk. Herr von Ribbentrop sought to represent the question of responsibility in such a way that I was responsible to him alone, he to the Führer alone, and the Führer solely to the German people, while I maintained that it was necessary to be deeply rooted in the theory of such a policy in order to carry it out to the best advantage. Herr von Ribbentrop declared that the Führer had never yet made a mistake; his most difficult decisions and acts (occupation of the Rhineland) already lay behind him. It was necessary to believe in his genius, just as he, R., did from long years of experience. If I had not yet reached the stage of blind belief in the question under discussion—as I expressly told Ribbentrop—then he desired of me, in a friendly manner and urgently, too, that I should do so. I should certainly regret it later, if I did not succeed in doing so and the facts then contradicted me.

The conversation, during which Ribbentrop sought to corroborate his arguments by citing a large number of military aspects, passed off for the rest calmly and as between intimates.

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<sup>26</sup> There were two senior Czech officials of this name; it is not known which is referred to here.

It may also be worthy of note that, according to Ribbentrop's account, the Führer intends to move into Czechoslovakia himself at the head of the leading armored division. The Foreign Minister is to accompany him into action. Instead of Herr von Neurath, to whom the Führer would apparently like to delegate his functions at home, Ribbentrop intends to have me take charge of these matters.

AUGUST 19, 1938.<sup>27</sup>

No. 375

1613/386993-94

*Memorandum by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the  
Personnel Department of the Foreign Ministry*<sup>28</sup>

SECRET

(Pol. I 1981 g)

MEMORANDUM

Since 1935 the Sudeten German Party has been regularly subsidized by the Foreign Ministry with certain amounts, actually a payment of 15,000 marks per month, of which 12,000 marks are transferred to the Prague Legation for disbursement and 3,000 marks are paid out in Berlin to the Party's representative (Bürger's office). In the course of the last few months the tasks assigned to Bürger's office have increased considerably owing to the current negotiations with the Czechoslovak Government. The number of pamphlets and maps produced and distributed by the office has risen; the propaganda activity in the press has increased enormously; and the expenditure has grown in particular because, owing to the necessity for being constantly well informed, the expenses of journeys to Prague, London, and Paris (also the financing of journeys by Sudeten German deputies and agents) have been greatly increased. In these circumstances Bürger's office is no longer able to manage on the sum of 3,000 marks per month allotted to it, if it is to meet all demands made upon it. Herr Bürger has, therefore, applied to the Ministry for an increase in this sum from 3,000 marks to 5,500 marks per month. In view of the great increase in the business transacted by the office and of the importance attached to the office's activities with regard to cooperation with the Foreign Ministry also, this request cannot but be warmly recommended.

<sup>27</sup> The date is added in pencil in Weizsäcker's handwriting, and the document was kept in a sealed envelope.

<sup>28</sup> This document was produced in evidence at Nuremberg as document 3059-PS.

Herewith submitted to Pers[onnel] Department with a request for approval. It is requested that the payments should be increased with effect from August 1.

WOERMANN

BERLIN, August 19, 1938.

DECISION

1. The payments to Bürger's office will be increased to 5,500 marks per month until further notice, with effect from August 1 of this year.
2. Herr A. R. Herold for attention and further action.
3. Herewith returned to Pol. IV.

BERLIN, August 23, 1938.

DIENSTMANN

[Penciled marginal notes:]

Pr[üfer], August 22; agreed.

*Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* will be informed by the Political Division.

Herr Schmitt, V.D.M.St., has been informed verbally by me today of the current payments by the Foreign Ministry to the Sudeten German Party. A[LTEBURG], August 24.

No. 376

337/197375

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Under State Secretary (Woermann)*

BERLIN, August 20, 1938.

M. E. Prince Hohenlohe described the Henlein-Runciman conversation to me today. What was new to me in the account was that Runciman was showing signs of haste in order to arrive quickly, either at a positive solution, or at the point where it could be established who was responsible for failure. Czech readiness to adopt a conciliatory attitude is very great according to impressions gained by Hohenlohe.

Herr Altenburg has probably noted down the details.

Herewith to Under State Secretary.

WEIZÄCKER

## No. 377

139/125561

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, August 20, 1933.

The British Ambassador touched briefly on the subject of the Halifax memorandum again today, after I had sent for him on account of the affair of the Vienna arrests.<sup>29</sup> I left it to his discretion whether to request an interview with the Reich Minister, who, as far as I was aware, actually happened to be here, if he had any wishes regarding this matter. Henderson, nevertheless, was opposed to the idea that he should wish to discuss it officially or press for action. To his request for my private opinion on what attitude he should best adopt in this affair, I replied by saying, "Wait and see."

The Ambassador also added that he had remarked at the time to Herr Woermann and Herr Lammers that the French had not been informed about the memorandum by the British. He was now bound to add that on inquiry by the French the British Government were unable to deny the existence of the memorandum and its contents. For the sake of correctness it would be well to bring this to the notice of the authorities concerned.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 378

2369/494818-20

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

URGENT

PRAGUE, August 20, 1938.

SECRET

(Pol. IV 5538)

A. III. 2. h.

With reference to report elsewhere.

Subject: Move by President Beneš.

Dr. Kier, the legal adviser to the Sudeten German Party, has given a member of the Legation further information concerning the move by President Beneš.<sup>30</sup> I have the honor to submit the enclosed memorandum on this.

A visit by Deputy Kundt to the President is scarcely likely before the 23d of this month.

HENCKE

<sup>29</sup> See document No. 368, p. 585, and footnote 18 thereto.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. document No. 369, p. 586.

[Enclosure]

## MEMORANDUM

## TOP SECRET

Dr. Kier gave me the following information concerning the meeting of the Political Committee of the Sudeten German Party which took place at 3 o'clock in the afternoon of August 19, 1938:

The meeting had begun with a unanimous joint report by Deputies K. H. Frank and Kundt on Lord Runciman's conversation with Konrad Henlein at Rothenhaus Castle. The move by the President had been discussed before His Lordship's arrival at the castle. Kundt had reported to Konrad Henlein on the recommendations which he had received by way of the Legation. Both Henlein and Frank were in agreement with Kundt's measures. Konrad Henlein had adopted the point of view that the invitation from Dr. Beneš for a private exploratory conversation ought to be accepted, and, moreover, that they should proceed in accordance with their instructions. Deputy Kundt made it a condition that he should be permitted to take a witness along with him to Dr. Beneš (Dr. Sebekovsky is envisaged). The conversation will not take place before Tuesday.

Professor Sander then appeared at the meeting and gave a detailed report on his conversation with the President and [the latter's] statement. This report corresponds in the main to the information from Kundt forwarded by Dr. Kier on August 17, 1938. As a supplement to the first Sander report the following is nevertheless worthy of note:

- 1) The President stated that his hands were tied by the constitution. He was obliged actually to wait for a request from the Prime Minister. He could, however, induce the Prime Minister to make this request to him. He considered that the time had now come when he would have to intervene in his capacity as President. On Sander's inquiring whether he had an authoritarian regime in mind, Beneš expressed the opinion that he was already quite certain about the method.
- 2) Regarding the four points dealing with preliminary concessions envisaged, Beneš pointed out that in the event of a loan foreign aid would also be necessary, which gives the impression that Beneš already has financial support. (During the ensuing meeting Dr. Kier straight-way drew attention to the seriousness of this matter.)
- 3) Beneš wishes to carry out the preliminary concessions in order to create a peaceful atmosphere.

Since Professor Sander's report to the Party leaders on August 19, doubts have arisen as to whether the President intends to carry out the preliminary concessions and simultaneously conduct negoti-

ations in the committee on which both sides have equal representation [*paritätischer Ausschuss*], or whether he wishes to separate both moves in point of time. It is this question which the Sudeten German Party now wishes to clarify with the President direct. M. Beneš spoke of three stages to Professor Sander. He had obviously the preliminary concessions in mind as the first and the negotiations as the second, while he had said nothing at all about the third. A full clarification of this question would be important—at least from the theoretical point of view—for the date of commencement of the so-called armistice, regarding which there were only vague notions for the present.

4) What is said to have been most interesting was that Beneš stated in the course of the conversation he fully understood that the Germans wished to be their own masters in the German region; he considered that purely German self-administrative regions could well be discussed, e.g., purely German districts [*Gaue*] (Silesia, Leitmeritz, Karlsbad). He had no anxiety with regard to the Czech minorities in the German region. To a corresponding question from Sander, Beneš replied: I give you my word that I shall achieve this.

5) Beneš pointed out that he was the only Minister at the time to oppose the introduction of the historical provincial units in 1927.<sup>31</sup> (According to Kier this is historically correct.)

6) During the Parliamentary negotiations over the constitution in 1920 Beneš sounded a warning note against designating Czechoslovakia as a National State. (According to Kier this is historically correct.) The expression "*Les Etats nationaux*" was used during the peace negotiations, not in the sense of National State, but merely as a term to distinguish them from Austria-Hungary. He considered the theory of the National State to be mistaken.

Deputy Kundt has confirmed the above information from Dr. Kier.

DR. OSKAR MITIS

PRAGUE, August 20, 1938.

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<sup>31</sup> In 1927 a provincial administrative reorganization was undertaken, the main effect of which was to place Slovakia on a similar footing to the traditional provinces of Bohemia and Moravia—a move away from centralization in the interests of the Slovaks, though not of the Germans.



## No. 379

139/125556-58

*Letter From the Foreign Minister to the British Foreign Secretary  
(Halifax)*(Final version)<sup>32</sup>

BERLIN, August 21, 1938.

DEAR LORD HALIFAX: On my return from leave I have still to thank you for your letter of July 28.<sup>33</sup> I should like to reply to you with the same frankness with which you wrote to me.

From your letter I perceive that it was your intention to inform the German Government of Lord Runciman's Mission before it became known in the press, and that this was only prevented by the indiscretion of British newspapers. You will agree with me that this makes no difference to the situation itself. The sending of Lord Runciman was decided upon by the British Government in agreement with the French and Czechoslovak Governments without our participation. The Reich Government was not informed of this until afterward. In these circumstances the Reich Government must disclaim any responsibility for whether the efforts of Lord Runciman lead to success or not.

German policy can surely claim for itself as an important credit that it allowed the Government in Prague to negotiate with the Sudeten Germans without interference, and for not having intervened, although the negotiations have not made the slightest progress owing to the completely uncomprehending Czechoslovak intransigence. Naturally, we in Germany are now unable to take part also in the carrying out of Lord Runciman's Mission, which has come into being without our participation.

The efforts of the British Government in the Sudeten German question up till now have, unfortunately, not met with success. On the contrary, the attitude of the Prague Government has merely increased in intransigence and aggressiveness. Indeed, there can hardly be any doubt today that the conduct of the Prague Government, which is strongly influenced by Bolshevik ideas, represents the sole real obstacle to the pacification and peaceful settlement of Europe. I believe that public opinion in the world is becoming more clearly aware of this fact every day. That this has not been fully realized in some quarters is, in my opinion, due to the tendentious attitude of a section of the international press, which is at pains to give public opinion an entirely false view of the situation in Czechoslovakia. I am convinced that this press will not succeed in

<sup>32</sup> Added in pencil at the top.

<sup>33</sup> Document No. 323, p. 522.

the long run in concealing the true situation in Czechoslovakia, and I should be glad if Lord Runciman's stay in Prague were to have this effect and open the eyes of the public in Great Britain.

One thing seems quite plain to me at any rate. As long as authoritative circles in Prague still have hopes of support from outside, even if they drive matters to the limit, all efforts to induce them to deal with the legitimate Sudeten German demands in a reasonable manner will be in vain. I still remain convinced that in this is to be found the real key to a settlement of the situation.

Moreover, I am obliged to take this opportunity of stating quite frankly that the memorandum deposited by Sir Nevile Henderson on the 12th of this month<sup>34</sup> has caused great astonishment here. What there is to be said from the German side about the military measures mentioned in it has been given by our military authorities to your Military Attaché as part of the exchanges of information customary between them. We are naturally unable to enter into any discussion on internal military measures.

You are right in emphasizing how important the attitude of the press is for further political developments. Unfortunately, I am bound to set on record that it is precisely the British press that has throughout the recent period and in almost every case neglected to make what contribution it might have done toward a relaxation of the tense atmosphere and toward an Anglo-German settlement. During recent months there has been scarcely one single political or diplomatic action bearing on Anglo-German relations which British newspapers have not in one way or another made the object of indiscretions, imputations, or downright false reports, in order to discredit systematically German policy. I should like once more today in all seriousness to draw your personal attention to these matters.

I am glad that in your letter you mention our various conversations in London, during which we always regarded the establishment of good and friendly relations between Germany and Great Britain as our common goal. I have never lost sight of this goal and am convinced that, after a solution of the Sudeten German problem and a reasonable settlement of the colonial question, our two Governments will, in the absence of any diverging interests, achieve cooperation based on mutual trust. In order that the way shall be made clear for a constructive policy of this kind, however, it seems to me to be indispensable that a radical change should be brought about in the attitude of the British press toward Germany, and that the

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<sup>34</sup> Document No. 346, p. 549.

desire for an understanding with Germany, which in my view exists among the British people, may find free expression.

With kind regards,

Ever yours sincerely,

RIBBENTROP

No. 380

1613/387035-40

*The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to the Under State Secretary in the German Foreign Ministry (Woermann)*

Moscow, August 22, 1938.

(Pol. I 2107 g)

MY DEAR HERR WOERMANN: This morning I sent you a telegram about my conversation with M. Litvinov.<sup>35</sup> I should like to add to my remarks that the conversation was comparatively detailed and prolonged, and that it was not without difficulty that M. Litvinov could be prevailed upon to speak. I tried in vain to induce M. Litvinov to express himself as to the form which possible assistance by the Soviet Union to Czechoslovakia would take. The Commissar for Foreign Affairs avoided answering this question again and again. It would seem to be the "*mot d'ordre*" here not to commit oneself on this point. M. Litvinov was, as usual, amiable to me personally, but for the rest, his statements did not leave anything to be desired in point of clarity. I cannot estimate whether they accord in every detail with actual circumstances.

I transmit to you a memorandum of my conversation with M. Potemkin on the 20th of this month. It has confirmed my view that the stubbornness of the fighting in the Far Eastern frontier incident on Lake Hassan is to be attributed to the Soviet desire to pin down the Japanese troops in Manchukuo. The second reason given by M. Potemkin, to impress the Japanese or, alternatively, the Chinese, seems to me rather farfetched and scarcely convincing. May I be permitted to point out that in their battles near Lake Hassan the Soviet Russians did not attain their *tactical* goal, the conquest of the famous heights; they did, however, attain their *strategic* goal, the pinning down of Japanese troops in Manchukuo.<sup>36</sup>

Czech affairs are naturally the subject of daily conversation in the Diplomatic Corps here. We are being pressed from all sides

<sup>35</sup> Not printed; an expanded version of the report contained in this telegram is printed as document No. 396, p. 629.

<sup>36</sup> During July and August stubborn fighting took place between Soviet and Japanese troops for the possession of the heights of Changhufeng, which lay on the frontier at a point where its exact line was in doubt. The fighting ended with a truce on August 10.

to say what is the meaning of our "mobilization" and what our plans in Czechoslovakia are. In my replies I have kept to the instructions in the directive of August 3.<sup>37</sup> My French colleague, Coulondre, said at the end of our conversation: "I hope from my heart that it does not come to a German-French conflict. You know as well as I do for whom we are working if we get at loggerheads." The British Ambassador's wife said to me "Come and tell me! will you be naughty?"

I spoke at length with the Japanese, too. He, however, was interested only in Lake Hassan and not at all in Czech affairs. It is true the Japanese asked Herr von Tippleskirch repeatedly about Czech affairs.<sup>38</sup> He emphasized how agreeably impressed Japan had been by our sympathetic attitude during the Manchurian frontier conflict.

I have received an invitation to Stuttgart and Nuremberg, and—after consultation with the Personnel Department—will arrive on August 29 in Berlin, and on September 1 in Stuttgart. I must have the new uniform made during my 3-day stay in Berlin.

I shall not fail to call on you at once on my arrival.

With sincere greetings and Heil Hitler!

I remain, my dear Herr Woermann, yours sincerely,

F. W. SCHULENBURG

[Enclosure]

MEMORANDUM

Moscow, August 20, 1938.

I had requested permission of M. Litvinov and M. Potemkin to call on them to report on my return from leave. Besides this I had a number of current matters for discussion with M. Potemkin.

M. Litvinov has so far not replied, but I have been with M. Potemkin this afternoon.

P. questioned me at once about *Czechoslovak affairs*; he thought the situation there looked difficult enough. I replied that was the case. For the rest I kept to the instructions of Reich Minister's directive of August 3 of this year.<sup>37</sup> In the main P. listened to me without expressing a personal opinion. He acted as if the Czechoslovak question were indeed of great interest to the Soviet Government, but did not concern them particularly. P.'s attitude obviously conforms to a "*mot d'ordre*" given out by the Soviet Government and also acted

<sup>37</sup> Document No. 332, p. 529.

<sup>38</sup> This sentence is here inserted in Schulenburg's writing.

upon by the Soviet press, but which in no way corresponds to the truth. I have the impression that M. Litvinov is postponing my visit because he wished first to find out through P. whether I did not intend to put "awkward" questions.

In the course of the conversation P. also turned to the *Far Eastern frontier incident at Lake Hassan*. He was very informative. He gave two decisive reasons in reply to my question as to how the extraordinary "spreading" of the incident was to be explained.

1) The Japanese Kwantung Army had, "out of jealousy," sought occasion to prevent weakening of their effectives and consequent loss of prestige through transfer of troops to the Hankow offensive.

2) It was intended to demonstrate to China that the Soviet Union was retreating before gross provocation, did not dare fight against Japanese troops, and would therefore never be any real support for China.

The objective of 1) has apparently been achieved; the purpose of 2) has failed completely.

It is highly probable that the reasons given under 1) and 2) are in themselves correct. It was, however, the *Soviet Union* that had wanted to prevent troops of the Kwantung Army being transferred to Hankow, and the *Soviet Union* had wanted to prove to China that she can fight if need be, and that the *Japanese* recoil when it comes to the worst.

In this connection P. commented that Japan ardently desired to clear up the Chinese "adventure." Two days ago the French newspaper *Ordre* published the report that Italy was doing her utmost at Hongkong, Shanghai, and Hankow to bring about a settlement between Japan and China. P. considers these reports correct; Italy was undoubtedly acting on Japan's instructions. To my question as to what form such a settlement was likely to take, P. replied the plan was to replace Chiang-Kai-Chek by Wang-Sin-Weh (?), who was friendly toward Japan, but in a position to form a national government. The formation of a *national* government was necessary because otherwise anarchy (!) would break out in China. Under Wang-Sin-Weh China would then be guided into the "Anti-Comintern combination." P. did not know how to answer my question as to what position Japan would take in the "Anti-Comintern China."

COUNT VON DER SCHULENBURG

## No. 381

397/212851-54

*Memorandum by the German Ambassador in the Soviet Union  
(Schulenburg)*

## OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Moscow, August 23, 1938.

I would like to supplement my telegram No. 158<sup>39</sup> to the Foreign Ministry by recording following fragments of conversation from my interview yesterday with Foreign Commissar Litvinov.

**MYSELF:** The question here turns not upon an attack plain and simple, but on whether the attack is provoked or not provoked. We cannot and will not tolerate everything. Above all, however, we desire a peaceful solution of the Sudeten German question.

**LITVINOV:** Even the unruliest Czech hotheads do not want war or an attack on Germany. Their sole demand is for energetic defense against a German attack, and no yielding. They have a perfect right to this. But in reality the position is quite different. You desire the destruction of Czechoslovakia, you want to conquer the country. Naturally you prefer to attain your goal by peaceful means. War is always a risk. Everyone will try to avoid war if he can gain his ends without it.

**MYSELF:** The Czechs have been encouraged to stubborn resistance by the speeches of British and French statesmen and assurances of help.

**LITVINOV:** The Soviet Union considers the Sudeten German question to be the domestic concern of Czechoslovakia. The Soviet Union had not interfered in any way or given any advice, whether in the one or the other direction. Neither will she do it in the future.

**LITVINOV:** If the old democratic Germany still existed, the Czech question would have had quite a different aspect for the Soviet Union. We have always espoused the cause of self-determination of peoples.

Litvinov's remarks repeatedly contained unfriendly allusions to British policy.

A few days ago my British colleague, Lord Chilton, spoke to me about the Czech question. He was optimistic and expressed the opinion that agreement would still be reached. He asked whether the Sudeten Germans would be satisfied with far-reaching autonomy

<sup>39</sup> Not printed; an expanded version of the report contained in this telegram is printed as document No. 396, p. 629.

within the framework of the Czech State, or if they were definitely aiming at "Anschluss" with Germany.

I referred Lord Chilston to the Karlsbad program of the Sudeten Germans.

The junior members of the British Embassy here, who are on particularly good terms with our younger members, have repeatedly and in a friendly manner begged us not to allow ourselves to be deceived: should a German-Czech war break out France was certain to march, and with equal certainty Great Britain would support her. These younger members hoped, too, that Lord Runciman would find a solution acceptable to all parties.

Today the Finnish Minister called on me and informed me he had had to break off his leave prematurely because his Government considered both the Far Eastern frontier incident on Lake Hassan and the situation in Central Europe very critical. Baron Yrjö-Koskinen asked me how matters stood with the Czechoslovak question. I replied to him on the lines of the instruction of August 3.

The Finnish Minister declared in the course of the conversation, he feared it was well-nigh certain that, in the event of a German-Czech armed conflict, France and Britain would intervene with armed force. The Baron was equally convinced that in such an eventuality the Soviet Union would do as little as possible.

COUNT VON DER SCHULENBURG

### No. 382

139/125574-81

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the State Secretary in the German Foreign Ministry (Weizsäcker)*

LONDON, August 23, 1938.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: You will find enclosed a detailed memorandum on a conversation which I had today with Sir Horace Wilson, Chamberlain's most intimate colleague. Herr von Dirksen will have told you of Sir Horace's position here. Horace Wilson is generally considered to be one of the most influential men in the British Government. He does not like to appear in the limelight. It is an established fact that Neville Chamberlain asks for his advice on all matters. This man, who is opposed to all outward show, commands respect from all who come in contact with him. He is an embodiment of Moltke's idea: "To be more than you appear to be."

I gained the impression from the conversation that the British are aware of the untenable nature of the situation in Czechoslovakia. They are doubtless also prepared to do everything possible to meet

our wishes, at any rate at a price; they want to avoid a solution by war, not least because they probably feel that they would be fighting for a cause which is essentially worthless. Sir Horace mentioned the possibility that a special envoy of the British Government might transmit to the Führer a proposal for a peaceful and generous settlement. At the same time, however, he said that every effort in this direction would be useless if there were any truth in the rumors circulating in London and on the Continent that we had already fixed a time limit for the invasion of Czechoslovakia. I specially pointed out to Sir Horace how necessary it was that the British Government should now speak and act clearly. Beneš and his people should not be allowed to have the impression that the old policy of cheating could be continued because of British indecision.

Following the instructions given to me, I did not mention a plebiscite in the Sudeten German area as a possible solution. From the whole course of the conversation, however, Wilson can have no doubt that we would not agree to a solution which left the State intact in its present extent.<sup>42</sup>

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

TH. KORDT

[Enclosure]

MEMORANDUM

Today at the house of Mr. Conwell-Evans<sup>42a</sup> I had an exhaustive conversation with Sir Horace Wilson on the whole field of Anglo-German relations. The conversation opened with a discussion on the events during the Czechoslovak crisis of May 20 and 21 last. I pointed out to Sir Horace that at that time the British Government had let themselves be led astray by Czech propaganda. Acting on false reports of a German mobilization, the Czechoslovak Government on their side had mobilized. The British Government had then been convinced that there was not a word of truth in the alleged German mobilization. They had spread the idea abroad, or at least allowed it to be spread, that their sharp words and decisive action had prevented a world war. Sir Horace must admit that this procedure was unfair. It was reminiscent of the story in *Thoughts and Memories* [*Gedanken und Erinnerungen*] where Bismarck describes the visit of Gortschakoff to Berlin. Immediately after his arrival Gortschakoff pronounced the words, "*Maintenant la paix est assurée.*" Bismarck described this procedure by saying that he did not like someone jumping on his shoulder from behind and giving a circus

<sup>42</sup> The final paragraph is added in handwriting by Kordt.

<sup>42a</sup> A member of the Anglo-German Society; see document No. 482, p. 765.



performance. Exactly the same situation had arisen over the week-end crisis.

Sir Horace answered that the British Government's main concern had been to prevent a solution by force of the Czech problem. After the Austrian *Anschluss*, leading men in Germany had stated for weeks that it was now the turn of the Sudeten German question; it must be solved in a similar way. It could not be taken amiss if, in view of such statements, the British Government were on their guard. One was equally justified in being anxious if someone were sitting beside a powder barrel with a lighted cigar. As a matter of fact, the British Government, in common with the French Government, had merely intended to prevent the outbreak of war. Admittedly, a few days later, after the inspection of the German-Czech frontier by the British Military Attaché in Berlin, they had had to confess that there was not a word of truth in the whole rumor.

The conversation then turned to the Runciman Mission. Sir Horace emphasized that Runciman was making no reports of any kind about his activities. In this way he wanted to prove, in understanding with the British Government, that his activity was that of an independent mediator and investigator. When I asked Sir Horace if he thought that the Runciman Mission could succeed, he answered that Runciman would do his best to reconcile the two points of view. Nevertheless, it was possible that in the end there would be a gap between them, which could not be bridged. I told Sir Horace that success seemed impossible to me on the lines already followed. Czechoslovakia would refuse to make the necessary concessions as long as she definitely believed that she could count on support from both Western Powers in any eventuality. Belief in this support was, according to my conviction, the greatest obstacle to a reasonable solution of the Sudeten German and the Czechoslovak question. Germany's rise to power, and in particular the Austrian *Anschluss*, had fundamentally altered the position of Czechoslovakia. Between 1918 and 1938 France had thought that in Czechoslovakia and in the Little Entente as a whole she had an infallible means of keeping Germany in subjection. French policy, based on this idea, had failed. It was an illusion to imagine that Czechoslovakia could remain a thorn in the German flesh. Her one-time artificially created strategic position had collapsed in the face of new realities. She was like an air cushion out of which the air was gradually escaping. Artificial structures of this kind could not last forever, and it was to be hoped that, after the collapse of the policy of a man like Beneš, a statesman would arise from among the Czech people who would show his nation the way to a better future.

We had no confidence whatever in M. Beneš and his methods. For 20 years now he had tried to deceive us. It was intolerable to us that, by her alliance with Soviet Russia, Czechoslovakia had become a glacis for an attack on Germany. Ties with Soviet Russia and France must cease; only then would we see a possibility of a peaceful settlement with the Czechoslovak people. The Czechoslovak people's place was not on the side of Germany's opponents, but on the side of her friends. Here British policy had the opportunity of taking really constructive action toward European peace.

Sir Horace listened with great attention. He replied that a policy of this nature could quite well be discussed with Great Britain. It was only necessary that this policy should not be rendered impossible by the sudden use of force by us. He completely agreed with my remarks on the present unnatural and absurd position of Czechoslovakia. If there was a possibility here of settling the question by peaceful political means, the British Government were prepared to enter into serious negotiations. He asked me if the Führer were prepared to regard such a solution of the Czechoslovak problem as the beginning of further negotiations on a larger scale. The Führer had used the simile to an Englishman (he thought it was Lord Halifax) that European culture rested on two pillars which must be linked by a powerful arch: Great Britain and Germany. Great Britain and Germany were in fact the two countries in which the greatest order reigned and which were the best governed. Both were built up on the national principle, which had been designed by nature itself as the only working principle of human relationship. The reverse of this, Bolshevism, meant anarchy and barbarism. It would be the height of folly if these two leading white races were to exterminate each other in war. Bolshevism would be the only gainer thereby.

Wilson then turned to Germany's Southeastern policy. A constructive solution of the Czech question by peaceful means would leave the way clear for Germany to exercise large-scale policy in the Southeast. He himself was not one of those who held the view that Germany wanted to organize Southeastern Europe and then to use its resources for the annihilation of the British Empire. In these areas he could see possibilities of action for Germany better than any that could be imagined. The Balkan countries were the natural buyers of German manufactured goods, and, on the other hand, were the natural sources of raw materials essential to Germany. There was no sense in sending a turkey from Budapest to London instead of to Berlin. Neither had Great Britain any intention of opposing a development of German economy in a southeasterly direc-

tion. Her only wish was that she should not be debarred from trade there. There were a number of different products which Germany was not in a position to deliver to the Balkans. Britain wished to have her share in the Balkan trade in these commodities. The capital investments which Great Britain had recently made there were in no way intended as a weapon against German economy. Great Britain had realized that capital was needed in these countries, and it had been decided to divert capital there. Germany would also benefit from the consequent recovery. There was a similar situation in China with regard to Japan, which had also claimed 80 percent of the whole of China's foreign trade. Great Britain only wanted to reserve for herself opportunities for development of the remaining 20 percent.

When I was leaving, Sir Horace said that the conversation had been "most helpful" to him. He would discuss the whole situation with the Prime Minister. Perhaps a decisive step by Great Britain would result. I told him that things were moving toward a decision one way or another. If Great Britain wanted to help in achieving a reasonable solution of the Czechoslovak question, and thus in reaching an Anglo-German understanding, she must act quickly. Sir Horace replied that of course Lord Runciman could not be interrupted in the further carrying out of the task he had begun. He would, however, see to it that the British Government was prepared for the time when Runciman's Mission might fail.

TH. KORDT

LONDON, August 23, 1938.

No. 383

F18/371-374

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*<sup>43</sup>

SECRET

ON BOARD "PATRIA,"<sup>43a</sup> August 23, 1938.

While the Führer and the Hungarian Regent discussed political matters on the morning of August 23, the Hungarian Ministers Imredy and Kanya were closeted with Herr von Ribbentrop. Herr von Weizsäcker was also present during this conversation. M. Kanya brought forward two subjects:

- 1) The Hungarian negotiations with the Little Entente and
- 2) The Czech problem.

<sup>43</sup> Nuremberg document 2796-PS.

<sup>43a</sup> The discussions between the German and Hungarian Ministers took place while watching naval maneuvers at Kiel.

Kanya's observations on point 1), negotiations with the Little Entente, were mainly historical and produced actually nothing new. In any case, they were insufficient to justify any addition to the closing communiqué, which Kanya laid on the table. This communiqué is due to be issued today by the conference of the Little Entente.<sup>44</sup> It appears that Baron Apor, in Budapest, and Bessenyi, Minister in Belgrade,<sup>45</sup> have agreed to it. The question whether it was opportune was therefore really out of date. Nevertheless, one must go more deeply into it in order to bring out the German point of view.

Herr von Ribbentrop explained how, in his opinion, the renunciation of the use of force, which is to be proclaimed afresh, would not have the desired political effect, namely, that of protecting Hungary from Yugoslavia, particularly in the event of a Hungarian-Czech crisis. On the contrary, Hungary was blocking the road to intervention in Czechoslovakia and making it more difficult morally for the Yugoslavs to leave their Czech allies in the lurch. The impartial reader will say to himself that Hungary is moving away from the German-Czech political orbit and, in effect, renouncing revision, since he who does not assist departs with empty hands.

Kanya's arguments against this were unconvincing. They all touched on point 2, namely, Hungary's attitude in the event of a German-Czech conflict.

Herr von Ribbentrop asked the Hungarians how they would act if the Führer put into effect his decision of replying by the use of force to any new Czech provocation. The Hungarians hedged on two points: Yugoslavia must remain neutral if Hungary were to march northward and, eventually, to the east. Moreover, Hungarian rearmament had only just started and would require another year or two to complete.

To this Herr von Ribbentrop remarked to the Hungarians that the Yugoslavs would take care not to walk into the pincers of the Axis Powers. Rumania, too, would certainly not move on her own. England and France would likewise remain quiescent. England would not lightly risk the loss of the Empire, for she appreciates our newly recovered strength. It is not possible, however, to say

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<sup>44</sup> The communiqué issued on August 23, at the end of the discussions at Bled between representatives of the Little Entente States and Hungary, stated that the provisional agreements reached "include the recognition by the three States of the Little Entente of Hungary's equality of rights as regards armament, as well as the mutual renunciation of any recourse to force between Hungary and the States of the Little Entente." (Text in *Documents on International Affairs*, 1938, vol. I, p. 284, published by The Royal Institute of International Affairs, London.)

<sup>45</sup> Baron Gábor Apor was Hungarian Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Deputy Foreign Minister) from 1935 till 1939. Baron Bakách-Bessenyei was Minister in Belgrade.

anything definite in advance concerning the exact time of the event we are considering, since this depends on Czech provocation. Herr von Ribbentrop repeated that those who desired revision must seize opportunity by the forelock and themselves take an active part. Thus the Hungarian reply still remained subject to conditions.

As to Herr von Ribbentrop's question, what object the desired conversations between the General Staffs were supposed to have, little emerged save the Hungarian wish for a kind of mutual military inventory and preparatory stocktaking for the Czech conflict. No definite political basis for this—the exact moment for Hungarian intervention—was agreed.

Meanwhile, Horthy had expressed himself to the Führer in more definite language. While not keeping silent on his misgivings as to the British attitude, he nevertheless made it clear that Hungary intended to cooperate. The Hungarian Ministers were and still remain more skeptical, for they realize more strongly the direct danger to Hungary's unprotected flanks.

M. Imredy had an interview with the Führer in the afternoon and was most relieved *when the Führer stated to him that, in this particular case, he required nothing of Hungary.* He himself did not know the precise moment. He who wanted to sit at table must at least help in the kitchen. If Hungary desired General Staff conversations, he had no objections.

The Hungarian point of view can quite well be summarized today as follows: (a) Hungary is glad at not having to expect from us demands in the form of an ultimatum, and (b) Hungary is convinced that she will not be able to intervene until some 14 days after the outbreak of war.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 384

F20/126-127

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*<sup>46</sup>

RM 250

During the voyage on board the *Patria*,<sup>46a</sup> Ambassador Attolico informed me that he had been instructed to request the German Government to give the expected date of a German move against Czechoslovakia. Mussolini was especially anxious for this to be communicated to him, since the consequences of such an event might also

<sup>46</sup> Nuremberg document 2791-PS.

<sup>46a</sup> The discussions between the German and Hungarian Ministers took place while watching naval maneuvers at Kiel.

affect Italy. The Italian Government would like to avoid the surprise of a *fait accompli*. In this, Ambassador Attolico obviously hinted at the German entry into Austria.

I answered the Italian Ambassador that no exact moment for such an action had yet been fixed. I could only assure him that the German Government would not tolerate a repetition of the occurrences of May 21. If the Czechs again proceeded to provoke Germany, then Germany would march. This might be tomorrow, in 6 months' time, or perhaps not for a year. I could, however, promise him that the German Government would inform the Head of the Italian Government at the earliest conceivable moment of any increased tension in the situation, or directly the Führer had made a decision. In any case, the Italian Government would be the first to whom such information would be given.

R[IBBENTROP]

AUGUST 23, 1938.

No. 385

621/250602-04

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

A 3417

PARIS, August 24, 1938.  
(Pol. II 2619)  
(Pol. II 2780)

In continuation of the report No. A 3404 of the 22d of this month.<sup>47</sup>  
Subject: Reception by the French public of Vuillemin's visit.<sup>48</sup>

A confidential agent in circles close to the Quai d'Orsay informs me that the Foreign Ministry has so far received on General Vuillemin's visit to Berlin only a report from the French Ambassador about the General's conversations with the Führer and Field Marshal Göring. From this it appears that nothing of especial political import emerged from the conversation with the Führer. It consisted mainly in the exchange of reciprocal courtesies. In the interview with Field Marshal Göring, General Vuillemin remarked, not only out of politeness but as a result of conviction, how deeply he had been impressed by what he had seen of German aviation, which was at the highest pitch of efficiency. He admired particularly the methods and the organization of our aircraft production and how Ger-

<sup>47</sup> Not printed.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. document No. 289, p. 484, and footnote 90 thereto. General Vuillemin arrived in Germany on August 16 for a 5-day official visit. He was received by Hitler in Berlin on August 18.

many had profited by her technical and aeronautical experience. This represented an unheard-of achievement for so short a time.

Field Marshal Göring turned the conversation to the political field and asked General Vuillemin point-blank what France would do in the event of a German-Czechoslovak war. Vuillemin emphasized that such a war could not be localized and must inevitably lead to a Franco-German war. Field Marshal Göring interrupted to say that Germany had no intention of waging war against Czechoslovakia but would merely, in the Führer's words, hasten to the help of her Sudeten German friends, if they should be menaced. To this Vuillemin replied: "I am not a diplomat and am therefore unable to express an opinion on details. If you attack Czechoslovakia, we will attack you. Moreover, since the possibility of a German attack on Czechoslovakia exists, my General Staff and myself in accordance with our duty have made all our preparations for a war with Germany."

François-Poncet, the Ambassador, had appended his own remarks to this final report and had expressed his satisfaction at the soldierly answer of the French General, which had made an obvious impression and was, in any case, likely to produce more effect than any *démarche* he himself might have made to the Wilhelmstrasse in his capacity as Ambassador. Moreover, General Vuillemin had been received yesterday by Daladier and had made a detailed report to him on his journey.

The press published reports on Vuillemin's journey, ascribing to it a pronounced political character and affirming that the question of an air convention had been discussed. The Havas Agency in an official communiqué transmitted here yesterday by D.N.B. denied these rumors and it is stated in well-informed circles, so the report goes, that the announcements according to which General Vuillemin was handed a proposal for an air convention lack any foundation. His conversations with Field Marshal Göring were confined to generalities. The German Field Marshal in his talks with the Frenchman had touched on all the outstanding problems of international politics and, in particular, the question of Czechoslovakia. During the very cordial interviews between the two airmen General Vuillemin had adopted an attitude to all the questions dealt with which was in keeping with the traditional courtesy of the French Army.

H. WELCZECK

## No. 386

1613/386995-99

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

PRAGUE, August 24, 1938.

A. III. 2. h.

(Pol. I 2009 g)

In continuation of report of August 17, 1938 (Pol. IV 5493).<sup>48a</sup>

Subject: Lord Runciman's Mission.

## POLITICAL REPORT

The third week of Lord Runciman's activity in Prague began on the 17th of this month with the meeting between the Sudeten German Party delegation and the political Ministerial Committee. This conference represented a kind of stage in the negotiations between the Sudeten German Party and the Government, owing to Deputy Kundt's statements on the fundamental questions of the nationality problem. As is known, Deputy Kundt, in excellently formulated statements, both from the political and legal angle, has rejected as utterly inadequate the proposals of the Czechoslovak Government hitherto, and has most emphatically indicated the crux of the nationality problem—National State or Nationality State. The fear entertained both by Lord Runciman and the Czechs that the meeting on August 17, at which the unbridgeable gulf between the German and the Czech point of view was revealed in all its clarity, would mean the breaking off of negotiations, proved too pessimistic. The willingness expressed in the Sudeten German Party's statements to attempt to reach a conformity of views on the fundamental questions by further negotiations, afforded Prime Minister Hodza the opportunity to state in the name of the Government that efforts for agreement would be continued by negotiation. It is now for the Czechs to state their attitude to the Sudeten German Party's statements of August 17. So far this has not been done, nor has a new date been fixed for talks between the Sudeten German Party and the Government.

In the meantime President Beneš has personally intervened in the course of events. I reported on his offer verbally on August 18 and on August 19 by a memorandum<sup>49</sup> submitted to you. The further trend of the negotiations depends on the results of the talk arranged for today (August 24) between Deputy Kundt, Dr. Sebekovsky, and the President of the Republic. It is not yet quite clear whether in his offers to the Sudeten German Party the President is acting

<sup>48a</sup> Not printed.<sup>49</sup> Documents Nos. 369 and 371, pp. 586 and 588.



in concert with Prime Minister Hodza, whose previous activity in the nationality question he sharply criticized. Attempts by Hodza to obtain more precise information on the contents of M. Beneš' offer from Prince Max Hohenlohe, in a private conversation arranged by him, give rise to the supposition that the President acted independently. The well-known rivalry between the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister might also support this interpretation.

At the moment it cannot be seen what part Lord Runciman is playing in the President's latest action. A number of signs point to the fact that His Lordship, who visited the President on August 16, was certainly the cause of the President's surprising intervention, but that M. Beneš has not so far given the British mediator more detailed information on the extent of the concessions he intends to make. At any rate, in a conversation with Deputy Kundt on August 23, Lord Runciman was evidently not informed on details. In certain circumstances the desire to meet possible British proposals might have played a considerable part with Beneš. Certain circles of the Czech public, and especially those who belong to the President's faction, regard the Runciman Mission as interference in the sovereignty of the State. In these circumstances it must be a matter of importance to the President to keep British pressure in the attempts at a solution of the nationality problem as much in the background as possible. From statements made by Lord Runciman to Herr Kundt it can be assumed that the British mediator, too, would be glad if the initiative for new methods came from the President of the Republic. It is self-evident that M. Beneš is anxious above all to prove to international public opinion and to increasingly critical Czech opposition that, in a possible armed conflict with Germany, the blame is not on his side.

Lord Runciman and his staff have been very active during the past week. If the talk with Konrad Henlein on August 18 at Schloss Rothenhaus was important for the British more from the point of view of obtaining information, the talks which His Lordship has had during the last few days with the Prime Minister and the President seem to indicate the beginning of a tendency to new and more far-reaching concessions. Certain press reports to the effect that Lord Runciman was at present engaged on working out a proposal of his own were described as untrue by his colleagues. It is said that His Lordship does not think that the moment has yet come for a decisive act of mediation. Furthermore, the hope—obviously based on Czech assurances—seems to have increased among the British during the last few days that a German-Czech settlement might successfully be

brought about. In the Diplomatic Corps here, too, the pessimistic view prevailing hitherto of the possibilities of a solution has given way to a somewhat more optimistic attitude.

As is known, a conversation lasting for several hours took place between Konrad Henlein and Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin on August 22 in Marienbad, on the contents of which no exact information can be obtained from the leaders of the Sudeten German Party because of Konrad Henlein's injunction to silence. K. H. Frank told me, however, that Ashton-Gwatkin discussed two very important questions of international importance. A report on the conversation by Konrad Henlein had been dispatched direct to the Führer.

There seems to be no truth in suppositions expressed in the newspapers here that Lord Runciman is considering the idea of proposing the introduction of a "*Gau*" administration in the Sudeten German territory, which would grant a kind of self-government to medium-sized Sudeten German districts, without, however, granting a uniform consolidation of the Sudeten German territory under one common leadership. On the contrary, there is much to support the view that similar plans were recently pursued by the President himself, who is said to have inspired the authorship of the enclosed articles in *Bohemia*<sup>50</sup> on this subject.

After the last talks with the British mediator and his staff the impression has grown on the Sudeten German side that Runciman is favorably disposed toward the Sudeten Germans. The active interest of the British in all Sudeten German questions, which is shown by the various journeys to the provinces by His Lordship's colleagues, strikes, in the view of leaders of the Sudeten German Party, a friendly note. On the other hand, rumors are being spread by Czech Government circles that Lord Runciman has formed a very unfavorable impression of the Sudeten German Party negotiators and Party leaders as such. For example, a high Government official made the statements set out in the enclosed memorandum<sup>51</sup> to an agent of the Legation, obviously with the intention that they should come to the knowledge of the Sudeten German Party and thus arouse the distrust of Konrad Henlein and the Sudeten German Party negotiating delegation for His Lordship. If there is any truth at all in the contents of the memorandum, which I doubt, it is at the most a matter of exaggerations of incidental personal remarks by the British, which, however, can hardly afford definite conclusions as to their fundamental attitude.

<sup>50</sup> Not printed here. *Bohemia* was the oldest German newspaper in Prague.

<sup>51</sup> Not printed.

In contrast to the unintelligible attitude of the Czechs, the Sudeten German Party line was unequivocally laid down by Konrad Henlein in his conference with the Sudeten German Party negotiating delegation in Marienbad on August 22. The leader of the Sudeten Germans instructed the delegation not to let matters lead to a failure of the negotiations, and to do everything to convince the British of the sincerity of the Sudeten German desire for agreement. On the other hand, the delegation has the task of adhering without compromise to Konrad Henlein's eight Karlsbad points in the conversation with the President, and also in further negotiations with the Government.

HENCKE

No. 387

139/125564-65

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

PRAGUE, August 24, 1938—9:29 p.m.

No. 300 of August 24

Received August 24, 1938—11:05 p.m.

In continuation of telegram No. 296 of the 23d.<sup>52</sup>

For the State Secretary personally.

1) I learn the following about the conversations which have taken place during the last few days on the problem of nationalities:

a) Conversation between Konrad Henlein and Ashton-Gwatkin in Marienbad on August 22:

The contents have been kept secret by the Sudeten German Party in accordance with special instructions from Konrad Henlein. Frank, however, informed me that Ashton-Gwatkin raised two questions of far-reaching international importance which were dangerous for us. Konrad Henlein reported the conversation immediately to the Führer direct. Ashton-Gwatkin flew yesterday to London to present his report.

b) Conversation between Runciman and Kundt on August 23:

Kundt told Runciman the tenor of Beneš' proposals, as known to him. Runciman, who apparently was not conversant with the details, said he would be glad if negotiations could be carried on and brought to a successful conclusion on the basis of Beneš' offer and without his own direct intervention. He requested Kundt to keep him informed discreetly on the course of the conversations between the Sudeten German Party and Beneš.

c) We expect to receive information this evening on today's conversation between Kundt and Sebekovsky on the one side, and the

<sup>52</sup> Not printed.

President on the other. Frank stated that he would also report today direct to the Führer.

2) K. H. Frank informed me without giving details that, according to reports from the Sudeten German area, the Czechs were making preparations for acts of terrorism against the population if war started (arming of civilians, accumulation of weapons, proscription lists). Frank harbors the idea of making these facts public at the right moment with the slogan, "the Czechoslovak State is unable to protect its Sudeten German citizens." He hinted that perhaps this slogan might afford a pretext for German intervention but, on the other hand, expressed his anxiety lest the Sudeten German cry for help might strengthen the present British inclination to lift the problem onto an international plane.

HENCKE

### No. 388

C34/000323-25

*Memorandum by the General Staff, Submitted to the Führer*<sup>53</sup>

TOP SECRET, MILITARY

BERLIN, August 24, 1938.

Chef L.

TO BE HANDLED ONLY BY AN OFFICER

WRITTEN BY A GENERAL STAFF OFFICER

#### MEMORANDUM FOR REPORT THE TIMING OF THE X-ORDER AND THE QUESTION OF ADVANCE MEASURES

The *Luftwaffe's* endeavor to take the enemy air force by surprise on their peacetime airfields in the first attack on Czechoslovakia justifies the *Luftwaffe's* objection to all measures in advance of the X-order, and to the demand that the X-order itself be given sufficiently late on X-day minus 1, so that the fact of Germany's mobilization will not be known in Czechoslovakia on X-day minus 1.

The *Army's* efforts tend in the opposite direction. It intends to let the O.K.W. carry out between X-day minus 3 and X-day minus 1 such advance measures as will ensure the rapid and smooth working of mobilization. Therefore the O.K.W. also demands that the X-order be given to the Army not later than 2 p.m. on X-day minus 1.

<sup>53</sup> Taken from the Schmudt file. (Nuremberg document 388-PS.)

On the other hand it must be said:

Operation "Green"<sup>53a</sup> will be set in motion by an incident in Czechoslovakia, which will provide Germany with a pretext for military intervention.

The fixing of the time for this incident *to the day and hour* is of the utmost importance.

It must take place in general weather conditions favorable for our superior *Luftwaffe* to go into action, and at a suitable hour for authentic news of it to be known to us by midday of X-day minus 1.

It can then be automatically answered by the issuing of the X-order at 2 p.m. on X-day minus 1.

On X-day minus 2 the Fighting Services will receive only a warning order.

If the *Führer* intends to act thus, all further discussions are superfluous.

For then no advance measures may be taken before X-day minus 1, which cannot be innocently explained, as otherwise the incident would appear to have been staged by us. Absolutely necessary advance measures then must be ordered well beforehand, and camouflaged with numerous exercises and maneuvers.

The question raised by the *Foreign Ministry* of recalling in good time all Reich Germans from potential enemy countries must in no way lead to a conspicuous departure of all Reich-German subjects from Czechoslovakia before the incident.

It is also impossible to warn diplomatic representatives in Prague before the first air attack, although the consequences of their becoming victims of the air attack might be very serious (for example, the death of representatives of friendly or definitely neutral powers).

If, for technical reasons, it should be desirable to have the incident in the *evening*, then the next day *cannot* be X-day, but it must be the day after that. In any case, we must act on the principle that nothing must be done before the incident which would point to mobilization, and that after the X-incident the swiftest possible action must be taken.

The purpose of these notes is to point out how deeply the *Wehrmacht* is interested in the incident, and that it must be informed in good time of the *Führer's* intentions—insofar as the Intelligence Branch [*Abwehr-Abteilung*] is not itself charged with the organizing of the incident.

I request that the *Führer's* decision on these points be obtained.

J[ODL], August 26.

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<sup>53a</sup> See footnote 54, p. 239.

[Note in Schmundt's handwriting, initialed by him August 31:] Submitted on August 30. The Führer will act on the lines of these suggestions. Colonel Jodl informed on August 31.

## No. 389

2369/494839-44

*The German Ambassador to Great Britain (Dirksen) to the State Secretary in the German Foreign Ministry (Weizsäcker)*

BAD REICHENHALL,<sup>54</sup> August 24, 1938.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: Many thanks for your friendly letter of August 19<sup>55</sup> about Mr. Morgan. I shall be glad to establish contact with him from London.

I am enclosing two memoranda on the British attitude toward the Czech question; they have just reached me and seem important enough to be brought to your notice, since they throw light on two points:

- 1) The growing British comprehension of the Czech problem.
- 2) The increasing British readiness to take our demands into consideration, always providing that peace be maintained.

I should be very grateful if you would return these enclosures through your department after you have made copies.

I am conscientiously taking the cure here, concentrating on it all the harder because of the continual rain. Owing to absence, I have not yet been able to carry out the further object of my stay here, that is, to report verbally at Obersalzberg. I hope to do this before the Party rally; it would be unpleasant if I had to reply there in the negative to a question from Henderson on the subject, particularly as Chamberlain in his private letter to me had attached so much importance to this report.

Au revoir till Nuremberg! With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

DIRKSEN

<sup>54</sup> Dirksen was on leave in South Germany.

<sup>55</sup> Not printed.

[Enclosure 1]

MEMORANDUM BY BARON VON WELCK, SECRETARY OF LEGATION  
(LONDON EMBASSY), ON A CONVERSATION WITH BARON HAHN,  
MEMBER OF THE D.N.B. OFFICE, LONDON

Baron Hahn, diplomatic correspondent of the D.N.B., called on me today and gave me the following information:

He met yesterday morning at the Foreign Office, S. F. Steward,<sup>56</sup> the Prime Minister's Press Chief, whom he has known for many years and who invited him to visit him in the afternoon.

Steward said to him during the visit that he wanted to speak frankly. In his opinion—and he was speaking as a specialist—German propaganda was extraordinarily bad. Germany was spending a great deal of money to explain her measures and successes to the outside world, but succeeded in arousing only very little interest. Germany refused to say the one thing which would be good propaganda, namely, that she was prepared to cooperate peacefully with the other nations. She did nothing but put forward new demands, refusing any negotiations on them or any *quid pro quo*. It was quite inevitable that by these methods the world was made more and more uneasy and became more and more anti-German. With regard to the Czech question, Steward observed that there could not be the least doubt that France and Great Britain would fight if Germany resorted to force. Neither France nor Great Britain desired war. He was convinced that the German Government did not want it either.

The British Government were prepared to demand the most far-reaching sacrifices from Czechoslovakia if only Germany would adhere to peaceful methods in settling the Czech question. The British Government and people had no interest whatever in Czechoslovakia, other than that the affair should not end in Germany's using force. He knew for a certainty that Chamberlain had an intense desire to start conversations on the Czech question between Germany and Great Britain as soon as it was conceivably possible. He was quite indifferent as to whether these conversations took place between Lord Runciman and the German Government, or between the German Embassy and the British Government, or in some other way. If Lord Runciman received the slightest hint that the Führer would like to speak to him, he would gladly take the appropriate steps. If the negotiations between Germany and Great Britain seemed to promise success, then France could participate on the side of Great

<sup>56</sup> Presumably Mr. George F. Steward, a journalist and former Press Attaché in Belgium and Holland, who was attached to the Prime Minister's Office from 1929 to 1940.

Britain and Italy on that of Germany. Steward made no mention at all of Czechoslovakia's being admitted to these negotiations.

Mr. Steward urgently requested Baron Hahn not to give his name—at least for the time being—in any report he might make on this conversation. If everything went well, he could be mentioned later. Baron Hahn reported on his conversation with Steward, without mentioning his name, in a private letter to Minister Aschmann.

Baron Hahn reported to me, moreover, that the day before yesterday he had had a conversation with Crolla, Counselor of the Italian Embassy. Signor Crolla had made to him very much the same observations. He, too, was convinced that if Germany used force France and Great Britain would undoubtedly go to war, but that, on the other hand, Great Britain was prepared for any solution by peaceful methods. Signor Crolla merely expressed doubt whether it would be possible to hold a four-power conference on the Czech question with the participation of Czechoslovakia.

Submitted to the Chargé d'Affaires.

LONDON, August 18, 1938.

[Enclosure 2]

#### MEMORANDUM

by Herr Otto Chr. Fischer (*Reichskreditgesellschaft*) on conversations with Mr. Rykens (Unilever) who, together with Mr. D'Arcy Cooper, discussed thoroughly, with the knowledge of the Foreign Office, economic and political questions with Herr Fischer in May of this year.

The following points, which emerged from the conversation with Mr. Rykens on August 11 and 12, 1938, call for special notice:

1) I had the impression that the associates of Mr. Rykens consider the present Czech proposals, and, in particular, therefore, the system of four Provincial Diets each with a Czech majority, as hopeless and, in any case, as much less likely to provide even a temporary solution, than the so-called Karlsbad demands.

2) That the unfavorable effects on Czech mentality, especially on that of the Czech military authorities, of British action on May 21 are now realized, as well as the effects it had in rendering a settlement of outstanding questions more difficult.

3) That the difficulties which might arise are more clearly recognized, should any proposals of Runciman be rejected by the Czech military, whose excessive importance in the eyes of the Czech Government must be known to the British. I had the impression that the British were keeping their freedom of action in case this did happen, and hoped that the French would do likewise.



I again found in Mr. Rykens this time a full comprehension of the problem and also of how impossible it was for the land frontier of a country, allied to Germany's greatest enemy, to lie only 41 kilometers distant from Germany's geographical center. He realized, too, how unbelievable it was that a satisfactory permanent solution of the nationalities problem, in which also the attitude of the Poles and, especially, of the Hungarians naturally plays a great role, should be found *within* the framework of a Czechoslovak State. It is likewise obvious that there are fears as to the consequences which may ensue in the meanwhile from the recent noticeable worsening in the economic situation of the Sudeten Germans and the resulting increase in unrest.

## No. 390

F18/369-370

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*<sup>57</sup>

BERLIN, August 25, 1938.

Today the Reich Minister had a further conversation with M. Kanya, at the latter's request. The Reich Minister pointed out to M. Kanya the jubilation of the Czech, French, and British press over the Bled communiqué<sup>58</sup> and repeated that this event, especially at the present moment, was regarded abroad as a rift in German-Hungarian friendship and as a renunciation by Hungary of her revisionist aims. M. Kanya again put forward the already well-known points of view on the legal situation and on the questionable value of the so-called preliminary agreements between Hungary and the Little Entente, and in particular tried once more to prove that the intensified Hungarian demands on Czechoslovakia for protection of the minorities ensure that the agreement will never be fulfilled. And even if it were fulfilled, said M. Kanya, it would never be kept by the other side, and so Hungary would be freed from the observance of her guarantee not to use force. M. Kanya is expecting more detailed information from Budapest as to how far they have actually got with the initialing of the treaties, and will inform the Reich Minister on this. The Reich Minister and M. Kanya agreed that a great deal depended on the treatment of the Bled communiqué in the Hungarian press during the coming weeks.

With reference to Hungary's willingness to take an active part in the event of a German-Czech conflict, it is known that M. Kanya

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<sup>57</sup> Nuremberg document 2797-PS.

<sup>58</sup> See footnote 44, p. 610.

said a few days ago that an interval of one to two years was necessary in order to develop Hungary's fighting forces sufficiently. In today's conversation, M. Kanya amended this remark by saying that Hungary's military strength had in fact improved. By October 1 this year their armament would be so far advanced as to enable them to take part.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 391

337/197306-07

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

No. 304 of August 25

PRAGUE, August 26, 1938—12:30 a.m.

Received August 26, 1938—5:40 a.m.

In continuation of my telegram No. 302 of the 25th.<sup>61</sup>

In today's conversation with Kundt and Sebekovsky, the delegates of the Sudeten German Party, the President developed the offers which are known to the Foreign Ministry. He envisaged as the first step agreement on the carrying out of an immediate program, designed to prepare the ground psychologically and to show proof of good will. The second step should be a truce, especially in the press, and he had already laid the foundations of this on the Czech side. Then a special commission should deal with reforms in principle and, in this connection, Beneš had no intention of sticking rigidly to the distinction between administrative and constitutional reform.

As complementary objects of the immediate program, Beneš proposed:

- a) a settlement of the question of officials, including the police,
- b) the language question,
- c) economic and social questions,
- d) proportionate shares in the budget.

As to the question of officials, he desires to safeguard the right of the Government to transfer at will a definite percentage. In general, the intentions he communicated, including his views on the language question, agree with the information to hand there. He sees the solution of the economic problem in the suggested loan, and on psychological grounds he would also make this loan available to certain Czech districts. The budget should be proportioned wherever feasi-

<sup>61</sup> Not printed.

ble but not, for example, in the cases of the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Posts.

Beneš admitted to a certain extent that there were practical possibilities of compensation, but did not wish to use phrases which might well have an unfavorable psychological effect.

With regard to the withdrawal of the State police, he was quite ready for a compromise, directly order had been restored.

Beneš identified a fundamental settlement in the matter of self-government with the introduction of regional administration, which would mean a recasting of the State, which he preferred to describe as the completion of the structure of the State. The proposals contained in the memorandum of the Sudeten German Party were, in their present form, quite unacceptable to the Czechs. He was not prepared to say either "Yes" or "No" to the Karlsbad demands, he considered his . . . (group missing) in keeping his oath for the sovereignty, the unity, and the integrity of the State, was a point of honor with him. Kundt emphasized that this was also the case for the Sudeten German Party in the matter of the Karlsbad demands. Beneš sees the next move as a handing-over by him, at the beginning of next week, of his written proposals to the delegates of the Sudeten German Party, who have hitherto only talked with him in their private capacity. After they have been discussed with the Sudeten German Party he will lay them before the Prime Minister. When full agreement had been reached with the Sudeten German Party and the Government he would announce them to the public—he indicated the form the announcement was to take. The President was now waiting for the agreement of the Sudeten German Party to the projected *modus procedendi*.

Kundt and Sebekovsky merely took note of the proposals and reserved their opinion. On the other hand, when Beneš made his general statements on conditions in the Republic, they did not refrain from expressing their divergent views.

Beneš gave the delegates of the Sudeten German Party the impression of sincerity. In the course of the conversation, the President remarked that he would either obtain a unanimous agreement or resign his post, but in saying this he did not wish it to be taken as a threat.

The minutes will be forwarded by the next courier.<sup>62</sup>

Foreign journalists are spreading the rumor that Beneš desires agreement in principle with the Sudeten German Party before the Party Congress starts.

HENCKE

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<sup>62</sup> See document No. 398, p. 633.

## No. 392

340/198902

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

SECRET

BERLIN, August 26, 1938.

Today after lunch in Schloss Charlottenburg M. Imredy gave me once more a short résumé of his impressions here and the conclusions he had drawn from them. The Hungarians were definitely determined on taking part in a revisionist campaign against Czechoslovakia. The hour of striking, however, depended and would continue to depend on the assurance of Yugoslav neutrality. His, Imredy's, doubts about the whole European setup remained unchanged, although the Führer had tried to discount them.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 393

2369/494853-54

*Memorandum by the Counselor of the German Embassy in France (Bräuer) for the German Foreign Ministry*

(Pol. IV 5695)

Annex to report A 3431 of August 26, 1938.<sup>62a</sup>

## MEMORANDUM

During a visit which I paid to M. Massigli on other business, he broached the subject of the foreign political situation. He declared that a peaceful settlement of the Sudeten German problem depended to the extent of 20 percent on the Sudeten Germans and of 80 percent on Germany. A peaceful settlement was perfectly feasible if only no impossible demands were made. An abrupt settlement of the Sudeten German question imposed by Germany by force would inevitably lead to a general war. I answered to this that we were primarily interested in the solution of the Sudeten German problem and had nothing else in mind other than to contribute to peace in Central Europe, and indeed in the whole of Europe, by a reasonable solution which paid due regard to Sudeten German interests. If, however, we were forced to intervene to protect the Sudeten Germans, then the decision whether such a solution of the Sudeten German problem should lead to a general conflict depended simply and solely on France, for it was she who would have to decide to declare war on us, since we would not attack France, with whom we had no quarrel of any kind. M. Massigli replied that France could

<sup>62a</sup> Not printed.

not disinterest herself in the solution of the Czech problem. Europe had become so small that the Great Powers were interested even in countries which did not lie immediately on their borders. A further aspect of the question gave France special anxiety. Mussolini would undoubtedly seize the opportunity of a conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia, and possibly France, to intervene again energetically in the settlement of the Spanish question. He would then in all probability not only send considerable further reinforcements and deliveries of war material but, if through Italian help the Spanish war reached a conclusion favorable to Franco, he would attempt to carry into effect his own political aims. It is obvious what a threat this would constitute to the French Pyrenean frontier and to the lines of communication between the motherland and the North African possessions.

M. Massigli then objected strongly to the assertion put forward by the British press, and adopted by part of the French press, that Britain had in mind a repetition of Chamberlain's statement of March 24 and would, under certain circumstances, propose a joint Franco-British declaration. There was no reason for such a declaration, since nothing had changed during the last few days in the Czech question. Furthermore, the time for making speeches was past; the attitude taken up by France and Britain was well known and would only be weakened by repetition. The French had put forward this point of view in London in unmistakable terms.

BRÄUER

PARIS, August 26, 1938.

No. 394

337/197105

*The Under State Secretary (Woermann) to an Official of Political Division IV (Altenburg)*

VERY URGENT

TOP SECRET

To HERR ALTENBURG: I request as soon as possible a compilation of all available reports on the attitude of individual powers in the event of a conflict brought on by Czechoslovakia. This memorandum should contain no personal views or suppositions, but merely sum up the material known to us, giving the sources, separately by countries. Ministerial speeches, statements in diplomatic conversa-

tions, and official press announcements should therefore among other things be taken into consideration.

WOERMANN

BERLIN, August 26, 1938.

[Note in handwriting, signed by Heinburg:] The requested memorandum<sup>63</sup> together with three copies submitted herewith to the Under State Secretary. Berlin, September 6, 1938. HEINBURG.

No. 395

F6/0292

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 249

I held a conversation today with Imredy, the Hungarian Prime Minister, and Kanya, the Foreign Minister. M. Kanya informed me that the "Agreement of Bled"<sup>63a</sup> had been provisionally signed for Yugoslavia and Rumania by Stoyadinovich<sup>64</sup> but, on the other hand, not for Czechoslovakia. No agreement had come about with Czechoslovakia, as Hungary had demanded from her a more far-reaching declaration regarding the protection of Hungarian minorities than had been demanded from Yugoslavia and Rumania. Czechoslovakia had, however, declined to make this more extensive declaration. According to what he had just heard, the Hungarian Minister in London<sup>65</sup> had been summoned to the Foreign Office where he had been reproached with the attitude of the Hungarian Government. The Hungarian Minister had been urged at the Foreign Office to abstain from demanding such far-reaching assurances from Czechoslovakia.

As regards the treatment of the Agreement of Bled, Hungary's true attitude will be clarified by the attitude of the press.

Imredy, the Prime Minister, told me today that in his opinion France would hasten to assist Czechoslovakia in the event of a German attack, as France had pledged her honor to do this.

M. Imredy further informed me that the Hungarian Government would examine our complaints in the question of schools and would settle the matter in the shortest possible time. The Hungarian Government would, however, be grateful if Germany would exercise a moderating influence on the representatives of the German minority in Hungary.

<sup>63</sup> The memorandum is printed as document No. 436, p. 704.

<sup>63a</sup> See footnote 44, p. 610.

<sup>64</sup> The German here is ambiguous; it must mean that Stoyadinovich signed for Yugoslavia only.

<sup>65</sup> György Barcza was Minister in London, June 1938 to April 1941.

I merely took note of these observations of Imredy's without expressing an opinion on them.

RIBBENTROP

BERLIN, August 26, 1938.

No. 396

2369/494859-64

*The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A/1254

Moscow, August 26, 1938.

Subject: Soviet Union-Czechoslovakia.

In continuation of telegraphic report No. 158 of August 22.<sup>66</sup>

POLITICAL REPORT

On my return to Moscow I requested an interview, as is my custom, with Litvinov, Commissar for Foreign Affairs. Litvinov received me on the 22d instant. I have sent a telegraphic report on the course of my conversation with him. After a few introductory remarks, we very soon turned to the Czechoslovak question, and gradually a lengthy discussion developed, in which I adhered to the directions in instruction Pol. I 1770 g (IV) of the 3d instant.<sup>67</sup> I summarize the essential points of Litvinov's statements as follows:

Litvinov stated that the Sudeten Germans were trying to introduce National Socialism within the Czechoslovak democratic republic. It was impossible to combine different systems of government, for example, monarchy and republic, within *one* state. When I contradicted this, and referred, among other historical examples, to Danzig, where everything had been calm since National Socialism became dominant, Litvinov remarked that since then Danzig was lost to Poland; she had long since "written off" the city; it now had no significance for Poland.

I pointed out to Litvinov that the Czechs had been encouraged in their obstinate rejection of the Sudeten German demands by the speeches of British and French statesmen and by the assurances of help. In reply Litvinov remarked that the Soviet Union regarded the Sudeten German question as an internal affair of Czechoslovakia. The *Soviet Union* had not interfered in any way, and had not given the Czech Government any advice either in one direction or the other. Neither would she do so in the future.

<sup>66</sup> See footnote 35, p. 601.

<sup>67</sup> Document No. 332, p. 529.

In the further course of the conversation Litvinov stated that in no circumstances would Czechoslovakia attack Germany. I answered that it was not simply a question of an attack, but whether the attack was provoked or unprovoked. We could not and would not put up with everything. Above all, however, we desired a peaceful settlement of the Sudeten German question. Litvinov retorted that even the wildest Czech hotheads did not want war or to attack Germany, and would take good care not to provoke Germany. Their demand was merely for an energetic defense against a German attack without yielding. That was their acknowledged right. In reality, however, things were quite different: Germany was not so much concerned about the Sudeten Germans; she aimed at the annihilation of Czechoslovakia as a whole; she wanted to conquer the country. Naturally Germany preferred to achieve her end by peaceful means. War was always a risk. Anyone would try to avoid war, if he could achieve his purpose without it. If, however, it did come to war, Germany would clearly be the unprovoked aggressor. It was certain that France would then mobilize and Great Britain would follow France's lead. The British Government could no longer retreat, even if Chamberlain wanted to do so. The Soviet Union had promised Czechoslovakia her support; she would keep her word and do her best.

When I asked whether Litvinov really believed that the powers would launch a major European war on account of Czechoslovakia, the People's Commissar replied that it was less a matter of the Czechs than of questions of power politics. The Soviet Union bore no responsibility for the creation and composition of the Czechoslovak State; she had not sat at Versailles; on the other hand, she must combat any increase in power of National Socialist Germany in her violence and desire for attack. Litvinov added: if the old democratic Germany had still existed, the Czechoslovak question would have assumed quite a different aspect for the Soviet Union. The Soviets had always been in favor of the right of self-determination of peoples.

From my impressions of the conversation with Litvinov I would say that, even if Litvinov only said France would "mobilize," there was no doubt in my mind that he meant by this expression that France would attack Germany. Furthermore, it is worth noting that Litvinov's statements repeatedly attacked British policy.

Although the conversation was relatively detailed and of long duration, it was not easy to induce Litvinov to speak. My efforts to make Litvinov state what form possible Soviet help to Czechoslovakia would take were in vain. The Foreign Commissar repeatedly avoided answering this question.



In view of the importance of Litvinov's statement that the Soviet Union has promised her support to Czechoslovakia, that she will keep her word and do her best, I have examined the possibilities which the Soviet Union has at her command for doing this. The result is set out in the enclosed memorandum,<sup>68</sup> the contents of which were worked out in agreement with the Military Attaché and the Naval Attaché. The examination reaches the following conclusions:

1) Whereas the Soviet Union is attempting to force France and Great Britain to take the initiative against Germany, she herself will hold back. This does not exclude the possibility that France and Czechoslovakia may agree, or have already agreed with the Soviet Union on how help is to be rendered.

2) The Soviet Union will not attack Germany, because she has no common frontier with Germany. However, she will at least mobilize the western Military Districts [*Wehrkreise*].

3) The Soviet Union can attack Germany from the air.

4) By employing U-boats, light naval forces and naval aircraft, and also by laying mines, the Soviet Union can considerably disrupt German shipments of ore from Sweden and northern Norway.

5) The Soviet Union can attack East Prussia across the Baltic by naval and land aircraft, and can also interrupt sea communication between the Reich and East Prussia by means of U-boats.

6) The Soviet Union will make use of every opportunity to supply Czechoslovakia with war material in considerable quantities, in particular with aircraft. The sending of troops to Czechoslovakia is difficult to accomplish and is also not in the interests of the Soviet Union. The dispatch of military technicians is not out of the question.

7) Wherever it can harm Germany, the Soviet Union will incite the workers against Germany.

In all countries and in all spheres Soviet propaganda and Soviet funds, helped too by the Marxist and Jewish press, will be used in increasing measure against Germany.

In conclusion, I must not omit to say that the overwhelming conviction of the Diplomatic Corps here is that, in the event of a German-Czech armed conflict, France would attack Germany, and Great Britain would be at France's side. The members of the British and French Embassies here have repeatedly told us this. As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, my colleagues here believe that she will do so as little as possible, so that at the end of the war she will have an intact army at her disposal. In consequence, the Soviet Union would in the end be the only one to gain. Characteristic of this is the following remark of my French colleague here: "I hope, with all my heart, that it will not come to a German-French conflict. You know, as well as I do, for whom we are working if we come to blows."

SCHULENBURG

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<sup>68</sup> Not printed.

## No. 397

337/197304

*The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 167 of August 27

Moscow, August 27, 1938—9:28 p.m.

Received August 27, 1938—11 p.m.

In continuation of my telegram No. 158 of the 22d.<sup>69</sup>

As I was discussing today with the Foreign Minister the release of the German trawler<sup>70</sup> he introduced on his own initiative the subject of Czechoslovakia. Litvinov remarked that an American journalist had asked him whether it was correct that I, acting on instructions from the Government of the Reich, had carried out a *démarche* with him and had declared that war over Czechoslovakia was imminent. He, Litvinov, had denied this to the journalist but, as against this, he had received definite reports that our representatives in Bucharest and Belgrade had each actually carried out such a *démarche*. As the subject of these *démarches*, Litvinov repeated almost verbatim some passages of the instruction of August 3.<sup>71</sup> In the case of Belgrade, the Czechs had received this information from Stoyadinovich. After a few comments such as: they are apparently unaware in Berlin of the seriousness of the situation, Litvinov again emphasized that France would intervene in a German-Czech war. On my remarking in the course of the conversation that Poland and Rumania were unlikely to grant right of transit to Soviet troops, he answered that Czechoslovakia and Rumania<sup>72</sup> were very greatly worried about the future. The latter was afraid of being next on the list, when once Czechoslovakia had been settled by Germany.

SCHULENBURG

<sup>69</sup> See footnote 35, p. 601, and document No. 396, *supra*.

<sup>70</sup> The S.S. *Bahrenfels* had been detained by the Russian authorities in the Bering Sea.

<sup>71</sup> Document No. 332, p. 529.

<sup>72</sup> Thus in the copy received in the Foreign Ministry. Schulenburg's penciled draft from the Moscow Embassy files mentions only Rumania.

## No. 398

1613/387004-27

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

PRAGUE, August 27, 1938.

A. III. 2. h.

(Pol. I 2035 g)

With reference to report of August 25, 1938.

Subject: New proposals of President Beneš.

I have the honor to enclose copies of the minutes, placed at my disposal by the Sudeten German Party, on the conversations between the Sudeten German delegates, Kundt and Dr. Sebekovsky, and the President of the Republic on August 24 and 25 of this year.

Apart from the contents of the conferences reported in telegraphic report of August 25, 1938,<sup>73</sup> I would like to refer to the following remarks of the President:

*a) Conference of August 24, 1938:*

President Beneš is not anxious to appear as the one who issued the invitation.

The President envisages a simultaneous start on the separate stages of his proposals for a solution.

M. Beneš agrees with the view of the Sudeten German Party that agreement on fundamental points must first be reached between the Government and the Sudeten German Party before any start can be made with hammering out individual questions.

The President of the Republic maintains that, by his actions on May 21, 1938, he also rendered a great service to the German Reich. He had never said that the German Army intended to invade Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak measures were intended to have a preventive effect, to act as a warning, and to emphasize that Czechoslovakia is determined to defend herself.

M. Beneš denies the existence of any war party in Czechoslovakia.

The President repudiates the ideas of National State or State of Nationalities for Czechoslovakia, and alleges on the contrary that as early as 1919 he opposed the thesis that the Republic should be firmly anchored in the Constitution as a National State.

The President desires to establish good neighborly relations with Germany by means of a *modus vivendi*, for then the question of the Pact with Russia would in practice lose all actuality.

*b) Conference of August 25, 1938:*

The President of the Republic stresses that there is only one problem in Czechoslovakia and that is the problem of nationalities. He wants to solve it by evolutionary means and is afraid of two things only, a war and then Bolshevism.

<sup>73</sup> Document No. 391, p. 624.

M. Beneš admits that the Republic is no model democracy, but a dictatorship of the Government majority over the opposition and of the majority of the nation over the other national groups. Czechoslovakia was therefore today a kind of pseudo-authoritarian State and by no means a democracy.

The President gave the information that he had made it quite clear to the Czech "Frontiersmen" [*Grenslers*] that only the Army was competent to defend the State. Night exercises and such-like activities must cease both on the Czech and the German side.

The attitude of the Sudeten German delegates is evident from the minutes. Deputy Kundt and Dr. Sebekovsky countered the declarations and statements of the President by giving him a clear picture of the real situation.

HENCKE

[Enclosure 1]

*Minutes of Meeting*

Present: President Dr. Eduard Beneš, Deputy Ernst Kundt, and Dr. Wilhelm Sebekovsky.

Time: August 24, 1938, from 10:15 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

Place: Library of the President at the Castle in Prague.

The conversation was carried on in German.

*Introduction:*

The conference came about through Beneš, who, at the suggestion of the President of the Constitutional Court of Justice, Professor Dr. Krejci, inquired of Deputy Kundt by way of Professor Dr. Sander whether he were prepared to accept an invitation to a conference, since the President desired to intervene in the negotiations between the Sudeten German Party and the Government, which had reached a complete *impasse*.

Deputy Kundt sent an answer to the President that he was ready to take part in a private talk if he might bring with him another member of the Party.

In due course Professor Sander brought a message that the President was expecting Deputy Kundt and Dr. Sebekovsky at 10 a.m. on August 24, 1938.

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To start with, Beneš stated that he had been persuaded to call this conference at the suggestion of the President of the Constitutional Court of Justice and through the agency of Professor Sander.

Deputy Kundt interposed: So you want it to remain indefinite on whose initiative the invitation was issued. We heard a different story from Professor Sander.

To this the President replied that he did not wish to raise any question of prestige on this occasion, since questions of prestige should play no part.

Beneš declared that he would plunge immediately *in medias res* so as to explain the nature of the business. Two points were in question:

- 1) How to dispel the general mistrust, so that good will might be manifest on both sides and
- 2) How the basic questions of German-Czech relations might be treated in a practical way and settled.

On the psychological plane, relations must be improved by means of immediate separate adjustments without, however, permitting the treatment of the main problem to be postponed.

It must rather also be kept in mind, even at the time of separate adjustments within the framework of the first stage, how the second and third stages are to be shaped, since unless one wants the third stage it is impossible to start on the first.

Sebekovsky interrupted to ask what he understood by the third stage, taking the first as separate adjustment and the second as main settlement. Beneš explained that he had only given this enumeration as an example, without having any definite idea in his mind as to the third stage.

When Deputy Kundt asked him whether he proposed to start with the first stage and, after that had been settled, go on to tackle the second, or whether, not wanting a separation in time, he would deal with the whole problem at once, Beneš replied that naturally the problem should be treated as a whole.

Deputy Kundt stressed that ever since February the Sudeten German Party through its representatives had pointed out to the Prime Minister that the Government must, by their actions, create the prerequisites for an improvement in the atmosphere, in order that the German population might have faith in the good will of the Government and thus make it easier to negotiate the settlement of the problem as a whole.

In practice nothing was done and the atmosphere was even considerably worsened by the proceedings of May 21, 1938, when a position both unconstitutional and illegal was created. The sufferings of the German population at the hands of the military rabble [*Soldateska*] still further deepened their distrust.

Nevertheless the Sudeten German Party, on the basis of Kundt's discussion with the Prime Minister on May 23, also entered into conversations to settle the problem. These, however, proved fruitless. Deputy Kundt explained this in his introductory remarks at the

meeting on August 17 between the Government and the delegates of the Sudeten German Party. Kundt stated that he had explained this in order to emphasize that now even Beneš shared the opinion of the Sudeten German Party that psychological conditions must be created by immediate action on the part of the Government.

Beneš agreed on the necessity for creating psychological conditions.

Sebekovsky rejected the Czech charge that the Sudeten German Party refused to take part in definite conversations. He referred to the initial meeting between the Sudeten German Party and the Government on June 23, when for 5 solid hours the Sudeten German Party, with the help of political, industrial, historical, and psychological arguments, had established their case that the Government had to act on the basis of the Karlsbad demands put forward by Konrad Henlein. To this, no reply had been received. The Government made a counterproposal in paragraph form and demanded that it should be discussed paragraph by paragraph. The Sudeten German Party refused because the fundamental principles had not even been discussed, let alone an agreement reached on them. To reach this agreement on basic principles is surely the first task and the most concrete work which is to be done.

To the supplementary question put by Deputy Kundt, whether Beneš was also of the opinion that a common point of view must first be reached before any definite work could be started on individual questions, Beneš replied that such indeed was his opinion. Beneš now developed the theme that ever since 1919 he had always advocated a just order of things and a settlement between Germans and Czechs. Thus in 1919 he had demanded in Paris that the authorities in Prague should admit Germans to the Revolutionary Government so that they might cooperate in formulating the Constitution and the first laws. He had then ever since 1920 kept in close touch with German Members of Parliament, especially with Professor Kafka, Spina, Mayer-Harting,<sup>74</sup> the Social Democrats Czech and Czermak, and had also frequently sounded the views of Dr. Lodgman<sup>75</sup> and taken his opinion. Then in 1925 the Activist movement started, to which he had given his approval.

(Beneš desired to prove by all this that he had always worked for a just arrangement between Germans and Czechs and that today also he was still advocating the same thing.)

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<sup>74</sup> Kafka was a German Liberal, Spina a German Agrarian, and Mayer-Harting a German Clerical, all of whom had adopted the change from "negativism" to "activism" (i.e., participation in the Government) in 1925.

<sup>75</sup> A former German National member of the Austrian Reichsrat who tried to organize a government in German Bohemia in 1918-19 and subsequently became a Deputy of the German National Party in the Prague Parliament, retiring in 1925, after he had not been re-elected.

Beneš stated: The psychological aspect is of primary importance. In this respect both sides have made mistakes. But I declare emphatically that the Czechoslovak people is both ready and willing for a settlement.

The tone of the press can be changed; that is just a matter of a week or two.

He further stressed the fact that he had also been the one to settle the *émigré* question. If we asked Minister Eisenlohr he would confirm this.

As to May 21, 1938, Beneš tried to explain that the measures taken were based on a legal foundation and referred in this connection to paragraphs 21 and 22 of the Military Law. These paragraphs, however, had been wrongly interpreted by the military and other circles, for which reason he had already laid down at a meeting of the political Ministers that the decisions concerned must, on some quieter occasion, be suitably construed.

He knew of the cases of unlawful intrusion reported by the Sudeten German Party, for he himself as head of the Army had "intervened." Beneš admitted that unlawful intrusions actually had taken place. He emphasized that the acts of May 21 were fitting and necessary not only for the State but also for Germany, for Sudeten Germanism and for European peace.

Sebekovsky said that the Sudeten German Party regarded the measures of May 21 as the greatest of misfortunes and asked for the reasons for Beneš' verdict.

Beneš stated that there had been elements who had actively worked for an explosion. It could be inferred from his remarks that he meant "cliques" in Reich-German political circles. He was well informed on Germany and the currents of feeling there. It is no secret that differences exist within the Party and between the Party and the Reich Army.

He had never said that the Army of the German Reich intended to stage an invasion, although movements of troops had taken place. The Czechoslovak measures were designed to have a preventive effect, to act as a warning and to make it quite clear that Czechoslovakia is determined to defend herself.

Beneš maintained that through the action of May 21 he had also rendered a great service to the German Reich.

Deputy Kundt pointed out to Beneš that friends of his (Beneš) were saying that he, at about the time of May 21, had expressed the opinion that the National Socialist regime would collapse in 6 months' time. This information is connected with the rumor that

Beneš had wanted May 21, so that this action might contribute to the overthrow of the National Socialist system in Germany.

Beneš emphatically denied this, saying that a statesman must always take account of realities. He referred to his speech as Foreign Minister in the Czechoslovak Parliament, after National Socialism had seized power, when he declared that he would always continue a neighborly policy toward Germany, irrespective of the system in force there.

By the action of May 21, he had only wished to serve peace. *In his own words*: "I would have been either an idiot or a criminal if I had desired to overthrow the National Socialist system by the acts of May 21."

Moreover, there was no war party in Czechoslovakia. With us the military take no part in politics, neither will they do so.

He referred again to the speech which he had made at Tabor on May 21. In this he had not alluded to Hussite traditions but had spoken about King Podebrad.<sup>76</sup>

To the objection that everybody had interpreted the fact that he, the President, had made a speech on May 21 in the Hussite town of Tabor, as stressing the warlike significance of the measures of May 21, he answered that he had been misunderstood. In his own words: "During my whole life I have been misunderstood politically."

In connection with this statement he referred also to the internal political fight which he had to wage as Foreign Minister, and emphasized once more that he was always in favor of settlement.

Why had Kramař<sup>77</sup> fought him? Because, even in the revolutionary National Assembly, he had opposed the idea of a national language and the suggestion that Czechoslovakia be firmly bound by the Constitution as a National State.

He then tried once more to prove that the point at issue was not the idea of a National State or Nationalities State, since it cannot be denied that you are right when you say that the State is based on the relative proportion of the several peoples. The expressions "National State" and "Nationalities State" must not, however, entail the carrying on of a policy of prestige.

Deputy Kundt remarked that the Sudeten German Party were not concerned with the abstract question, National State or Nationalities State, but with the concrete fact that the whole mentality of the Czechs and, as a result, of the civil service favored a National State,

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<sup>76</sup> King George of Podebrad, 1458-1471, best remembered as a national hero and defender of the Hussite movement, had nevertheless worked hard for a compromise with Rome, and had also made a proposal for a "League of European Princes" to meet the Turkish danger.

<sup>77</sup> The first Prime Minister of the Czechoslovak Republic, and a strong Czech nationalist.



which fact was confirmed when even the most trivial official business was transacted. Kramař, therefore, and the theory of the National State had in practice won the day, and Beneš' view had not prevailed. Thus Beneš, as President, is in the tragic position of having to liquidate this development of 20 years. Is it correct that, when he took over the Presidential office, he observed that, succeeding Masaryk, the President of the Liberation, he conceived his own function to consist in becoming the President of the "Consolidation"?

Beneš agreed to this and referred to a speech of his in Reichenberg in the year 1936, which he described as "revolutionary" to Czech mentality.

He stressed once again his desire to be a President for all nationalities, including the German. But that naturally depended on the Sudeten German Party.

Politics in this country were a matter of one's generation and he considered himself as one of the younger generation. He had never been in Vienna nor had he ever engaged in politics there. He had set himself the aim of not taking an active part in politics before the age of 40 and, until then, of studying and preparing himself. Developments during the war had driven him into politics. Previous to that, he had written books.

In Austria, the Czechs sat under the table, while the Germans were underneath it.<sup>78</sup> After the birth of Czechoslovakia, the same politicians sat down together, only this time the Czechs sat around the table and the Germans underneath it. He had arrived from Paris after the war and had been unable to understand either case.

He was aware that his books were quoted against him since he had not carried out what he had written.

He had written his thesis at the age of 23.<sup>79</sup> In a young man of that age, however, a few mistakes must be overlooked. No one knew better than he himself that the book contained contradictions which, however, had not yet been noticed by his critics. Nevertheless, he still basically adhered today to the opinions expressed in that book.

In his own words: "What was claimed there does not satisfy you."

Then changing the subject to that of foreign policy, he emphasized that he had always advocated a *modus vivendi* and, in general, a corresponding relationship to Germany. In this connection, he had accentuated that Czechoslovakia should serve the interests of no other country, either in the West or in the East. Deputy Kundt mentioned that, all the same, according to reports on the Peace Con-

<sup>78</sup> *Sic*; presumably an error for "the Germans sat around the table . . ."

<sup>79</sup> Presumably *Le problème autrichien et la question tchèque*, published in 1908 when Beneš was in fact 25.

ference, Czechoslovakia had offered her help to the Western Powers, particularly France, against the German Reich. Beneš remarked, people say that the Versailles Treaty was a bad one. All treaties after a war are bad, since they are concluded under the influence of a victory psychosis. What sort of treaty do you think Germany would have made? We know indeed some of the provisions, for example, those affecting Belgium.

He then passed to the question of the reports of the Czechoslovak delegation at the Peace Conference and said that he had not been the sole author. The expression "hereditary enemy" had indeed been used there, but this was understandable, given the psychological atmosphere of the war period, as described already.

He observed that he had been one of the few statesmen not to employ too forcible expressions against Germany and the German people. He had always been opposed to "pan-isms," since they lead to war. He had been against the Pan-Slavism of Tsarist Russia and was still its enemy, whatever garb it assumed. (An allusion to the Pan-Slavism of the Bolshevists.)

When asked what importance he attached to the settlement of the nationality problem between Czechoslovakia and Germany, Beneš stated that the German-Czech question must be solved without regard to its effects on foreign policy. This question had today an effect on foreign political relationships. He admitted that the problem of nationalities had become today one of international importance. Nobody would go to war because of the nationality problem. When one wants to go to war, it is always possible to find a pretext.

As to the pact with Russia, Beneš said: The treaty with Russia protects our rear, but it is not a military pact. He had concluded the treaty in 1934, that is to say in the same year as Germany renewed the Treaty of Rapallo with Russia. He had the intention of concluding at the same time a similar treaty with Germany. In international politics no treaties were simply thrown overboard. He desired a *modus vivendi* with Germany from which good neighborly relations should develop, and then in practice the question of the pact with Russia would lose all actuality.

Beneš observed at the termination of the conversation that he had informed the Prime Minister yesterday about this private interview.

He was in full agreement with Hodza. Although they each possessed different temperaments and used different methods, yet their aims were identical.

He wished to intervene in order to overcome the deadlock in the negotiations between the Government and the Sudeten German Party.

Beneš asked if a résumé could now be drawn up on the basis of today's conversation, but the two representatives of the Sudeten German Party stated that this was impossible, for not enough had been said on internal politics and the present situation. It was therefore agreed that the discussion should be continued on the following day (August 25) at 10 a.m.

PRAGUE, August 24, 1938.

[Enclosure 2]

*Minutes of Meeting*

Present: Dr. E. Beneš, Deputy E. Kundt, and Dr. W. Sebekovsky.

Time: August 25, 1938, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Place: Library of the President at the castle in Prague.

The conversation was carried on in German.

Continuation of the first conversation on August 24, 1938.

Beneš had stated on the first day that he also wanted to tell the Sudeten German Party what mistakes he considered it had made. The interview started thus.

He blamed the Sudeten German Party for:

1) Lack of objectivity, especially in its press.

The press reports nothing but the bad side and deficiencies; no mention is ever made of positive achievements. And yet the Sudeten German Party must know very well that the State has been consolidated and that, industrially and financially, it is in full working order. He expressed the opinion that Czechoslovakia, even in comparison with France, England, and Germany, was one of the most orderly countries existing.

He cited as an example the national debt, which in 1930 amounted to 30 milliards and had now risen to 42 milliards. Nevertheless, the State, owing to the reduction in the rate of interest, did not pay any more than in the year 1933. In the social sphere likewise, the State had not permitted any class war to develop. Strikes which threatened to break out were avoided. The strike problem had not caused any such difficulties as in other countries.

The State revenue this year was one milliard more than had been estimated. This fact was not known, not even to the Parties, so as to preclude any further demands on the occasion of the forthcoming budget.

There is only one problem in this State and that is the problem of nationalities. He desired to settle everything by evolutionary methods. He was only afraid of two things, a war and, after it, a Bolshevik revolution.

Masaryk and he had been the first to make anti-Bolshevist speeches. His first speech after the Peace Conference had attacked the Bolshevists.

2) The Czech people is democratically inclined. When the press of the Sudeten German Party praises every performance of the authoritarian countries, yet refuses to recognize the achievements of the democracies, that also displays a lack of objectivity.

3) Cases of terrorism are greatly exaggerated. There are, however, actually a number of cases on hand. He mentioned numerous letters which his Chancellery had received even from German sympathizers with the Sudeten German Party. He had also discussed them with the Minister of the Interior.<sup>80</sup> He was particularly anxious to arrange a press truce and had already taken steps to this end with the Czech press.

Deputy Kundt stated in answer to the criticism of the President: If we do perhaps often estimate incorrectly in some particulars the financial situation of the State, then the fault lies in the fact that the Parliamentary Opposition has hitherto never been given exact information. For instance, we were never admitted to the private sessions of the Parliamentary Savings and Control Commission, although the C.T.K.<sup>81</sup> report read as if the whole Commission had been sitting. Complaints to the Speaker of the Parliament and to the Prime Minister had so far been fruitless. When secrets are kept from the Opposition in this way, it is only logical to assume that the real position of the State finances must also be hidden from them.

As to social development, it must be made clear that, while the improvement in the standard of living may be true as regards the Czech population, it certainly is not so as regards the Sudeten Germans. The Sudeten German Party is to thank for the fact that no revolutionary class wars broke out among the Sudeten Germans, since its victory saved the Sudeten German areas from Bolshevism. You can easily imagine what a blaze Bolshevism might have started right on the State frontier. The fact that the Sudeten German Party strove to bring about a closer contact between the employers and the workers of all kinds did not produce any improvement in the social lot of the workman, but only gave him the hope that his future might be better. Moreover, workers, peasants, and employers all know that, for reasons of national policy, they share a common social misfortune and are therefore fighting to remove the national political causes of this misfortune. This fight is not directed against the State as such. It is a struggle against the

<sup>80</sup> Dr. Josef Černý.

<sup>81</sup> The Czech news service.

system and against the Government and the Government Parties who represent it.

Beneš: Democracy is an ideal which develops by degrees. The Germans must also assist democracy to attain its full growth.

During the first years of the Republic, the "Petka" functioned (a committee of five members from the Czech Government Parties). He had always disavowed the Petka system and, as Minister, had never reported to the committee. In 1922 he had written a pamphlet "What is Democracy?", which indirectly attacked the Petka and brought on him great enmity. The Petka system was the first stage. This was superseded by the second stage, in which the Government was no longer carried on by five men only but by the majority parties. We must now move on to the third stage in which the monopoly of the majority parties will be superseded in its turn.

The German Ministers were to blame for cooperating with this system, instead of altering it. For it is not a question of improvements within the framework of this system but of a radically different system. The State is not a model democracy but a dictatorship of the Government majority over the Opposition, and a dictatorship of the Czech majority over the groups of other nationalities. The State is therefore today a kind of pseudo-authoritarian State and by no means a democracy.

We represented our views on this system in detail at the Karlsbad meeting this year and, from these facts, Konrad Henlein produced the well-known eight Karlsbad demands as an absolute minimum. If we had wanted to haggle, we would have demanded more, so as to be in a position to make concessions. We are, however, honest and only demand the minimum necessary. No concessions are therefore possible. Discussion can only take place on the most suitable means of carrying out these demands.

Sebekovsky denied the reproach that the Sudeten German press lacked objectivity. The task of the press was to report facts and to comment on them. The important point was not to demand restraint from the press but to permit no incidents and not to put into force such measures which, being thoroughly bad, are recorded in the press and must also naturally be criticized. It is the causes which must be avoided. The Sudeten German press has orders to publish nothing but the truth in strict accordance with the facts. The Czech press bureau attempted for a time to counter this with corrections but these only served as indirect confirmations of the accounts.

The psychological and political situation was precisely as it was reflected in the press. The impressions, presented by the Czech and the German press, can be summarized in brief as follows: The

Czech press agitates, while the German press defends itself. The Czech press reflects the Czech viewpoint, which is that in the frontier areas the Czechs say: let ten Germans bite the dust rather than that one Czech should die. When the crisis comes, or before we leave, we will kill every German.

Beneš replied that the comparison between the Czech and the German press was incorrect. It was merely that the German press was more skillful and the Czech press less skillful.

Deputy Kundt pointed out that the Czech press, as well as the Government and the central authorities, saw conditions in the German area solely through the eyes of the *Hraničáři*,<sup>82</sup> who are less interested in the State than in their own material welfare. Between us and you, therefore, this *Hraničáři* question must be settled, if the problem is to be solved.

Beneš answered that he had summoned the *Hraničáři* and had made it quite clear to them that the Army alone was responsible for defending the State. Night exercises and similar activities must cease, on the Czech as well as on the German side.

Beneš then enlarged on his proposal. He began by saying that Lord Runciman had given him certain indications on the conversation between Ashton-Gwatkin and Konrad Henlein in Marienbad and apparently held the opinion that Ashton-Gwatkin returned from Marienbad with a proposal which, according to hints dropped by Lord Runciman, was identical with his own.

Kundt and Sebekovsky explained that this must be a misunderstanding, since to their knowledge Konrad Henlein had made no proposals to Ashton-Gwatkin. It can only refer to a conversation concerning Beneš' ideas, which he had discussed with Professor Sander, who in turn had told us. We had not, however, accepted this report from Sander as official, but were now waiting to hear the President's ideas and proposals from his own mouth.

Beneš conceived the method as agreement on the framework of a program to be tackled immediately, in order to create psychological conditions and thus manifest good will. The sequel to this would be a truce.

Further, a commission should deal with radical reforms, and here he does not wish to commit himself to the expression "administrative or constitutional reform."

He proposes as agenda for the immediate program:

- a) The question of officials and police.
- b) The language question.
- c) The economic and social question.
- d) Proportional representation.

<sup>82</sup> The Czech frontier guards.

Opportunity is, however, left for the introduction of other points into the framework of the immediate program.

*Ref. a)* As to the question of officials, he accepts the basic principle that Germans should be administered by Germans, always providing that the State is unable to renounce the right within limits of transferring officials. A compromise between these two postulates must be possible, perhaps on the lines that it should be laid down that there must always be a certain percentage in the German area, while the State can act as it thinks fit with the remainder. He assumed that an agreement could be reached on proportional representation. (Interjection by Kundt: "with due consideration to the administrative area and to participation in all categories".)

With regard to the intake of officials, it is obvious that, as from the entry into force of the agreement, 22 percent of all newly appointed officials must be German. As against this, there is the objection that this process would take forty to fifty years. A way must therefore be found of accelerating the tempo. He had the idea that, for a given period, an "overpercentage" of Germans should be accepted, so that good will might be apparent to the people. Discharged officials also might be reappointed. These fundamental points, which he had brought forward as examples affecting the question of officials, must be discussed. Agreement must be reached on basic principles, the actual drafting of details could then be undertaken and the necessary decrees and instructions issued. In this connection, the higher ranks of the civil service must be given to understand that they are to adhere to the basic agreement, even though it has not yet become law. When we have once reached an agreement on these problems, you have my personal assurance that it will be carried out. I must take my stand above both parties, and want to prove to them both that I insist on the conclusion of a settlement or I will lay down my office. (He explained that by this he did not mean to utter a threat.)

*Ref. c)* The first matter on which a common viewpoint must be obtained is the best means of assisting industry to reduce unemployment. The main question here is the raising of a loan. In order that the project might be acceptable to the Czechs as well, he made no secret of the fact that this loan must also be utilized for certain Czech areas.

Proportional representation in a rough computation of the State also applies here and is a difficult question. It is not possible either in the Ministry of the Interior, the Foreign Ministry, or the Post Office, but perhaps in the Ministry of Education or of Social Welfare and Health. This enumeration was only given as an example

and details would be open to discussion. He was also ready to settle the question of investments and supplies for the purpose of stimulating Sudeten German production.

Kundt brought up the question of compensation.

Beneš did not dispute the fact that in certain cases reparation is possible. Beneš emphasized at this point, as he had done time and again during the whole conversation, that it was not a question of words and ideas. Neither he nor the Czechs nor the Sudeten German Party wished to depend on words, if they had a bad psychological effect.

As to the question of the State police, Beneš observed that this was a difficult matter, when account was taken of the psychological situation of the Czech public. His own view was the following: Two years ago we had local police forces, and I see no reason at all why the former arrangement should not be restored. In this case also, a reasonable compromise is needed to safeguard the interests of the State. In principle, he did not oppose the reestablishment of municipal police.

This question can be settled when conditions are more peaceful.

Kundt: The State police is itself a cause of unrest and, if you really desire to win over the German population psychologically, then the best way is the immediate withdrawal of the State police. He referred to the proposal of the Sudeten German Party that the security forces should be divided into two: municipal police and State police. This must suffice.

To the question whether he intends to carry out the settlement within the framework of the existing Constitution, or whether he envisaged an amended Constitution, Beneš replied:

I have no hesitation in altering the Constitution, but it must be done at the end and not at the start. Moreover, I do not want to scare people with the suggestion.

He then touched on the question of a basic accord, which would be dealt with by a special commission.

You have worked out proposals and the Government has, too. Your proposals are unacceptable to the Czechs, as the Government has already told you (Kundt interrupts: "not in this form"). Even if I wished, I would find it impossible to put your suggestions into force. I make a third proposal: that autonomy should be settled on the lines of a provincial constitution [*Gauverfassung*].

Kundt: We cannot take up a definite attitude on this today but surely it is a matter for your proposed commission.



Beneš stated in conclusion: If you like, I will put my proposal into shape and lay it before the Prime Minister and yourselves. My proposal will cost me a lot of effort with the Government.

What I am proposing is a rebuilding of the State. However, I will not employ your word, but call it "*Dobudování*" (the completion of the State structure).

I do not wish to discuss the eight Karlsbad demands; I say neither Yes nor No. Neither of us wishes to lead the other into a blind alley. I have sworn an oath to uphold the sovereignty, the unity, and the integrity of the State. My honor enjoins me to keep this oath. I can go no further.

Deputy Kundt: The eight Karlsbad demands mean the same to us. To uphold them also touches our honor.

Beneš answered in these words: I thank you. I will make a note of that.

In conclusion, the Sudeten German representatives started to discuss the philosophy of National Socialism which they themselves professed.

Beneš replied that he would willingly talk further on this subject. He considered the form of expression adopted as a matter calling for tact.

Beneš desired to know the attitude of the Sudeten German representatives to his proposals, and emphasized that he could not make them public until their acceptance was certain.

He allowed it to be understood that he would inform the public by means of a message, so as to prepare them psychologically in advance.

The Sudeten German representatives explained that they were not present in an official capacity and were therefore unable to adopt any attitude in the matter.

It was agreed that, at the latest at the beginning of the next week, Beneš should hand over his proposal in writing at a fresh meeting and should elucidate it.

He pictured to himself the future course of events in this manner, that he would only give his proposal in writing to the Sudeten German Party when they were basically in agreement with the *modus procedendi*. After discussing the written draft of his proposal with the Sudeten German Party, he would then submit it to the Prime Minister.

When the Sudeten German Party and the Government had reached an agreement, it would be issued to the public.

PRAGUE, August 25, 1938.

## No. 399

1613/387028-30

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

PRAGUE, August 27, 1938.

A. III. 2. h.

(Pol. I 2036)

Reference report of August 24, A. III. 2. h. Pol. I 2009<sup>83</sup>

Subject: Proposals by the President and Lord Runciman's Mission.

So far no news has filtered through to the public on the conversations between the President and the Sudeten German Party delegates, Kundt and Dr. Sebekovsky. Even journalists and diplomats here appear at present to know nothing of the direct contact between M. Beneš and the Sudeten German Party. On the other hand, the press described the conference between the political Ministers and the President which took place in the Hradcany in Prague as the starting point for the creation of a new—third—basis for the solution of the nationality problem.

According to the direct impression of Deputy Kundt, who spoke to him on August 26, the Prime Minister is displeased about the initiative taken by the President, apparently without previous consultation with him. M. Hodza, whose whole ambition it is one day to be able to represent any German-Czech settlement as the result of his own political activity, feels that he has been outmaneuvered by the President, whose previous attitude was generally regarded as intransigent. The Prime Minister clearly showed Kundt his annoyance over this situation. Herr Kundt does not think it is out of the question that the Prime Minister will now turn the tables and—in the field of domestic policy at least—agitate against M. Beneš because of his too far-reaching concessions. In Kundt's view, difficulties might also arise for the Sudeten German Party in the near future as a result of this attitude of Hodza's. It is possible that, in order primarily to make trouble for M. Beneš, the Prime Minister will now make available to Lord Runciman material incriminating to the Sudeten German Party, which Hodza doubtless possesses, but has hitherto refrained from using for political reasons, and which he will also use against the Sudeten German Party leaders in other ways. For safety's sake, the latter are preparing their defense and counter-attack.

Meantime, it is not to be assumed that the Prime Minister will go so far in his annoyance as to sabotage a realization of Beneš' pro-

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<sup>83</sup> Document No. 386, p. 614.

posals. The impression, rather, is growing that, for political reasons, an energetic attempt will now be made to reach some form of agreement with the Sudeten German Party as quickly as possible or, at least, by concrete offers, to prove to the world the good will of the Czechoslovak Government. The military measures by the Reich make M. Beneš and the Prague Government realize ever more fully the seriousness of the situation, so that responsible elements of this country must decide to abandon the delaying tactics so far pursued. In particular, unpleasant surprises are feared as a result of the Nuremberg Party Rally, surprises which must be counteracted if possible with the help of the new basis for negotiations.

The hope that a peaceful solution will be reached has diminished everywhere again. The slight wave of optimism, which was evident a few days ago, has now completely ebbed. This applies equally to Czech circles and to the members of the Diplomatic Corps. This mood of pessimism can undoubtedly be traced to press reports from London, sensationally quoted by the papers here, and which speak of a deterioration of the situation—allegedly based on Ashton-Gwatkin's reports. Deputy K. H. Frank's appeal, which, moreover, as I learned confidentially, was a surprise even for the Sudeten German Party delegation, has also increased the fear of the outbreak of serious conflicts. In these circumstances the speech of the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, expected on the 27th of this month, is looked forward to with great eagerness and it is hoped that from it will come a lessening of the pressure weighing on Czechoslovakia.

The Sudeten German Party delegation think that they can detect a certain change of opinion in their disfavor in Lord Runciman himself. Kundt traces this to a misunderstanding which arose in the following way: from their talks with Konrad Henlein, which took place before the semiofficial discussion of the President's new proposals, the British formed the impression that President Beneš' offers, especially with regard to the preliminary concessions, would satisfactorily settle just those questions which had been discussed by Henlein as the prerequisite for the creation of a better atmosphere. Therefore the surprise of the British Mission at Konrad Henlein's negative attitude during his talk with Ashton-Gwatkin in Marienbad on August 22 had been all the greater.

Moreover, His Lordship had been informed by Deputy Kundt of the substance of the discussions with the President of the Republic. For his part, Lord Runciman has had talks in the last few days with the leaders of the Hungarian and Polish national groups, as well as with the German Social Democrats. A representative of Carpatho-Ukraine also presented himself to the English mediator.

As for the question of district constitution [*Gauverfassung*], which the President mentioned to the Sudeten German Party delegation on August 25, it seems that M. Bruggmann, the Swiss Minister here, also played a part in the internal discussions with regard to this. M. Bruggmann, who has lived in Prague for many years and enjoys a special position of confidence with the President and leading Czech circles, was evidently asked for advice months ago by the Government here. He has the reputation of being an expert in nationality questions and has therefore repeatedly been consulted recently by the Ministers of Great Britain and France. Mr. Newton has further given M. Bruggmann an opportunity of having a detailed exchange of views with Lord Runciman on the nationality problem.

HENCKE

No. 400

139/125582

*The State Secretary (Weizsäcker) to the German Chargé d'Affaires  
in Great Britain (Th. Kordt)*

BERLIN, August 27, 1938.

DEAR HERR KORDT: Your letter and detailed memorandum of the 23d of this month<sup>84</sup> interested me very much. I only have time, however, for a very brief reply. Your remarks as to what the British intend doing in respect of Czechoslovakia agree entirely with what I should say in the same position. As regards Anglo-German talks of a more general nature, you in London cannot naturally adopt a negative attitude toward them and cannot destroy the hopes which many Englishmen have in them. Nevertheless, I would always emphasize in this connection that there can be no question of more comprehensive discussions without a settlement of the urgent Czech situation.

Kindest regards and Heil Hitler!

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>84</sup> See document No. 382, p. 605.

## No. 401

F20/124

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*<sup>85</sup>

RM 251

Ambassador Attolico visited me today at midday to tell me the following:—

He said he had received a fresh written instruction from Mussolini requesting that Germany should state the probable date of an attack on Czechoslovakia in good time. Mussolini asked for this information in order, as Attolico assured me, "to be able to take in due time the necessary measures on the French frontier."

R[IBBENTROP]

BERLIN, August 27, 1938.

N.B. I answered Ambassador Attolico in the same way as I had answered his previous *démarche*,<sup>86</sup> that I could not give him a date, but in any case Mussolini would be the first to be informed of any possible decision. Berlin, September 2, 1938.

## No. 402

340/198912-16

*The German Minister in Hungary (Erdmannsdorff) to the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

SECRET

BUDAPEST, August 29, 1938.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: I would like to give you the following information about the conversations I had with the Regent and the individual Ministers on my way back from the visit to Germany.

The Prime Minister told me that on the way from the Charlottenburger Schloss to the Lehrter Station he had told the Reich Foreign Minister that he felt it his duty as a friend of Germany to say—for the fourth time—that he was firmly convinced that France would attack us in the event of a German-Czech conflict. The Reich Minister had again expressed his opinion to the contrary.

The Regent who, together with Mme. Horthy, spoke with enthusiasm of the impressions received on his visit to Germany, said to me that the extraordinary situation had arisen that he, who for years had desired nothing more ardently than a speedy realization of Hungarian revisionist aims, was now forced to sound a warning note owing to the international political situation.

\* Nuremberg document 2792-PS.

\*\* See document No. 384, p. 611.

M. Kanya thought that the Hungarians would fight even if the chances of success were only 60-70 percent. But they could not be expected to commit suicide.

There was little time for political discussions at Karinhall; one took place during a hunting expedition between the Regent and Field Marshal Göring, who had a few minutes' private conversation with M. Imredy after dinner.

Speaking of this talk, the Regent and the Hungarian Minister told me that the former had said that it was urgently desirable that a possible armed quarrel with Czechoslovakia should be postponed until the spring at least, in view of the present weakness of the Hungarian Army, which was due to the fact that the creation of new formations within the framework of the rearmament program was only beginning. Field Marshal Göring showed full understanding for this point of view and declared that no date had as yet been fixed. He would also welcome postponement from the German point of view and would use his influence toward this end. The Hungarians have, initially, accepted this statement with much relief but are under no great illusions in the matter.

The Field Marshal, too, was of the opinion that, in the event of a German-Czech war, Hungary would only take up arms after Yugoslavia's attitude had been clarified, although he was confident that Stoyadinovich would remain neutral. A quarter of an hour after our departure on the evening of the 26th he—Göring—had gone by rail to a place in the neighborhood of Munich in order to meet one of Stoyadinovich's agents as arranged by the Consul General, Neuhausen. He also intended to establish contact with Prince Regent Paul. He promised the Hungarians to inform them as soon as he had clarified Yugoslavia's attitude in event of a conflict. However, M. Kanya hardly believes that Stoyadinovich will give a definite answer. People here are much more inclined to think that the attitude of France and Great Britain will be decisive for Yugoslavia. Mussolini's assurance that he would not permit a Yugoslav attack on Hungary, given during the last visit of the Hungarian Ministers to Rome, is not considered very significant here as the Italians would then presumably have their main body of troops tied up on the French frontier, and an Italian offensive against Yugoslavia would soon be held up in the impassable country in the Karst mountains.

The Prime Minister promised to grant the wish of the Field Marshal for the erection of a German D/F station in Hungary to give better navigation facilities to German aircraft in the event of their operating over Czech territory, and also the request to accord landing facilities and assistance to any German aircraft driven from

Czech territory. When the Field Marshal asked why the Hungarians had recently ordered Italian and not German aircraft, M. Imredy answered that he in his capacity of Minister of Commerce would have welcomed the idea of purchasing more war materials from Germany in order to reduce the balance of Hungarian exports, which was far too high. But in contrast to the Italians we had not wanted to issue any licenses and had also shown much less consideration in other matters. Field Marshal Göring then inquired of the Prime Minister whether Hungary was in a position to help us out with petrol in case a possible conflict lasted for any length of time. Hungary hopes that her new oil deposits discovered during the last few months will suffice for her own needs from next year onward.

Von Ratz, the Minister for War, who elaborated in more detail Hungary's complaints about Germany's lack of cooperation in regard to the question of deliveries of war material, also said to me that the Hungarian Army would gladly take up arms as soon as possible after the possible outbreak of a German-Czech conflict, but that the exact moment was dependent upon the attitude of Yugoslavia. He intends to send the Chief of the General Staff to Berlin to take part in military discussions in the near future.

M. Imredy said also that the Hungarian Government was in a difficult position because, out of consideration for us alone, they wished if possible to avoid the impression that the considerable speeding up of deliveries of war materials from Hungarian factories, now to be inaugurated here, was the result of the visit to Germany.

M. Kanya referred particularly to the *Völkischer Beobachter's* report on the Prime Minister's interview on the well-known Bled communiqué.<sup>87</sup> Minister Sztójay told me that Kanya was somewhat annoyed because the Führer and Field Marshal Göring had had no political talks with him. He had considered that, when all was said and done, he and not the Prime Minister was the authority for Hungarian foreign policy.

Reich Ministers Darré and Frick have postponed their visits to Hungary. The Field Marshal has issued an invitation to the Regent to come to Rominten between the 15th and the 25th to shoot elk. The Regent intends to fly there in the Field Marshal's own aircraft and remain in East Prussia for a couple of days only. He expressed his particular satisfaction with the atmosphere of confidence which existed between him, the Führer, Field Marshal Göring, and Reich Minister Hess, and has personally invited *Obergruppenführer* Lorenz to come to Hungary to discuss German questions; Prime Minister Imredy has similarly invited State Secretary Brinkmann to discuss economic questions.

<sup>87</sup> See footnote 44, p. 610.

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning that the Regent told me that care would be taken that the Czech troops of Hungarian nationality, who would presumably be sent to the German frontier, did not, should the occasion arise, fire on German soldiers.

I am sending a copy of this report to Woermann, as I am taking into account the fact that you may be separated in view of the Stuttgart Rally.

Kindest regards and Heil Hitler!

ERDMANNSDORFF

No. 403

2369/494885-90

*The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to the Under State Secretary in the German Foreign Ministry (Woermann)*

Moscow, August 29, 1938.

(Pol. IV 5790)

MY DEAR HERR WOERMANN: With reference to my telegram No. 167 of the 27th of this month,<sup>88</sup> I should like to inform you of the following regarding my second conversation with M. Litvinov:

When I made the remark that Poland and Rumania would hardly permit the passage of Soviet troops, M. Litvinov replied that Rumania was deeply worried about the future; she feared that it would be her turn when Germany had finished with Czechoslovakia. I could not avoid the impression that M. Litvinov, with his remark on Rumanian anxiety, wished to give me the impression that it might be by no means impossible that Rumania would permit the passage of Soviet troops. I still doubt that the King of Rumania will ever permit Soviet troops to enter his country. But, of course, M. Litvinov likes to give others false impressions as much as he can.

Enclosed I am sending you two memoranda. The one concerns a conversation between Counselor of Embassy von Tippelskirch and his Italian colleague; the other, Herr von Herwarth's<sup>89</sup> conversations with a number of young diplomats here. These conversations offer nothing essentially new but many quite interesting details, among others the statement by a British diplomat that the Rumanian Government had officially informed the British Government that they would not permit the transit of Soviet troops through Rumania. I also consider noteworthy the statement by a French diplomat who maintained, just as M. Litvinov did, that Czechoslovakia could never

<sup>88</sup> See document No. 397, p. 632.

<sup>89</sup> Herwarth von Bittenfeld, one of the Secretaries of the German Embassy.



provoke Germany; that was out of the question in the case of a small state vis-à-vis a great power.

We shall meet in Nuremberg at the latest. Meanwhile I send you my best regards. With Heil Hitler!

I am, my dear Herr Woermann,

Sincerely yours,

F. W. SCHULENBURG

[Enclosure 1]

MEMORANDUM

Moscow, August 16, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 5790/38)

For the Ambassador.

Berardis, the Italian Chargé d'Affaires here, called on me today to discuss some political questions with me. He brought up among others the question of Czechoslovakia. In this connection he said he wished to tell me that Chollerton, for many years correspondent for the *Daily Telegraph* here, and well known for his close relations with the French and British Embassies, had expressed to him his conviction that, in the event of an armed conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia, France would come to the assistance of Czechoslovakia, and Great Britain would back France. Signor Berardis added that Marchetti, the Greek Minister here, who was on very friendly terms with the French Ambassador here, had told him that France would unquestionably come to the assistance of Czechoslovakia. Marchetti had also mentioned that an attempt was being made on the Soviet side to arrive at an extension of the Franco-Soviet Mutual Assistance Pact to include military contingencies.

Berardis told me finally that not long ago he had had a conversation with Fierlinger, the Czechoslovak Minister here, in the course of which the latter had assured him in excited tones that Czechoslovakia would defend herself to the last man if attacked by Germany.

I replied to some questions by Berardis on the lines of the circular instruction by the Reich Minister.<sup>59a</sup>

VON TIPPELSKIRCH

<sup>59a</sup> Presumably that of August 3, document No. 332, p. 529.

[Enclosure 2]

## MEMORANDUM

Moscow, August 29, 1938.

On Sunday, August 28, 1938, Reuter and Havas representatives spoke to me about the Tass report from Prague which had appeared in the Soviet press, according to which the German representatives in London, Warsaw, Bucharest, Belgrade, and other places had, on official instructions, announced that, in the event of further delay in solving the Sudeten German problem, Germany would have to take active steps. They asked me whether the Ambassador, Count Schulenburg, had also made such a *démarche*. I replied in the negative, and pointed out that the People's Commissar, Litvinov, had likewise given a *démenti* to an American journalist. I was not aware of alleged *démarches* by German representatives in a number of other capitals.

A French Secretary of Legation, who was also present, stated to me later that, according to their information received from the Rumanian Government, the German Minister had in fact made such a *démarche*. He wished to tell me quite frankly that the situation was very serious. France had given Czechoslovakia her word and would keep it. It was indisputable and unalterable that France would at once intervene in the event of a German-Czechoslovak war. It was equally certain that Great Britain would stand by the side of France. To my objection that France would surely not attack Germany in the event of a conflict arising from provocation by Czechoslovakia, the French Secretary of Legation replied that that was an entirely useless, but all the more dangerous *jeu de mots*. It was out of the question that little Czechoslovakia could ever provoke powerful Germany. He then repeated once more that we should not indulge in illusions, for France would, *under any* circumstances, come to the assistance of Czechoslovakia in case of war. Neither could authoritative personages in Berlin delude themselves, for some 10 days ago General Vuillemin had stated France's above-mentioned attitude frankly to Field Marshal Göring.

A British Secretary of Legation, who on former occasions had frequently emphasized that France would intervene in any case in the event of a German-Czechoslovak war and that Great Britain would just as surely follow, again expressed the same opinion, and added that Sir John Simon's recent statements<sup>90</sup> should not be interpreted in any other way. If it came to war between Germany,

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<sup>90</sup> Presumably Sir John Simon's speech at Lanark on August 27, in which, while emphasizing British efforts for peace, he reaffirmed Mr. Chamberlain's statement of March 24. See document No. 436, p. 704.

France, and Britain, the only ones to benefit would be the Soviets. In the event of war the Soviet Union would expose herself as little as possible. To my question as to whether there was not the possibility for the Soviets to send troops through Rumania, he replied that the Rumanian Government had officially informed them that they would never permit the transit of Soviet troops.

As I pointed out in the course of the conversation that, after all, Great Britain would not wage war against us in order to hinder 3½ million Germans in the exercise of their right of self-determination, he objected that unfortunately German claims in the Czechoslovak question had never been precisely formulated. When one concession was made to us we always demanded fresh concessions. Germany had always evaded a concrete statement of her demands.

The Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires<sup>91</sup> asked me whether the Ambassador, Count Schulenburg, had made a *démarche* with Litvinov in the Czechoslovak matter. He had received a corresponding inquiry from Budapest. I replied in the negative.

VON HERWARTH

No. 404

2369/494845-46

*Circular Telegram From the German Foreign Ministry to  
German Missions Abroad*

Telegram

BERLIN, August 29, 1938.

(e.o. Pol. IV 5660)

(Pol. IV 5732)

To

all European Posts  
and

the Embassies at Ankara

Washington

Tokyo

Rio de Janeiro

Buenos Aires

Santiago

the Legations at Montevideo

La Paz

Lima

Quito

Bogotá

<sup>91</sup> Dr. J. Mihákovics.

Guatemala  
Mexico  
Havana  
the Consulate at Geneva;

For information.

The rumor has cropped up in the foreign press, as well as in certain political circles abroad, that the Reich Government has recently undertaken *démarches* regarding the Sudeten German question with the Great Powers and also, among other places, in Bucharest and Belgrade. This rumor is devoid of any foundation. Moreover, as far as London is concerned, it has already been denied by Reuter. If the rumor should arise in your country, please counter it, as has been done here, in the manner which appears most suitable. For the rest, the circulation of the rumor might be connected with the instruction of August 3, Pol. I 1770 g,<sup>92</sup> with which you are acquainted.

WOERMANN

No. 405

139/125589-90

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 416 of August 29

PARIS, August 29, 1938.

Received August 29, 1938—11:30 p.m.

During the last few days an ever increasing uneasiness about the alleged warlike intentions of Germany and the danger of an imminent European war has been apparent in political circles and among the population. It is certain that the desire to avoid a clash still exists, but reports here are unanimous in declaring that the possibility of becoming involved in a war occupies people's minds in an increasing degree. The fact that Germany has no intention of attacking France is discounted, and it is made to seem as though German behavior in the Czechoslovak question is the criterion for Germany's belligerent or peaceful intentions. In the latest development both the country and the press show the greatest reserve which, as far as the press is concerned, can doubtless be traced to instructions from official quarters. The tone adopted toward Germany is decided, but avoids all signs of aggressiveness. When German personages and sportsmen are received, as well as in the handling of our

<sup>92</sup> See document No. 332, p. 529.

interests and wishes by official quarters, studied courtesy and greatest consideration are shown, which betrays the wish to give us no grounds for complaint.

In addition, it is felt here that the Spanish question, as well as the Czechoslovak question, has become one of the acute dangers to peace. The idea has gained ground here that both these questions, due particularly to British influence, are more and more ceasing to be causes for war and becoming pretexts for war, and that the question of the disagreement with the authoritarian states and the halting of their drive for expansion begins to overshadow all others. People here do not believe that Germany will be saturated after settlement of the Czech question. Similarly, doubts have been expressed here recently as to whether Italy is not pursuing territorial and political aims in connection with the settlement of the Spanish conflict. The idea is therefore gaining ground that a conflict with Germany or Italy, or alternatively with both, has already entered the initial stages of its development. The significance generally ascribed to this point of view is shown by the fact that difficulties in domestic policy caused by Daladier's speech of August 21 have not culminated in the grave development expected, owing to Blum's reserved and compliant attitude which can be ascribed to the international situation.

In order to influence the trend of opinion here and clarify our position we should, in our defense, emphasize more than hitherto that the Czech problem and a European war are not indissolubly bound together; and that the interrelation of these two ideas is only upheld by France and, as I would here point out, under strong pressure from Great Britain. We should also place more emphasis on our understanding for France's vital interests and our willingness to assist in protecting them. We could not, however, include the Czech question in this category, as this was rather a Central European matter, subject to its own laws, and one of Germany's vital interests.

WELCZECK

## No. 406

139/125597

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 314 of August 30

PRAGUE, August 30, 1938—5:30 p.m.

Received August 30, 1938—7:15 p.m.

Learn the following from a hitherto generally reliable agent, who occasionally has access to documents of Foreign Ministry here:

Fresh talks in Bucharest are said to be taking place at present between Czech and Rumanian Governments on passage of Soviet Russian troops in event of German-Czechoslovak war. It looks as though Rumania would permit transit of, at most, 100,000 Soviet soldiers in civilian clothes should Poland agree to this. In addition, the transport of Czech refugees, especially women and children, from a possible Czechoslovak theater of war, through Rumania to the neighborhood of Kiev, is said to be under discussion here.

HENCKE

## No. 407

139/125599-600

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

No. 316 of August 30

PRAGUE, August 30, 1938—10:40 p.m.

Received August 31, 1938—12:45 a.m.

In continuation of telegram No. 312 of the 29th.<sup>93</sup>

1. Today the President handed a memorandum with proposals to Sudeten German Party delegates Kundt and Sebekovsky. According to information from K. H. Frank, memorandum contains proposal for a solution based on offer already known, as well as settlement of problems of self-administration within the framework of district constitution [*Gauverfassung*]. Details to be worked out by a commission on a parity basis. In his verbal explanations Beneš had observed that his proposals would mean the start of the fulfillment in practice of Konrad Henlein's eight Karlsbad demands. He could not, however, be expected in the meantime to explain this fact openly to the Czechoslovak people.

According to information from Kundt, Beneš further said that he would not object if the Sudeten German Party for its part pub-

<sup>93</sup> Not printed.

licly announced that eight Karlsbad demands would be fulfilled. He would ensure that Czechoslovak press reaction to such statements would not be biased. He now expected a clear "yes" or "no" from the Sudeten German Party. President gave Kundt impression of greater assurance.

Though Frank described proposals as being comparatively far reaching, they were as unsatisfactory as before. However, it was his opinion that they could not be rejected out of hand. Kundt further evaluated the proposals by expressing the opinion that their realization could in actual fact mean the fulfillment of the eight Karlsbad demands.

President asked to have Sudeten German Party opinion by Friday. He then intends, in agreement with the Sudeten German Party delegates, to have the finally formulated proposals presented to them by the Government. Beneš intimated that he also wished to state his opinion of the proposals in public. The text of Beneš' statements follows by courier.

2. The meeting arranged between Henlein and Frank and Ashton-Gwatkin in Marienbad did not take place today, as reply awaited from London not yet to hand. Conference contemplated for tomorrow.

3. According to Frank, Sudeten German Party has increasing impression of close collaboration [*Zusammenspiel*] between President and Lord Runciman.

HENCKE

No. 408

337/197296

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 395 of August 30

LONDON, August 30, 1938.

Received August 31, 1938—9:40 a.m.

Hear from best British source that Czech Government proposals discussed in today's Cabinet meeting. Unanimous opinion of Cabinet members that proposals correspond largely to the Karlsbad demands and constitute a basis for promising negotiations.

In addition to the proposals Czech Government have intimated that they are prepared to discuss their political ties with Soviet Russia.

The Cabinet is of opinion that a rejection of the Czech proposals by Sudeten German Party would mean that Henlein was putting forward demands exceeding his previous ones.

Runciman has had no hand in the drafting of the Czech proposals and has avoided expressing any opinion on them.

British Government intend to address an urgent appeal to the German Government to cooperate. Ambassador Henderson leaves for Berlin tomorrow.

French Ambassador Corbain [*sic*] was expected back today. In this connection Foreign Office statement was given out at press conference that British Government are accustomed to closest cooperation with French Government and desire to establish a common policy.

TH. KORDT

No. 409

240/198904-08

*Memorandum by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*<sup>93a</sup>

STRICTLY SECRET

[AUGUST 30, 1938.]

THE POLITICAL SITUATION AT THE END OF AUGUST 1938

Germany is keyed up for war with Czechoslovakia and is completely prepared for it. These preparations are widely known abroad. From the middle of September further preparations (troop concentrations) will take place which will likewise not be concealed from other countries. There is no question, therefore, of an element of surprise.

Though at the present moment Hungary shuns war, she does not wish to stand aside provided she can be certain of not having to fight on three fronts. Hungary's readiness for war is thus conditional.

At present Italy is showing no signs of misgiving about a German-Czech conflict, as Mussolini appears to believe that the conflict can be localized. In case of the war developing into a European conflict no Italian obligations of alliance exist on paper, but Mussolini has made public declarations of solidarity. It is not quite certain how much these declarations are worth; Italy seems at present neither to desire a European war nor entirely to shun one.

<sup>93a</sup> This document is preceded in the file by a minute from Weizsäcker to Ribbentrop which reads: "Instead of a verbal report on my appreciation of the political situation, I beg to forward the attached short memorandum . . ." Although the document printed here does not bear the reference given in the covering note (St. S/28/38 g. Rs, frame number 198903), it is clearly the memorandum referred to.



Czechoslovakia is playing for high stakes and would not avoid a war, in view of her confidence in receiving assistance from outside.

Great Britain and France wish to prevent war as far as they can; nevertheless they are not ready for the decision to sacrifice their friendship for Czechoslovakia in order to keep the peace.

Poland is on the alert and wants to keep all roads open for herself. At present Poland is not attempting any official approach to Germany.\* The only certainty is that, in event of war, Poland will not permit the Russians to set foot in their country.

The coming weeks will raise the Czech problem from a localized to a European crisis. The attitudes of the European Great Powers in their diplomatic and military facets will then be demonstrated in a clearer fashion than hitherto. There will then no longer be any doubt that if Germany invades Czechoslovakia she will have the Western Powers as her enemies. In this situation the leaders of German policy must, in my opinion, revise their plans. If they do not do so, the war—shortly after the German action—would develop into a European one. This war would sooner or later end in a German capitulation. The coalition of the Western Powers can, if it will, decide the war against Germany without any great bloodshed by the mere employment of siege tactics. The consequences of such a defeat for Adolf Hitler's reconstruction work are obvious.

However, there is no need for us to sacrifice the fruits of our previous Czech policy if we change our warlike tactics. What can be achieved at present can be obtained by negotiation on the existing basis, whereby reduction of our military preparations would lead *pari passu* to a change of policy by the opposite side.

Whether there will be opportunity and indeed necessity to take military action against the Czechs later on, depends on whether the Czechs, as is expected, will oppress the Sudeten Germans further, forfeit British and French help, and expose their flanks to a German surprise attack. Meanwhile it would be advisable to tighten more and more the German economic screw on the Czechs.

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\* No information yet about recent conversations of the Polish Ambassador and a message from Minister Beck to Field Marshal Göring. [Footnote in the original.]

## No. 410

340/198917-21

*Minute by the Head of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Danzig Senate (Böttcher) for the German Foreign Ministry*

## MINUTE

DANZIG, August 31, 1938.

[Note in pencil:] Passed to RM. RM is of opinion that a certain intimidation of the other side also has its advantages.

W[EIZSÄCKER]. September 5.

During a Netherlands evening party given by Nederbragt, the president of the Harbor Board, Professor Burckhardt,<sup>84</sup> the High Commissioner, gave me some information about a talk with *Gauleiter* Forster, from which he was still feeling the shock and which seemed to me to be so important that I requested him to pass it on to President Greiser<sup>85</sup> immediately.

Accordingly, Professor Burckhardt had a meeting with President Greiser in my presence at the latter's house at 11:30 p.m.

M. Burckhardt said that he and his wife, together with Minister Chodacki, the Polish Diplomatic Representative, were invited to the house of *Gauleiter* Forster and his wife this afternoon. M. Chodacki was absent on account of indisposition but Herr Schäfer, the bank president, was there.

M. Burckhardt was horrified at what the *Gauleiter* had said, the way in which he had said it, and the fact that he had spoken of such a matter at the tea table.

The *Gauleiter* first of all remarked that he was sorry that Minister Chodacki was not there, otherwise he would have had a wonderful opportunity of sounding him on all the Polish plans regarding the Sudeten German conflict and of getting everything out of him.

The *Gauleiter* then spoke his mind freely about the Sudeten German conflict. He stated that Germany would settle the Sudeten German question in the autumn. There would not be much time wasted, but matters would be settled by brute force. For a start, 1,000 aircraft would be sent over Prague, which would be razed to the ground. Poland would be on Germany's side. At the carving up of Czechoslovakia she would receive her share, with which she would be content. Great Britain was still too weak to take action against Germany. But even if Great Britain took part, which was not anticipated, there was no doubt that Germany would win

<sup>84</sup> Professor Karl Burckhardt, the League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig, was a Swiss.

<sup>85</sup> President of the Danzig Senate.

the war. We had lost the world war through treachery; in this coming war that was out of the question. Should treachery be attempted, one man in every ten would be shot out of hand, so that events such as happened in 1918 could not occur again. Besides, in 1914 the enemy had wanted war and we had lost it. This time we wanted it and would therefore win it. The *Gauleiter* knew the Führer's most secret thoughts, he even had access to his bedroom at all times.

The High Commissioner went on to say that after tea at the *Gauleiter's* he had hardly been able to pacify his wife, who talked about taking her children to safety in Geneva at once. The *Gauleiter* evidently forgot completely that he, Burckhardt, was a foreigner after all, and such talk was bound to cause him extreme embarrassment also from a moral point of view. Finally, if Motta<sup>96</sup> or Lord Halifax were to ask him what he thought about the situation, he would be forced to divulge part of his information in the interests of his country and for the sake of peace, for which he worked continuously.

He could not believe that the Führer really intended to do what the *Gauleiter* had said. But then if only 20 percent of what he had said were true, the rest was still bad enough. The atrocity stories which had been related about the Germans during the World War would then become true, to the horror of the whole world. Apart from that, the *Gauleiter* was wrong about Poland as well as about Great Britain. Poland would remain neutral, at all events until she saw which way the scale was tipping. The *Gauleiter* presumably forgot completely that Beck had staged the occupation of the Westerplatte,<sup>96a</sup> and that when the Rhineland was reoccupied Beck had declared to France that he would fight on France's side. He only made a temporary change in his policy when France did not declare war. But Great Britain, who, during the World War, had been reproached with not having stated clearly beforehand that she would fight on France's side, could not be similarly reproached today. Certainly Great Britain did not want war, neither was she conducting a campaign against Germany in favor of the Czechs, but she had repeatedly stated quite clearly, all sentiment apart, on whose side she would and must come in. And there was no doubt at all that America was on Great Britain's side.

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<sup>96</sup> Dr. Giuseppe Motta was head of the Political Department of the Swiss Federal Council (Foreign Minister). In 1937 he had been President of the Swiss Republic.

<sup>96a</sup> In March 1933 the Poles had increased the size of the guard on their ammunition depot on the Westerplatte peninsula beyond the numbers permitted by the decision of the League of Nations Council in 1925, and without reference to the League.

The *Gauleiter's* statements were extraordinarily naïve. He had, for instance, told him that the reason he had not gone to the Baltic States was because he would certainly be asked there what Germany's intentions were. But he could not tell lies and had therefore preferred not to undertake his journey at all. The *Gauleiter* had told him, Burckhardt, furthermore, that the Führer had made Germany secure from any attack in the West. When Burckhardt asked him whether he knew definitely that the attack would come from the West—it could, for instance, equally well come from the South—he had replied: oh, he would have another look at the map about that.

For the rest, he, Burckhardt, was shocked at the frankness with which the *Gauleiter* had spoken about plans which, according to him, contained the Führer's most secret opinions.

President Greiser stated in the course of the conversation that the *Gauleiter's* statements were not to be taken so seriously. However, as he had spoken to Professor Burckhardt about these questions, he could explain to him that he knew, of course, that all the German Ministers were against armed hostilities on account of the Sudeten German question. Count Schwerin-Krosigk, the German Minister of Finance, had confirmed this to him only a few days ago; and that Göring, the Prime Minister, had expressly emphasized that he desired a peaceful settlement of this conflict.

Burckhardt then said that if Motta or Lord Halifax now asked him in Geneva for his opinion he would reply that he certainly regarded the position as extremely grave; although he did not know the Führer's view, he knew that high-ranking German leaders, possessing authoritative influence, definitely wished for a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

VIKTOR BÖTTCHER

### No. 411

2369/494891-92

*Memorandum by a Secretary of the German Embassy in the Soviet Union (Herwarth)*

[Note in pencil:] Received from Count Schulenburg on September 2.

#### MEMORANDUM

On the evening of August 30 the French Chargé d'Affaires spoke to me about the Czechoslovak question. I took the opportunity of denying the rumors and reports of Reich Government *démarches* in the Czechoslovak question, particularly in Bucharest and Belgrade, by referring to my conversation on the same subject with another

member of the French Embassy a few days ago. The French Chargé noted this with obvious satisfaction and said that it had really only been a question of talks which the German representatives had had with various Foreign Ministries in the normal course. The People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs had faithfully informed him about the conversations between Ambassador Count von der Schulenburg and People's Commissar Litvinov. From the résumé given to him, it was clear that after his return from Germany Count von der Schulenburg had been to see Litvinov and Potemkin and had taken the opportunity of talking over all current problems. I confirmed this on my part and pointed out that Litvinov had expressly denied to an American journalist that the Ambassador had approached him in any way about the Sudeten German question on behalf of the Reich Government.

M. Payart emphasized that France had a treaty with Czechoslovakia. There was no point in discussing whether this treaty was good or bad. It existed and France must keep her word, otherwise she would cease to be a Great Power. In case of war the Soviets would have the last laugh. Having no common frontier they had no need to expose themselves to any great danger. As far as possible they would assist the Czechs as much as lay within their power, namely, in the supply of war materials, primarily aircraft, and by sending technicians. The possibility of air attacks on East Prussia could not be excluded. He thought it improbable that the Soviets would bomb Berlin, as in such an event the losses in aircraft would be too great.

When I remarked that the Soviets could not carry out an air attack on Königsberg without having to fly over neutral territory, he said that the Soviets would not scruple to fly over neutral countries.

In this connection I would like to mention the fact that a member of the Italian Embassy here told me that forty Soviet aircraft had flown to Czechoslovakia over Polish territory at a great height some time ago. This had been reported to him by an absolutely reliable informant. The Poles had noticed the flight of the Soviet aircraft too late to take practical measures against it.

HERWARTH

Moscow, August 31, 1938.

## No. 412

1941/435057-58

*The German Minister in Yugoslavia (Heeren) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*<sup>97</sup>

No. Bled 5

BLED, August 31, 1938.

(Pol. IV 5763)

Subject: Stoyadinovich's remarks on the origin of the rumor about German *démarches* in Belgrade and Bucharest on the Sudeten German question.

During a talk about the progress of the Little Entente Conference in Bled, Stoyadinovich also mentioned the report published in the Prague *Abendblatt* of German *démarches* in Belgrade, Bucharest, and Moscow in connection with the Sudeten German question. He thought he had reason to assume that this report had been inspired by the Czech Government, and was based on remarks which he and Comnen, the Rumanian Foreign Minister, had made to Krofta during the Bled Conference. He, Stoyadinovich, had in fact seized the opportunity during the discussion on the general political situation to indicate to Krofta the seriousness of the position as it seemed to him after his talks with me. He had told Krofta that he was convinced that there was no doubt of the Führer's wish for peace. But, according to everything that he heard from Germany, it seemed to him it would be a fatal error to believe that the negotiations with the Sudeten Germans could be prolonged indefinitely. He had the impression that Germany had made up her mind not to be led by the nose. These observations on his part had obviously made a deep impression on Krofta, an impression which was considerably strengthened when Comnen added that he had been informed by Fabricius on exactly the same lines about the German attitude. These remarks made by him and Comnen to Krofta had been passed on in an exaggerated form the very same day by Krofta to the French Minister and the British Chargé d'Affaires, who had immediately reported them to Paris and London. The French Minister had in addition complained to him because he had not let him know earlier of this particular conversation with me. As Stoyadinovich then said to me, the question was raised in the course of the discussion on the Sudeten German question, whether Yugoslavia and Rumania would also look upon it as a *casus foederis* if German troops were to attack Czechoslovakia from Hungarian territory. Stoyadinovich then stated that this question obviously depended on

<sup>97</sup> Copies of this despatch were sent out to the main European Missions, for confidential information, on September 7, 1938.

the attitude of Hungary in such an event; it would have to be thoroughly examined in relation to the text of the conditions of the pact and from the military point of view. He must reserve an answer until this examination had been made. Comnen took the same view. I did not omit to point out to Stoyadinovich that, according to the clear text of the pact, a *casus foederis* would in any case only arise in the event of an unprovoked *Hungarian* attack on Czechoslovakia. Stoyadinovich did not contradict me.

VON HEEREN

### No. 413

1613/386968-69

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation in  
Czechoslovakia*

BERLIN, August 31, 1938.  
(Pol. I 1893)

In continuation of the instruction Pol. IV 4073-4338 of June 28, 1938.<sup>98</sup>

I transmit herewith a copy of a despatch of July 4 of this year from the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht* on the subject of the Austrian frontier agreement with Czechoslovakia.<sup>98</sup>

Please make the following communication to the Czechoslovak Government:

With reference to the treaty of December 12, 1928, between the Austrian Republic and the Czechoslovak Republic for the regulation of legal relations on the State frontier, the Reich Government does not regard itself as the legal successor of the Austrian Government. The above-named frontier statute contains provisions which in part depart from the German-Czechoslovak frontier treaty signed on November 17, 1937.<sup>99</sup> Hence, after the ratification of the latter treaty, an irregular situation would be created on the German-Czechoslovak frontier, which would complicate the practical application of the provisions on the frontier by the German frontier authorities.

The Reich Government find themselves obliged to request the Czech Government to abstain for the present from exercising the rights to which they are entitled in virtue of article 56, paragraph

<sup>98</sup> Not printed.

<sup>99</sup> Actually signed November 13, 1937.

3,<sup>1</sup> of the Austro-Czechoslovak frontier statute of December 12, 1928.

In what manner the relations on the former Austro-Czechoslovak frontier can be adapted to those on the frontier between the German Reich as it was [*Altreich*] and Czechoslovakia must be reserved for later deliberation. The Reich Government reserve to themselves the right to approach the Czechoslovak Government with appropriate proposals at a suitable time.

Please transmit for the archives here a copy of the *note verbale* which is to be transmitted to the Czechoslovak Government.

For the Minister:

WOERMANN

### No. 414

340/198907

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

SECRET

BERLIN, August 31, 1938.

St. S. No. 29/38 g. Rs

#### MINUTE

The Italian Ambassador today asked for a personal interview with the Reich Minister or with the Führer himself on instructions of his Government. It is obvious that the Italian Government are now beginning to interest themselves more seriously in the Czechoslovak problem. This was indicated already by the remark made by Attolico a week ago (on board the *Patria*) to the effect that if a crisis occurred, Italy would occupy her western Alpine front with stronger forces in order to exercise a preventive influence on France.<sup>2</sup>

Attolico's personal view is that a speedy and frank discussion on mutual intentions and plans is necessary between the Axis Powers. His instructions presumably run on the same lines.

Submitted to Reich Minister herewith.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> "The Contracting States shall facilitate the use of adjacent lands for the maintenance and repair of frontier marks and shall for this purpose allow the officials of the other State access to their territory . . ."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. documents Nos. 384 and 401, pp. 611 and 651.



## No. 415

F20/111-116

*Memorandum Transmitted by Prince Philip of Hesse<sup>3</sup> to the Duce*

[Note in pencil:] Memorandum handed to the Duce by Prince Philip of Hesse in September 1938.

1) In spite of all the talk about peace, the fact can now no longer be ignored that certain international forces are attempting to weaken the authoritarian states and bring about their downfall at an appropriate time. To this end Great Britain is drawing ever closer to France and is attempting above all to persuade the United States of North America as well to take an active part in these efforts under the slogan "defend the freedom of nations; fight the autocracies." Collaboration with Soviet Russia is directed toward the same object. It can hardly any longer be doubted that Great Britain is determined to get rid of one or other of the two totalitarian nations as soon as she has completed her rearmament.

The following facts stand in the way of an immediate realization of this plan:

- a) the Navy is at present inadequate to meet the needs of the British Empire in event of war,
- b) the weakness of air armament, especially anti-aircraft,
- c) the weakness and unpreparedness of the Regular Army for use at the present time in a European theater of operation. (At present five divisions in process of being mechanized and one armored brigade.)

As far as the Army [*Navy?*] is concerned, Great Britain will have caught up within three to four years; as far as the Air Force is concerned, this can be effected within one to two years, and the same would be conceivable in respect of the Army. Great Britain is therefore trying to prevent or postpone at all costs any European conflict which might lead to a weakening of the whole position of the democratic powers.

2) By virtue of its birth and formation, Czechoslovakia is from the start obliged to take sides with the democratic powers for better or for worse. In addition, she has a military alliance with Soviet Russia. The alliance with France is understandable for the first reason. Should Germany ever become involved in a war against France or Great Britain—whether on her own or with allies—Czechoslovakia would constitute one of those serious factors which, in certain circumstances, might be decisive for the outcome of such

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<sup>3</sup> Son-in-law of the King of Italy and used as a special envoy between Hitler and Mussolini. The document presumably represents a statement of the Führer's policy intended for Mussolini personally.

a war. Pierre Cot, the former French Air Minister, gave a clear definition in an article a few weeks ago of Czechoslovakia's role in the event of a war between Germany and the Western Powers. Her primary service would be the destruction of the German war industry. A vast German industrial area of the greatest importance in war, namely, the chemical industry, is concentrated in large factories situated only a few minutes' flying distance from the Czech frontier.

3) It is in the interest of Germany to prevent this State from becoming a source of latent danger in the future through the abuse of 3½ million of our own citizens. The following demand must therefore be put forward: complete equality of status for nationalities must be established. This struggle has been going on for years, though without any visible success. Czech Governments in the past did not think it worth while to consider such wishes, even theoretically. For several years those in power in Czechoslovakia have been afraid of not being able to maintain this situation permanently. After the *Anschluss*, Government circles in Prague wavered between a brusque denial of all nationality demands and an ostensible acceptance of them. Last spring the German Government had hopes of easing the tense situation by peaceful measures in certain circumstances.

On May 21 the Czech Government (it is possible, however, that this was only the Czech militarists!) tried to exert pressure on the communal elections, no longer to be postponed in the Sudeten German and other national areas, by garrisoning troops in the communities. To this end—in order to provide a reason for this type of mobilization—the assertion was spread that Germany was mobilizing and was concentrating troops on the Czech frontier ready for invasion. This was a despicable lie trumped up from beginning to end. Unfortunately the German Government were at first unable to grasp all the implications of this rascally trick on the part of Dr. Beneš. They did, on their part, declare at once that there was not one word of truth in these allegations. However, the world press, inspired by Great Britain, rushed in and alleged that the lack of action on the part of the German Government—natural because none was intended—was only a sign of a cowardly retreat before the strength of the Czech State and the intervention of the other powers. There is no doubt that Germany suffered a severe loss of prestige on account of this. Thereupon the Führer took the immediate decision to make the necessary preparations and to act decisively in the face of any similar attempts or provocation in the future. As he did not feel he could involve Italy in difficulties

on this account, he organized all the military preparations himself, including those in the West. Up to the present the number of workmen, members of the *Arbeitsdienst*, engineers, and soldiers directly engaged on the western fortifications since May amounts to nearly 600,000 men.

4) The Führer looks upon the current negotiations skeptically. The danger lies in the fact that the intention of the Czech Government and of the British to attempt to gain time can no longer be concealed either from the Germans or from the remaining nationalities in Czechoslovakia. For, while the time is frittered away in discussion, the exact opposite to the declared aims is in fact taking place.

As the shameless attitude of the Czech mob must not be taken lying down if Germany does not wish to run the risk of again being looked upon as weak, the only thing to do, in the interests also of our solidarity with those concerned, is to take up strong counteraction in the press from now on. This, however, is bound to bring about a tense situation. In these circumstances the Führer judges the prospects of a peaceful settlement with increasing skepticism. He does not, in fact, wish to take the initiative himself, but will intervene immediately, in spite of all threats from Great Britain and France, even at the risk of war with both these Powers, should it—as already remarked—come to fresh intolerable provocation. He believes that if Italy were in a similar position she could not act otherwise, that Mussolini would not act otherwise, and that, above all else, to forego solving the Czech question would sooner or later entail dire consequences. And this not only for Germany but for both those great States whom Fate has now so closely bound together.

However, under these circumstances the Führer is unable to state any definite time because he does not know this himself. He has, nevertheless, bluntly told the British and French Ambassadors through Ribbentrop, the Foreign Minister, that if Czechoslovakia makes another move of provocation he will draw the obvious conclusions. For the rest, the Führer will explain his attitude in detail when he makes his big speech at the Party Rally.

He expressed his sincere thanks to Mussolini for his attitude and can only repeat that he will remain at Italy's side—regardless of what may arise.

## No. 416

340/198922-24

*Memorandum by the President of the Danzig Senate (Greiser)*

DANZIG, September 1, 1938.

## MEMORANDUM

The minute of August 31 by *Staatsrat* Dr. Böttcher<sup>5</sup> is correct in every paragraph. I have the following supplementary observations to make:

During a consultation on the morning of August 31 with *Gauleiter* Forster, who asked me about the views of the Poles and the High Commissioner, I expressly emphasized that one had to be particularly cautious when meeting the High Commissioner. I did indeed regard the High Commissioner as a German in outlook, who was in particular a friend of Danzig; nevertheless by virtue of his office and position he was under an obligation not only officially but also morally to Lord Halifax, the British Foreign Minister, in the latter's capacity as Chairman of the Committee of Three, and I had the impression that his British orientation was very strong.

At a reception given by Dr. Nederbragt, the president of the Harbor Board, at his house in Zoppot on the evening of the same day Dr. Schaefer, the president of the Bank of Danzig, told me that he had attended the tea reception at the *Gauleiter's* house in Wordel on the afternoon of the same day and was horrified at the way in which the *Gauleiter* had discussed the Führer's most secret intentions in front of Burckhardt, the High Commissioner, and the ladies who were present. He was amazed in particular at the *Gauleiter's* disclosure that written pledges from the Polish Government to the Reich Government in the event of an occupation of Czechoslovakia are said to be in existence. Dr. Schaefer asked me whether Burckhardt, the High Commissioner, could be sufficiently relied upon not to pass on such information, perhaps to the Poles. I emphasized that though Burckhardt was a German Swiss, he was a foreigner even so, and one could not rely on foreigners in such matters.

During the conversation with M. Burckhardt which took place at my house afterward, and which he, being in a state of agitation, wished to have with me, M. Burckhardt also informed me that his wife intended to take her children to Switzerland as quickly as possible. Besides, among men it was possible perhaps to digest some difficult question or other more easily, but as the *Gauleiter's* observations had been made in the presence of his wife, he was in duty

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<sup>5</sup> Document No. 410, p. 664.

bound to draw attention to the fact that his wife was not a German Swiss and he could not for purely human reasons blame her if in her consternation and anguish she should now talk about them.

My inquiry as to whether his wife would travel with him to Geneva was answered in the affirmative, and whether she would come into contact with non-German circles there was likewise answered in the affirmative.

My question to M. Burckhardt as to whether he would reply honestly and frankly to his own Federal President, M. Motta,<sup>6</sup> if questioned, was likewise answered in the affirmative. He added that no one could blame him if at least by virtue of his Swiss nationality he was frank with his own Federal President.

I further asked M. Burckhardt whether, either voluntarily or on being questioned, he would inform Lord Halifax, whom he would of course be seeing at the present session of the League of Nations Assembly in Geneva. M. Burckhardt replied that he felt himself under a special obligation to Lord Halifax, not only as the British Foreign Minister who was pursuing a very reasonable policy, but also in particular as the President of the Council of Three for Danzig questions, and was bound in consequence of this feeling to speak and answer frankly and honestly when questioned.

GREISER

## No. 417

139/125632

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 320 of September 1

PRAGUE, September 1, 1938—8:34 p.m.

Received September 1, 1938—11 p.m.

In continuation of telegram No. 312 of August 29.<sup>7</sup>

1) Previously arranged meeting between Konrad Henlein and K. H. Frank on the one hand and Ashton-Gwatkin on the other took place in Marienbad yesterday. Latter handed Konrad Henlein British Government's reply to inquiry reported in telegram No. 312. Counselor of Legation Brücklmeier communicated text to Berlin. In course of conversation Konrad Henlein described Beneš' latest proposals as inadequate in present form and expressed doubts, based on experience, as to trustworthiness of Beneš and fairness of Czechoslo-

<sup>6</sup>M. Motta was in fact no longer President, which office he had held for the year 1937.

<sup>7</sup>Not printed.

vak Government. Further subject of conversation was Konrad Henlein's visit to Berchtesgaden which British Government desired, concerning which formal statements were exchanged. Text of these statements was handed by K. H. Frank to Counselor of Legation Brücklmeier for submission to Reich Minister. Brücklmeier was informed of details of conversation by K. H. Frank direct.

2) Conversation between Lord Runciman and Deputy Kundt took place on August 31. Kundt informed Lord Runciman of Sudeten German Party's views on Benes' written proposals.

3) Sudeten Germany Party delegation will tomorrow hand President statement of attitude toward his proposals in form of counter-draft, preliminary text of which Counselor of Legation Brücklmeier has taken to Berlin.

EISENLOHR

No. 418

340/198927-30

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the State Secretary in the German Foreign Ministry (Weizsäcker)*

LONDON, September 1, 1938.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: From a thoroughly reliable source I have heard the following details about the deliberations of the British Government on the Czechoslovak question:

The British Government yesterday received reports to the effect that the Führer intends to settle the Czechoslovak question by force. These reports originate primarily from Churchill, Vansittart, and Christie.<sup>6</sup> Churchill pointed out yesterday in his talk with Lord Halifax that the British Government must act promptly and energetically if they still wish to prevent the outbreak of a war. As a means to this end he proposed the following: concentration of the Fleet in the North Sea with introduction of at least partial mobilization; warning to be issued simultaneously to Berlin against attempt to settle Czechoslovak question by force, together with a "fair offer" in regard to the Sudeten German problem. I have not been able to ascertain further what in Churchill's opinion constitutes this "fair offer." In this connection it is interesting that Sir Robert Vansittart holds the same view and understands by "fair offer" complete introduction of "home rule" for the Sudeten German minority. Group Captain Christie, an intimate friend of Vansittart's, goes a step further in this direction: he proposes a plebiscite in the Sudeten German area.

<sup>6</sup> Group Captain M. G. Christie. See footnote 19, p. 404.

According to my information, Lord Halifax answered all three gentlemen in a similar way: first of all, he thanked them for their information and stated that he had also received similar information from elsewhere. The British Government could indeed not believe that the Führer desired to pursue such a policy, which in all probability would lead to a world war. Nevertheless, in order to be prepared for every eventuality, they had put themselves in close touch with the Dominions. Besides this they were constantly exchanging views with the French Government. Final decisions had not yet been made. Great Britain would, however, be ready when the decisive hour arrived. Everything depended on whether France considered it to be a *casus foederis*. He personally believed that France would regard it as incompatible with her honor to desert Czechoslovakia if her existence were threatened.

Moreover, Lord Halifax gave Mr. Churchill clearly to understand that the British Government did not intend from now onward to open personal discussions with prominent members of the House of Commons.

The above information originates from a British personage who is friendly toward us. In the Foreign Office all non-German visitors are told frankly that this time Great Britain will not give way again as she did in the case of Italy. The policy of 1935 has had the most serious consequences, and Great Britain must be resolved, if necessary by resorting to arms, together with her ally, to call a definite halt to the Germans. I did not expect any other attitude from the Foreign Office, where, apart from a few junior officials, we have no friends.

As the Embassy has already reported on various occasions, the Foreign Office stands in scarcely concealed opposition to Chamberlain. This was expressed particularly clearly in the Spanish question in July of this year, when the Foreign Office, in intimate conjunction with the die-hards and the Left, tried to move Chamberlain to attack Franco on account of the bombardment of British ships.

When I took leave of you, you particularly recommended me "to follow things as closely as possible." I do not believe that the British Government in conjunction with the French Government have decided as yet what to do in the case of a German attack on Czechoslovakia. Naturally a large proportion of the press is already sounding the alarm. Acting on the Reich Minister's warning contained in his instruction of August 3 of this year,<sup>8a</sup> I tried to separate the propaganda from the facts to the best of my ability. Nevertheless, signs of storm are clearly recognizable. As public opinion

<sup>8a</sup> Document No. 332, p. 529.

in this country stands at present, the signs of hysteria which were apparent on May 20 and 21—I would like to say, reassuringly—are absent. In place of this a mood of grim resolution is gaining ground, which has always been the foundation of fateful decisions in British policy. The attacks on Chamberlain, which only a month ago threatened to affect seriously the position of the Prime Minister, are completely silenced. In their place the idea is taking possession of the broad masses of the people that: “if Chamberlain, who has expressed his wish for a settlement with Germany in such strong terms, cannot maintain the peace, then we can be sure that war is the only way out.” The mood is reminiscent of that which prevailed immediately before the start of the Great War. At that time Sir Edward Carson, leader of the Ulster Conservatives, stated in the House of Commons that the Conservative Party wished to postpone their resistance to the Asquith government’s policy of “Home Rule,” which had been planned on the basis of armed force if necessary, “so as to enable Great Britain to speak and act with the authority of a united nation.”

Many thanks for your letter of the 24th of this month<sup>9</sup> which I will use as a guide to further conversations. Herr von Dirksen urgently requested me for information on events here. In anticipation of your agreement I have sent him a copy of my letter of the 23d of last month<sup>10</sup> together with enclosure. Should you for any reason wish that Herr von Dirksen should not make use of the contents of the letter, I should be grateful if you would instruct him accordingly. I have requested Herr von Dirksen to obtain your authorization if necessary.

Kindest regards and Heil Hitler!

Yours very sincerely,

TH. KORDT

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<sup>9</sup> Not printed.

<sup>10</sup> Document No. 382, p. 605.



## No. 419

340/198908-10

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, September 1, 1938.

St. S. No. 30/38 g. Rs.

## MINUTE

The British Ambassador, who returned from London yesterday evening, left his other guests for a few minutes after dinner at his house in order to tell me the following:

During the last few days in London he spoke to all those in authority and took part in the long Cabinet meeting on August 30. He was therefore now well informed about his Government's attitude; nevertheless he had been given no specific orders. Naturally he would attach great importance to a personal talk with the Reich Foreign Minister, or even the Führer himself, for the situation was serious enough to warrant that. He did not, however, want to ask for an audience himself and in particular did not wish, by making an official visit to the Wilhelmstrasse, to give an opportunity to sensation-mongering journalists of making completely erroneous statements that: London warns, or even alternatively, threatens in Berlin. Henderson would much prefer, if the Reich Minister could arrange it, to be received by him quietly somewhere today or tomorrow, in the country, for instance, in order that he, Henderson, could inform the Reich Minister direct what his impressions had been in London.

Henderson described these impressions to me as follows: The British Government considers the next few days very important for the peaceful settlement of the Sudeten German question. Initial steps had already been taken in Prague toward this end and with the greatest energy. It was a question of forcing the unreliable Beneš to make a comprehensive offer to Henlein and tying him down to a public statement, so that he could no longer evade the issue. Henderson believes Beneš will shortly be in this position. Henlein must then be counted upon not to turn down such an offer out of hand, should it not absolutely satisfy him. Cherries are not swallowed whole but eaten in two bites. The Führer would render an inestimable service if during the Party Rally he could smooth the way for a gradual procedure by a public statement.

If Henlein did not accept a comprehensive offer from Beneš, the situation would of course be serious. He, Henderson, discounted the idea of Germany's intention to use force. He did not believe in such a decision by the Führer and had tried also to convey this

belief to the Cabinet. Some Cabinet members were, however, of the opinion that Germany intended war even so. Nevertheless he, the Ambassador, as already stated, had not been instructed to use warnings or threats. All that was necessary had been said. Further moves in this affair would be of another nature. He, Henderson, had found the British mood in the event of a solution by force to be more threatening than the last time. In this connection the Ambassador mentioned the military measures which had been taken on land and the plans for naval maneuvers in the North Sea.

The whole trend of Henderson's remarks proved the closest relationship of the British attitude to Runciman's activities, although Henderson only mentioned the R. Mission quite casually. Sir Nevile did not fail to make disapproving remarks about Beneš' methods.

I do not consider my own questions and objections sufficiently important to be included here. I have reserved all other points for the conversation of the Ambassador with the Reich Minister.

Herewith submitted to the Reich Minister.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 420

139/125620-21

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in the United States (Thomsen) to  
the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

WASHINGTON, September 1, 1938—3:50 p.m.

No. 241 of September 1      Received September 2, 1938—2:50 a.m.

1) By publishing information of a political and military nature from the whole of Europe, the American press has in the last few days been busy proving that Germany is gradually approaching total isolation. This is backed up by reports about concentration of the British Fleet, French maneuvers and fleet movements, Italy's lukewarm attitude, and the increasing influence of Great Britain and France in the Balkans. Regarding Italy, a well-informed source in Rome reports that Italy will not fight against Western Powers for the sake of Sudeten Germans. If war breaks out, her attitude will be decided by extent and duration of war and by the powers involved in it. At present Italy is a neutral observer, the only difference being that she is Germany's friend.

According to statement of Military Attaché<sup>11</sup> no preparations for war being undertaken by American armed forces, neither have

<sup>11</sup> Lt. Gen. F. von Bötticher was German Military and Air Attaché in Washington from 1933 till 1941.

measures been taken up to now toward industrial and economic support of Great Britain. Four hundred aircraft ordered by Great Britain cannot be delivered before four to five months. From conversation in General Staff, Bötticher has definite impression that America not urging for war, that understanding for Sudeten Germans' demands exists there, and that General Staff working along these lines. On the other hand, Bötticher shares my opinion that leading political circles will urge war with Germany if Great Britain and France become involved in such a war. Clearly recognizable that British Government have informed Americans about their plans to last detail through Kennedy, and requested on their part particulars of extent of Neutrality Law and (group missing) Acts. In general, public opinion is given the line that Germany alone will decide on war or peace and is therefore responsible for future events.

Please pass this telegraphic report to *Wehrmacht*, as a report by General Bötticher.

THOMSEN

No. 421

2410/511044-45

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in the United States (Thomsen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

No. 1495

WASHINGTON, September 2, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 6063)

Subject: Attitude of Italy in event of an armed conflict arising from the Sudeten German question.

A member of the Italian Embassy here has spoken as follows about Italy's attitude in the event of an armed conflict arising from the Sudeten German question:

He considers it out of the question that Italy would take an active part in a war breaking out now. In his opinion the war is bound to be localized. Even if France, Great Britain, and Soviet Russia, too, were to take Czechoslovakia's part the war would still be localized and for the following reasons:

France could not penetrate into German territory on account of the Rhine fortifications and the well-known excellent antiaircraft organization in Germany. On the other hand, neither could Germany penetrate into French territory on account of the Maginot Line. Therefore no large-scale battles would be fought on Germany's western front, and the war there would be limited solely to infantry and air force operations. Great Britain would be unable to approach

German territory because the North Sea would be blocked by the German Navy. The war would therefore take place only in the East and would terminate in a comparatively short time in the downfall of Czechoslovakia. After this it would be extremely difficult to explain to the French and British peoples the necessity of continuing the war against Germany, as Germany had no intention of attacking these two countries. The war would therefore be localized.

But the situation would be otherwise if Italy joined the war on Germany's side. Such a war would then lead to a kind of "holy" war by the democracies against the totalitarian states and would start a world conflagration, in which the United States, too, would doubtless take a hand. Italy (and Germany with her) would run too great a risk in this case; for the Italian nation it would mean a fight for her existence in which the chances of defeat were 90 to 10.

The Italian informant remarked that, in the event of war, Italy could be of much more use to Germany by supplying munitions and raw materials than by supplying military aid. Italy could likewise force the French, by constant threats and "saber rattling," to keep an army in readiness on the Franco-Italian frontier to protect her flank, which would relieve the pressure on the German front on the Rhine.

The Italian informant, of course, described his statements as his personal opinions; even so, his manner was so precise that the assumption cannot be dismissed that these statements form the substance of an Italian order for guidance of speech.

THOMSEN

No. 422

139/125615-17

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

PARIS, September 2, 1938.

No. 421 of September 1 Received September 2, 1938—12:50 a.m.

Foreign Minister Bonnet asked me to call upon him today and requested me to convey the warmest thanks of the French Government to the Führer, Field Marshal Göring, and Reich Minister Ribbentrop for cordial reception of General Vuillemin,<sup>12</sup> which had made excellent impression here.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. documents Nos. 239 and 385, pp. 484 and 612.

Turning to general situation, Bonnet sought to convince me that such bright spots in Franco-German relations were overshadowed by actions of Reich Government to an extent never previously encountered. These actions caused gravest concern to the Western Powers, who were anxious to preserve peace, and certain nervous politicians, of whom he was not one, had considered taking analogous measures. Happily, this idea was eliminated for the time being. After a repetition of the general peace talk which I have often heard from him, he added that he felt that we did not fully appreciate understanding attitude of the French Government and people toward Germany's problems and aspirations. There could be no doubt about the attitude of himself and Daladier. Apart from this, a fundamental change of opinion had taken place reaching extensive sections of the Left Wing parties within the last 2 years, and it was recognized more fully that a rigid adherence to the forms of the Versailles clauses and the treaties born of postwar nervousness formed the main impediments to an understanding with the New Germany, which, he said, was sincerely desired by at least 90 percent of the French people. This understanding attitude was shown among other things at the time of the Austrian *Anschluss*. However, precautions must not be interpreted as weakness. He said in this connection that it had been hoped and desired that on the occasion of the Reich Party Rally, or some other occasion, a talk might be arranged between the Führer and Herriot, whom he described as a convert. They had also hoped for a repetition of General Le Rond's very promising visit.<sup>13</sup> Bonnet here made the remark that he himself, Daladier, and other members of the Cabinet were sincere admirers of the Führer, in spite of the loss to French prestige due to his policy. Without bloodshed Führer had prepared the way for grandiose reconstruction of Germany and carried this out in a fashion which no one would have believed possible before the Great War. But he was convinced that this work would find its logical culmination not in war, which would mean final destruction of European culture and economy, including that of the victorious state, but in continued peaceful development by revision of the peace treaties and understanding with France and Britain. Such a culmination would finally make the Führer the greatest statesman of the century. When this was done he, Bonnet, wished for nothing more ardently than to see the Führer in Paris as the guest of the French Government, where he would then find an enthusiastic reception. It was unthinkable that we should be willing to run the risk of a war, certain to last a long time, and which would undoubtedly develop into a world

<sup>13</sup> Cf. document No. 289, p. 484.  
797664-49—vol. II 49

war, if the same result could be achieved within a reasonable time by peaceful means as well. In the present situation he wanted to leave no room for doubt that France, and Britain at her side, were firmly resolved to hasten to the assistance of the Czechs if they were attacked by German troops or volunteers during the present negotiations. He would also give an assurance that in this case America would not stand aside, neither would Russia. In France and Britain however, he asserted, nothing was so ardently desired as peace. The pressure being exerted on the Prague Government was much greater than was supposed. Even though he allowed Britain to take the lead here, the French influence was no less energetic and lasting. Hardly a day went by without his telephoning Prague. We could depend upon it that Czechoslovak Government would be forced to accept Runciman's verdict, which, in all probability, would mean the fulfillment of 70, 80, or 90 percent of the Sudeten German demands.

I answered Bonnet that I was convinced the only satisfactory solution of the Czech question would be the integration of the Sudeten German areas within the Reich. Bonnet did not deny this. He replied that such integration would follow quite naturally upon the autonomy if we could wait. There was only one case in which France must fight and that case was fully known to us. With our highly developed understanding for national honor we must realize too that France's honor was once and for all pledged to the Czechs by the solemn Treaty of Alliance. He who broke his word was without honor. No one could expect France to sacrifice her honor and thus humiliate herself. He implored us to spare France this and declared he would not force France, who was prepared to be friends with us and give fullest consideration to our interests, to take up arms against us. The aim of his policy, after satisfactory solution of the Sudeten German question, was to invite us to engage in negotiations of a general nature, in which justice would be done, not only to our economic and financial claims, but also to our colonial demands.

I gave expression to our attitude in the most emphatic language in accordance with instructions received and left the Foreign Minister in no doubt as to our intention to use armed force for the sake of our rights if this should be necessary. The responsibility would lie with the powers who wished to interfere with us. France had it in her power to avoid a warlike solution.

In conclusion, Bonnet said to me that he had placed the statements made to me today in the name of his Government among the records of the Quai d'Orsay, as a historical document. He requested me to guarantee that they would be put before the Führer in their entirety and unabridged. I gave Bonnet this assurance.

WELCZECK

## No. 423

139/125783-84

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) and the Military Attaché of the German Embassy in France (Kühlenthal)*<sup>14</sup> to the German Foreign Ministry and War Ministry

Telegram

MOST URGENT

PARIS, September 2, 1938.

No. 424 of September 2

Received September 2, 1938—11:05 p.m.

- 1) War Ministry, General von Brauchitsch.
- 2) Foreign Ministry, Berlin. For State Secretary von Weizsäcker.

General Colson<sup>15</sup> sent his A.D.C. to me this afternoon to ask for permission for General Colson to visit me this evening at my home. This visit took place at 7 o'clock this evening in my house. General Colson said he had come to see me privately because of his trust in me as a friend, to tell me of his concern at the reports constantly being received by him about military activities in Germany. He mentioned the large-scale calling up of reservists and the reports to the effect that we intended to retain for a considerable time the age groups due for release. Apart from this, however, and this was the most important, reports had reached him to the effect that fresh troops had been detained on Germany's western frontier. The French had not as yet done anything in reply to these measures. But I must realize that he, both as responsible Chief of the General Staff and as an individual, could not quietly tolerate what he saw, and that in addition he was being approached from certain quarters with the question: What measures is France taking? When I pointed out that the reservist exercises had been known of for a long time and were born of the necessity to retrain the older age groups, which the French Army had been doing for a long time; further, that I was unaware of any retention of age groups due for release or that troops were being detained on the western frontier, and that I could not imagine how our actions could be regarded as a threat to France, he replied that he offered no opinion on the matter; as a responsible Chief of the General Staff, in the interest of the security of his country, he could only counter with measures similar to those which were reported to him, and I myself must realize that if such measures were ever adopted by both sides a dangerous situation might arise, especially on the Lorraine frontier, which could no longer be controlled with the best will in the world. Up to now he had kept com-

<sup>14</sup> Lt. Gen. Erich Kühlenthal was German Military Attaché in Paris. His previous post was head of the Intelligence Branch in the War Ministry.

<sup>15</sup> Chief of the General Staff of the French Army.

pletely calm and taken no action, but I must realize that a moment would finally come when France would be forced to answer our actions move by move. He would heartily regret it if friction arose which would impair the mutual respect of both armies and let loose the danger of war. He was therefore approaching me as a friend and was prepared at all times to listen to my explanations and statements in my private house.

Please let me have instructions by return of post as to how I am to reply to the above.

KÜHLENTHAL  
WELCZEK

No. 424

C34/000326-29

*Notes by Hitler's Adjutant (Schmundt) on Conference on Operation "Green"*<sup>16</sup>

CONFERENCE ON SEPTEMBER 3, 1938, AT THE BERGHOF

Present: The Führer.  
General von Brauchitsch.  
General of Artillery Keitel.  
Major Schmundt.

I.

GEN. v. B.: Reports on the exact time of the move-up of the troops to "exercise areas" for [Operation] "Green."

Field units to be moved up on September 28. From then will be ready for action. When X-day becomes known, field units carry out exercises in opposing directions.

FÜHRER: Has objection. Troops assemble 2 days' march away. Carry out camouflage exercises everywhere.

O.K.H. must know when X-day is by 12 noon on September 27.

II.

THE FÜHRER: Expresses different opinion on employment of forces for "Green."

Prospects for 2d Army (O.S.) are smallest. Strongest Czech fortifications here. Waste of troops.

Thrust in 10th Army area however is promising. Road blocks prepared everywhere, additionally also in 2d Army area. No reason for hindrance.

<sup>16</sup> Handwritten notes from the Schmudt file (Nuremberg document 388-PS). For Operation "Green," see footnote 54, p. 239.



Czechs will halt opposite 2d Army and keep assault army ready east of Prague. A thrust against it is to be made into the heart of the country.

Thrust in 14th Army area will fail because of means of transport.

Therefore assemble all motorized and armored divisions with 10th Army and employ in the forward thrust.

Once we are through there, the south front, which is built up in three defense lines opposite 12th Army, will collapse.

One army in the heart of Bohemia will force the decision.

Possible repetition of Verdun with 2d Army. Attack there would mean bleeding to death for a task which cannot be accomplished.

v. BRAUCHITSCH: Has objections because of state of motorized divisions, reinforcements, and untrained leaders.

THE FÜHRER: The course now planned corresponds to Czech expectations. Opposite 10th Army, enemy is not always in concrete emplacements. Possibility here of drawing in Henlein people (uniforms). The line here is very far back.

Cooperation between 10th and 12th Armies.

We must add motorized units to army. As formerly the Prussian Cavalry. How else can we gain experience? Decisive is the coordination of equal speeds.

Break-through in 2d Army sector not so rapid as to turn tactical success into strategic one.

### III.

THE FÜHRER: Orders further development of the western fortifications.

Improvement of advanced positions, around Aachen and Saarbrücken.

Construction of 300 to 400 battery positions. (1600 guns.) He emphasizes flanking action.

Certified as correct.

SCHMUNDT,

*Major, General Staff*

BERGHOF, September 4, 1938.

## No. 425

F6/0296-99

*Two Memoranda by the Foreign Minister*<sup>17</sup>

RM 254

The British Ambassador visited me in Sonnenburg on August 31 and expressed the wish to speak with the Führer in Nuremberg.<sup>18</sup> In my reply I left it open whether the Führer would be prepared to receive him or not. The British Ambassador then spoke in a very cautious way about the mood in Great Britain. He said he had not visited me in the Wilhelmstrasse as the press would have described this as a *démarche*. His position was very difficult. He wished neither to warn nor threaten. Nevertheless, it was his opinion that France regarded the situation as very grave. The Sudeten Germans and the Czechs were a matter of complete indifference to Great Britain. Great Britain was only concerned with the attitude of France. Should France be drawn into the conflict Great Britain's position would be very different. The honor of France was at stake.

To this I replied that I could not see how the honor of France was at stake, as in my opinion:

1) The alliance of the French with the Czechs was a thoroughly immoral one, as it was based on the mentality of Versailles and aimed at establishing completely unjustified claims to hegemony.

2) This alliance was immoral because it meant the oppression of 3½ million Sudeten Germans.

3) Not only was France under no obligation to intervene in any conflict provoked by the Czechs, but she was not even justified in doing so.

If, in spite of this, France were to attack, the responsibility would rest exclusively on French shoulders, because it was not France's honor which was at stake but Germany's honor only. Any attack by France would signify a war of aggression, aimed at conquest. Germany, who is prepared for everything, would react accordingly.

As I pointed out, a repetition of May 21 was out of the question. If Beneš did not radically change his tactics, then, in my opinion, no settlement would ever be achieved and the hatred held in check by Henlein only with difficulty must break out openly.

In the course of the conversation the British Ambassador stated that the atmosphere in Great Britain had become steadily worse since he took up his post 16 months ago. To this I replied that the

<sup>17</sup> These memoranda were sent out as a despatch to the main European Missions on September 7, 1938 (Pol. I 2092 g (IV)).

<sup>18</sup> Hitler was to arrive at Nuremberg on September 5.

Führer had always conducted a consistent policy of agreement vis-à-vis Great Britain and the safeguarding of British interests. If the atmosphere in Great Britain had nevertheless deteriorated, then something was clearly wrong with Great Britain. Great Britain had no right to expect more from Germany than Germany from Great Britain.

At the close of our discussion Henderson again referred to the signature of the French alliance and stated that Great Britain could do nothing to change this state of affairs. I answered him that in my opinion many leading politicians in France thought completely otherwise and, as regards what had been said before, I could only recommend Great Britain to make France see reason should a German-Czech conflict occur, which was desired by none and which, if it came nevertheless, could be credited to the account of M. Beneš alone, and not to risk the existence of the British Empire for the sake of a perverted idea of France about her honor.

R[IBBENTROP]

BERLIN, September 3, 1938.

RM 253

During my talk on August 31 with the British Ambassador he said that he hoped that an agreement could still be reached on the Czech question. I replied that I, too, shared this hope. Henderson then went on to say that it would of course be difficult to come to an arrangement this year; nevertheless this must be done definitely next year.

R[IBBENTROP]

BERLIN, September 3, 1938.

No. 426

139/125793-94

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy in France*  
Telegram

BERLIN, September 3, 1938.

With reference to telegram No. 424.<sup>19</sup>

Kindly inform Military Attaché, likewise in the name of the Army High Command, as follows:

We are not in a position to give detailed *démentis* to the constant stream of false reports continually being put about regarding Ger-

<sup>19</sup> Document No. 423, p. 685.

man military measures. In particular, as regards German troop movements toward the western frontier, attention may be drawn to the fact that Reuter has today issued a *démenti* of this report of their own accord. For the rest, we do not intend to engage in conversations about our military measures.

For your strictly confidential information I may observe that on the orders of the Führer no further information about German military measures will be given even to the Military Attachés here.

We would, therefore, prefer if conversation with C.<sup>20</sup> need be carried no further. Otherwise, Military Attaché, in order to bring conversation to a close, might employ following argument:

No military measures of any kind are in force which threaten France or could be interpreted as a threat, any more than certain military measures adopted by France on the French eastern frontier, of which we have learned, are interpreted by us as a threat to Germany.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 427

1648/391560-68

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Department of the Foreign Ministry (Wiehl) for the Foreign Minister*

SECRET

#### ECONOMIC MEASURES AGAINST CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Measures could be adopted in the realm of the exchange of commodities and in the sphere of communications. Their extent varies according to whether they are adopted as measures of open conflict or whether economic relations are formally maintained.

##### I. OPEN ECONOMIC WARFARE

###### *a) Exchange of commodities.*

Existing treaties will be denounced which, in the case of the clearing agreement, would be possible any month, and in the case of the coal agreement at the end of the year on October 1. By this means the exchange of commodities between Greater Germany and Czechoslovakia would be practically brought to a complete standstill.

*Results for Czechoslovakia:* Loss of exports to Greater Germany, which in 1937 amounted to 220 million RM, that is, about 20 percent of the Czechoslovak total exports; Czechoslovakia would presumably be able to transfer within an appreciable time a considerable portion of these exports to third countries. Loss of an export surplus which

<sup>20</sup> General Colson.

amounted in 1937 to 26 million RM (out of 87 million RM total export surplus) and which in the first 6 months of 1938 had risen to 33 million RM (out of 89 million RM total export surplus). Loss of imports from Greater Germany amounting to 194 million RM in the year 1937. Czechoslovakia would not feel this loss appreciably, because she can in part herself produce the commodities procured from Germany, in part purchase them elsewhere.

*Results for Germany:* Loss of exports amounting to 194 million RM which, though this comprises only 3 percent of our total exports, would, however, probably be difficult to transfer to other countries. Avoidance of the above-mentioned unfavorable trade balance, which amounts to an unfavorable German balance in the clearing business of about 30 million RM to date. Loss of imports from Czechoslovakia of 220 million RM would be advantageous only insofar as they consist of commodities which can easily be dispensed with. About 75 million RM consist, however, of goods which are urgently needed (33 millions worth of timber, 5 millions worth of kaolin, 25 millions worth of grain, 10 millions worth of textiles) the provision of which from other countries would be difficult.

This action would, it is true, inflict appreciable damage upon Czechoslovakia until she could transfer her former exports to Germany to other countries, but not to the extent that she would be driven to economic collapse. The damage which the policy would entail for Germany would be more extensive than that suffered by Czechoslovakia. Germany could put up with this in itself, since the exchange of commodities with Czechoslovakia does not, measured by its bulk, play any considerable role within the framework of Germany's total foreign trade. However, the falling off in our supplies of timber and kaolin would just in our present situation be difficult to bear. For third states, as their interests would not be directly affected, this procedure could not offer any legitimate ground for countermeasures.

*b) Communications.*

If Germany wished to profit by her geographical position, surrounding as she does considerable regions of Czechoslovakia, without regard for existing treaty obligations, a stoppage of communications could be considered as a means of exerting economic pressure, namely, the interruption of the transport of Czech goods on the waterways of the Elbe via Hamburg and the Oder via Stettin, and likewise on the railway communications through Germany to Italy (Trieste), Switzerland, France, Belgium, Holland, and Denmark. Czechoslovak exports to countries of Southeastern Europe and to Poland, Russia, and the Baltic States, which in 1937 made up about 20 percent of

Czechoslovakia's total exports, would not be affected by these measures. Thus 60 percent of the total Czech exports (exports to Germany dealt with above under *a*) accounted for 20 percent) would be materially affected by the stoppage. A great part of this 60 percent, however, which now passes through Germany to Scandinavia, Britain, and overseas, and comprises about 35 percent of Czechoslovakia's total exports, could without special difficulty be directed from the German channels of communication to a route via Poland-Gdynia or Hungary-Trieste. If Poland and Hungary take no part in the boycott, its effectiveness is limited to 25 percent of the total Czechoslovak exports which go to Italy, Switzerland, France, Belgium, and Holland. Its efficacy would, however, be even further diminished by the promise which we have given to Italy respecting the railway tariffs through Germany to Trieste, as well as by the fact that diversions of traffic to Switzerland, France, Belgium, and Holland would also be possible via Trieste and Gdynia, provided that commodity prices were not in consequence unduly increased.

The stoppage of Czechoslovak goods transport would, according to this, only be in some degree effective if Poland and Hungary associated themselves with it. Otherwise, it would only injure Czechoslovakia to a relatively small degree, and that only until the use of the alternative routes had become regularized.

To this must be added the fact that such a stoppage must be carried into effect by decreeing a general prohibition of through traffic or by fixing a competitive tariff for Czechoslovak goods. Both these measures might, however, be at variance with the express provisions of numerous existing treaties: not only with the German-Czechoslovak Economic Agreement of 1920 (subject to 3 months' notice of termination), but also with the International Agreement of 1921<sup>21</sup> on the freedom of through traffic to which most European states have acceded, for instance, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Britain, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland (subject to 1 year's notice of termination), as well as with various other trade agreements, for instance with Britain (subject to 1 year's notice of termination). In the event of any violation of the International Agreement and of the treaties with third states by the stoppage of communications, we should certainly have to reckon with countermeasures taken by the affected third states against Germany, the damage inflicted by which would exceed the doubtful advantage which it might be able to obtain with the measures against Czechoslovakia.

<sup>21</sup> The convention and statute signed at Barcelona on April 20, 1921.

*c) Result.*

In the most favorable circumstances Czechoslovak exports to the value of 475 million RM, that is 45 percent of the total Czechoslovak exports, could be stopped for a limited time by the measures discussed, namely:

according to a) exports to Germany to the value of 220 million RM of which, however, a portion could within an appreciable time be transferred to third countries,

according to b) exports to Switzerland, France, Holland, Belgium to the value of 275 million RM of which, however, a portion could within a relatively short time, by the adoption of alternative channels of communication, be still directed to export markets.

The total Czechoslovak exports are estimated at 10 percent of the total industrial and agricultural output of Czechoslovakia. Even the cutting off of 45 percent of the total exports, which according to the above would only be attainable for a relatively short time, would thus only comprise 4 or 5 percent of the Czechoslovak total production. From this it results that the measures discussed above could not so hit Czechoslovakia that her economy would suffer any decisive inconvenience. On the other side must be entered as disadvantages for Germany the loss of imports of timber, kaolin, and wheat, at present indispensable, as well as the still incalculable effects of the countermeasures adopted by third countries affected by infringement of the treaties involved in b).

Such a balance sheet points to the advisability of rejecting the open measures of conflict already discussed, which would embrace the whole field of exchange of commodities and communications, and of limiting ourselves to partial measures which promise success in accordance with section II below.

## II. MEASURES PERMITTING THE FORMAL MAINTENANCE OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS

*a) Exchange of commodities.*

In future transactions involving trade and politics with Czechoslovakia, care is to be taken in the first place to get rid of the passive trade balance which still exists, mainly in trade with Austria, and further to limit as far as possible the supply of unwanted and unnecessary commodities from Czechoslovakia. The existing German-Czechoslovak treaties are, insofar as they do not conflict with this aim, to be retained, otherwise they are to be denounced.

In the year 1937 German imports from Czechoslovakia were made up in the following way:

1) of 40 million RM worth—that is, 19 percent of the total Czechoslovak export—of commodities indispensable at present, such as timber, kaolin, certain kinds of seeds. These imports are to be retained and, where possible, to be increased.

2) of 66 million RM—that is, 30 percent—of necessary commodities such as cereals, hops, grains for fodder, pelts and hides, yarns, etc. These imports are to be continued, so far as there is a demand which cannot be met from other countries.

3) 40 million RM, that is, 19 percent, unwanted and unnecessary commodities such as beer, motorcars, wheaten flour, cheese, cotton yarn, cellulose paper, leather, pottery, ironware, machines, chemical products, fabrics. These imports are as far as possible to be suppressed.

4) 30 million RM, that is, 13 percent, unwanted and unnecessary commodities from the Sudeten German regions such as glassware, cotton goods, and woolen goods. These imports are to be continued as hitherto, since otherwise we should be inflicting prejudice upon the Sudeten Germans without doing appreciable injury to Czechoslovakia by suspending the imports.

5) 38 million RM, i.e., 19 percent, of coal of which half, about 19 million RM worth, was delivered to Austria and half to the Old Reich. The deliveries to Austria are already reduced to about a half. The process of strangling will be continued, and the deliveries stopped altogether as soon as the German railways are sufficiently complete to transport the necessary Ruhr coal to Austria. A coal agreement exists between the Old Reich and Czechoslovakia, in virtue of which we deliver about 19 million RM of pit coal and import in return about the same amount of lignite. The pit coal comes from the Prussian State mines in Silesia (distressed area). The Czechoslovak lignite is at the moment indispensable for the German factories which depend upon it, because German lignite cannot be made available for them (the whole German lignite output is needed for more important purposes) and because the conversion of the factories for the use of pit coal would take several years. Thus Silesian pit coal cannot be employed as an immediate substitute for Czechoslovak lignite, while its marketing elsewhere in Germany would only be possible as a result of sacrifices (lower railway tariffs). On the other hand the nondelivery of Silesian pit coal to Czechoslovakia would only be beneficial to the latter since the deficiency could easily be replaced by an increase of her own output. In these circumstances the continued functioning of the coal exchange agreement is provisionally in the interest of Germany.

#### *b) Communications.*

Efforts have already been made during the recent months, when the opportunity occurred, to eliminate Czechoslovakia as a transit country as far as possible. Thus in the agreement with Poland it was decided that we would indeed continue to import the 800,000 tons annually which Poland hitherto delivered to Austria, but that this coal should no longer as hitherto be transported to Austria



through Czechoslovakia, but should be received on the German-Polish frontier in Silesia. In this way a yearly loss of freight estimated at from 20 to 25 million RM will be inflicted upon Czechoslovakia. Already, too, the Reich Ministry of Communications is considering, in the tariff negotiations with the southeastern countries, directing transport from these regions through Austria and avoiding Czechoslovakia. A similar scheme is contemplated for the tariff negotiations with Poland and the Baltic States for the transport of their commodities through Germany to Italy and Switzerland.

On the other hand, we have not yet considered putting difficulties in the way of goods traffic through Germany from and to Czechoslovakia by means of separate tariff measures. For this purpose an appropriate report to the Reich Ministry of Communications would be needed. In view of the fact that, as was set forth above in note II b), such measures promise only very small practical results, while, on the other hand, they would violate existing treaties with third countries and consequently lead to difficulties with these, it seems desirable in future to leave them out of consideration.

Submitted to the State Secretary for the Reich Minister, with a request for approval of proposed measures.

WIEHL

SEPTEMBER 3, 1938.

No. 428

139/125795-96

*The German Ambassador in France (Welczeck) and the Military Attaché of the German Embassy in France (Kühlenthal) to the German Foreign Ministry and the War Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

PARIS, September 3, 1938.

No. 426 of September 3

Received September 3, 1938—11:30 p.m.

For a) War Ministry, General von Brauchitsch

b) Foreign Ministry, State Secretary von Weizsäcker

Referring to telegram No. 424 of the 2d instant.<sup>22</sup>

After I had sent word to General Colson this morning that I would most probably give an answer on September 5 to his statements of yesterday, he again called upon me this evening at 7:15 p.m. at my private address after a previous intimation and made the following communication:

According to information which he had received today, reinforcement and detrainment of German troops were in progress on the right

<sup>22</sup> Document No. 423, p. 685.

bank of the Rhine opposite Strasbourg and near Basle. In particular, from the left bank of the Rhine the detrainment of artillery and tanks had been observed near Kehl. The population in Strasbourg and Upper Alsace had been seriously disquieted by this, a fact which was already observable in the reports of the Alsatian civil authorities to their superiors in Paris.

I received from my conversation with the General the impression that General Colson and the French General Staff judged the situation from the military point of view with perfect calm. Apprehensions are, however, felt that, in view of the mentality of the French frontier population, political pressure might be brought to bear upon the War Ministry to order countermeasures which might, in view of the propinquity of modern frontier fortifications, develop into sources of danger.

In my opinion it will be necessary not only to issue reassuring statements, but also to take measures to avoid considerable troop movements on our part which might perhaps be undertaken in the course of training, or to keep them out of sight of the French.

KÜHLENTHAL  
WELCZECK

No. 429

139/125804

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 398 of September 3

LONDON, September 3, 1938.

Received September 5, 1938—8:45 a.m.

Yesterday's official communication that Konrad Henlein called upon the Führer<sup>23</sup> "under instructions of Lord Runciman" has caused considerable perplexity in the Foreign Office. The translation given in the first place by Reuter "under instructions of Lord Runciman"<sup>24</sup> was at once held up by the Foreign Office, and it thus happened that for the space of 2 hours no official version was released and so could not appear in the evening papers. Obviously there was no one in the Foreign Office who would have been in the position to give an officially approved translation. This is an example to what extent allegedly completely independent British press is guided by the intentions of the Foreign Office.

<sup>23</sup> Henlein saw Hitler at Berchtesgaden on September 1.

<sup>24</sup> Phrase in English in the original.

Reports from reliable source are to the effect that Lord Runciman is by no means such a stranger to the composition of Czechoslovak proposals as British Government would have us believe.

KORDT

No. 430

F2/0276

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division I (Heyden-Rynsch)*

TOP SECRET  
RM 22/g. Rs.

(e.o. Pol. I 787 g. Rs.)

MEMORANDUM

In the event of mobilization the Führer as Supreme Commander of the *Wehrmacht* has reserved the right to summon individual members of the Reich Cabinet to his own Headquarters, which will not always be the same as the Headquarters of the Field Army.

The Reich Minister has given orders that provision shall be made beforehand to secure for himself and a limited staff communication facilities in the Headquarters of the Führer's quarters. Two additional teleprinter lines and three telephone lines are to be reserved for him.

The question of principle will be discussed by me today with the competent authorities at the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht*.

The proposal attached in the annex<sup>25</sup> will be put forward.

It may seem desirable in the absence of the Reich Minister to leave someone as permanent representative of the Reich Minister on the Führer's staff; I suggest Counselor of Legation Hewel.

In accordance with the proposal of August 31, 1938, one teleprinter installation has already been requested for the Reich Minister at Headquarters in the event of mobilization. Separate application will also be made today for a second teleprinter installation as well as three telephone lines.

The Reich Minister himself wishes to superintend the fitting up of the operations room in the Führer's Headquarters.

The question of meeting costs is to be discussed with the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht*, if necessary to be submitted to the Reich Finance Ministry.

VON DER HEYDEN-RYNSCH

BERLIN, September 5, 1938.

<sup>25</sup> Not printed.

## No. 431

139/125801-02

*Circular Telegram From the German Foreign Ministry to  
German Missions Abroad*<sup>\*</sup>

Telegram

BERLIN, September 5, 1938.

(e.o. Pol. IV 5811)

For information:

The negotiations of the Czechoslovak Premier with the Sudeten German Party have during recent months produced no results, owing to the absence of readiness on the Czech side to make any concessions; on the contrary they have led just recently to an actual stiffening of their unconciliatory attitude.

Now, however, on August 30—unofficially, in the first instance—the Czechoslovak President has approached the Sudeten German Party with a proposal which, while it offers, it is true, some slight prospects in the question of the admission of German officials in the Sudeten German settlement area, even in the language question, in certain economic and budgetary questions, and finally in the matter of a possible establishment of self-government within the framework of a constitution based on the *Gau*, is, in spite of certain suggestions in the foreign press, too little positive in tone and above all too confused for it to be regarded as a workable basis for an understanding. On September 2, therefore, on the basis of Henlein's eight Karlsbad minimum demands, while outwardly adhering to the statements of the Czechoslovak Premier, the Sudeten German Party has handed over a counterproposal. We must now wait to see whether the Czechoslovak Government is ready this time, on the basis of this new Sudeten German effort at an understanding, to go at last to the very roots of the nationalities problem in Czechoslovakia, and not as hitherto to employ merely tactical expedients or methods designed to catch the eye. Situation, therefore, continues tense. Should the direct negotiations of the Czechoslovak Government with the Sudeten German Party lead to no result, we should have to reckon with Lord Runciman's mediatory proposal to both parties.

HEINBURG

<sup>\*</sup> Sent to all European Embassies and Legations; the Embassies at Tokyo and Washington; all South American Embassies and Legations; the Missions at Ankara, Bagdad, Bangkok, Kabul, Cairo, Pretoria, Teheran; to the Consulates General at Batavia, Beirut, Danzig, Hong Kong, Calcutta, Ottawa, Singapore, Sydney; and the Consulate in Geneva.

## No. 432

139/125808

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) and the Military Attaché of the German Embassy in France (Kühlenthal) to the German Foreign Ministry and War Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

PARIS, September 5, 1938.

No. 428 of September 5 Received September 5, 1938—9:40 p.m.

- 1) War Ministry, General von Brauchitsch.
- 2) Foreign Ministry, for State Secretary von Weizsäcker.

This afternoon I availed myself of telegram 399 (Pol. I 832 g. Rs.) of September 4<sup>27</sup> to bring to a conclusion my proposed conversation with General Colson. I then asked him about the measures ordered by the War Ministry, announced this afternoon by Havas. He assured me that they only amounted to a security measure in the sectors opposite the German-French frontier. In this region it was only in the case of fortress troops, whose strength had been reduced by the recently effected discharge of older men and reservists, that new reservists and men absent on leave (officers and other ranks) had been called up or recalled to restore the normal strength. So far nothing further had been done. As regards the French measure in question, it had been caused by our measures, by which the French frontier population had been gravely disquieted. The order had already been issued before our first conversation and was now published in order to tranquilize the population. He had referred to it during our first conversation, a statement which accords with the facts.

I received from the conversation the impression that in the immediate future nothing further will be done, but that, as the General already pointed out earlier (cf. telegram No. 424 of September 2<sup>28</sup>) we must reckon with the adoption of further measures here in reply to each one of ours.

KÜHLENTHAL  
BRÄUER

<sup>27</sup> Document No. 426, p. 689. The copy printed there has no number and is dated September 3 but presumably was actually dispatched to Paris early on September 4.

<sup>28</sup> Document No. 423, p. 685.

## No. 433

139/125810

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

No. 329 of September 5

PRAGUE, September 5, 1938—10:35 p.m.

Received September 6, 1938—2:15 a.m.

1) Information about conversation between Konrad Henlein and Ashton-Gwatkin on September 4 was not to be obtained today from Sudeten German Party sources, as negotiating délégation was in Eger for consultation with Henlein.

Member of Italian Legation here has received this evening in strict confidence from Ashton-Gwatkin following information intended only for Italians:

Konrad Henlein has informed Ashton-Gwatkin regarding Berchtesgaden statement that Führer has fully approved intention announced by Henlein of reaching peaceful solution by further negotiations and of abandoning demand for a plebiscite. Prerequisite for this would, however, be the acceptance of the eight Karlsbad demands. Sunday speeches by Soviet Russian politicians would not, indeed, in opinion of Ashton-Gwatkin be altogether consistent with results of Berchtesgaden discussions. Notwithstanding, Runciman Mission now takes more optimistic view of situation. They hold the opinion that for Czechoslovak Government acceptance of eight Karlsbad demands represents lesser evil in comparison with results of refusal.

2) On subject of influence daily exerted by Runciman upon President, Ashton-Gwatkin expressed himself to member of Italian Legation to the effect that His Lordship would only use his influence moderately, in order not to encourage Sudeten Germans to put forward excessive demands by putting too much pressure on Beneš.

3) Italian Minister has—evidently from Press Department of President's Council of Ministers—received confidential information according to which President will this evening or tomorrow come forward with proclamation. I transmit this last piece of information with reserve.

HENCKE

## No. 434

139/125821

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Rumania (Stelzer) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 171 of September 6

BUCHAREST, September 6, 1938—8 p.m.

Received September 7, 1938—3:10 a.m.

Foreign Minister Comnen, to whom I spoke in the manner indicated in the telegram (N.P. 8167)<sup>30</sup> shortly before his departure for Geneva,<sup>31</sup> stated that there were no negotiations in progress. Expressed astonishment that such an inquiry should have been addressed to him at all. He also answered emphatically in the negative my question whether direct conversations between General Staffs were going on, and observed that only the day before yesterday he had discussed the situation in detail with the Chief of General Staff. The Foreign Minister then explained, pointing to the map, that there were practically no facilities for transport of Soviet troops through Bessarabia. Only existing railway would in combination with lateral road [*Keilstrasse*] take a disproportionately long time to transport even a small number of Russian troops.

In this connection Comnen described situation as very critical and added that in his opinion, in the event of a conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia, world war was unavoidable. Latest information from London and Paris left no room for doubt. Clearly in order to give emphasis to his words, Foreign Minister insisted that sole beneficiaries of a conflict would be Bolshevism and international Jewry.

STELZER

## No. 435

1613/387041-44

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to an Official of Political Division IV (Altenburg)*<sup>32</sup>

A. III. 2. h.

PRAGUE, September 6, 1938.

(Pol. I 2111 g)

DEAR ALTENBURG: I enclose a secret memorandum on a strictly confidential conversation which Ashton-Gwatkin has had with the

<sup>30</sup> Not printed; the telegram enclosed a press cutting alleging that in case of war Rumania would not remain neutral but would range herself with the Western Powers, and asked for the source of this report.

<sup>31</sup> The Council of the League of Nations (of which Rumania was at this time a member) was to meet on September 9, and the Assembly on September 12.

<sup>32</sup> A marginal note in Altenburg's hand reads "Original of annex submitted to State Secretary in Nuremberg. A. September 8."

Secretary of the Italian Legation here, who is on terms of personal friendship with myself. I thought it right to set these observations down in writing, as they reflect the impression that the British have received of the Berchtesgaden discussions. As regards these discussions the British in Prague—in their case through the Henlein-Ashton-Gwatkin conversation—as well as the Czechoslovak Government received information about them from the discussion that followed between Lord Runciman and Beneš. The only interested quarter which knew nothing about it was the Legation, as it had no opportunity of learning anything from the Sudeten German Party. The reason for this was that Henlein had summoned the negotiating delegation to Eger for discussions.<sup>33</sup>

I set these points on record, not with any view to making complaints, but only in order to make it clear to you how difficult it is for the Legation to give the Foreign Ministry correct and up-to-date information if it finds itself behindhand in comparison with other quarters in Prague. Needless to say I am perfectly clear that you, my dear Altenburg, cannot alter this state of affairs. But I should be very pleased if the Sudeten German Party were given to understand in a suitable way that the Legation has a perfectly legitimate interest in receiving speedy and reliable information. In saying this, it is of course understood that we abstain altogether from assuming any attitude of our own toward the Sudeten German Party. If in addition the Foreign Ministry, as far as it is in a position to do so, could give us brief information about such important events as the Berchtesgaden discussions, it would naturally be of quite special value.

I continue to hope that I shall be able to welcome you and your wife this week in Prague.

In sincere friendship and Heil Hitler!

Yours very sincerely,

HENCKE

[Enclosure]

A. III. 2. h.

MEMORANDUM

On September 5 Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin, member of Lord Runciman's Mission, made the following communication to the Secretary of the Italian Legation, Silvestrelli, about his conversation with Konrad Henlein on Sunday, September 4:

<sup>33</sup> Marginal note inserted in handwriting: "Moreover, K. H. Frank referred us to the Foreign Ministry."



The meeting with Konrad Henlein was arranged with a view to obtaining fuller information about the discussions at the Obersalzberg. Konrad Henlein reported that he arrived at Berchtesgaden on the afternoon of September 1 and at once handed to the Führer the text of the President's proposals of August 30. There was no discussion in detail with the Führer and Reich Chancellor on September 1. This first took place in the morning of September 2. The Führer inquired of Konrad Henlein what course he now intended to adopt. Konrad Henlein answered that he was above all concerned with the avoidance of a war from which the Sudeten German area would be the first to suffer. The Führer stated that this was his wish too, and accompanied his statement with the question as to what practical steps Konrad Henlein had in mind for further action. Henlein answered that there were two possibilities: The one would be a continuation of the negotiations with the Czechoslovak Government—in which the acceptance of the eight Karlsbad demands must be put forward as a claim admitting of no compromise. The second would consist in demanding a plebiscite in the Sudeten German region. Herr Henlein himself would prefer a solution reached by negotiations. The Führer agreed with Konrad Henlein's view and expressed his approval of his aims. For the rest, Konrad Henlein received no definite directive or instructions from the Führer.

Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin further said to the Italian diplomat that the British Mission derived a certain feeling of optimism from the report of Konrad Henlein upon his conversation with the Führer and Reich Chancellor. They accordingly regarded a peaceful solution as still possible. The sharp utterances in the Sunday speeches of the Sudeten German politicians on the occasion of the harvest thanksgiving had, it is true, occasioned some surprise. Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin had, however, to admit that Konrad Henlein had never turned aside from his insistence upon a complete acceptance of the eight Karlsbad demands.

In reply to a question to that effect put by the Secretary of the Italian Legation, Ashton-Gwatkin gave him to understand that the British Mission considered the acceptance of the eight Karlsbad demands as possible for the Czechoslovak Government. It was, in any case, the lesser evil, as their rejection would in all circumstances bring great misfortune upon Czechoslovakia.

As regards the attitude of Lord Runciman, Mr. Ashton-Gwatkin expressed himself in the sense that the British mediator was exerting pressure every day upon Beneš to induce him to accept a settlement on generous lines. His Lordship was, of course, using his influence

with great circumspection, because he was convinced that for him to exert too energetic pressure upon Beneš might encourage the Sudeten German Party to put forward more extensive demands.

HENCKE

PRAGUE, September 6, 1938.

No. 436

337/197106-18

*Foreign Ministry Memorandum*<sup>33a</sup>

SECRET

Compendium of all information at present available to us on the attitude of the different powers in the event of a war breaking out over Czechoslovakia.

1) *France.*

Report from Ambassador Count Welczeck, A 2089 of May 23, on an interview with Prime Minister Daladier on the evening of May 22.<sup>34</sup> The Prime Minister expressed himself as follows:

"The dilemma in which France found herself vis-à-vis her ally Czechoslovakia was not unknown to me. He had not made the alliance and was certainly not happy about it. It did, however, exist, and, if we attacked Czechoslovakia, the French would have to fight if they did not wish to be dishonored (*déshonorés*). A nation who valued her honor could no more break her word than could a man of honor. Neither would we act otherwise in the same situation."

Telegram of September 2 from Ambassador Count Welczeck reporting an interview on that date with the French Foreign Minister, Bonnet.<sup>35</sup> Bonnet declared:

"It was unthinkable that we should be willing to run the risk of a war, certain to last a long time and which would undoubtedly develop into a world war, if the same result could be achieved within a reasonable time by peaceful means as well. In the present situation, he wanted to leave no room for doubt that France, and Britain at her side, were firmly resolved to hasten to the assistance of the Czechs if they were attacked by German troops or volunteers during the present negotiations. He would also give an assurance that in this case America would not stand aside, neither would Russia. With our highly developed understanding for national honor we must realize too that France's honor was once and for all pledged to the Czechs by the solemn Treaty of Alliance. He who broke his word was without honor. No one could expect France to sacrifice her honor and thus humiliate herself. He implored us to spare France this and not to force her to take up arms against us."

<sup>33a</sup> Although undated, this appears to be the report called for in document No. 394, p. 627 and submitted on September 6, as noted on that document.

<sup>34</sup> Document No. 194, p. 326.

<sup>35</sup> Document No. 422, p. 682.

2) *Great Britain.*

Chamberlain's speech in the House of Commons on March 24:

"Where war and peace are concerned, legal obligations are not alone involved, and, if war broke out, it would be unlikely to be confined to those who have assumed such obligations. It would be quite impossible to say where it would end and what Governments might become involved. The inexorable pressure of facts might well prove more powerful than formal pronouncements, and in that event it would be well within the bounds of probability that other countries, besides those which were parties to the original dispute would almost immediately become involved. This is especially true in the case of two countries like Great Britain and France, with long associations of friendship, with interests closely interwoven, devoted to the same ideals of democratic liberty, and determined to uphold them."

Sir John Simon, Chancellor of the Exchequer, at Lanark on August 26, referring to Chamberlain's speech of March 24:

"This speech even today still corresponds to the situation. There is nothing to change in the subject matter and nothing to add to it. All those concerned must contribute in finding a solution of the conflict in Czechoslovakia. The Government realize that a real problem exists in Czechoslovakia and that a solution is urgently needed. We are convinced that, if good will is shown by both sides, it should be possible to find a solution which would do justice to all legitimate interests. There is no need to underline the importance of such a peaceful solution, since in the modern world there are no limits to the backlash of war."

Letter from the British Ambassador on May 22 to the Reich Foreign Minister: (Halifax message)<sup>36</sup>

"If a resort is had to forcible measures, it is quite impossible for me or for him to foretell the results that may follow, and I would beg him not to count on this country's being able to stand aside if, from any precipitate action, there should start a European conflagration."

Letter from the British Ambassador on July 28 to the Reich Foreign Minister:<sup>37</sup>

"It cannot be denied that the continued tension caused by the Czechoslovak problem is creating a state of uncertainty and nervousness throughout Europe, and, if all concerned do not work together to reduce this tension, it is no exaggeration to say that the peace of every one of the Great Powers of Europe may be endangered."

<sup>36</sup> Document No. 189, p. 319. In English in the original.

<sup>37</sup> Document No. 323, p. 522; this is in fact a letter from Lord Halifax, in English in the original.

The above passage in the letter to the Reich Foreign Minister is repeated in the memorandum of the British Government dated August 12.<sup>38</sup>

Extract from a letter of Winston Churchill to a German confidant.<sup>39</sup>

"I am sure that the crossing of the frontier of Czechoslovakia by German armies or aviation in force will bring about a renewal of the World War. I am as certain as I was at the end of July 1914 that England will march with France, and certainly the United States is now strongly anti-Nazi. It is difficult for democracies in advance and in cold blood to make precise declarations, but the spectacle of an armed attack by Germany upon a small neighbor and the bloody fighting that will follow will rouse the whole British Empire and compel the gravest decisions.

Do not, I pray you, be misled upon this point. Such a war, once started, would be fought out like the last to the bitter end, and one must consider, not what might happen in the first few months, but where we should all be at the end of the third or fourth year. It would be a great mistake to imagine that the slaughter of the civil population following upon air raids would prevent the British Empire from developing its full war power; though, of course, we should suffer more at the beginning than we did last time. But the submarine is practically mastered by scientific methods, and we shall have the freedom of the seas and the support of the greater part of the world. The worse the air slaughter at the beginning, the more inexpiable would be the war. Evidently, all the great nations engaged in the struggle, once started, would fight on for victory or death."

Interview on August 31 between the British Ambassador and the Reich Foreign Minister:<sup>40</sup> The Ambassador stated:

"The Sudeten Germans and the Czechs were a matter of complete indifference to Great Britain. Great Britain was only concerned with the attitude of France. Should France be drawn into the conflict, Great Britain's position would be very different. The honor of France would be at stake."

### 3) *United States of America.*

Telegram No. 160 from Ambassador Dieckhoff on May 24:<sup>41</sup>

"There is no doubt at all that, in the present situation, the American Government subscribe in large measure to the British and French point of view."

<sup>38</sup> Document No. 346, p. 549; the German copy printed is, in fact, dated August 11, 1938, but the memorandum was not handed to the Foreign Ministry till the evening of August 12.

<sup>39</sup> Not printed. The quotation is in English in the original.

<sup>40</sup> Document No. 425, p. 688.

<sup>41</sup> Not printed.

4) *Soviet Russia.*

Report from Ambassador Count Schulenburg on an interview with Foreign Commissar Litvinov on August 22:<sup>42</sup>

"Litvinov declared that under no circumstances would Czechoslovakia provoke Germany or attack her. Even the rashest Czech hot-heads thought only of defense and had no desire for war. Should a war start nevertheless, then it would be quite certain that Germany was the aggressor. There was no doubt that France would then mobilize and England would follow suit. The British Government could no longer back out, even if Chamberlain should wish it. The Soviet Union had promised assistance to Czechoslovakia; she would keep her word and do her best. . . . The Soviet Union had not participated in the creation of the Czechoslovak State and had not attended the Versailles Conference, yet she was forced to oppose any increase of power of a Germany lusting for attack."

5) *Italy.*

Telegram No. 141 of May 23 from Ambassador von Mackensen reporting interview with Count Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister:<sup>43</sup>

"Ciano interpolated that he had also unequivocally emphasized to Perth (British Ambassador in Rome) the complete lack of interest taken by Italy in the Czechoslovak question, and he, moreover, refrained from asking me for information on the present position."

6) *Poland.*

Report P I1 b/7.38 of July 9 from Ambassador von Moltke on an interview with Foreign Minister Beck:<sup>44</sup>

"In continuation of the conversation on the minorities problem today M. Beck turned to political questions. He first drew attention to the rumor appearing in French newspapers for some days past that Poland intended to modify her attitude toward Czechoslovakia. It was partly maintained also that Poland had already assumed certain commitments vis-à-vis Czechoslovakia. The same rumor was being hawked around in diplomatic circles in Prague. The Soviet Minister in Prague even held that a definite treaty to this effect had already been concluded. As this rumor was growing, and he assumed it had either come to our notice or else would soon do so, he attached some importance to confirming right from the start that these assertions were entirely without foundation. The Polish Government had not modified its attitude toward Czechoslovakia nor did it intend to do so. He requested me to communicate this to Herr von Ribbentrop, the Reich Minister."

<sup>42</sup> This passage is taken from Moscow telegram No. 158 of August 22, 1938, which is not printed. Similar statements are to be found in two fuller accounts of the interview (documents Nos. 380 and 396, pp. 601 and 629).

<sup>43</sup> Not printed.

<sup>44</sup> Document No. 287, p. 482.

Memorandum of May 25 by Under State Secretary Woermann on an interview with the Italian Counselor of Embassy:<sup>45</sup>

"The Counselor of Embassy stated that the Italian Government also had been informed that M. Beck had refused to make promises to France. According to other information, the Polish attitude was more anti-Czech than anti-German."

7) *Rumania.*

Telegram No. 118 of May 24 from Minister Fabricius:<sup>46</sup>

"Court Minister Urdareanu, the Queen's intimate friend, informed me in conversation that King Carol had clearly stated to Beneš that Rumania would not intervene in a conflict between Czechoslovakia and Germany. Rumania would only march if Hungary attacked, or if a world war broke out and she were compelled by virtue of the League of Nations Covenant to intervene. Naturally the position was extraordinarily difficult for Rumania as, like Poland, she had not conceded the right of transit or flight over her territory to Soviet Russia and would be compelled to fire on aircraft flying over."

Report of August 17 from the German Legation in Bucharest:<sup>47</sup>

"If wisdom alone decides, Rumania will therefore have to make every effort not to be drawn into a conflict. And, according to statements repeatedly made by Rumanian statesmen, Rumania will try to follow this course. She will also endeavor to prevent the passage of Russian troops, if such a step is planned at all, and, like her ally Poland, will, in theory, resist the passage of Russian aircraft. The fact that she does not possess the necessary antiaircraft defenses to ward off a powerful force of Soviet aircraft flying to Czechoslovakia is quite another matter, as is also the fact that, out of fear of being involved in the conflict, she might not have the courage to take open belligerent action by employing fighter squadrons against Soviet aircraft violating her territory.

This intention on the part of Rumania to remain neutral, which undoubtedly exists, might be altered by two circumstances. One would be if the League of Nations declared Germany to be the aggressor. If, in that case, France and Britain decided on belligerent action or sanctions against Germany, Rumania, who is still faithful to the League of Nations, would associate herself with them. There is the additional fact that King Carol holds the conviction that, if Bolshevism does not emerge as the victor from a European or world war, it will be Great Britain whose power will in the end be victorious; therefore in his view it is advisable to be on the side of Great Britain.

The other circumstance would be the case of Hungarian intervention in the conflict. Rumania would be unwilling to fight against Hungary, but in the event of Hungary's attacking Czechoslovakia, she would fight or at least mobilize against Hungary. Rumania would do this in fulfillment of her obligations arising out of the Little

\* Not printed.

\* Document No. 205, p. 337.

\* Document No. 363, p. 573.

Entente, and, therefore, of course, only in the case of an 'unprovoked' attack by Hungary on Czechoslovakia."

Telegram of August 30 from the German Legation in Prague:<sup>48</sup>

"Fresh talks in Bucharest are said to be taking place at present between the Czechoslovak and Rumanian Governments on passage of Soviet Russian troops in the event of a German-Czechoslovak war. It looks as though Rumania would permit transit of, at most, 100,000 Soviet soldiers in civilian clothes should Poland agree."

Telegram No. 56 of May 23 from the German Legation in Budapest:<sup>49</sup>

"Baron Apor, Foreign Minister's Deputy, informed me Hungarian Government had indisputable evidence that Krofta had been expressly assured at Sinaia of armed assistance from Rumania and Yugoslavia, in the event of military action by Hungary against Czechoslovakia. On the other hand, Krofta had been told that, in event of a German-Czech conflict, Rumania and Yugoslavia were unable to promise armed assistance. Apor further stated that it had been expressly confirmed to Hungarian Minister, on his inquiry in Rome, that Italy would not leave Hungary in lurch in event of attack by Little Entente."

#### 8) *Yugoslavia.*

Report A 246 of April 29 from the German Legation in Sofia:<sup>50</sup>

"During a conversation on the general situation, M. Kysse-Iwanoff<sup>51</sup> (Bulgarian Prime Minister) informed me today that he knew that the Yugoslav Government had given Czechoslovakia to understand that she could not reckon on Yugoslav assistance if any war with Germany broke out over the Sudeten German question. Given the well-known friendly relations which unite the Bulgarian Prime Minister and M. Stoyadinovich, it is logical to assume that M. St. is himself the authority for this information, which is perhaps designed to confirm other information from Belgrade."

Report of August 17 from the German Legation in Bucharest:<sup>52</sup>

"I am of the opinion—I may add in parenthesis—that then Yugoslavia would align herself with Rumania, and even that, should M. Stoyadinovich or Prince Paul try to oppose this—the opposition in Yugoslavia is powerful and political murder always possible—Yugoslavia would mobilize against Hungary.

In my opinion, therefore, it would be extremely advantageous for the localizing of such a conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia if Hungary's military aid, should this be necessary, were kept in reserve as long as possible."

<sup>48</sup> Document No. 406, p. 660.

<sup>49</sup> Document No. 198, p. 331.

<sup>50</sup> Not printed.

<sup>51</sup> Dr. Georgi Klosselvanoff, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, 1935-40.

<sup>52</sup> Document No. 363, p. 573.

9) *Hungary.*

Report of August 29 from the German Legation in Budapest:<sup>53</sup>

"M. Kanya thought that the Hungarians would fight even if the chances of success were only 60-70 percent. But they could not be expected to commit suicide.

There was little time for political discussions at Karinhall; one took place during a hunting expedition between the Regent and Field Marshal Göring, who had a few minutes' private conversation with M. Imredy after dinner.

Speaking of this talk, the Regent and the Hungarian Ministers told me that the former had said that it was urgently desirable that a possible armed quarrel with Czechoslovakia should be postponed until the spring at least, in view of the present weakness of the Hungarian Army, which was due to the fact that the creation of new formations within the framework of the rearmament program was only beginning. Field Marshal Göring showed full understanding for this point of view and declared that no date had as yet been fixed. He would also welcome a postponement from the German point of view and would use his influence toward this end. The Hungarians have initially accepted this statement with much relief but are under no great illusions in the matter. . . .

Mussolini's assurance that he would not permit a Yugoslav attack on Hungary, given during the last visit of the Hungarian Ministers to Rome, is not considered very significant here, as the Italians would then presumably have their main body of troops tied up on the French frontier, and an Italian offensive against Yugoslavia would soon be held up in the impassable country in the Karst mountains.

Von Ratz, the Minister for War, who elaborated in more detail Hungary's complaints about Germany's lack of cooperation in regard to the question of deliveries of war material, also said to me that the Hungarian Army would gladly take up arms as soon as possible after the possible outbreak of a German-Czech conflict, but that the exact moment depended upon the attitude of Yugoslavia."

## No. 437

139/125835

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 332 of September 7      PRAGUE, September 7, 1938—1:40 p.m.  
Received September 7, 1938—3 p.m.

In continuation of my telegram 314 of August 13.<sup>54</sup>

Italian Military Attaché reports that Rumania has accorded permission to Soviet Government to fly over Rumanian territory on condition that Rumanian Military Attaché in Prague is in each case

<sup>53</sup> Document No. 402, p. 651.

<sup>54</sup> Document No. 406, p. 660. The date August 13 must be an error for August 30.



informed in advance by the Czechoslovak General Staff of any transit flight and landing. Since conclusion of this agreement forty-five Russian airplanes are so far reported to have been flown across to Czechoslovakia.

HENCKE

No. 438

139/125844-45

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PRAGUE, September 7, 1938—10:44 p.m.

No. 335 of September 7

Received September 8, 1938—1 a.m.

In continuation of telegram 331 of September 6.<sup>55</sup>

1. New Government proposals submitted to Sudeten German Party today are on way by courier. Dr. Kier requests that proposals, with whose contents even Henlein is not yet acquainted, should be forwarded to Nuremberg as soon as possible.

2. Prime Minister received Sudeten German Party Deputies Kundt and Rosche this morning. Hodza stated it was evident to him that securing acceptance of eight Karlsbad demands was matter of prestige for Henlein. Prime Minister further declared that final drafting of text concerning self-administration was not yet complete, and suitable form of central administration of Germans in Republic must be found.

Sudeten German Party Deputies complained for their part about publication of Government proposals before their delivery to negotiating delegation, also about recent appointments of Czech magistrates in Sudeten German area. On last point Hodza stated matter could be settled to German advantage in process of carrying out proportionate allocation of official posts. Principle of irremovability of magistrates constituted no obstacle to their being able to apply for transfer on their own, justifiable, initiative. Arrests of Sudeten German Party members reported in telegram No. 334 of September 7<sup>55</sup> provided further subject for complaint.

3. This afternoon meeting of negotiating delegation held, with Frank presiding. Delegation was unanimously of the opinion that proposals, particularly after Hodza's supplementary statement, could not be turned down; on contrary, published form must be accepted. In Kier's opinion proposals included acceptance of eight Karlsbad

<sup>55</sup> Not printed.

demands in theory, realization of which was now dependent on how they would be carried out in practice.

4. As a result of Mährisch-Ostrau incidents,<sup>56</sup> when Sudeten German Party Deputy was roughly handled by mob, Sudeten German Party delegation has meanwhile decided to inform President and Prime Minister that it would have to break off negotiations until affair was cleared up. Decision was based on the fact that Government was clearly not sufficiently master of situation to begin profitable discussions with any prospect of success, or to conclude them undisturbed at present. Details of Mährisch-Ostrau incident reported by *Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro*.

5. Sudeten German Party delegation led by Frank called on Runciman this morning in order to report Mährisch-Ostrau incidents to him and inform him about interruption of negotiations. British observer, Major Sutton-Pratt, has gone to Mährisch-Ostrau to investigate.

6. Conversation between Kundt and Rosche and the Prime Minister regarding incidents is expected to be renewed this evening.

HENCKE

### No. 439

337/197254-56

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) to the German Foreign Ministry*<sup>57</sup>

Telegram

[No. 433]

PARIS, September 7 [, 1938].

Received September 8 [, 1938]—1 a.m.

Prime Minister Daladier asked me to call on him today and communicated the following to me: it had been reported to him from various quarters that a state of emergency (*état d'alerte*) had been declared in Germany. He was not clear about the term, "state of emergency," and wished to ask me whether I knew anything about the order and what the state of emergency meant in Germany. If he were to apply the *état d'alerte* to French conditions, the measures thereby involved would be very extensive and would approximate mobilization.

<sup>56</sup> German deputies had gone to Mährisch-Ostrau to investigate the arrest of eighty-three Sudeten Germans on charges of gunrunning and espionage. During their visit one was alleged to have been struck with a whip by a police officer.

<sup>57</sup> A covering note, attached when the telegram was passed to General Keitel, bears his initial against the date, September 8. The copy printed bears no number, but it is clear from the answer that it was No. 433.

This answer was based on Weizsäcker's marginal note; it was telephoned from Nuremberg and dispatched to Paris as telegram No. 406 on September 8 (337/197257).

I told Daladier in reply that the expression "state of emergency" [*Alarmzustand*] was not known to me as a technical expression for general military measures. Nor had I any kind of information from which it could be concluded that new factors had entered into the situation in Germany. At the same time I pointed out to M. Daladier that French measures of a military nature recently adopted were well known to us, and had hitherto given no grounds for anxiety or for further inquiries. At this Daladier let the reason for his inquiry become apparent, namely, that anxiety had been felt by French authorities because of the report of the alleged declaration of a state of emergency in Germany, and that demands for counter-measures might result from this, which he would wish to be avoided if at all possible on account of the danger involved.

In connection with this, Daladier expounded very emphatically opinions similar to those expressed by Bonnet in his conversation with the Ambassador on September 1.<sup>58</sup> He stressed particularly the terrible and calamitous consequences of a European war, and declared that, from experience gained in the Spanish and Chinese conflicts, a war lasts a long time and must lead to destruction on an inconceivable scale. After the end of a war, the outbreak of a revolution, irrespective of victors or vanquished, was as certain in France as in Germany and Italy. Soviet Russia would not let the opportunity pass of bringing world revolution to our lands, after the weakening of the European Continent. I pointed out in this respect that the situation was clearer than before, and that France only needed to show understanding for our national interests, in order to avoid the outbreak of a general conflict with the consequences described by him (Daladier). Daladier replied that in France there was complete understanding for our demands and there would be no opposition to their being achieved by peaceful means, but that the occasion of any armed intervention by Germany in Czechoslovakia would mean the application of the *casus foederis*, and with that a general armed conflict. On the other hand, the French people harbored absolutely no feelings of hatred for Germany but would, in the event of a peaceful solution of the Czech question, be completely won over, not only to accept the realization of German demands but also to tread the paths toward pacification and the possibility of agreement with Germany to the benefit of Europe.

There was no doubt about his own personal attitude toward Germany. For 20 years he had been striving for a settlement with Germany and had himself concluded the Four Power Pact, which he had advocated in the French Parliament against opposition even from

<sup>58</sup> See document No. 422, p. 682.

the ranks of his own friends. For the Führer he had particular understanding and respect. Thus he had listened yesterday to the broadcast of the Führer's speech in Nuremberg with some of his colleagues present. He completely subscribed to the Führer's declarations concerning agreement on mutual interests. The voice of the people was indeed of greater importance. But he was convinced that this necessitated peace on both sides of the frontier. Thereupon I once more explained our position duly apportioning the responsibility.

I should be grateful if I could be enabled to convince M. Daladier of the correctness of my assumption that fresh measures have not been adopted in Germany.

BRÄUER

[Marginal note by Weizsäcker:]

U. St. S.: The RM would like us to reply somewhat as follows:

We are in agreement with language held, but do not desire this conversation to be continued unnecessarily, especially as official inquiries would have to pass through Poncet's hands.

If necessary, B. could say he had received no evidence at all to suggest that his extemporized answer was inaccurate.

(The exchange of telegrams should be shown to General Keitel after dispatch in Nuremberg, since he is not here.) W. September 9.

### No. 440

337/197230-35

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

URGENT

PRAGUE, September 8, 1938.

SECRET

A. III. 2. h.

The leader of the Sudeten German Party negotiating delegation, Dr. Kundt, and his legal adviser, Dr. Kier, have each placed at my disposal an assessment, from the Sudeten German point of view, of the political situation which has been created by the latest Government proposal.

In enclosure (1) I have the honor to submit Deputy Kundt's memorandum, and in enclosure (2) that of Dr. Kier.

Because of the need for speed, I have sent a copy of this report, with enclosures, by safe hand to the Minister, Dr. Eisenlohr, in Nuremberg.

HENCKE

## [Enclosure 1]

An entirely new situation has been created by the new official Government proposal, instigated by Beneš and partially drawn up by him, which demands a speedy decision. Both from this proposal and also from statements by President Beneš and the Prime Minister, it can be assumed with comparative certainty that Beneš, as well as the Government, is endeavoring to come to a draft agreement with the Sudeten German Party, so as to demonstrate to world public opinion that the Government was going thus far in the interests of peace to accept and to realize in practice Konrad Henlein's eight Karlsbad demands, within the limits of the sovereignty, integrity, and unity of the State. What must therefore be taken into account is that the few but still very fundamental supplementary proposals by the Sudeten German Party to this draft agreement will be accepted eventually by the Government. If the Sudeten German Party does not wish to put itself, and thus also the German Reich, in the wrong, the Sudeten German Party must eventually accept such an agreement which, outwardly and in its essential content, covers the most important principles of the Karlsbad demands. Otherwise, Beneš and the Government will succeed in finding proof, credible to the less well-informed foreign countries, that the Sudeten German Party on instructions from the Reich was only pretending to strive for a peaceful solution, but that, in reality, it was aiming at the conquest of Czechoslovakia by the Reich, or at very least of the Bohemian and Moravian provinces, without regard to the very far-reaching concessions by the Czechs. Certainly Beneš and the Government took over from the Western Powers this scheme for settling the question of war guilt to the disadvantage of the German people, whereby perhaps certain politicians of the Western Powers also genuinely wish for a peaceful solution, so that they should not expose themselves and their countries to the dangers and sacrifices of war without serious reason for so doing. This aim of those Czechs and circles friendly to the Czechs, who wish to show up the German people in the question of war guilt, is, however, no less dangerous for the Czechs than it might be in certain circumstances for the Reich through tactical blunders by the Sudeten Germans. Beneš and, in particular, the Left Wing of the Czech Government, who are obliged to submit to momentary pressure by the Western Powers to go so far that they must accept the implementation of the Karlsbad demands within the framework of such an agreement, are nevertheless not definitely honest in their intentions. They hope to gain time and that they will find ways and means in its execution to evade an actual implementation of the eight Karlsbad demands. It must be assumed

with certainty that authoritative Czech politicians, particularly Beneš, are fully aware that, if such an agreement actually materializes, the Germans will acquire such a position within the Bohemian-Moravian area, in conjunction with the encircling of this area by the greater German Reich and full cooperation between Sudeten German and Reich German forces made possible by the treaty, that though the State remains in form a sovereign, independent, and to a certain extent unified State, enclosed by State frontiers, in practice it will come, in a very short space of time, not only to economic and intellectual, but also diplomatic and military subjection. By the realization of such an agreement, the State would become so impotent that it could henceforth neither be a stronghold of the Czech people nor a powerful weapon for other Great Powers to use against the Reich. As this is quite obvious to the Czech politicians, whose cunning and clear-sightedness, particularly in the case of Beneš, should by no means be underestimated, there is here the certain possibility that within a few weeks, within 3 months at the most, during the working out of the legal basis for the formulation and realization of the agreement, it will be proved to the world that Beneš and his Government once more intend to continue in the main the post-1918 policy, merely by means of new trickery. This proof appears to be urgently necessary for the most varied reasons, in view of the European situation revolving round the Czechoslovak question, since this Government proposal, which has given Beneš a certain advantage. Even though analogies from history are always a little off the mark, yet it seems necessary to demonstrate to world public opinion the dishonesty of the man Beneš, as we succeeded in doing in the case of the more clumsy stupidity of Schuschnigg, in such a way that the Western Powers were no longer prepared to take up arms for such a politician. The situation would be more dangerous still if such an agreement, which could enable the Sudeten German Party to demonstrate this, did not materialize, and if furthermore—what is already in preparation—Lord Runciman came forward with a British proposal which certainly would not be part of the Government proposal. Firstly, the fact that Lord Runciman's mission would thereby only properly assume real political significance, and also the fact that British prestige would thereby establish the British in the Central European region on the lines envisaged by certain British politicians, would make political intervention by the Reich more difficult; if an agreement were reached between the Czech Government and the Sudeten German Party and were implemented within a short time, the fact that the Czechs were again leading international public opinion astray would be exposed without direct British participa-

tion. There is therefore some justification for believing that, by accepting a valid agreement, the Bohemia-Moravia-Silesia area would either come unobtrusively under the exclusive influence of the Reich, or that, on the sudden violation of this agreement by the Czechs, there would remain the possibility of a solution by other means. The latter solution would only be facilitated to a certain extent by this. Anyone fully acquainted with Czech psychology, the materialistic outlook of authoritative Czech circles, and the obstinacy of the General Staff officers, which has been aggravated by Moscow to the point of blindness, may assume with comparative certainty that, at the latest, at the moment when the implementing measures come into force and the legal implementation of the agreement by Parliament must be decided upon, the present political plan of Beneš and the Government is doomed to failure in the eyes of their own people, even if it is meant in all sincerity. It is only a question of whether the respite which can be granted to the Sudeten German Party is a few months at the most, in spite of the gravity of the situation, and whether this would cause the Sudeten Germans to lose their nerve, which would be decisive in either case; alternatively, are the Sudeten German collaborators of Konrad Henlein, concerned with it, confident that they can still accomplish this task for National Socialist Germany from now on as well? I believe that the latter point, namely whether or not this time can be allowed to the Sudeten German Party, can only be decided by the Führer!

Such a decision will, however, be necessary within a few days, as otherwise the Sudeten German Party delegation and, thereby, the Sudeten German Party and the Reich too will waste important days, which might put us more easily in the wrong.

KUNDT

[Enclosure 2]

*The situation created by the second offer.*

Aim and motive of the second Government offer must, in view of the present situation and information to hand, be found in the following three possibilities:

- 1) It has materialized as a result of pressure from Britain and France, who have caused the Czech Government to *realize* that such an offer is necessary.
- 2) Under pressure from Britain and France, *made under duress* by the Czechs, with the intention of getting over the period until the middle of October, regarded by the Czechs as a dangerous time, by means of *bluff*.
- 3) Under pressure from Britain and France, but with *their agreement*, solely as an expedient, to get over the dangerous period.

At the same time it must be considered whether there is not the intention on the British side to test whether an agreement with the Reich (even if only indirectly) can be reached in any way, or whether the Reich is only (indirectly) making sham offers, which it never seriously intends to carry out.

It must be the unequivocal *aim* of Sudeten German policy to make sure that Czechoslovakia should not be an available tool in the hands of the Reich's enemies, and to achieve this by every means at their disposal. If this proved possible by a sterilizing process, then this opportunity must not on any account be wasted.

Guiding principle for Sudeten German conduct has been strictly laid down, to follow at all costs that course which gives the surest guarantee that *every possibility* will remain open.

The following situation therefore arises:

1) *In event of rejection:*

- a) Strongest support from Britain and France for the Czechs.
- b) The Czech people united behind the Government.
- c) Removal of all dissension in the Czech Government camp.
- d) No new *point de départ* for the Sudeten Germans and elimination of all possibilities of a solution, not involving the use of force.

2) *In event of acceptance:*

- a) The State undoubtedly greatly weakened.
- b) Great difficulties for the Government with the Czech people and increase in internal Czech differences.
- c) Extraordinary difficulties in necessary negotiations in the Parliament.

As a result those chances again emerge which present the Sudeten German Party sooner or later with every opportunity for a solution.

The question now is *whether* the offer is *acceptable*. This can be *answered in the affirmative* in view of the statements made by Prime Minister Hodza since, particularly under pressure from the Mährisch-Ostrau incidents, the complete realization of the eight points is attainable in a very short time, and since, moreover, there can be no doubt that, by reaching an agreement, there would be adequate opportunities of demonstrating to the Czechs the nonobservance of their pledges.

Even on examination of the three alternatives listed at the beginning, irrespective of which alternative proves correct, acceptance is certainly preferable to rejection. Even in the unlikely event of a *complete realization* of the eight points, there is no danger in acceptance, since by skillful carrying out of this policy by the Sudeten German Party, disregarding of course direct external consequences, the power of the State can be completely undermined from within.



If the power potential of the Reich, which will be available to its full extent in the next 5 weeks, is now fully utilized, the course of negotiations must in all circumstances be accelerated, so that at the end of this period either the bad faith of the opposing side is unequivocally demonstrated, or those fundamental new regulations are adhered to, in principle at least, which constitutes the aim of the eight points.

Delaying tactics could not therefore be in any way in the interests of the Sudeten German Party.

## No. 441

139/125861-82

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PRAGUE, September 8, 1938—10:50 p.m.

No. 339 of September 8

Received September 9, 1938—1:30 a.m.

In continuation of telegram No. 335 of September 7.<sup>59</sup>

1) Prince Max Hohenlohe had conversations yesterday and today with K. H. Frank and other Sudeten German politicians and also with Ashton-Gwatkin, which yield following picture:

a) Frank described new Government proposal as very far-reaching. It would mean about 90 percent acceptance of Karlsbad demands. Dr. Rosche and Dr. Schickedanz, members of negotiating delegation, had even spoken of 95 percent. To this would be added supplement dealing with self-administration, mentioned yesterday to Sudeten German Party delegation by Prime Minister. After settlement of Mährisch-Ostrau incidents, Sudeten German Party sees for the present no possibility of refusing acceptance of Government proposal and avoiding negotiations for its implementation.

Sudeten German Party is aware that in practice implementation would produce considerable difficulties, in view of Czech mentality. Also it would not be easy to obtain majority in Parliament in favor of acceptance of appropriate laws, although Government has already prepared means of bringing influence to bear to this end—clearly also of a financial nature. In these circumstances it would be of importance to insist, after possible acceptance of Government proposal, on immediate implementation of practical measures by Czechoslovak Government.

b) Ashton-Gwatkin gave it as his opinion that new Government proposals closely approximated Karlsbad demands. Latter could be

<sup>59</sup> Document No. 438, p. 711.

fully met, with some additions to be achieved by means of negotiation. British and French Governments would not allow Czechoslovak Government to make difficulties over its implementation. Should Czechoslovak Government not fulfill their pledges in practice, Britain would regard herself as being under no obligation. Moreover, British are conscious that success of negotiations was not Runciman's achievement, who almost suffered a nervous collapse the day before yesterday, but must be attributed primarily to German military measures.

2) Mährisch-Ostrau incident not yet settled. Government statement is expected tomorrow. Prime Minister's offer to set free eleven Sudeten German prisoners was rejected by Sudeten German Party as inadequate.

Ashton-Gwatkin told Prince Hohenlohe that Major Sutton-Pratt was still in Mährisch-Ostrau. British Mission hoped that chief of police in Mährisch-Ostrau, who has a bad reputation, would be removed. They had received news from Government that policeman who had struck Sudeten German Party Deputy May<sup>60</sup> had been reduced in rank.

In this connection Ashton-Gwatkin referred to British press reports, which expressed suspicion that incident was an intrigue by Frank, who wished by this means to sabotage German-Czech agreement at the last moment. Without expressing any opinion on the facts reported in the press, Ashton-Gwatkin remarked that British Mission would regard it as extreme provocation, if Sudeten German Party were to take advantage of blunders by Czechoslovak police to sabotage discussions. Frank was almost solely responsible for maintenance of peace.

3) Hope to be able to telegraph tonight more detailed account of Sudeten German legal opinion on Government proposals.<sup>61</sup>

HENCKE

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<sup>60</sup> Cf. footnote 56, p. 712.

<sup>61</sup> See document No. 442, *infra*.

## No. 442

337/197238-41

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 340

PRAGUE, September 8 [, 1938].

In continuation of telegram No. 339 of September 8.<sup>62</sup>

Resolution of Sudeten German Party negotiating delegation, approved by K. H. Frank, on most recent Government proposal, reads as follows:

"New Government bill deals with all essential demands which were raised at Karlsbad. Formulation is based to considerable extent on our counterproposal to Beneš.

1) In text of draft protocol three of these demands are either inadequate or vague.

a) Equality of rights and status for German national group in the legislative organization of the State, and its inclusion in State administration, are not mentioned. (Our demand was Diet system in National Assembly and incorporation of leaders of self-administrative body in central Government.)

b) Legal personality of national group is not expressly recognized as such, but only indirectly by reference to fundamental rights, nationality, and collective interests.

c) Absolute recognition of settlement area only accorded with restrictive proviso, which is capable of wide interpretation.

2) Spirit [*Psyche*] of national self-administration to be established unsatisfactory, because national self-administration would have to be shared among districts [*Gaue*] having no legal connection with one another, and no central organs provided for individual nationalities. There is certainly some mention of granting a legal norm to this self-administration. It is not, however, clear whether the expression should also include actual rights to legislate on competency of self-administration, or whether this expression was chosen in deference to press as matter of prestige.

Setting up of central authorities for national self-administration is, however, essential, as also verbally recognized by Prime Minister Hodza. Division of responsibilities between State and self-administration only formulated in general terms. Text is partly based on our proposal.

3) Text of remaining points contains some reservations, which can be interpreted in an elastic manner.

Question of State police in German area dealt with as in our version, therefore proposal satisfactory. Also actual complaints in supplementary protocol satisfactorily formulated to a certain extent,

<sup>62</sup> Document No. 441, *supra*.

but need to be amplified, in matter of amnesty in political criminal procedure and arrests.

General impression: If vague wording completely eliminated, additions and amplifications mentioned here are inserted by law and corresponding effective guarantee, draft can be regarded from legal aspect as theoretically suitable basis for agreement in form and principle, in order to assist realization of eight Karlsbad demands and thereby attainment of aim within formal framework of State.

In view of 20 years' experience, exceptional difficulties must certainly be reckoned with in subsequent discussions on implementation when drafting implementing laws [*Durchführungsgesetze*] and amendments to them."

Negotiating delegation requests onward transmission by telegram to Nuremberg of above resolution, intended only for internal use.

HENCKE

### No. 443

139/125884-85

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 406 of September 8

LONDON, September 8, 1938.

Received September 9, 1938—10:10 a.m.

Last paragraph of yesterday's *Times* article<sup>63</sup> caused great sensation in London. General opinion that idea of cession of Sudetenland to Germany, to prevent threat of world war, inspired by Government. Foreign Office denied this view first in press conference at midday and then in evening in form of official statements. Statement says:

" . . . that a suggestion appearing in *The Times* this morning to the effect that the Czechoslovak Government might consider as an alternative to their present proposals the occasion [*sic*] of the fringe of alien population in their territory in no way represents the views of His Majesty's Government."<sup>64</sup>

<sup>63</sup> *The Times* on September 7 published a leading article containing the following passage: "It might be worth while for the Czechoslovak Government to consider whether they should exclude altogether the project, which has found favor in some quarters, of making Czechoslovakia a more homogeneous State by the secession of that fringe of alien populations who are contiguous to the nation with which they are united by race. . . . The advantages to Czechoslovakia of becoming a homogeneous State might conceivably outweigh the obvious disadvantages of losing the Sudeten German district of the borderland."

Cuttings of the leading articles of September 7, 8, and 9 and the article by the diplomatic correspondent of September 8 were sent by Kordt to the Foreign Ministry as despatch No. A 3800 of September 10 (2369/494925-30).

<sup>64</sup> The quotation is in English in the original.

Latter official *démenti* was result of direct intervention by Masaryk, Czechoslovak Minister here, who twice called at the Foreign Office for this purpose.

*Daily Telegraph* and leading provincial papers attack *Times*, particularly on grounds that Sudeten German attitude would be stiffened by *The Times* article.

According to reliable information, *Times* article was certainly not inspired by the Foreign Office. The possibility exists, however, that it derives from a suggestion which reached *The Times* editorial staff from the Prime Minister's entourage. Supporting this view is fact that *Times*, in today's leading article, "The Threat of Force," maintains its opinion, even though in less pronounced form.

TH. KORDT

#### No. 444

139/125897

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) and the Naval Attaché of the German Embassy in France (Marwitz) to the German Foreign Ministry for the Kriegsmarine*

Telegram

No. 435 of September 9

PARIS, September 9, 1938.

Received September 9, 1938—8:55 p.m.

Italian Naval Attaché communicates from allegedly reliable source: French Mediterranean Squadron has recalled men on leave and brought crews up to war strength. All fortifications on Mediterranean coast and Corsica are manned. Construction of more batteries in progress, reinforcing of garrisons on the Italian frontier confirmed. Similar measures for Atlantic Fleet and Atlantic coast are probable, but not so far confirmed.

MARWITZ  
BRÄUER

## No. 445

139/125892

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Rumania (Stelzer) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 174 of September 9

BUCHAREST, September 9, 1938—7 p.m.  
Received September 9, 1938—9:30 p.m.Reference 188 (Pol. IV 5875) of September 7.<sup>65</sup>

Prague report confirmed by agent here. Rumanian General Staff has agreed to air transport of Soviet Russian aircraft over Rumania on condition that Rumanian Military Attaché in Prague checks that neither arms nor photographic apparatus are carried, when Russian aircraft land. On strength of this agreement, 650 Russian aircraft in all have been delivered.

Commission composed of members of Czech General Staff is at present in Moscow to arrange delivery of a further 300 aircraft.

STELZER

[Penciled note referring to the figure 650 above:] R.K.M. [War Ministry] considers this figure too high and estimates it as 300 at most.

## No. 446

139/125893-96

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 344 of September 9

PRAGUE, September 9, 1938—10:44 p.m.  
Received September 10, 1938—1:30 a.m.In continuation of telegram 340 of September 8.<sup>65a</sup>

1) Sudeten German Party expects that by the fulfillment of concrete demands put forward by them the incident at Mährisch-Ostrau will be cleared up by the Czech Government today.

2) If this is so, the Sudeten German Party delegation intends to propose to the Prime Minister that negotiations be resumed on September 13. At the talks a statement by Hodza on the practical working out of self-administration is expected.

In reply to the last Government proposal, the Sudeten German Party delegation has drawn up a new version of draft which will

<sup>65</sup> Not printed.<sup>65a</sup> Document No. 422, p. 721.

probably be handed to the Government on September 13. Draft follows by courier.<sup>66</sup>

3) Original intention of Government here was to publish complete text of last Government proposals. Such procedure would be contrary to agreements between President and Kundt, in which publication was provided for only after final agreement had been reached. Hodza now gave an assurance that only an extract was to be announced to the public.

4) According to statement by the Prime Minister, the radio address by the President, expected tomorrow, will not deal with questions of foreign policy, but will merely be a peaceful exhortation to the people as a whole.

5) Prime Minister today asked Kundt whether the Sudeten German Party would be prepared to guarantee peace and order in the Sudeten German area with their own forces, as (group missing) after the Austrian *Anschluss*. Kundt answered that this would only be possible if uniformed Sudeten German irregulars assumed the functions of the police. Hodza expressed no opinion on this.

6) In the last few days the Runciman Mission has receded very much into the background; an active part is now played only by Ashton-Gwatkin, who told Prince Max Hohenlohe that Lord Runciman himself was no longer studying the situation, and was annoyed by the methods of negotiation of both parties. He thought that it was Lord Runciman's urgent desire to return to London as soon as possible. If so desired, Prince Hohenlohe thinks he has an opportunity to force the Runciman Mission to decide on a speedy departure.

7) A Communist riot is expected in Prague tonight. Police have taken extensive precautions.

HENCKE

### No. 447

2369/494980-81

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

#### MINUTE

(Pol. IV §217)

The Rumanian Minister called on me today because he said he would presumably not be able to contact the Reich Minister. The Minister said he came on instructions of his Foreign Minister with whom he had recently spoken in Bucharest. According to him the Rumanian Government has exerted strong pressure in Prague to make the Czech Government adopt a conciliatory attitude toward the

\* Not printed (139/125872-80).

Sudeten Germans. The Minister ascribes a part of the merit for the present Czech proposals to his own Government.

For the rest the Minister commented on the presumable course of German military action against Czechoslovakia. According to him international Jewry would see this as a signal for launching a general agitation against Germany, in which the Jews would succeed as far as the Western Powers were concerned. There was no fear of anything similar occurring in Yugoslavia, and Rumania, too, would do her best not to be involved. It was in the most vital interest of his country that Russia should be prevented from interfering via Rumanian territory. In this connection Rumania was at one with Poland.

However, the Minister continued, the position would become critical if Hungary took a hand. Yet very definite information from Hungary made it clear that Hungary would keep quiet. The only case that might be anticipated was a possible use of Hungarian territory by German troops. Whether this would mean a *casus foederis* for Rumania was a question upon which the lawyers could not agree. The Minister asked me to give him a declaration that we would not force Hungary to take up arms, neither would we make use of her territory.

I told the Minister not to concern himself with such theoretical matters but to concentrate on the fact already known to him that the friendship between Germany and Hungary was a true one; nevertheless, we did not give instructions to the independent Hungarian State. The Minister acknowledged that Imredy, too, had recently said much the same thing to him.

I answered a further question from the Minister as to whether we would demand a plebiscite in the Sudeten German area by saying that up to the present the German Government had not demanded anything of that nature, as they had not interfered with the negotiations in any way. However, should the idea of a plebiscite come to the fore it would doubtless find favor with us.

WEIZSÄCKER

NUREMBERG, September 9, 1938.



## No. 448

C34/000330-38

*Manuscript Notes by Hitler's Adjutant (Schmundt) on Conference at Nuremberg*<sup>67</sup>

TOP SECRET, MILITARY

CONFERENCE, NUREMBERG, SEPTEMBER 9-10, 1938, 10 P.M.—3:30 A.M.

Present: The Führer

General von Brauchitsch

General Halder

General Keitel

Major Schmudt

Captain Engel

Captain von Below

**GENERAL HALDER:** States reasons for operational plan "Green."  
**Task:** To prevent retreat of Cz. Army from Moravia-Bohemia area. To beat army. To bring about rapid decision.

Task can be accomplished by pincer attack in the direction of Olmütz and Brünn, to be undertaken by 2d and 14th Armies. Difficult transport situation in Austria, therefore main effort in 2d Army area.

Cz. frontier can only be lightly held. Withdrawal certain on part of Cz. forces. Several defensive lines favored by terrain will delay secondary thrusts and allow time for a Cz. withdrawal, and thus hold the central districts. This must be prevented. The Bohemian-Moravian heights which will confront the attacker in the last phase will favor probable Cz. tactics.

The pincer attack makes a "rear attack" from behind these heights possible.

This operation will definitely succeed.

Reserves at first mainly local. Further reserves near and south of Prague. Opponent cannot collect further reserves.

Opponent does not possess concentrated armored forces. They are dispersed and consist of light units.

*2d Army.* Weaknesses opposite its sector recognized. Fortifications only partly completed. Mostly lack armored cupolas. There are great gaps.

Oppa is no obstacle; can be crossed by tanks as well as infantry. No armored forces opposing. Freudenthal only 35 men garrison? So-called light motorized forces on right flank are no danger. They consist partly of mounted units and will be engaged by adjoining

<sup>67</sup> From the Schmudt file (Nuremberg document 388-PS). For Operation "Green," see footnote 54, p. 239.

army. Were the attack, against expectations, to fail, then under no circumstances "bleed to death" before the position.

Deployment must be flexible. Rear formations will then be brought up to points where success has been achieved.

Cz. fears the Glaz mountain area. Only demonstrations to be staged in this area, to pin down Cz. forces.

To provide cover eastward, tanks will be valuable.

On the rest of the mountain front: IVth Corps and frontier defensive sector, demonstrations must be staged to pin down forces.

*12th and 14th Armies* will work together. Their columns must necessarily support one another during the advance and cause front to collapse.

Bohemia only weakly held on frontier: 1 div. to 120 kms. Operation therefore promising.

After advance in northerly direction, 12th Army swings east and "races" for Brünn.

The enemy will not be able to employ reserves according to plan.

*10th Army* faces Pilsen switch line which is strongly fortified. Bad roads. Tanks must break through here and secure bridgeheads for following-up forces. Forces of next wave will be brought up by mechanized transport troops.

After the 3d and 4th mobilization day, 6 further divs. will be brought up to 2d and 3d line and can be employed where success is in the balance.

**THE FÜHRER:** We should not base our plans of operation on wishful thinking, but on the probable course of action pursued by the enemy.

With regard to his course of action two factors are decisive:

1) At the time of our rearmament between 1934 and 1938, our opponent must have endeavored to secure himself against a cutting of west-east communications, therefore probably between Troppau and Nikolsburg. Against us, therefore, by means of fortifications on the Upper Silesian frontier. In the South, an agreement with Austria would achieve a defense north of the Danube, or an advance to the Danube to protect the southern flank.

2) The latter is no longer possible. Therefore, as a result of the situation created in March 1938, it is all the more probable that they have increased their fortifications opposite our 2d Army. The enemy must hold there—otherwise there is no sense in holding the remaining front. Hence here the best regiments and fortifications are to be expected. Holding of the front facing the 2d Army will decide the fate of Czechoslovakia.

There is no doubt that the planned pincer movement is the most desirable solution and should take place. But its success is nevertheless too uncertain for it to be depended on. Especially as a rapid success is necessary from a political point of view. The first week is politically decisive, within which a far-reaching territorial gain must be achieved.

Our artillery (21-cm. howitzers) not adequate against the fortifications. Where an attack is expected the element of surprise is ruled out.

Besides, from experience it is difficult to abandon an action which achieves only partial success. More and more units are thrown into breaches and "bleeding to death," which must be avoided, sets in. (Verdun!!) Tanks are used up and are not available for the subsequent operation to gain territory. The consequence is that motorized divisions have to advance without tanks. ("Tables turned!")

Also the objectives of the motorized units are not far enough ahead and can be gained without fighting, so that they could be equally well gained by the infantry.

The motorized divs. will not be able to influence a decision substantially.

It is the task of motorized forces to cross areas free of the enemy. Where an attack has opened up a large free space, their employment is justified. Compare the use of army cavalry whose swan song came at the beginning of the 1914 war.

It is catastrophic for tanks to have to stop and wait for infantry. This contradicts all laws of logic.

In the 14th Army sector fortifications can only have been begun since March, hence thrust toward Brünn will be easier. 2d Armored Div. can therefore be left there. However, this division should operate with 29th (Mot.) Div. Therefore the 29th must not arrive on the evening of the 2d day. The 2d Armored Div. must constitute the advance column of the 29th (Mot.) Div. Are the road conditions suitable for the 29th?

The 13th Div., which has no prospects of success as a mot. div. with the 12th Army, is to be transferred to Reichenau's Army together with the 2d (Mot.) Div.

Thus two chances for victory will be created.

If pincer movement has no success, 10th Army will open way for 12th Army, bringing strong forces into the heart of the country. If both operations are successful, this means the end of Czechoslovakia.

In place of the two mot. divisions it is preferable to mobilize two further divisions which are to be brought up in lorries and busses.

For the 10th Army, a turn northeast toward Prague may become necessary.

GEN. v. BRAUCHITSCH: Employment of mot. divs. was based on difficult rail situation in Austria and difficulties of bringing up other divs. (ready to march) at the right time.

In the west, vehicles will have to leave on September 20, if X-day remains as planned.

Workers leave on the 23d by relays. Specialist workers remain according to decision by Army Command 2.

THE FÜHRER: Doesn't see why workers have to return home as early as X-11. Other workers and people are also on the way on mobilization day. Also the railway wagons, they will stand around unnecessarily afterward.

GENERAL KEITEL: Workers are not under the jurisdiction of district commands [*Bezirks-Kdos.*] in the West.

Trains must be marshaled.

GEN. v. B.: 235,000 men (Labor Service) will be called up. 96 Constructions Bns. will be distributed (also in the East). 40,000 trained men stay in the West.

THE FÜHRER: Trained men should be distributed among newly formed 2d line divs.

GEN. v. B.: Will be investigated. Implies change of mobilization orders. War orders already in hands of the people.

GENERAL CONSTRUCTION INSPECTOR DR. TODT: (brought in later!) Delays in unloading of material through slow changeover in railway timetable only from September 15.

Transports must have moved off by X-11.

Air defense zone to be in rear of infantry zones.

Construct battery positions.

Certified correct.

SCHMUNDT

Major, General Staff

## No. 449

1613/387045

*An Official of Political Division IV in the German Foreign Ministry  
(Altenburg) to the German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia  
(Hencke)*

SECRET

BERLIN, September 10, 1938.

By courier on September 12

(Pol. I 2111 g)

DEAR HENCKE: Very many thanks for your interesting letter, A. III. 2. h., of the 6th of this month.<sup>68</sup> Unfortunately, I could not answer it immediately, as in the meantime I was in Nuremberg and only got back yesterday. For the same reason, I was unable to telephone to tell you that my idea of coming to Prague would have to be given up. I must thank you heartily for all your friendly intentions toward me and still have some hope that a visit may be possible.

As for the conversations in question, the information which we have received here sounds less cheerful or, if you prefer, more positive. It is, however, terribly difficult to write anything on these matters and therefore I do not think it right of Frank to refer you for information to the Foreign Ministry when he well knows that you have not yet been informed and that, by the very nature of things, you can hardly have received anything in writing. We have arranged matters here between the Foreign Ministry, the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*, and Bürger, that whoever is the first to get any news at once passes it on to the others. Herr Frank might easily have done the same, particularly as there are definite instructions for the Party always to keep the Legation informed of what is going on. Since this is a matter of primary importance, it might be perhaps a good thing for you to discuss it once more with Frank. For it is precisely now in these days of special difficulty that we have a duty to work together to the fullest extent.

I heard today by telephone from Nuremberg that K. H. is in bed with a temperature, but has given his sanction to the Sudeten German attitude to Beneš' latest proposal, as it has been reported in the German Press.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

A[LTENBURG]

<sup>68</sup> Document No. 435, p. 701.

## No. 450

139/125911-12

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

LONDON, September 10, 1938—3:30 p.m.

TOP SECRET

Received September 10, 1938—4:45 p.m.

No. 407 of September 10

To be forwarded to Reich Minister immediately.

Have learned following from absolutely unimpeachable source:

Concerning Halifax conversation yesterday with French Ambassador Corbin: Corbin began conversation with observation that well-known *Times* article<sup>69</sup> was extraordinarily inopportune. To this Halifax replied with much gravity that, from a purely tactical point of view, he was of the same opinion. He was nevertheless obliged to inform the French Ambassador that it was impossible for an Anglo-Saxon nation to take up arms in order to prevent the fulfillment by means of a plebiscite of the right to self-determination of a nation of 3,461,000 people. Such a course of action would be contrary to the highest principles which the Anglo-Saxon peoples wished to see guiding their destiny.

Ambassador Corbin thereupon replied that the French Government shared this view completely. Nor would France take up arms in order to prevent a national group, highly developed morally and intellectually, from exercising the right to self-determination. However, this resolution was only valid on one condition: France would never allow her Czechoslovak ally to be forcibly attacked. Should Germany make such an attempt, France would in all circumstances fulfill her treaty obligations with all the forces at her disposal. Lord Halifax thereupon confirmed that the views of the French and British Governments coincided on all points: France could count on British armed assistance in the event of armed action by Germany against Czechoslovakia.

KORDT

<sup>69</sup> See document No. 443, p. 722 and footnote 63 thereto.

## No. 451

139/125913-15

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) and the Naval Attaché (Siemens) to the German Foreign Ministry, the War Ministry, and the Naval High Command*

## Telegram

VERY URGENT

LONDON, September 10, 1938—5:53 p.m.

No. 408 of September 10

Received September 10, 1938—7:40 p.m.

Also for War Ministry, Supreme Command of the Navy, M. Att. To be forwarded to Reich Minister immediately.

In continuation of telegraphic report 403 of September 8.<sup>70</sup>

In view of the announcements in the morning press, I called this morning, after consultation with Chargé d'Affaires, on Rear Admiral Troup, head of the Admiralty Intelligence Service,<sup>71</sup> who received me in absence of Admiral James<sup>71a</sup> (head of the Operations Division actually concerned). I first of all asked Admiral Troup whether press report of mobilization of British Fleet was correct. Troup replied that this report was correct in regard to mine sweepers and mine layers. On my inquiring about the reason for these measures, Troup pointed to general European situation. I thereupon replied that Great Britain was in no way threatened. I could assure him officially that similar steps had not been taken by the German *Kriegsmarine*. Troup then replied that Great Britain felt herself threatened as a result of the uncertain situation in Central Europe.

To my further question whether the above-mentioned measures constituted the only mobilization measures that had been taken by the British Admiralty, Troup answered "Yes." I thereupon replied with these words: "Then I can inform our Admiralty that these are the *only* measures?" To which Troup: "You put me in a hard position with this report of yours." I answered: "If the British Admiralty calls up the naval reserve, it is such a serious step that I must ask this question." To which Troup: "I am no diplomat. I must first make inquiries and make sure whether I can give you any further information."

He thereupon asked me to leave him alone for 10 minutes.

On resuming the conversation, he stated that the measures mentioned were the only ones that the Admiralty had taken up to that time. I thereupon asked him the further question: "Why has the aircraft carrier *Royal Oak* and the Fourth Destroyer Flotilla put

<sup>70</sup> Not printed.

<sup>71</sup> Rear Admiral J. A. G. Troup, Director of Naval Intelligence, 1935-1939.

<sup>71a</sup> Admiral Sir William James, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff, 1935-1939.

to sea bound for Portland, and not for Scapa Flow as planned!"<sup>12</sup> One must assume from this that it means a further stage of mobilization." Troup thereupon replied that the Admiralty had made public the reason for this in the newspapers (the ships had new commanders and new crews on board and had to undergo exercises). I thereupon answered: "This statement is designed for public use. You must give me, as a naval officer, a more plausible explanation." Troup replied that no further mobilization measures had been taken up to that time. He could not give me any further information.

At the end of the conversation I asked Admiral Troup whether, if he were in my position, he would not regard these measures as a threat to Germany. The Admiral thereupon replied: "I can only repeat that these measures are the result of the situation in Central Europe." Conversation ended at 1:15.

SIEMENS  
KORDT

### No. 452

139/125917-18

*Counselor of Legation Selzam of the German Embassy in Great Britain to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 409 of September 10

LONDON, September 10, 1938.

Whole London and provincial press represents political situation today—clearly from official information—as extremely grave. It gives expression throughout to supposition that Führer incorrectly informed about attitude of British Government and public opinion, and that Government was deliberating on suitable method of defining more clearly than hitherto British attitude toward Germany. Numerous papers, particularly those of Left Wing, demand immediate declaration to this effect.

Whole press agrees unanimously that Czech proposals to Sudeten Germans are extremely far reaching and that attitude of Czech Government gives no justification whatsoever for German action by force. Whole press further leaves no doubt that Britain could not remain neutral in such an event. Even *Daily Mail* and *Daily Express* have abandoned hitherto dissenting attitude. *Daily Mail* declares in today's leading article that whole country stands firm behind Government.

<sup>12</sup> *The Times* reported these fleet movements on September 7, 1938. H.M.S. *Royal Oak*, the battleship (not aircraft carrier), was involved.



British public opinion is accordingly reckoning with the possibility of a war. It is convinced that, after serious loss of prestige during the last few years, Britain could not allow unilateral German action by force against Czechoslovakia. It considers the security and freedom of the Empire would be threatened if Britain did not give active assistance to Czechoslovakia and France in this event.

SELZAM

## No. 453

139/125908-09

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in the United States (Thomsen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

WASHINGTON, September 10, 1938—12:02 p.m.

No. 245 of September 10 Received September 10, 1938—10 p.m.

American Government has clearly been striving during last few days to quell war psychosis existing here. Opinion prematurely expressed in the press that American intervention in European conflict is certainly to be expected is beginning to make Government uneasy, since it is anxious to maintain peace and preserve its own freedom of action. President yesterday inveighed at press conference against newspapers which had misinterpreted his own statements on the foreign political situation, implying that a kind of alliance existed between America and democracies "to stop Hitler." Even if one recognizes that Roosevelt's statements, like those of Hull,<sup>73</sup> have substantially contributed to the trend of American public opinion, President's attitude nevertheless shows that America is doing nothing rashly, pouring no oil on the fire, but does, however, wish to gain time. One can interpret in this sense *démenti* by Ambassador Bullitt<sup>74</sup> who, in statement now being spread by Stefani agency and particularly stressed by President, denies having made declaration on occasion of speech in Bordeaux: "United States Government stands with France in war as in peace." Move made by Hearst<sup>75</sup> to discuss question of Sudeten German plebiscite is also surprising. Suggestion was certainly denied with usual righteous indignation, but idea is gaining ground that speedy solution of Czechoslovak problem is preferable to prolonged crisis. Internal structure of Czech State appears here to be so much weakened by union of Sudeten Germans, Hungarians, Poles, and Slovaks against Prague, that

<sup>73</sup> Secretary of State, 1933-1944.

<sup>74</sup> William C. Bullitt, American Ambassador in Paris, 1936-1940.

<sup>75</sup> William Randolph Hearst, editor and proprietor of leading American newspapers in New York, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

Czech State can no longer exercise in the future the function intended for it on its formation.

In spite of this, basic outlook of American foreign policy has not changed. If, in the event of German intervention in Czechoslovakia, Great Britain and France attack Germany, America will be found on their side.

THOMSEN

No. 454

2369/494937-40

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium (Bergen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

VERY URGENT

BRUSSELS, September 10, 1938.

A 939

(Pol. II 2793)

Subject: Conversation with the Premier, M. Spaak.

POLITICAL REPORT

As already reported elsewhere, I had a rather lengthy conversation yesterday evening with the Premier, M. Spaak, about the political situation. In the first place I explained the German standpoint on the Czechoslovak question to the Premier as it had been laid down in various instructions of the Foreign Ministry, and followed this up with a question as to how the Belgian Government judged the situation, and what might be their attitude toward things.

M. Spaak declared that he considered the situation to be very serious; Europe found herself in a grave crisis. If it came to a conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia, he did not think it would be possible to keep it localized. He had, however, not yet given up hope that a way out of the Czechoslovak problem would in the end be found and war would be avoided. As to the attitude of the Belgian Government, nothing had altered. Belgian policy had repeatedly been declared by him so unequivocally and clearly, that no further comment was needed. The policy of independence must now bear its fruits. King and Government had always emphasized that they wished to remain outside any conflict, and they would act accordingly. The struggle about the Sudeten Germans therefore did not in reality affect Belgium; it was a matter which did not concern Belgium. If it should come to a war of the Western Powers against Germany, the Belgian Government felt secure through the guarantee declarations of the three great neighbor States, and hoped to be able to maintain her neutrality.

Regarding possible military security measures, M. Spaak confirmed the statement made to me by Baron van Zuylen<sup>76</sup> a few days ago (cf. my report of the 7th instant—A 924<sup>77</sup>). He added, however, that in view of extensive military preparations by Germany and France, Belgium was in a very difficult position, because she must be prepared to resist a potential attack. This remark suggests that the Belgian Government is, after all, entertaining the idea of making some kind of military provisions of a precautionary nature in the near future.

After this, I turned the conversation to the question of the defense of Belgian neutrality. On this point M. Spaak expressed the opinion that no doubt could exist as to Belgium's attitude in the event of a German attack. He was convinced that Belgium would rise as one man and defend her independence, as in 1914. He did not think, however, that it would come to this, because he had complete confidence in our declaration of October 13 of last year.<sup>78</sup> I assured the Premier of our peaceful intentions and remarked that, according to my observations, the firm belief was also gaining ground here that Belgium had nothing to fear from our side. In my conversations with Belgian politicians, journalists, and with politically interested people generally, I often encountered the doubt, on the other hand, whether it would be possible to maintain Belgian neutrality also against Anglo-French pressure, and whether, through the application of coercive measures of one kind or another, Belgium might not be forced to concede right of transit, or the establishment of air bases, and by so doing, might be forced to take part in a war against us. The Premier's reply was unequivocal and lucid. He told me that he did not think the French would demand right of transit because they knew quite well that Belgium would refuse it. (Here M. Spaak appeared to be hinting at a *démarche* by the French Ambassador in May this year.) Besides, there could only be question of right of transit if the provisions of article 16 of the League of Nations Covenant<sup>79</sup> applied. But no one could seriously assume that, in the event of a European conflict, the League of Nations would still take action or, if it did try this, would still have any kind of authority

<sup>76</sup> Belgian Director General of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>77</sup> See vol. iv.

<sup>78</sup> The declaration stated that the German Government undertook to respect the inviolability and integrity of Belgium, and to support Belgium if she were attacked or invaded. Germany would regard herself released only if Belgium participated in military action against Germany.

<sup>79</sup> Article 16 describes the action to be taken by its members should one of its members resort to war; this is to include (paragraph 3): ". . . that they will take the necessary steps to afford passage through their territory to the forces of any of the Members of the League which are cooperating to protect the covenants of the League."

or importance. Consequently, right of transit could only be demanded by the French for strategic reasons. He, Spaak, would, however, reject such a demand more categorically still than one based on article 16. Should the French try to force their way through, that would mean war between Belgium and France. The Premier added: "I know well that that would be a very, very hard war for Belgium." For the rest, he was convinced however that the French would honor their plighted word, just as he assumed the same of the British, who had always taken up a friendly attitude toward Belgium's policy of independence, and had never placed any obstacle in the way of its realization. He could not credit British aspirations after air bases in Belgium. Such a request had never been brought forward nor was there any need for it. The British could operate just as well from their own coast or from France. Air bases in Belgium presented as many disadvantages as advantages. They certainly lay nearer to the field of action, but also nearer the danger. He could not therefore imagine that the British had any interest in the matter. In conclusion, M. Spaak summed up his point of view in a fresh assurance that he trusted the pledged word of the three neighboring States, that he feared nothing from them, and hoped that Belgium's policy of independence would prove itself in the case of a European war.

The Premier who, incidentally, contrary to his original intention, is not going to Geneva, because, as he says, nothing of importance is on the agenda for discussion, spoke with great earnestness, but also with an inner confidence which seemed given him by the consciousness of having done everything in his power to protect his country from war. His statements were filled with the belief that the policy of independence conceived of in theory would prove itself in practice as well. To what extent this belief is sincere, or only feigned for my benefit, must remain an open question. Still, the conversation with M. Spaak confirmed me once more in my opinion that the Belgian Government has an honest and sincere desire for neutrality and is determined to hold fast to it, as has been expressed again and again in Legation reports. A certain amount of caution is advisable toward M. Spaak's assertions that a violation of neutrality by the French would be met with armed resistance. M. Spaak did not mention Britain in this connection. Neither did he maintain that Belgium would be able successfully to resist Anglo-French pressure, but only expressed his conviction that she would not be exposed to such pressure.

VON BARGEN

## No. 455

139/125901-02

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

PARIS, September 10, 1938.

No. 437 of September 10 Received September 10, 1938—10:30 p.m.

Following is summary of developments in political situation here:

1) Daily increase of nervousness and fear of war in broadest sections of the population is unmistakable, and fostered particularly by crushing effect of ignorance of actual German intentions.

2) Fear repeatedly expressed that determination of Western Powers to resort to military intervention in favor of Czechoslovakia in event of German attack upon latter not sufficiently clearly understood in Germany.

3) As reported by Havas Special, forwarded by teleprinter today (telegram No. 436<sup>80</sup>), Bourgués emphasizes in semiofficial *Petit Parisien* that, as Foreign Minister and Prime Minister have stated many times, German attack on Czechoslovakia would automatically unleash general European conflict, nevertheless points out at the same time that, if Germany desires peaceful solution of Czech question and wishes to cooperate with Western Powers, this solution will certainly be found. Leading article in yesterday's *Temps* stresses on the one hand danger and horrors of war, but on the other hand hints, as does Bourgués, that latest proposals of Prague Government are still capable of modification on certain points. Paul Faure, Secretary General of Socialist Party, demands in today's *Populaire* exhaustion of all possibilities even to the very last for maintenance of peace. In the same vein Fabre-Luce in *Journée Industrielle*, who refuses to regard Prague proposals as final, and Boucher in *Action Française*, who accuses Soviet Union of thwarting moderating influence of Western Powers on Prague. Opposed to further pressure on Prague today only *Humanité*, also Pertinax (*Ordre*) and Tabouis (*Oeuvre*), who both criticize Lord Runciman's attitude.

4) Lively discussion taking place on article in *Times* on plebiscite and possible cession of Sudeten German regions to Germany. Idea of plebiscite generally opposed, except for Roche and Déat in *République*. In this connection statement by *Informazione Diplomatica* taken to mean that Italy actually in favor of Karlsbad program, but against separation of Sudeten Germany. Italian outburst is therefore eagerly seized upon in all newspapers as argument against pro-

<sup>80</sup> Not printed.

posals in *Times*. Attempts continue to be made to create impression that Sudeten Germans themselves do not desire annexation, since warned by events in Austria. More cogent reason for rejection of idea of plebiscite, which ought actually to carry weight in a democratic country, may however be Kérillis' argument in *Epoque* that, if plebiscite granted to Sudeten Germans, idea of plebiscite cannot be checked in other parts of Europe also, in which connection Polish Upper Silesia, North Schleswig and also Alsace are expressly mentioned. This latter argument may also have some influence with the newspapers which are more favorable to the German point of view and which, instead of a plebiscite, see the solution of the Czech problem in federalization allied to neutralization of Czechoslovakia (Dominique in *République* and *Tribune des Nations*, Doriot in *Liberté*, and Bailly in *Le Jour*).

5) Despite fact that Government stresses determination not to shrink from military intervention in the event of German attack on Czechoslovakia and great majority of press follows same line, yet isolated voices—even though less numerous than early this year—are heard which draw attention to senselessness of unleashing a world war on account of Czechoslovakia. Especially the provincial press and, in particular, the Alsatian press publish articles of this sort.

BRÄUER

No. 456

139/125929-30

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) and the Military Attaché of the German Embassy in France (Kühlenthal) to the German Foreign Ministry and War Ministry*

Telegram

No. 442 of September 11

PARIS, September 11, 1938.

Received September 11, 1938—2:05 p.m.

STRICTLY SECRET, NO COPIES TO BE MADE.

1. War Ministry, General Staff Section 3, for General von Brauchitsch.

2. Foreign Ministry for State Secretary personally.

General Gamelin<sup>81</sup> asked me to call at his office this morning and communicated the following to me:

Because of our mutual acquaintance and the military comradeship which he always encouraged he wished to tell me that the French military measures already ordered, of which General Colson had in-

<sup>81</sup> Vice President of the Supreme Council of National Defense, 1935-1939.

formed me,<sup>82</sup> would henceforth be intensified. However, these measures would in no way amount to what Germany had set in motion, according to reports reaching him. He then mentioned the conversation between Prime Minister Daladier and the German Chargé d'Affaires,<sup>82a</sup> about which he was fully informed, and said Daladier had received no further information since the conversation concerning the anxiety he had voiced on account of the *état d'alerte*.

General Gamelin mentioned to me as military measures ordered forthwith: a general ban on leave, the recall of men on leave, the disbanding of naval depots and training centers, and other preparatory measures. The measures mentioned by him all belong to the first degree of tension (first stage emergency measures).

He expressly told me that no *disponibilité* or complete age group had been called up; nevertheless reserves would be called up in large numbers covering several age groups.

He then went on to explain that if, according to reports reaching him from Germany, further military measures were taken there, a further increase in French military measures would take place in France also.

As General Gamelin did not ask me any question of a military nature, I saw no occasion to raise this point myself.

KÜHLENTHAL  
BRÄUER

### No. 457

139/125932

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 347 of September 11      PRAGUE, September 11, 1938—1:55 p.m.  
Received September 11, 1938—3:25 p.m.

Sudeten German Party demonstrations in numerous places in the Republic, mostly German-Bohemian, which have been reported by D.N.B. during recent days, have preserved local character so far. Clashes with police and *gendarmérie* have not in the main had any serious results. The police have obviously had orders to exercise greatest restraint.

Demonstrations were carried out in general on uniform lines. Cause was mostly local affairs, in individual cases also Communist meetings. Demonstrators assembled in market places, sang National Socialist

<sup>82</sup> See document No. 423, p. 685.

<sup>82a</sup> See document No. 439, D. 712.

songs, and chanted in chorus demand for return to Reich. While orders by police were mostly ignored, as a rule exhortation by Sudeten German Party officials was sufficient to induce crowds to disperse.

President's radio speech did not lead to serious excesses expected,<sup>83</sup> to judge from reports available so far. Bad weather came to aid of police in Prague. Besides, big church demonstration took place throughout whole of inner city during and directly after Benes' speech.

Police are in increased state of readiness throughout whole country.

HENCKE

No. 458

139/125940-41

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

LONDON, September 12, 1938—2:04 a.m.

No. 410 of September 12

Received September 12, 1938—5:30 a.m.

The statement by the British Government to the foreign press, transmitted by D.N.B., and the Reuter statement for the British press, reported in my telegram No. 411,<sup>84</sup> represent highly significant official announcements which are approved by the Prime Minister. Unimportant differences in the wording between these two pronouncements are explained by the fact that the British Government is obliged to use phraseology which takes into account demand by Parliament for sanctions.

It amounts to a definite statement of British policy, the seriousness of which can no longer be doubted. The possibility can be discounted that such a far-reaching definite statement could have been made only for the purpose of intimidation. The complete change which British public opinion has undergone during the last fortnight places British Government in a position to implement tomorrow the policy announced today. In this connection I must draw attention among others to the main resolution at the Trades-Union Congress at Blackpool<sup>85</sup> and the article in the *Observer* today by Garvin, who has always hitherto adopted a friendly attitude toward us.

<sup>83</sup> The speech was, in fact, couched in very conciliatory terms, stressing the need for calm and the desire for equitable solution.

<sup>84</sup> Not printed.

<sup>85</sup> A demand for collective defense against aggression. The British Government must leave no doubt that they would unite with the French and Soviet Governments to resist any attack on Czechoslovakia. (Made on September 7, 1938.)



Kennedy, United States Ambassador, called on Halifax twice during ministerial discussions.

As I learn from a reliable source, President Roosevelt has made it known through the Ambassador that Great Britain could count on the support of the United States if she should become involved in a war.

KORDT

No. 459

139/125958

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 412 of September 12 LONDON, September 12, 1938—12:23 p.m.  
Received September 12, 1938—1:30 p.m.

In continuation of telegrams Nos. 410<sup>86</sup> and 411<sup>87</sup> of September 12.

D.N.B. report on attitude of British press to official statements of yesterday evening is exhaustive. Meantime it has become known that Attlee, leader of the Opposition, as well as Churchill and Eden, the leaders of the opposition group within the Conservative Party, have given full support to the Government's policy. In consequence there is at present no opposition to Chamberlain.

KORDT

No. 460

1613/387052-54

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

LONDON, September 12, 1938.

A 3818

(Pol. I 2137 g)

Subject: Conversation with Kennedy, American Ambassador, on Czechoslovak question.

I am enclosing herewith a memorandum on a conversation which Counselor of Legation von Selzam had today with Mr. Joseph Kennedy, the American Ambassador here.

TH. KORDT

<sup>86</sup> See document No. 458, p. 742.

<sup>87</sup> Not printed.

[Enclosure]

## MEMORANDUM

I had the opportunity today of speaking with Mr. Joseph Kennedy, the American Ambassador. Kennedy told me he had always been of the opinion so far that, in the event of warlike developments in the Sudeten German question, Britain would make every effort not to become involved in the conflict. He had completely altered this opinion of his within the last 72 hours, particularly as a result of conversations which he had had with Chamberlain and Halifax yesterday. As a result of these conversations it was now his firm conviction that if France intervened Britain would intervene too. "There was a new glint in Chamberlain's eyes and in those of Sir Samuel Hoare and of the others which I never noticed before. This time they mean business."<sup>88</sup> He had reported home to this effect and also informed the American journalists accordingly. During the conversation Kennedy stated that Roosevelt had assured Chamberlain of his sympathies with the latter's attitude. To my question as to how America would act in the event of a European conflagration in which Great Britain was involved, he replied that firm assurances by Roosevelt to the Government here (as was stated in the press) could not be given for Constitutional reasons. They would naturally endeavor "to keep America out of the war,"<sup>88</sup> as in the last World War. He himself had two sons and would work for this. He was, however, convinced that America would nevertheless intervene in the end. Feeling in America had never yet been as anti-German as was the case at present, and in his personal opinion very wrongly so, for Hitler had done wonders in Germany. He went into detail about this and showed an astonishing knowledge of Germany's achievements.

It depended on Hitler whether there was to be chaos, from which no country in the world could remain immune, or whether he became a benefactor of mankind, for if it did not now come to war over the Czechoslovak question, there would be a big change in public opinion throughout the world—this was his firm conviction—and above all in the United States. His ideas in the social and economic field, which were responsible for such extraordinary achievements in Germany, would be a determining influence on the economic development of the United States and economic cooperation between all nations. He repeated that this was his firm conviction.

VON SELZAM

LONDON, September 12, 1938.

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<sup>88</sup> The quotation is in English in the original.

## No. 461

139/125959

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 348 of September 12

PRAGUE, September 12, 1938—1 p.m.  
Received September 12, 1938—2:50 p.m.In continuation of telegram No. 347 of the 11th.<sup>89</sup>

1) Rebellious Sunday produced number of further Sudeten German Party demonstrations reported by D.N.B., at which there were clashes with police in some places. Demonstrations assumed more serious character in Reichenberg and Eger, where there were injured on both sides. Slogan everywhere: *Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer!*

2) Prime Minister and Minister of Interior yesterday requested Deputy Rosche to prevent further Sudeten German Party demonstrations, which were placing police in most difficult position. Rosche refused to adopt measures to this effect, pointing out that provocative effects of Communist meetings were tolerated, and recommended Prime Minister on other hand to give strict instructions to police not to show themselves at all at Sudeten German Party demonstrations.

3) The Czechoslovak Government is supposed to be in possession of secret orders from Sudeten German Party Executive, which are said to provide proof of systematic preparation and carrying out of demonstrations. Havas published Paris report to this effect yesterday evening. The Czechoslovak Government is said to be planning publication of their allegedly extensive material.

4) Rumor has it that Government is preparing for proclamation of state of emergency in event of demand for plebiscite being made in Führer's speech today. Investigation of rumor started.

5) Demonstration by Czech population takes place in Prague today for purpose of proclaiming their readiness for defense. Police have, by bringing strong moral pressure to bear, ordered flags to be flown on all houses.

HENCKE

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<sup>89</sup> See document No. 457, p. 741.

## No. 462

139/125956-57

*The German Consul General at Geneva (Krauel) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 85 of September 12

GENEVA, September 12, 1938—7:30 p.m.

Received September 12, 1938—9:15 p.m.

Rumanian Foreign Minister today told representative of a Balkan State, which is friendly toward us, that the Havas report on Rumanian pledges regarding permission for Russian armed assistance to be sent through or over Rumanian territory was a complete fabrication. On being asked why no Rumanian *démenti* was issued, Comnen stated that at the moment a Rumanian statement of this kind had not been issued out of consideration for Czechoslovakia, Russia, and France, in order not to weaken the position of these Powers in the dispute with Germany. Comnen also endeavored to minimize the probability of Rumanian promises regarding right of transit for Russian troops, by pointing out that Rumania could not make a weighty decision of this kind without previous assent of other members of the Little and Balkan Ententes.

Informant thought he could likewise infer from his conversation on this question with Souritz, the Russian Ambassador,<sup>90</sup> that binding Rumanian pledges regarding Russian right of transit have not yet been given. Russian efforts are apparently bent on interpreting Rumania's duty to allow transit for Russians pursuant to article 16 of League of Nations Covenant.<sup>91</sup>

Rumanian Foreign Minister is obviously at pains to steer clear of Franco-Russian efforts to secure the premature public declaration of Rumania's attitude in event of possible outbreak of a German-Czech conflict, and has therefore also refused to take over chairmanship of present League of Nations Assembly, which will probably elect De Valera this afternoon. Bonnet told my informant today that he understood and approved Rumania's cautious attitude in view of mounting tension in the international situation. My impression is that the Rumanian Foreign Minister made his communications to my informant in the hope that his statements would be passed on to the German Government.

KRAUEL

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<sup>90</sup> In Paris.

<sup>91</sup> See footnote 79, p. 737.

## No. 463

2369/494946-49

*The German Minister in Yugoslavia (Heeren) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

BELGRADE, September 12, 1938.

G.219/38 G 1

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Repercussions of German-Czechoslovak tension on Yugoslavia.

It is only natural that the attention of politically interested circles in Yugoslavia has recently been practically monopolized by developments in German-Czechoslovak relations. The fear of any disturbance of the *status quo* created by the peace treaties shown by this State, which has been saturated territorially by the peace treaties, the fear of a European conflict, into which every small state must be afraid of being dragged against its will, and last but not least the possibility that the "Czech" State crisis might one day be followed by a "Serbian" State crisis also, is sufficient to explain this feverish interest.

As I have already explained previously, the press here is only a very defective barometer of public opinion. Insofar as it is not the mouthpiece of the Government, its attitude is dictated by the ideological and internal political connections of a narrow stratum—the urban intelligentsia. The predominantly "anti-Fascist" outlook of these circles and their opposition to the Stoyadinovich regime is expressed in the tone of the press, whose fundamental anti-German tendencies are held in check to a certain extent only by pressure from the Government.

In contrast to the press, this prejudice against Germany is completely alien to the masses of the people. Here there prevails a sincere admiration for Germany's unparalleled rise to power and confidence that the Führer's political program does not involve any weakening of Yugoslavia. On the other hand the Czechs have never been particularly popular here. In many a conversation I have even been able to detect a certain *Schadenfreude* that these "Slav brothers," whose presumptuous and arrogant manner so often caused annoyance, have now got into difficulties themselves. This very widespread point of view testifies that the Prime Minister can count on the approval of the majority of the Yugoslav population for his thesis that the Yugoslav Army should only be employed on behalf of *Yugoslavia's* vital interests. What are, however, *Yugoslavia's* vital in-

terests? One should not blind oneself to the fact that the consciousness of a certain common destiny with Czechoslovakia is still very general among the Yugoslav population. No one believes that the satisfying of Hungarian revisionist aims in the direction of Czechoslovakia would saturate Hungary. They are, moreover, convinced that a revival of Hungarian revisionist policy in other directions could only result from this. The view that, for these reasons, it is one of Yugoslavia's vital interests to prevent any alteration in the *status quo* on the Hungarian-Czech frontier is part of the political creed of extensive circles, and forms the solid foundation for the obligations assumed under the Little Entente Pact. There is considerable understanding here, even in circles which are unfriendly toward us, for the idea of a solution of the Czech State crisis which would be restricted to the secession of the Sudeten German frontier region. The possibility of a dissolution of the Czechoslovak State is felt on the other hand to be a direct threat to Yugoslavia as well.

I believe that in authoritative circles in the Army similar ideas prevail. Here of course—above all among the older generation—there are signs of a feeling of traditional unity with the Czech and French Armies which must not be underestimated. But these feelings are counterbalanced to a considerable extent by the coolly realistic way of thinking peculiar to the Serb.

The line followed by Yugoslav foreign policy will not now of course be conclusively influenced either by the outlook of the Army or by that of the people, or even by that of the press, in view of conditions as they prevail here today. It will be determined solely by two persons, the Prince Regent and the Prime Minister. We are very fortunate in that both of these persons as a result of their fundamental outlook, which in the case of the Prince Regent derives in the main from his anti-Bolshevik ideology, and in the case of the Prime Minister from his sober economic-political orientation, are firmly resolved to avoid a conflict with Germany at all costs. There can be no doubt as to this resolve. The question can only be, how long they will have the power to implement this resolve. As far as predictions of this sort can be made at all, without knowing details of the circumstances attendant on the outbreak of an armed encounter, under present conditions one may, in a German-Czech conflict, count on Yugoslav neutrality as long as Yugoslavia's vital interests do not appear to be menaced to any great extent. By this I consider Yugoslav neutrality to be assured in a local German-Czech conflict, in which obviously only the fate of the Sudeten Germans is involved. If, however, the actual conflict were to break out under circumstances which made it appear that the destruction and partition of the

Czechoslovak State was intended, as would be concluded here above all from the participation of Hungary, then the Government's policy of neutrality might very soon encounter dangerous opposition among the people and in the Army. It would then depend on the kind of course taken by the conflict and the impression gained here of the relative strength of the opposing forces, whether and when the Government would have to yield to this opposition.

HEEREN

No. 464

139/125990-91

*Unsigned Foreign Ministry Minute*

REPORT FROM THE WAR MINISTRY<sup>92</sup>

BERLIN, September 13, 1938.

Head Customs Office at Eibenstock (Customs Official Iff) reports 4:30 p.m.

1) *BzKom.* (G) Klingenthal (Customs Inspector Enderlein) reported to me at 4 p.m.

From my own observation all buildings in Markhausen and Schwaberbach (Czechoslovakia) are flying the swastika flag. The Sudeten German inhabitants are wearing the swastika armband.

At Grasslitz (Czechoslovakia) the Czech officials have been driven back into the courthouse, but not disarmed. They are being held in check by Sudeten German inhabitants.

At Schwaberbach a motor vehicle belonging to the Czech State police was fired on by Sudeten Germans. In this two Czech officials were killed and one severely injured. As a result of the shooting, a bullet hit the wall of the German customs office at Sachsenberg-Georgenthal. The Czech customs officials are locked in their customs office at Schwaberbach. The remaining gendarmes have forced their way through to Grasslitz.

It is to be feared that the Czech *gendarmerie* will restore order in Schwaberbach by calling out a fairly large force.

2) *BzKom.* (G) Johann-Georgenstadt (Customs Inspector Leuoth) reported to me at 4:10 p.m.

At 3:14 p.m. the sound of shots coming from Breitenbach (Czechoslovakia) was again heard in Johann-Georgenstadt. In the meantime the Czech customs officials, *gendarmerie* reinforced by the military, railway, and post office employees and well-known Communists,

<sup>92</sup> In pencil. The only other identification on the document is the stamped: "Submitted to the State Secretary" and Weizsäcker's initial in the margin.

who are armed with rifles, have reoccupied Breitenbach. Strength about twenty men.

Martial law has been proclaimed in the Neudeck district (Czechoslovakia)—main town between Eibenstock and Karlsbad.

### No. 465

139/125973

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in the United States (Thomsen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

WASHINGTON, September 13, 1938—10:59 a.m.

No. 248 of September 13

Received September 13, 1938—7 p.m.

In continuation of telegram No. 247 of 12th.<sup>93</sup>

Today's comments on Führer's speech<sup>93a</sup> agree in main with yesterday's report that danger of war has been averted for time being (reference to unfinished German fortifications). Hitler has indeed threatened to use force, but has not decided on any definite action. He has rejected idea of plebiscite; on the other hand, right of self-determination remains as subject of direct negotiations between Sudeten Germans and Prague. Further British mediation now appears superfluous. Direct appeals to Great Britain and France and also reference to previous peace offers by Germany are described here as being extremely skillful tactics. Their aim was obviously to drive wedge between these Powers and Russia. Hitler has given Great Britain implicitly to understand that he renounces claim to colonies in return for free hand in Southeastern Europe.

Main conclusions: Hitler will achieve in due course what he is striving for, namely annexation of Sudeten Germany. As a past master in deciding on time for action he is waiting for more favorable situation than today, when he has to reckon with combined resistance by democratic powers and Russia.

THOMSEN

<sup>93</sup> Not printed.

<sup>93a</sup> Hitler's speech on September 12 in Nuremberg. Violent in tone, it attacked President Beneš, announced military preparations in the West, and stated he was not willing to allow a second Palestine to be created in the heart of Germany by the actions of other statesmen. See *Hitler's Speeches, 1922-1939*, vol. II, pp. 1487-1499, by Norman H. Baynes, London.



## No. 466

139/125987

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV (Altenburg)*

## MEMORANDUM

Hencke, Counselor of Legation in Prague, communicated by telephone at 7 p.m. that, according to an Italian agency's report, the disturbances in the Sudeten German region have assumed the character of an insurrection.<sup>94</sup>

Herr Hencke further communicated that the Sudeten German Party Executive had handed the Czechoslovak Government a 6-hour ultimatum at 4 p.m. this afternoon, which accordingly expires at 10 p.m. The demands listed are:

- 1) Withdrawal of the State police.
- 2) Repeal of martial law.<sup>95</sup>
- 3) Confinement of the military to barracks and their withdrawal from the streets in order to avoid clashes with the civilian population.
- 4) Transfer of control of the police and Security Service to local authorities (mayors, etc.).
- 5) Announcement of these measures over the radio.

In the event of these demands being rejected, the Executive of the Sudeten German Party disclaims responsibility for any consequences.

The Sudeten German Party Executive has moved to Eger; communication by telephone is bad, the lines are apparently out of order.

ALTENBURG

BERLIN, September 13, 1938.

## No. 467

139/125988-89

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV (Altenburg)*

Hencke, the Counselor of Legation in Prague, rang up at 8 p.m. and communicated that he would give the text of the ultimatum below at the request of the Sudeten German Party Executive, since their telephone communications with the Reich were interrupted. The text of the ultimatum is:

<sup>94</sup> As a result of Hitler's speech serious disorders broke out in the Sudeten German areas. On September 13 police and *gendarmarie* were attacked, and Henlein supporters tried to occupy railway stations, post offices, and police stations.

<sup>95</sup> The Czech Government declared martial law at noon on September 13 in many Sudeten German areas; this was extended on September 14 and 15.

“At a joint session which took place in Eger today the Political Committee and the Negotiating Delegation of the Sudeten German Party examined the political situation created by the incidents of yesterday and today and the measures adopted by the Government.

The Negotiating Delegation of the Sudeten German Party pointed out in this connection that the Czechoslovak Prime Minister repeatedly stated in February 1938 that the Government would take no important action without prior agreement with the Sudeten German Party. Although four members of the delegation remained in Prague until 10:30 a.m. and were even in telephonic communication with the Prime Minister, the Government ordered and carried out extremely far-reaching and disquieting measures without contacting the Executive of the Sudeten German Party. Thus, reinforced *gendarmerie* and military detachments were posted in German districts and martial law proclaimed by radio over extensive German regions.

When the conference was over Deputy K. H. Frank, Konrad Henlein's representative, addressed the following demands of Konrad Henlein to Prime Minister Hodza:

The Executive of the Sudeten German Party sets on record that a large number of Sudeten Germans have been killed and injured by State authorities and Czech frontiersmen. In view of this situation the Executive of the Sudeten German Party cannot see its way to negotiate freely and unhindered with the Government regarding the rights and destiny of the Sudeten German element, unless the Government adopts the following measures:

- 1) The proclamation of martial law is to be rescinded at once.
- 2) The State police will be withdrawn from all districts where the majority of the population is German. The exercise of the powers of the police is to be transferred to mayors and magistrates of communes, who are to arrange for the establishing of the corresponding substitute authorities for the maintenance of peace and order.
- 3) The *gendarmerie* and all other instruments of the S.O.S. are to be limited to their normal functions and their normal strength. They are, at the same time as the State police are withdrawn, to establish good relations with mayors and magistrates of communes in order to avoid further bloodshed.
- 4) All military formations are to be confined to their quarters and in purely military premises and barracks. They are to be kept away from the civil population.

If these demands by the Sudeten German element, designed to create a normal situation in which negotiations can alone be conducted, are not accepted, enacted, published, and in particular broadcast by radio within 6 hours, the Executive of the Sudeten German Party will disclaim any responsibility for further developments.”

ALTENBURG

BERLIN, September 13, 1938.

## No. 468

139/125974-75

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 354 of September 13

PRAGUE, September 13, 1938—6 p.m.

Received September 13, 1938—8:30 p.m.

Führer's speech extensively reported everywhere in Tuesday's press. Trend of headlines: *Prager Tagblatt*: "Hitler's menacing words. No precise demands." *Bohemia*: "Prague committed to achieving solution with Sudeten German Party." *Poledni List*: "Speech extremely sharp in tone, cautious in content." *Narodni Politika*: "Threats against Czechoslovak Republic." *Narodni Listy*: "Nothing new from Nuremberg. Superfluous threats." *Narodni Noviny*: "Hitler threatens. The Germans want right of self-determination. Extravagant attacks on Czechoslovakia." *Venkov*: "Peace and order at all costs."

*Narodni Osvobozeni*: "Speech threatening in tone, no concrete proposals." Paper concludes: ". . . speech shows that Germany is determined not to suffer a military defeat, and therefore she will not force Europe into an armed conflict at this juncture." *Česke Slovo*: "After threats, demand for agreement. Nothing about *Anschluss* or plebiscite." *A-Zet*: "Imprudent strong words . . . (group missing) war. Hitler does not exclude possibility of agreement. Serious situation continues." *Lidove Noviny*: "Hitler threatens and insults the Czechoslovaks."

Commentary says demand for plebiscite was expected, this word was not used. It can be assumed that Führer meant plebiscite every time he mentioned right of self-determination. International anxiety not only prolonged but intensified by speech. *Prager Presse*: "Situation remains obscure." Leading article states settlement of nationality question an internal affair of the Czechoslovaks, who, as always, are ready for agreement, but demands that threats, untrue accusations, and interference in the internal affairs of the Czechoslovaks should cease, because otherwise no basis for lasting and honorable peace.

All papers deny statement of oppression of Sudeten Germans. Speech does not express absolute desire for war. Exception is *Sozialdemokrat*, which maintains that a clear threat of war was expressed, even if the fatal word was not actually spoken. Papers state unanimously that Czechoslovaks will continue to seek means to satisfy the different nationalities. Opinion divided on emergency measures.

HENCKE

## No. 469

340/198974

*Unsigned Foreign Ministry Minute*[SEPTEMBER 13, 1938.]<sup>96</sup>

Mr. Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, today forwarded the following communication to the Führer and Reich Chancellor via the British Ambassador in Berlin:

"In view of the increasingly critical situation I propose to come over at once to see you with a view to trying to find a peaceful solution. I propose to come across by air and am ready to start tomorrow.

Please indicate earliest time at which you can see me and suggest place of meeting. I should be grateful for a very early reply. Neville Chamberlain"

The Führer has replied to the above communication saying that he is quite ready to meet the British Prime Minister on the 15th of this month. Mr. Neville Chamberlain is accordingly expected at the Obersalzberg tomorrow, Thursday afternoon.

## No. 470

139/125979

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

LONDON, September 13, 1938—9:18 p.m.

No. 417 of September 13

Received September 13, 1938—11:05 p.m.

Prime Minister's press secretary informed German press correspondents that Chamberlain felt disappointed and hurt by Führer's speech.<sup>97</sup> Chamberlain considered European war to be unavoidable if matters were allowed to run the same course as hitherto. He was still prepared today to examine far-reaching German proposals, including plebiscite, to take part in carrying them into effect, and to advocate them in public.

His readiness was nevertheless dependent on two prior conditions: 1) that he should be given time, 2) that the Sudeten Germans should not take any precipitate action. If these prior conditions were not

<sup>96</sup> The English text, forwarded by the British Ambassador, bears the date September 13, 1938, 11 p.m.

<sup>97</sup> See footnote 93a, p. 750.

met, then he would be obliged to assume that Germany wanted a European war.

KORDT

[Marginal comment by Weizsäcker:] Telephone through to RM *immediately*. W/14.

No. 471

139/125999-126001

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PARIS, September 14, 1938.

No. 448 of September 13 Received September 14, 1938—1:10 a.m.

1) Führer's speech received here in atmosphere of tension shared equally by Government and population, such as has not existed here since the World War. The measures recently adopted by Government in military sphere and polemics in the press had created the impression that the Führer's speech might easily be signal for war, general mobilization, or other serious measures. This accounts for the first reaction to the speech being a certain feeling of relief, because the direct menace of warlike complications is regarded as having been banished or at least delayed. In its comments the press follows to a great extent the statement issued by Havas and forwarded in telegram No. 446 of September 13.<sup>98</sup> It is generally stressed as a reassuring factor in the speech that it does not contain an ultimatum, demand the severance of the Sudeten German regions, nor signify any breaking off of the negotiations now in progress. Uncertainty prevails as to whether the Führer put forward a demand for the holding of a plebiscite by his reference to the right of self-determination of peoples.

The observation about Alsace-Lorraine is generally singled out and for the most part commented upon favorably, even though some are not lacking who point out that the Führer only wishes to obtain a free hand in Central Europe in return for the pacification of the West which he proclaims. On the other hand, the press is almost unanimous in emphasizing that the Führer has not retracted anything from his point of view in the Sudeten German question and has not renounced any of his claims against Czechoslovakia. On the contrary, as a result of the Führer's words, the demands of the Sudeten Germans will be advocated more intransigently and situation

<sup>98</sup> Not printed.

can soon become critical again if the assistance to the Sudeten Germans, which the Führer claims it is Germany's right to give, actually materializes. The population is warned categorically against regarding the danger as having been removed.

2) The verdict of the press on the situation created by the Führer's speech reads thus: "Neither deterioration nor relaxation of tension." *L'Intransigeant* observes in this connection: "Negotiations continue under arms and the tension remains." Bourguès in the *Petit Parisien*, Blum in the *Journal*, d'Ormesson in the *Figaro*, Marcel (group mutilated) in *Excelsior*, despite criticism of vehement tone of the speech, accentuate fact that door remains open for negotiations and that no irrevocable step has been taken. Bourguès adds that interests of Europe demand acceleration of Prague negotiations under aegis of Lord Runciman and cannot tolerate any delaying tactics. Latest Beneš plan may lead to satisfactory solution if confidence is established on both sides and single questions settled in a generous spirit. Léon Blum in the *Populaire* believes that British statement yesterday exerted decisive influence on Führer's speech. Idea of military invasion seems to be abandoned. Führer will now attempt to undermine Czechoslovakia from within. Same satisfaction expressed in leading article in *Le Temps*.

Great majority of newspapers do not conceal grave concern lest situation may at any time degenerate into a crisis as a result of incidents in Sudeten Germany. In this connection leading article in *Le Temps* states that, in view of the latest events today in Sudeten German region, *sole method of effectively avoiding further incidents consists in giving Sudeten German leaders share in responsibility for maintaining order.*

3) If there be added to today's press comments and today's Havas-Special on Cabinet meeting transmitted by teleprinter (telegram No. 445 of September 13<sup>99</sup> the fact that Government had banned export of several kinds of raw materials important for war purposes, the total impression gained is that tension has eased only very slightly and French measures for the event of a forcible solution of the Sudeten German question by Germany have not been subject to any delay.

4) Attention is drawn moreover to detailed press report by Press Attaché which is being dispatched tomorrow.

BRÄUER

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<sup>99</sup> Not printed.

## No. 472

139/126012-13

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV (Altenburg)*

## MEMORANDUM

(e. o. Pol. IV . . . g)

SS-Oberführer Behrens of the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* rang up the section at 6:10 p.m. and dictated the following reports:

1) On the expiry of the time limit which Konrad Henlein set for the reply to his demands to the Czechoslovak Government, he disbanded the negotiating delegation of the Sudeten German Party. At 11:30 in the morning of September 14, 1938, he received the members of the British Mission, minus Lord Runciman, in Asch. He stated that he had broken off the negotiations as the Czechoslovak Government was not willing to meet his legitimate demands. From the very beginning he had made no secret of the fact, even to the members of the Runciman Mission, that the withdrawal of the Czech police and *gendarmérie* from the Sudeten German region was a demand which admitted of no discussion. The present state of affairs in the region populated by Sudeten Germans proved how justified this demand was. The members of the mission stated they still believed that the Czechs could be brought to accept the demand. Konrad Henlein expressed the view that only in this event would he be prepared to sit down at the conference table again. Nevertheless, even then he would not negotiate on the eight Karlsbad points any longer, but demand the plebiscite. He declared that the Sudeten Germans wanted to return to the Reich and that no power on earth could deter them from this purpose.

2) As a result of the mobilization of the Czechoslovak Army, which is in full swing (application of martial law), and the arming of the Czech civilian population and Czech officials in the Sudeten German region, it is impossible to maintain contact with the individual branches of the Party in the interior of the Sudeten German region. Instructions to *Kreis* executives are henceforth being given via Reich-German territory. In this way the issuing of orders is uncertain and wastes time. Konrad Henlein crossed the frontier secretly today and is directing further action from the frontier town of Selb in Bavaria. The Czechs suppose that Konrad Henlein is still at Asch, his place of residence.

The report (No. 2.) must on no account be published without prior consultation with us (Konrad Henlein's office in Selb is indicated here). Konrad Henlein will probably cross the frontier by the same

means tonight for a prearranged meeting and will then probably be back here again by daytime.

ALTENBURG

BERLIN, September 14, 1938.

No. 473

139/126018-19

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 361 of September 14      PRAGUE, September 14, 1938—3:55 p.m.  
Received September 14, 1938—6:25 p.m.

In continuation of telegram No. 355 of the 13th.<sup>1</sup>

1) Since bloody incidents reported by D.N.B., during which five more Sudeten Germans and also several Czechs were killed, according to reports received so far, the night apparently passed quietly in the Sudeten German region under the martial law regulations.

2) According to information available here, yesterday's Cabinet meeting decided not to reply to Konrad Henlein's demands to which a time limit was attached, to invite Henlein to Prague for direct conversations on situation, and to adopt preparatory measures for general mobilization.

Konrad Henlein has broken off negotiations on basis hitherto adopted and relieved negotiating delegation of their duties. Nothing yet known of Henlein's attitude to Government's invitation for him to come to Prague. Czechoslovak Cabinet yesterday waited in vain until midnight for reply, and Hodza apparently until 3 o'clock in the morning.

3) As a result of removal of Sudeten German Party leaders' Executive from Prague to Eger or Asch, Legation is not in a position for the time being to obtain reliable information concerning intentions and measures by Sudeten German Party. Small liaison staff here, which worked in Parliament building until midday today, has been disbanded. It is not known so far whether since breaking off of previous negotiations Konrad Henlein intends to put forward new demands for solution of Sudeten German problem with plebiscite as goal.

4) Call-up of individual reservists continues in the meantime. In opinion of Military Attaché formation of reserve divisions in progress. Limited movement of troops and military vehicles in direction of Karlsbad and Pilsen reported by eye witnesses. In contrast to

<sup>1</sup> Not printed.



May 21, new military measures not outwardly apparent in Sudeten German region.

Population here getting ready for war. As result of extensive purchases of food, shortage of goods already apparent in places. Czechs and Jews are leaving Sudeten German region. Outward behavior of Czech population disciplined, which points to readiness for war. Scarcely any signs of fear of war observed so far.

5) Press generally calm, partly endeavoring to shift responsibility for bloody incidents and their consequences onto Reich and Sudeten German Party.

EISENLOHR

No. 474

139/126020-21

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 363 of September 14

PRAGUE, September 14, 1938—6:06 p.m.  
Received September 14, 1938—8:20 p.m.

1) The Italian Minister reported to me the following statements by Krofta during a conversation with him today:

Reasons for precautionary measures adopted, such as introduction of summary courts, were: necessity of maintaining order in the State, desire not to be cut off from frontier fortifications, pressure of Czech circles dissatisfied with Government's compliant attitude. Cancellation of measures intended in three or four days, if order completely restored by then. Forcible measures and disturbances in seventy different places; today only near Graslitz. Government was prepared to negotiate on granting of autonomy on broadest possible basis, but could not consent to separation of Sudeten German area. Germany was not concerned with this only, but with domination of whole of Czechoslovakia. Nothing was to be feared for the next few days, but in October things would become very dangerous.

2) From other reliable sources: Members of Sudeten German Party and their families said to have been ordered by Party leaders to leave Prague, in order not to fall victims to Czech reprisals. Deputies Kundt and Peters (Rosche?) are expected at Cabinet Office this afternoon. Taken altogether, yesterday's disturbances in many different places represent attempt at rising which can be considered as having failed. Only in Schwaderbach near Graslitz 30 policemen, 120 according to another report, are said to have been imprisoned by the mob. Armored cars alleged to have gone to set them free.

Leaders of Sudeten German Party said to be somewhat helpless. A solution would be proclamation of demand for plebiscite, now that negotiations on Karlsbad points are superseded by events and no longer supported by People's Court since Führer's speech. This would give advantage of a basis, which would also be recognized abroad, and which would of necessity isolate the Czechs. Czechs' previous determination to fight would then quickly disappear; internal unity of Czechs would be destroyed.

It is said that Mastny is not to be formally recalled, but that he is not returning to his post.

EISENLOHR

No. 475

28/19057

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, September 14, 1938—7:49 p.m.

Received Prague, September 14, 1938—9:30 p.m.

No. 218 of September 14

For Minister personally.

On instructions from Reich Minister request that wives and children of members of Embassy and Consulate staff should be evacuated gradually and unobtrusively.

You yourself are requested to come to Berlin on Saturday, September 17, for official consultation.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 476

.28/19058

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, September 14, 1938.

No. 219 of September 14

Received Prague, September 14, 1938.

Please maintain close contact with Sudeten German Party Executive in Asch also, and keep us continuously informed of their decisions.

WOERMANN

## No. 477

1613/387064

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 14, 1938.  
(Pol. I 2146 g. Rs.)

The Hungarian Minister<sup>2</sup> rang me up after his conversation with the State Secretary and said that he still had a commission to execute. He had received instructions to the effect that the Hungarian Government would regard it as intolerable that there should be any discrimination against the Hungarian minority in any settlement of the Czechoslovak question. This communication was also going to the Western Powers and was primarily intended for them. If any discrimination should result, the Hungarian Government would be obliged to disclaim any responsibility for the consequences. Not only would the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia rise up itself, but also in Hungary, where public opinion had hitherto remained very calm, such agitation would break out as might lead to a catastrophe. The Minister requested that this communication should reach the Reich Minister also as soon as possible.

WOERMANN

## No. 478

1613/387081-82

*The Counselor of the German Legation in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

PRAGUE, September 14, 1938.  
(Pol. I 2213 g (IV))

A. III. 1. b. 27

Subject: Soviet Russian armed assistance to Czechoslovakia.

The Legation has received from a usually reliable source the following information on the question of possible Soviet Russian armed assistance to Czechoslovakia, which I am passing on with all due reserve:

"In agreement with the Czechoslovak Government the Czech National Socialist Deputy David had, during his stay in Moscow some weeks ago, conversations with the Soviet Government on the extent and form of Russian assistance to Czechoslovakia. The Soviet Government are supposed to have informed the Czechoslovak Government through Deputy David that in the event of a conflict they would concentrate troops about 3 million strong on the Polish and

<sup>2</sup> Döme Sztójay.

Rumanian frontiers. The Red Army was determined to extort right of transit for troops through Poland and Rumania, if necessary by means of an ultimatum to the Governments in Warsaw and Bucharest.

A section of the Czechoslovak Government had received this information with some skepticism. In particular, some Ministers had expressed doubts concerning the strength of the Red Army as communicated by David, and the Soviet Government's readiness to violate Polish and Rumanian neutrality by force of arms. On the other hand, the Ministers belonging to the parties of the Left took the Soviet Russian assurances seriously.

Negotiations were still in progress regarding the question of the transit of Soviet troops through Poland and Rumania. In this connection pressure was being exerted on Warsaw and Rumania from the French side. All that was certain for the time being was that the Rumanian Government was prepared to permit the transit of war material. The question of the transit of Soviet troops, even camouflaged, had not yet been decided. The Polish Government was delaying its reply to the French *démarches*, with which the Rumanian Government had also associated themselves to a certain extent for the clarification of their own attitude. They wished to make their attitude dependent on circumstances arising in the event of an emergency."

HENCKE

No. 479

139/126024

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PARIS, September 14, 1938.

No. 456 of September 14 Received September 14, 1938—10:15 p.m.

Unanimous reports I have received from various informants concerning developments in the mood prevailing in the French General Staff, Parliament, and Foreign Ministry yield following picture:

1) The desire to avoid a European war, which would also be unpopular with the people, is becoming more noticeable than ever. The readiness to make concessions has increased during recent days. This is partly due to the realization, brought about by the Führer's speech and recent events in Czechoslovakia, that the continued existence of Sudeten Germans side by side with Czechs is no longer really possible. They are therefore prepared to agree to a plebiscite in the Sudeten German areas and to its result, which is regarded here as a foregone conclusion, although they are conscious of the opposition to be overcome and the political and technical difficulties connected with this. They believe they cannot oppose a solution, which, based

on the right of self-determination of peoples, settles the Sudeten German question by an act to which there can be no objection from the point of view of international law.

2) On the other hand, they still adhere to the view that military intervention by France would be inevitable if Germany made an armed attack on Czechoslovakia, whether for the liberation of the Sudeten German regions or for more far-reaching aims.

BRÄUER

No. 480

340/198931-32

*Minute by the State Secretary*<sup>3</sup>

MINUTE

I rang up Reich Minister von Ribbentrop in Munich (Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten) at 9:30 this morning, dictated Chamberlain's message for the Führer to him, and added verbally:

Chamberlain wished to have the Führer informed of his plan as soon as possible and actually through Herr von Ribbentrop. The plan which had been communicated to the Embassy was strictly confidential. It was not new but had already been discussed at the time of Henderson's last journey to London (about a fortnight ago).<sup>3a</sup> The fact that it was being forwarded now was not connected with Henlein's "ultimatum" of yesterday. The offer by the 70-year old man to intervene personally on behalf of peace, so as to avoid European chaos, showed his intention to make a last step at the cost of great sacrifice. The journey could be made either direct or via Berlin.

At 10:30 I repeated these points to Herr von Ribbentrop on the telephone.

At 12:15 Henderson asked me on the telephone whether there was any news here yet. I confirmed to Henderson that the Führer must have been informed; Herr von Ribbentrop had been on his way to him a short time ago.

At 2:40 p.m. Herr von Ribbentrop stated on the telephone that the Führer would naturally be pleased to receive Chamberlain. (The Führer's intention to visit Chamberlain himself because of the latter's age or to propose a rendezvous in the *Grille*<sup>4</sup> has been dropped.) Herr von R. now intends to tell Henderson on the telephone direct that Chamberlain should fly to Munich tomorrow, accompanied by

<sup>3</sup> The document is in handwriting, identified as Weizsäcker's. There is no date, but it must be September 14, as Chamberlain's message was received in the Foreign Ministry very late on September 13.

<sup>3a</sup> August 28-31.

<sup>4</sup> Hitler's yacht.

his wife if he so wishes. Henderson should join them. The necessary arrangements are still to be agreed upon concerning publication. (" . . . have agreed to discuss it direct. Chamberlain will therefore . . . ").

## No. 481

337/197186

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

PRAGUE, September 14, 1938—10 p.m.

URGENT

Received September 15, 1938—12:05 a.m.

CONFIDENTIAL

No. 366 of September 14

For State Secretary.

Reliable information yields following picture:

1) Leader's staff of Sudeten German Party is in session in Asch as a sort of revolutionary committee without any revolution, and without any contact with rest of Sudeten German region or with Henlein, who is said to be staying in the neighborhood of Asch. General helplessness and nervousness. The majority of the Sudeten German population demonstrated Monday night after the Führer's speech and then went home. Calm prevails everywhere today with the exception of the two places near Eger, Schwabenbach and Habersbürk. No accurate information is as yet available from the former. Reports about large number of dead near Habersbürk do not seem to be confirmed on this scale. Information just received puts figure of dead at four Czech gendarmes and two Sudeten German officials. All rumors require checking.

Sudeten German Party Executive has recalled Party members from Prague, giving as the reason that German air attack is expected within 48 hours, and has proceeded from this assumption apparently in attempt to stir up insurrection.

2) Führer's speech has caused view to prevail among Czech Government that no time must be lost in making decisive political offer to Germany in order to save peace.

3) A Kundt-Hodza conversation has not taken place.

EISENLOHR

## No. 482

1942/435266-85

*Memorandum by SS-Untersturmführer Baumann*

## MEMORANDUM

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

SEPTEMBER 15, 1938.

By SS-Untersturmführer Baumann—SS No. 132 574—on days spent with Sir Nevile Henderson, the British Ambassador, at the 1938 Party Congress.

*Wednesday, September 7.*

The Ambassador was met at the station at 8 a.m. by SS-*Standartenführer* Brantenaar and myself and conducted to Nuremberg North Station. His first desire was to be brought into contact with Field Marshal Göring. I did not wish, however, to be obtrusively insistent in my efforts to secure this meeting; it would be sufficient if some arrangement might be made during the day.

The Ambassador drove to the review of the Labor Service accompanied by SS-*Untersturmführer* Jasper, Attaché at the Embassy in London, and myself. He expressed his regret that the weather was not better for the poor young fellows, who must surely have been afoot since early morning. Apparently recollecting more peaceful times a year ago, he talked about the crazy world. He had been in London on August 28 in order to convince the Cabinet that Germany did not intend to make a sudden attack on Great Britain. As a matter of fact there were people in Great Britain whose attitude was based on this assumption. He himself was, however, convinced of the Führer's peaceful intentions toward Great Britain and had expressed himself accordingly.

On returning from the Labor Service display, he stated that in his opinion the compulsory Labor Service was the best thing in the National Socialist program. Together with his friends (apparently of the Conservative Party) he would do his utmost to ensure that compulsory labor service was introduced in Great Britain too within the next 6 months, since as a form of physical training and social adjustment it could not be dispensed with in modern industrialized States.

To my question whether he had understood the excellent words of the songs and part songs of the Labor Service, which were written by Will Decker, he said yes, he had, and remarked that F. M. Göring had drawn his attention to several characteristic passages.

Attaché Dr. Jasper, my *Sturm* comrade, incidentally remarked to me in confidence that, in the opinion of the individual members of

the London Embassy, the purpose of Sir N. H.'s journey had not been pacification but rather incitement. This is in my opinion a gross error of judgment.

On the way to tea with the Führer at the Deutscher Hof he expressed the hope that he might be able to speak with the Führer. However, the opportunity for a private conversation does not seem to have come his way. He merely spoke to me in the evening about some statements by the Führer to the effect that the Labor Service included about 2.6 million men. I pointed out that this figure probably referred to the total number of men who were in the Labor Service at present and had already passed through it.

On our return Sir N. H. informed me that he had succeeded in fixing the time for an interview with the F. M., namely, at 3 p.m. on the following day, and as last year at the Pfeifferhütte.

The same evening Sir N. H. received a visit from Sir Roger Chance, the head of the Press Section of the British Embassy, as I was informed from the German side.

Sir N. H. expressed the wish not to take part in the visit to Salzburg, but—particularly in view of the conversation with F. M. Göring—to remain in Nuremberg. He suggested that I should think out a program for a tour of Nuremberg for the next day, since I of course knew his tastes.

Sir N. H. informed me that he intended to remain in Nuremberg at any rate until Friday, September 9. The Protocol Department were under the impression that he intended to leave directly after the first day.

*Thursday, September 8.*

Early in the morning Sir N. H. received a visit from Mr. Conwell Evans.<sup>5</sup> As a member of the Anglo-German Society I knew him by name as being a leading member of the "English-German Fellowship" in London. As to his outlook, Sir N. H. remarked later that he was more German than British. He had a conversation with him lasting more than an hour and a half, during which they walked up and down between the railway tracks at the North Station on this fine sunny morning. When I procured a car to take Mr. Conwell [*sic*] back into the town and had a brief conversation with him, I had the impression that he was striving to conceal a great shock from me.

In accordance with Sir N. H.'s tastes I had arranged for the morning first an inspection of the latest German youth hostel, which had been opened in Nuremberg Castle only a few days before, and following on that a visit to the Bratwurstherzle, as last year Sir N. H. had

<sup>5</sup> See also document No. 382, p. 605.



expressed a wish to eat fried sausages in a real old-fashioned Nuremberg restaurant.

For the drive with the Ambassador the car I had chosen from the transport section (*Fahrbereitschaft*) was a new Opel-Admiral, with a driver whom I liked particularly. It turned out later that he was Fritz von Opel's chauffeur, who had held the post for over 26 years and was the oldest driver in the transport section; tall, fair, and a Westphalian type [*von fälischem Schlag*] he looked the very model of absolute reliability. As we made our way to the car Sir N. H. asked him at once where he came from. His reply that he came from Hesse-Nassau was the occasion for historical observations by Sir N. H. on the excellence of the men of Hesse, who had rendered the British great service in many wars.

As we drove through beautiful Nuremberg up to the Castle in glorious weather, Sir N. H. was unusually serious and remarked that one ought particularly to enjoy such lovely days in such beautiful surroundings, since one did not know how many such days were allotted to one by fate. He was obliged to inform me that he had received extremely grave news yesterday evening. The complete picture presented by the separate communications received by the British Government showed that it was intended on the German side to settle the Czechoslovak question by military force without waiting for the results of Runciman's mediation. The alliance with France was of course well known to all; France would therefore be obliged to march in this event, and he saw in this state of affairs no possibility of Great Britain remaining outside the conflict. He considered any pressure by Great Britain on France to be out of the question, since every nation was the guardian of its own honor. He was therefore extremely apprehensive, since any false step might have unpredictable consequences. If the Führer decided in favor of military intervention, he would risk his whole mighty work of reconstruction.

I replied that the Führer, whom the Germans revered as their greatest statesman, would certainly not make any wrong decision. Conditions for the Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia were, however, intolerable and demanded an immediate and radical change. The wife of my neighbor in Grossglienicke, one Baron Geyr von Schweppenburg—a relative of the former Military Attaché in London—was a Sudeten German and had given me details of the oppression to which long-established German landowners in Czechoslovakia had to submit. The family was Roman Catholic and Conservative in outlook and had not made themselves conspicuous in the Sudeten German question in any way at all. In spite of this they were treated as if they were living in an enemy country. One morning

about May 22 a detachment of Czech soldiers had constructed a concrete pillbox on their well-kept lawn—the family's particular pride—without considering it necessary to inform the owner of the house at all or to give any reasons. A large part of the garden might not be used by the family. What caused Baroness Geyr particular anxiety was the fact that in the neighboring village—it was a district where the population was mixed—the Left-Wing Radical workers on the estate were being specially trained by Czech N.C.O.'s in blasting and incendiarism, and were openly boasting of the purpose of this activity, namely to be able, if need be, to reduce all German property to ashes. An attempt by the family to invite the Czech officer, who spoke German, to have a meal with them—they acted on the assumption that as Czechoslovak subjects they could for their part make an attempt to improve relations—had as its sequel that on the following day the officer concerned was immediately relieved of his command for transgressing an existing ban on dealings with persons of German extraction.

To this Sir N. H. replied that he personally had no sympathy at all with the Czechs, and moreover considered the placing of Sudeten Germans under Czech domination to be a grave mistake. He expressed his aversion to the Czechs in very strong terms.

On announcing ourselves at Nuremberg Castle we were shown round by *Gebietsführer* Müller, an adjutant of the Reich Youth Leader. Sir N. H. was much impressed by the very appropriately and beautifully furnished rooms. Among other things we were shown the Reich Youth Leader's room and the adjacent rooms for the other leaders of the Hitler Youth Movement. When Sir N. H. expressed the wish to be able to stay at the Youth Hostel, our adjutant informed him that this was possible for all those who were members of the International Youth Hostels Association. Membership cost 4 marks for adults and 2 marks for junior members. Sir N. H. emphasized that on his next private visit to Nuremberg he would certainly take advantage of this friendly offer, since he much preferred these attractive quarters to hotel accommodation.

The only thing which Sir N. H. did not like about the Youth Hostel was the fact that on all the beds was a copy of the *Stürmer*, to which he personally showed most decided aversion and which he did not regard as suitable reading matter for the young.

We then went from the Castle to the Bratwurstherzle where I had reserved a table in the room to the right of the main entrance. He felt very much at ease in this old-fashioned German parlor with its simple fare and hoped to be able to visit the restaurant again on a later occasion.

In the afternoon a car from F. M. Göring, which was accompanied by Lieutenant Krüger, called for Sir N. H. When I asked whether in these circumstances I was to remain in Nuremberg, Sir N. H. expressed the wish that I should accompany him. During the conversation with Lieutenant Krüger on the way to the Pfeifferhütte he inquired about Lieutenant Brauchitsch, the Commander in Chief's son, who had accompanied him on a visit to F. M. Göring on another occasion.

At the Pfeifferhütte F. M. Göring received Sir N. H. and myself on the terrace and thereupon had a tête-à-tête conversation with Sir N. H. lasting almost 2 hours, and in fact they walked up and down on the pathway below the terrace and were partly visible from the terrace. On certain occasions they stood still and it was possible to observe that the F. M. was at particular pains to talk Sir N. H. round to his point of view.

In the meantime I remained on the front terrace in the company of State Secretary Körner, Major General Bodenschatz, and *Ministerialdirektor* Gritzbach, and was questioned by them in detail about the attitude of Great Britain and Sir N. H. First of all, they got it clear that I was not a member of the Foreign Ministry. I told these gentlemen all that I had heard about Sir N. H. and remarked that in my opinion the Ambassador felt himself to be in the midst of a tragic conflict. Although Great Britain had no sympathies at all with the Czechs, in the event of France regarding her alliance as coming into force she would be compelled to join in sooner or later. I had the impression that, owing to Runciman's Mission, not only British prestige but also the prestige of the Conservative Party would be at stake, if we were to take any military action before the conclusion of Runciman's negotiations for conciliation.

To be sure, Sir [*sic*] Neville Chamberlain and Lord Halifax were striving for an Anglo-German settlement with the support of Sir N. H. Here—I think it was State Secretary Körner—duly interjected that it was precisely German action which depended on these men.

I gave a warning against regarding Great Britain's present attitude merely as bluff or presuming far too much on the pro-German attitude of the above-mentioned men and indeed for the following reasons:

Great Britain, as I had already explained in my last report, should not in the opinion of Sir N. H. be rated as a democracy but as an aristocracy. This aristocratic ruling class was at present on the defensive against the broad masses of the popular front. The settlement of the Anglo-Italian conflict had already been a severe test for the Conservative Party, since the broad masses of the people in Great Britain condemned any yielding in face of claims by Mussolini. In

the Czechoslovak question the British Government had, by sending out Lord Runciman, committed themselves first of all to attempt to secure a peaceful settlement of this conflict. The British Government could not tolerate any military intervention before Runciman's Mission was concluded; they would run the risk of being swept away because of cowardice by the Labor opposition at the next general election. However, that would probably seal the fate of the old aristocratic ruling class in Great Britain. The pressure on Great Britain to intervene was therefore due to considerations of domestic politics. If I had only heard F. M. Göring's speech at the time, I would have noticed that the English too, being a virile Germanic race, preferred to be led by hunting and shooting men and not their opposites.

I personally did not believe that Great Britain's intervention in the Sudeten German question resulted from considerations of the balance of power on the Continent, since the increase of power accruing to Germany by the annexation of the Sudeten German regions would not constitute any appreciable shift in the balance of power, when regarded from the British point of view. From the British point of view the case would have to be judged quite differently from the former German entry into Belgium, when a direct military and political threat to Great Britain was the result.

The French point of view would certainly be different, as was expressed in a leading article in *Le Temps* during the previous week.

In reply to the question as to how Great Britain would react if we began military action in order to ward off a Czech attack, I declared that no person in Great Britain or America would regard a Czech attack as worthy of credence in view of the present ratio of forces.

If an attack by the Russians was proved I would, however, judge the case differently.

If Germany therefore wished in any event to settle the Sudeten German question by military force, it would depend merely on the assessment of Germany's military strength and her armament potential in comparison with those of the coalition ranged against us. I had no verdict to give on this.

State Secretary Körner was kind enough to give me details of the supply position and the probable development of a campaign against Germany by the Western Powers. According to these statements a confident assessment of Germany's military position seems thoroughly appropriate.

In reply to my further question as to the attitude Poland would probably adopt, Körner or Bodenschatz expressed the opinion that the Poles were sitting like vultures on the fence nearby and merely

wished to ensure for themselves the possibility of a large share of the prey; they would not march against us in any event.

At the end of the conversation at the Pfeifferhütte the F. M. drove with Sir N.H. to Burg Neuhaus in order to show him the place where he had spent a great part of his youth. The F.M. drove the car himself. The Ambassador sat beside him. When I informed Sir N.H. later that according to the speedometer they had traveled at 130 km. per hour in the car, he remarked that he had not noticed this. Before the drive had started Göring had asked him whether he found driving fast unpleasant. Sir N.H. had replied that this was all the same to him, whereupon Göring said that he nevertheless preferred driving slowly. The Ambassador then wondered at what speed the F.M. would really have driven if he had wished to drive fast.

On instructions from the F. M., I was expressly invited by State Secretary Körner to take part in the drive, when I suggested that I should be left at the Pfeifferhütte until they returned from the excursion. Besides the F. M. and Sir N. H., *Min. Dir.* Gritzbach and State Secretary Körner traveled in the first car; Göring's A.D.C., *Oberführer* Görnert of the *Feldherrnhalle Standarte*, and Major Konrad were in the second car.

After a glorious drive through the sun-bathed "Franconian Switzerland" we reached Burg Neuhaus, where a table for seven persons was laid for coffee on the terrace with a fine view; the F. M. showed Sir N.H. the layout of the castle, and in particular the places which are described in the book by *Min. Dir.* Gritzbach\*: Göring's favorite spot as a boy and the steep mountain face down which he had climbed.

During coffee I had the feeling that there had been a relaxation of the tension. First of all the F.M. expressed his pleasure at the letter of congratulation from Lord Halifax on the birth of his daughter. He proposed that, together with Sir N.H., he should write a note to Lord H. to the effect that Great Britain should disclaim any interest in Czechoslovakia if the four best stags in Germany were placed at his disposal for shooting. To this the Ambassador replied literally: "Gladly for my part, but unfortunately the decision does not rest with me." Then a card to be sent to the F. M.'s wife was brought and signed by all those present. Thereupon an open postcard with a view of Burg Neuhaus, which was written by Sir N.H. and signed by him and the F.M., was sent to Lord Halifax. It was addressed to the Foreign Office.

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\* *Hermann Göring; the Man and His Work*, Berlin 1938 (English translation, London 1939).

The F. M. explained the intended alterations to the castle and expressed the hope that these would be finished by the next Party Congress. He hoped that the Ambassador would then be his guest at this castle, and indeed in essentially more carefree circumstances, since Czechoslovakia would then no longer exist.

After coffee State Secretary Körner showed me over the castle in detail and informed me that it had been constructed by Henry I in connection with a chain of other castles as a barrier against invasions by the Huns. The F. M. was kind enough to explain personally to me some details of the defenses and their flanking possibilities, and to point out the particularly strategic position of the castle.

Finally, the visit to a neighboring place was abandoned, where the F. M. wished to show Sir N. H. a further entry in a book, in which Göring had signed his name as a boy as "Hermann Göring, Boer General."

It was a quick drive back to the Pfeifferhütte again. An excellent kirsch was served there, as a stirrup cup so to speak. The F. M. and Sir N. H. stood in conversation for almost another half hour. Finally I informed State Secretary Körner of my intention to take Sir N. H. to the Nassauer Keller in Nuremberg in the evening. From the Pfeifferhütte arrangements were made for reserving a table in a good position close to the entrance where the Führer had formerly also sat.

Business was brisk in the Nassauer Keller when we entered. Every single place was occupied by SA, SS, and political leaders, and there was a very gay atmosphere. The band was playing popular tunes, among others Rhenish carnival songs. Sir N. H. felt thoroughly at home in the surroundings and inquired with great interest about the history and rank of the individual men going up and down the steep staircase which was directly opposite us. As he had already done at last year's Party Congress, Sir N. H. showed a marked interest in the various German racial types. During the meal *Scharführer* von Jonquieres, whom I had asked to send a car to collect Sir N. H., announced that the car was waiting. When Jonquieres was about to leave, Sir N. H. asked him to sit down. Sir N. H. then came to speak of how in his young days in Bonn he had been a boon companion of the Bonn Prussians and still knew the Duke of Coburg, Bodo Count von Alvensleben-Neugattersleben, and Herr von Grunelius from that period. In reply to J.'s question whether Sir N. H. was identical with the man of the same name who, according to Nicolson's book on his father,<sup>7</sup> as Secretary to the British Embassy

<sup>7</sup> Harold Nicolson, *Lord Carnock, a Study in the Old Diplomacy* (London 1930), pp. 248-50.

in St. Petersburg had one night given his Ambassador the k.o., Sir N. H. said yes, and gave a detailed account of the way the episode took place. During that period of Anglo-Russian tension the Ochrana endeavored to gain possession of the Embassy's documents. When suspicious noises were heard one night, the not very brave young son of the Ambassador, later to become the author, gave the alarm to Sir N. H., who, being particularly athletic and unafraid, seemed to him especially suitable to ward off intruders. In the darkness Sir N. H. met the Ambassador and taking him for the intruder laid him out with an uppercut, so that he was obliged to stay in bed for several days afterward.

When we left about midnight the first morning papers were being delivered. When Sir N. H. saw the headlines which again dealt with the Czechs, he merely remarked "Oh, these blasted Czechs."

He did not make any communication by telephone to the British Embassy in Berlin or London regarding the results of the conversations with the F. M., as I ascertained by inquiry at the communications center.

*Friday, September 9.*

In the morning Sir N. H. was working on a report in his compartment, then at 12 o'clock had a conversation with the German Foreign Minister at the Grand Hotel, and then drove straight from the Grand Hotel to the Castle where he attended the lunch given by the Führer's Deputy (he sat next to Ley and General Epp).

In the afternoon he ordered a car for 7:45 p.m. and informed me after the departure of the rest of the C[orps] D[iplomatique] that he was expecting a courier from London with important despatches, who would arrive at the Nuremberg airfield at 8:15 p.m. He requested me to meet him, instead of going by himself, and to accompany him here. He remarked that he had no idea who was being sent as courier. If it was at all feasible would I arrange for the courier to have his meals and be accommodated in the diplomatic train.

One of the King's Messengers, named King—an elderly gentleman of about 60 years of age—had flown from London as courier at 2 p.m. He was in a very worn-out state, explained to me in great detail that he had been fetched out of bed for the flight—incidentally his first one—and had eaten nothing since morning. He requested me to obtain a light meal for him as soon as possible, a scrambled egg if possible, since he had had no less than five teeth extracted shortly before.

I immediately reported the courier's arrival to SS-Oberführer Stenger and communicated to him the British Ambassador's wish

that the courier might have his meals and be accommodated in the diplomatic train. *Oberführer* Stenger stated that he had to conform to advice from the head of the Protocol in this instance. I reported the case in detail to the latter. The head of the Protocol believed however that he could not accede to the Ambassador's wish as a matter of principle, since other members of the Diplomatic Corps would then beg for the same favored treatment. In particular it was a nightmare to him that His Excellency Attolico, the Ambassador of friendly Italy, might approach him with similar demands. In vain I drew attention to the special circumstances of the case and the possibility that the refusal might be felt to show a lack of customary courtesy in a critical political situation. The head of the Protocol adhered to his refusal. In particular the courier was also only permitted to have a meal in the restaurant car of the diplomatic train on the condition that the Ambassador sat with him. I refused to make such an unreasonable demand to the Ambassador. I requested the head of the Protocol to forward this refusal to Sir N. H. himself. On the way thither, I endeavored to bring about another change in the decision by drawing attention to the Ambassador's friendship with F. M. Göring; I thereby encountered such a brusque reprimand as has seldom fallen to my lot all my life.

As things were, accommodation had to be obtained at the office for guests of honor and the courier accommodated there. I took further charge of the courier and even took upon myself to obtain the hotel card at the office for guests of honor and arranged for the accommodation and the punctual departure of the courier, since there seemed to me perhaps to be a political interest involved in this. The courier then flew to Cologne next morning on the regular plane at 8:15 a.m. During the night I had ascertained that there was no vacant seat available in the Cologne-London plane. At the request of the Ambassador, I endeavored to charter a special plane—for a payment of 2150 marks. Since one was not available, a British plane was ordered to Cologne through the Embassy in London, since the Ambassador's report appeared to be urgent.

*Saturday, September 10.*

On the previous evening the refusal of the head of the Protocol to accommodate the courier in the special train had also made me particularly apprehensive, because Sir N. H. had announced for the coming day the arrival of a young Secretary from the Embassy in Berlin. The same principles were to apply to the latter as to the courier. He would, therefore, according to this, have to take his meals and be accommodated outside the diplomatic train. As in this instance I was afraid of the immediate departure of the Ambassador,



I attempted very early in the morning to obtain State Secretary Körner's advice in this matter. However, when I rang up at 6:30 a.m. there was only a *SS-Untersturmführer* from the criminal police present who stated that the State Secretary could not be contacted before 9 a.m. unless the matter was of particular urgency. Since I did not wish to attribute exaggerated importance to the matter, I merely gave a brief account of the case and wished only in the event of further difficulties arising to lay claim to advice from State Secretary K. at 9 a.m.

*SS-Oberführer* Stenger, to whom I reported the Secretary's arrival, straightway gave permission, without asking the head of the Protocol, for the Secretary to have breakfast in the restaurant car and referred me to the head of the Protocol in the matter of accommodating the Secretary in the diplomatic coach. At the urgent personal request of the Ambassador the head of the Protocol gave permission during the morning for Mr. Harrison, the Secretary, to be given accommodation in the Ambassador's coach, where three compartments stood empty already at the time of the Secretary's arrival. I had breakfast with Mr. Harrison and informed him that I was obliged to regard the sending of a delicate old gentleman as a courier as a mistake. He explained that the actual King's Messenger who was detailed for the journey could not be contacted as he was playing golf. He himself just had to admit that the King's Messenger looked perfectly comical in his get-up on his departure. Furthermore, King's Messengers were generally retired colonels of the British Army.

On the way to the Hitler Youth Rally Sir N. H. was accompanied by the head of the Protocol. From my seat in the front I could not help hearing the political conversation which was carried on. Sir N. H. stated that in the event of a military conflict between Czechs and Germans the alliance would in any case come into force for France, and he did not know how Great Britain could remain aside when the honor of France was at stake. During a discussion of the Mährisch-Ostrau affair<sup>8</sup> the head of the Protocol admitted that the reports might well be exaggerated by 50 percent or even 75 percent, however, the remaining 50 percent or 25 percent was quite sufficient to establish the fact of the Czechs' enormous responsibility. In all circumstances a peaceful settlement of the dispute was of importance to Great Britain. However, if Runciman stated that a result was not attainable, the way would be clear for another move. There was no doubt that if Great Britain entered the fray the whole world would rise up against Germany, for we ought to consider how far the influence of the 15 million Jews in the world would turn the scales

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 56, p. 712.

against Germany. He was so very worried about doing the right thing and not precipitating developments. Up till the present the movement among the Sudeten Germans had been, thank God, under control. However, events might happen when Germany's national honor would be affected by some incident or other. Unpredictable developments might result from some such incident. In the conversation Sir N. H. emphasized that he regarded Göring as his very good friend—Sir N. H. pointed out that if it were possible to secure a peaceful solution of the Czech question the Cabinet was willing to change British public opinion radically in favor of Germany within a year, and then there would be the possibility of a solution of the colonial question.

After the Youth Rally Sir N. H. arranged with State Secretary Weizsäcker for a fresh conversation before the departure of the C. D. This took place at 3 o'clock in the afternoon in the State Secretary's private room in the Grand Hotel. While I was waiting outside in the corridor, Under State Secretary Woermann greeted me and asked me whether Sir N. H. had finally delivered the letter, which he had been carrying on him for a long time. I could not give any information about this.

On the way back from the Grand Hotel, whither I accompanied Sir N. H. alone, he told me that Beneš had announced a speech for today; however, it was unfortunate that no one believed Beneš. I drew Sir N. H.'s attention to Beneš' acquaintance with French politicians in his young days, when he had been in Paris a long time as a student. Sir N. H. believed that first and foremost the Masonic link between him and the French politicians was the decisive factor.

On our return I had tea with Sir N. H. in the restaurant car. He remarked with a sigh that Great Britain was now having to pay for her guilty part in the Treaty of Versailles. No one apart from Clemenceau had a definite aim at the Treaty of Versailles. The leading statesmen were entirely ignorant of geographical conditions. Even in recent times he had spoken to people in Great Britain who had regarded Czechoslovakia as a new variety of interesting flower.

Sir N. H. had learned from a newspaper headline that, according to a Polish report, Dimitroff had arrived in Prague, and expressed the opinion that he was just the one who had been missing from the present situation so far! It would be tragic if, because of the Czechs who were aided and abetted by the Pan-Slavists, it should come to a conflict between the two great Germanic nations, the Anglo-Saxons and the Teutons. That would be a conflict in which Great Britain had no real war aims. Even if Germany were defeated, the Sudeten German regions would in his opinion have to be given to Germany

at the peace treaty, if an end was to be made to the eternal unrest in Europe.

I replied that if Dimitroff's arrival should turn out to be true, the outbreak of civil war in Czechoslovakia could soon be reckoned with. It would be the signal for all the Czech Communist organizations to take aggressive action against the Sudeten Germans, whereupon corresponding defensive action would naturally be taken. I therefore expected a crisis soon, especially also since, as was well known, the Chief of the Czech General Staff was a former Russian officer and was striving for close ties with Russia for reasons of Pan-Slav ideology.

It was openly stated in Czech officer circles that Germany would certainly overrun Czechoslovakia at the start; things would then develop as in Yugoslavia, and afterward Czechoslovakia would with Russian and other assistance emerge from the conflict greater and stronger than before. Unfortunately, despite his good intentions, Hodza could not carry his point in face of the military and Sokol circles, who were virtually exercising the functions of a rival government and sabotaging Hodza's measures designed to achieve a settlement.

Sir N. H. replied that in his opinion also much of what I had said was correct.

Sir N. H. then asked me about *Reichsführer* Himmler, for whom he seemed to have some regard. I informed him of the *Reichsführer's* interest in prehistoric times and folklore. He had been responsible for arousing an enormous amount of interest in this; the *Reichsführer* was especially interested in the person of Henry I, the first German king, at whose instigation the chain of defenses against the Huns had been built, of which Göring's castle at Neuhaus was a part.

*Sunday, September 11.*

Sir N. H. could not attend the ceremony in honor of the dead as he was expecting an important telephone call from London. He later attended the march past of the SA and SS and showed great interest in it. He preferred to remain in Nuremberg as he had arranged for a conversation with State Minister Neurath. This took place at 1 p.m. in the Grand Hotel and lasted about half an hour. After this Sir N. H. lunched with the Belgian Ambassador, Count d'Avignon, and his Secretary, M. Colleau. On Count d'Avignon's inquiring whether he was going to attend the military parade, Sir N. H. replied that he was going to leave the same day; moreover the *Luftwaffe* would not be so strongly represented at the parade as in the previous year, since most of the German squadrons were perched like birds of prey all around Czechoslovakia in order to swoop down at very

short notice, as F. M. Göring had told him. For the rest, questions of a general nature were discussed during the meal.

On the way to the Grand Hotel Sir N. H. had a detailed conversation with Count d'Avignon, while Ambassador Lipski conversed with M. Djuwara, the Rumanian Minister. During the meal I was again asked for details of the historical background of the Party, and the conversation turned to the *Stürmer* to which they showed aversion. They acknowledged that the *Schwarze Korps* was on a quite different plane, and in particular the illustrations were good.

After lunch Sir N. H. wished to go for a walk in the town and watch the last part of the march past of the SS. We went back to the diplomatic stand on foot, which was meanwhile occupied by girls from Styria, Carinthia, and the Egerland. The girls were particularly attractive in their national costumes. Sir N. H. asked me to explain to him the differences between the individual costumes. Reich Minister Goebbels came across during this and, surrounded by these girls, signed autographs. The group of very charming girls from Graz and Klagenfurt, with whom we had got into conversation, had soon discovered that it was the British Ambassador, and Sir N. H. was asked for his autograph. According to my calculations he gave 150 autographs to the individual girls who came from Graz, Klagenfurt, and from the Egerland as well. On the cards which I handed to him there was in most cases the name of Reich Minister Goebbels, but on at least ten the name of Konrad Henlein. He signed his name without more ado on these as well and gave his signature to uniformed members of the Sudeten German F.S. formations also.

He was particularly pleased on arriving at his former seat to find that one of the war-disabled men in the front row recognized him again and said spontaneously, "We are glad to see you back here." He also gave a number of war-disabled men his autograph and inquired about the regiments and provinces from which they came.

At the march past of the police units, Death's Head units, and the *Leibstandarte* he expressed his approval and thought that it was not possible to distinguish between the Austrian and German police.

When the parade was over Sir N. H. wished to go to the North Station. I was, however, unable to find a C. D. car. While waiting Sir N. H. met an acquaintance, SS-*Brigadeführer* Humann Huinigen, who was accompanied by the Greek Colonel Nikoladis and the Hungarian Field Marshal Count Tacas. Arrangements were made to have first a snack at the Bratwurstherzle, from where I intended to order a car from the North Station. We found a table on the first floor of the Bratwurstherzle despite the great crowd there. Sir

N. H. was asked about his hunting successes in Germany. He reported that unfortunately in the last 16 months he had only had four shots, which, however, had all been hits and brought down two stags and two bustards. He regretted very much that pressure of business left him so little time for big game shooting and feared that the time would soon come when he would have to confine himself to small game. He discussed his successes in chamois stalking in detail with Count Tacas, being familiar with all the different deer forests.

Count Tacas then led the conversation into the realm of politics and sought to make propaganda for the Hungarian minority in Slovakia. It was impossible geographically to cut the Hungarians in Slovakia off from the Hungarians in the lowland plain, since it involved a completely homogeneous region economically. During the drought in the summer the Hungarian peasants in the plain must be given more opportunity to drive their cattle into what is at present Slovak territory, since pasture and fodder were only to be found there. He appealed to Sir N. H. to use his influence so that Great Britain might make a definite proposal for mediation and recommended more "*kurasch*" in this direction.

After the snack at the Bratwurstherzle we inspected the works of Veit Stoss in the nearby church, and directly afterward set out on the drive back to the North Station. On leaving the Bratwurstherzle Sir N. H. was cheered enthusiastically by the people.

In the night of Sunday to Monday Sir N. H. set out at 1:08 a.m. on the return journey to Berlin. On his departure he thanked me with particular cordiality. He said that if I had not been by his side he would have broken off his stay in Nuremberg very much sooner, with which he apparently meant to express particular appreciation.

*Tuesday, September 13.*

Shortly before the arrival of the diplomatic train in Berlin on the Tuesday after the Führer's speech, M. Karecka, the Lithuanian Chargé d'Affaires, spoke to me at breakfast in the restaurant car. It was this gentleman, with whom I had not been acquainted hitherto, whom I had sat next at dinner, when he was sitting alone in the restaurant car, and had had a conversation with him on agricultural conditions in Lithuania. The conversation in the morning began with this subject. M. Karecka then switched suddenly to politics and told me that the Führer's speech had made him and also his colleagues in the Diplomatic Corps extremely apprehensive, since the Führer had henceforth confirmed Germany's intervention on behalf of the Sudeten Germans as a point of German honor on which there could be no yielding. In his opinion armed intervention by Germany

would encounter a defensive front of the broadest extent and the tragedy of the World War would be repeated. When I expressed my surprise at such an interpretation of the Führer's speech, so moderate in my opinion, and which explained with cogent logic the necessity for a change in the untenable situation of the Sudeten Germans, the Lithuanian Chargé d'Affaires declared that it was not a matter of the Sudeten German question alone; the Powers feared that, after disposing of the Sudeten German question, Germany would in the immediate future settle the question of the Polish Corridor and therefore it seemed appropriate even now to proceed to defensive action.

With regard to the latter remark I explained as my personal opinion that, in view of the loyalty with which the Führer had entered into commitments with France and Great Britain for maintaining peace, he would also respect the agreements with the great warrior Pilsudski and any aggression against Poland seemed to me personally to be completely ruled out, since a compact region populated by Germans the same size as that of the Sudeten Germans did not exist there. I emphasized in addition that in my opinion the Führer would succeed by his skill as a statesman in effecting the difficult settlement of the Sudeten German question without warlike complications, since the final stabilization of European peace was a matter near to his own heart. I believed also from the attitude of Sir N. H. that he would be able to count upon British support in this direction.

The conversation then broke off. The Lithuanian Chargé d'Affaires hoped to meet me again shortly if Providence allowed. From what M. Karecka said one may assume that at any rate doubts exist among individual members of the C. D. regarding the Polish attitude.

*SS-Untersturmführer*  
*SS-Reitersturm 1/7*

BERLIN, September 15, 1938.

## No. 483

1585/382840-43

*The German Minister in Ireland (Hempel)<sup>9</sup> to the German Foreign Ministry*

A 342

DUBLIN, September 15, 1938.  
(Pol. II 2877/38)

Subject: Details on Ireland's attitude in the present political crisis.

On the 8th instant Mr. De Valera went to Geneva.<sup>10</sup> On my return yesterday, therefore, I was only able to visit Mr. Walshe, Secretary General of the Ministry of External Affairs, and, of course, discussed with him the general political situation on the lines of the instructions received. Mr. Walshe told me that the Irish Government, which in the last critical weeks had constantly been in close contact with the British Government, had done all in their power to achieve in London the speedy intervention of the British Government for the achieving of a peaceful solution of the Czechoslovak question. Mr. Walshe told me again on this occasion, as on previous occasions, that the Irish Government understood the necessity of obtaining full rights of self-determination for the Sudeten Germans. I must not omit to mention that Mr. Walshe expressed the opinion that the British Government was so thoroughly opposed to taking part in a European conflict over the Czechoslovak crisis that a straightforward statement by us, to the effect that vis-à-vis France we would confine ourselves exclusively to measures solely in defense of German territory, would suffice to prevent Great Britain's intervening, at least at first. I referred Mr. Walshe to the Führer's speech, which stated clearly enough that a war, started by France against us, would only be a defensive war for us.

For the rest, Mr. Walshe merely said that, in the event of a European war in which Great Britain was involved, Ireland's position would be terribly difficult. It appears from the press that, in De Valera's absence, the Government has in the last few days been dealing with the question of the measures to be taken in the event of the outbreak of war. Only the Opposition paper *Irish Independent* publishes a more detailed report of the Cabinet meeting in question, and emphasizes that the measures aim at preventing the use of Irish territory as bases for an attack on Great Britain.

Chamberlain's meeting with the Führer has caused definite relief in the Ministry of External Affairs here.

<sup>9</sup> Eduard Hempel, German Minister in Dublin, July 1937-May 1945.

<sup>10</sup> Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs, 1932-48. He went to Geneva to attend the meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations on September 12.

Last week Eden was in Dublin during a lengthy visit to Ireland for health reasons and visited Mr. De Valera, who gave a small private luncheon party for him. The *Irish Times*, organ of the Anglo-Irish faction, yesterday gave prominence to a report from London that on his return Eden gave Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, a statement by De Valera promising the fullest cooperation with Great Britain in every direction which should appear necessary. I spoke to Mr. Walshe about this surprising news, which he described as pure invention and added that he had challenged the deputy editor in chief of the *Irish Times* on this matter—the editor in chief, Mr. Smyllie, is on holiday.

He added that such a report could only do harm. Last night's and this morning's press publishes a correction by the Government Information Bureau. ("It was officially announced in Dublin today that there is no truth in the statement appearing in a Dublin morning paper today that Mr. De Valera gave a message to Mr. Eden for Mr. Chamberlain.") Furthermore, the report is also said to have been denied by Eden, who said that no exchange of views of the kind described had taken place between Mr. De Valera and himself. Their conversation had been of a purely private nature.

In an interview in Geneva Mr. De Valera expressed his satisfaction over Chamberlain's meeting with the Führer. During a 3-hour stop in London on his journey to Geneva, he had lunched with Sir Thomas Inskip, Minister of Defense, and had a talk with Malcolm MacDonald.<sup>11</sup>

As far as I could ascertain up to the present, the idea is gaining ground in German circles here that, if war breaks out, Ireland would immediately ally herself with Great Britain. In this respect I doubt first of all whether an immediate open declaration of war is really to be expected, even though the Irish Government may be ready in large measure to meet the wishes of the British. In supplement to my earlier report, I think, however, that, even if there is no declaration of war, an early breaking off of diplomatic relations is very possible, especially if the United States at once declare themselves definitely against us. More precise details in the event of a further deterioration of the situation can only be learned after Mr. De Valera's return from Geneva.

HEMPFL

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<sup>11</sup> Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 1935-39.



## No. 484

2369/494950

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Norway (Neuhaus) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A. II. b. 12. a.

OSLO, September 15, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 6110)

Subject: The Norwegian Prime Minister on the attitude of Norway.

The Oslo newspaper *Morgenbladet* asked Nygaardsvold, the Norwegian Prime Minister, what deliberations the Norwegian Government had carried on during the days subsequent to the speech of the German Führer and Reich Chancellor and what conclusions they had reached. The Prime Minister is temporarily head also of the Ministry of Labor and of the Foreign Ministry. The Prime Minister answered that he had consulted the Government yesterday, and today would hold a preparatory session of the State Council. He did not wish for the time being to express his opinion as to the effect of European events on the settlement by Norway of her own affairs, apart from the fact that naturally every effort was being exerted to safeguard Norwegian neutrality in case of war. "But this is so self-evident," said the Prime Minister in conclusion, "that there is no necessity whatever to mention it."

NEUHAUS

## No. 485

2369/494951-54

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Sweden (Below) to the German Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

STOCKHOLM, September 15, 1938.

A 1470

(Pol. IV 6111)

Subject: Sweden's attitude to an armed conflict in Central Europe and to a demand by the League of Nations for the introduction of sanctions.

I. The Swedish Government would probably proclaim their neutrality and act in closest cooperation with the other Scandinavian States in an armed conflict limited to Germany on the one hand and Czechoslovakia, and perhaps Russia, on the other. There would be presumably little change in economic relations with the outside world, and Swedish deliveries (e.g., ore) would continue, while the export of war material (arms and ammunition) might of course be forbidden. At the same time the Government would do everything neces-

sary to strengthen the military defenses of the country, and would take special measures for naval and air defense at vulnerable points. It can be assumed that armed violation of the sovereignty of Swedish territory would meet with immediate armed resistance.

II. The same applies in the first place to an armed conflict in which Great Britain and France were involved against Germany. In this case too, Sweden would in all probability declare herself neutral and maintain her neutrality in closest cooperation with the other Scandinavian countries as long as possible. In particular she would try to maintain her commercial deliveries (among which deliveries of ore are to be understood) to both belligerent parties. Sandler, the Foreign Minister, has expressed the firm determination to remain neutral and the urgent desire to keep out of all entanglements with the Great Powers, in each of his political speeches during this year at meetings of the League of Nations and conferences of Ministers of the Scandinavian States. Hansson, the Prime Minister, did the same in his speech on the 13th instant.

It is almost certain that Sweden would not immediately comply with a League of Nations resolution to introduce economic sanctions by all its members against a belligerent power. The Government has, no doubt, long realized the dangers which this represents of being involved in a conflict; this is precisely the reason why, as early as the beginning of this year, they declared that they were not bound by article 16 of the Covenant,<sup>13</sup> but entitled to free decision on its application, and since then publicly expressed this view with increasing clarity, alone and in cooperation with the Governments of the Oslo Powers.<sup>14</sup> Under the pressure of public opinion in Sweden and obviously in view of the complications which may possibly arise, Foreign Minister Sandler has urgently recommended to the League of Nations at its present meeting—even under the slight threat of Sweden's withdrawal—to recognize that article 16 is no longer binding. However, he further stated that, even if this were not recognized, the Swedish Government would abide by its decision.

Another question is whether Sweden, in the event of the conflict's being of long duration, would be in a position, in face of pressure from Great Britain, to maintain her obvious intention to remain neutral and, in particular, her deliveries of raw materials, important for war to the opposite side. It can be assumed that there would be strong pressure from Leftist Radical circles in Sweden for the discontinuance of such deliveries. However, the Social Democrat-controlled Government would probably be in a position to resist this

<sup>13</sup> See footnote 79, p. 737.

<sup>14</sup> The Oslo Powers (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Holland, Luxembourg, Norway, and Sweden) had signed a trade pact on May 28, 1937.

pressure at first. In this, and also as regards the danger of workers' strikes in this field, the urge, inherent in the Swedish people, to exploit all financial advantages and possibilities of gain, might be of help to the Government.

The situation is to be regarded in a different light if British pressure is increased, perhaps by the application of a blockade, or if the war situation turns to Germany's disadvantage. In this case it must be reckoned with that Sweden will sooner or later yield to the demands of the other side, either directly or by the indirect method of sanctions. In this the attitude of Poland might not be without influence on Sweden's decisions.

BELOW

No. 486

139/128051-53

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 422 of September 15

LONDON, September 15, 1938.

Received September 15, 1938—8:30 a.m.

Never have I witnessed such a sudden change of atmosphere as took place yesterday evening in the whole of Great Britain when Chamberlain's visit to the Führer was announced. Until evening the entire British population was sunk in deep depression called forth by the decision, no less serious, to take up arms under certain circumstances. Now things had taken a completely unexpected turn which offered the hope of a peaceful settlement. For details I would refer you to the exhaustive reports from the D.N.B. It is no exaggeration when the newspapers report that men and women wept for joy in the streets.

Accompanied by von Selzam, Counselor of Legation, I went to Heston airport to be present at the departure of Chamberlain, who was accompanied by Sir Horace Wilson and Mr. Strang, Counselor of Embassy. Outside the airport a joyful crowd had assembled who greeted the Prime Minister with hearty cheering. I congratulated the Prime Minister on his decision and requested him to accept my best wishes for the journey. He was obviously moved and replied in simple and sincere words that he hoped he would be able to contribute to the consolidation of peace by his discussions with the Führer. (He expressly said "the Führer.")

Representative English persons present were: Lord Halifax and his wife, and the leading officials of the Foreign Office. All of them, and especially Lord Halifax, took pains to show us Germans by their attitude the genuine pleasure they had felt at the Führer's immediate and cordial reply to the message of the British Prime Minister. Lord Halifax took me aside in order to ask me what impression the Prime Minister's initiative had called forth in Berlin, and was highly satisfied when I told him how warmly the German people welcomed Mr. Chamberlain.

Lord Brocket, who was likewise accompanied by his wife, spoke to me of the deep impression made on him by his talk with the Führer in Nuremberg, and expressed his firm conviction that the task of conciliation would succeed.

Shortly before his departure Mr. Chamberlain had to submit to the cross fire of the press photographers. He then made a short statement for the weekly newsreel in the following words:—

"I am going to meet the German Chancellor because the situation seems to me one in which discussion between him and me may have useful consequences. My policy has always been to try and assure peace, and Herr Hitler's ready acceptance encourages me to hope that my visit will not be without result."

The midday press reports Chamberlain's departure in large headlines. The friendly trend is unmistakable.

KORDT

#### No. 487

337/197139-61

*Memorandum on the Conversation Between the Führer and Mr. Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, at the Obersalzberg (Berchtesgaden) on September 15, 1938*

Mr. Chamberlain mentioned in his introductory remarks that since he had become Prime Minister of Great Britain he had always worked for an Anglo-German *rapprochement* and had always been on the lookout for opportunities to put his intentions into practice. In spite of occasional difficulties in Anglo-German relations, he had nevertheless again and again had the feeling that there was the possibility of strengthening mutual relations by a direct exchange of views. During the last weeks the situation had now become so difficult and grave that the danger of a conflict had seemed to him extremely close. Yet, even if both countries avoided becoming directly involved, the tension in Europe would have developed in a

fashion anything but conducive to a *rapprochement* between the two countries.

Quite apart from the Czechoslovak question there were today much greater problems down for discussion and, conscious of this tension, he had therefore undertaken the journey to Germany in order, by means of a direct conversation with the Führer, to attempt to clarify the situation.

The Führer replied that he was well aware of the significance of the British Prime Minister's journey. The whole German nation welcomed this journey, as Mr. Chamberlain could, of course, have gathered from the demonstrations of sympathy which he had received from the German population on his arrival in Munich and on the way to Berchtesgaden.

He (the Führer) could definitely state that since his youth he had had the idea of Anglo-German cooperation. The war had come as a great internal spiritual shock to him. However, he had since 1918 kept the idea of Anglo-German friendship constantly in mind. The reason why he had thus taken up the cause of this friendship was that since his nineteenth year he had developed certain racial ideals within himself, which had caused him immediately at the end of the war to have the *rapprochement* between both nations systematically in view as one of his aims. He had to admit that in recent years this idealistic belief in Anglo-German racial affinity had suffered very severe blows. He would, however, count himself fortunate if he could succeed at the eleventh hour, in spite of all this, in leading back the whole political development into channels laid down by the theories which he had advocated again and again in his speeches and writings for a decade and a half.

Mr. Chamberlain replied that he fully valued the words of appreciation which the Führer had spoken to him. It was, in fact, no easy thing for a man of his age to undertake a journey of this kind. The fact that he had embarked on this journey to Germany should serve as proof, for the Führer and the German people, both of the importance which he (Mr. Chamberlain) attached to an Anglo-German *rapprochement* and also of his sincere desire to attempt everything possible to find a way out of the present difficulties.

This first conversation might best be utilized for the exchange of general ideas on the situation, so that each party could understand the other aright and ascertain between themselves whether agreement was possible or not. He (Mr. Chamberlain) had frankly to admit that many Englishmen regarded the Führer's speeches solely as words behind which carefully prepared plans were concealed. He (Mr. Chamberlain), however, looked on the Führer as a man who,

from a strong feeling for the sufferings of his people, had carried through the rebirth of the German nation with extraordinary success. He had the greatest respect for this man, and had come to Germany in order to attempt to solve the present difficulties by means of a frank exchange of views at the fountainhead of the German return to prosperity. He hoped that as a result of this exchange of views with the Führer both parties would be precisely informed of the views of the other, and that on the basis of this precise knowledge of the Führer's attitude he could then with redoubled confidence continue to work for an Anglo-German *rapprochement*.

The Führer then declared that at the head of all the problems to be discussed there stood the Sudeten German question, which had at the moment gone beyond the stage of theoretical discussion, since the situation was moving from hour to hour toward an open crisis. It therefore seemed appropriate to him to begin with this question, since it was also decisive for the future development of Anglo-German relations. He did not wish to linger too long over the past, for there were many points on which the two countries differed and few which they had in common. What was decisive was whether and how far agreement could be reached between the two countries on a common attitude in this question.

The situation was very grave. On the basis of the latest information, 300 fatal casualties and many hundreds of injured were to be expected among the Sudeten Germans. There were entire villages from which the population had fled. In these circumstances a decision must be reached in some way or another within a very short time. In this state of affairs he was obliged to state quite frankly that there would be no point in carrying on a conversation in the manner of previous diplomatic discussions. The long journey which the Prime Minister had made would not have proved worth while if they were to stop short at mere formalities.

For a better understanding of the situation he could assure him that his (the Führer's) whole significance rested on the confidence which the German people had in him. He was not a dictator, he had not established his power in Germany by military force, but his position was built up on the confidence of the nation whose mouthpiece and representative he was and whose interests he had to protect. Thus he also was not a free agent. He could not act contrary to promises and assurances which he had once given to the German people and which secured him their confidence. Therefore, he could neither remain silent nor inactive in a situation in which the whole German nation expected energetic action and plain speaking from him. If he should not act up to these expectations he would forfeit

the confidence of the people, and his way would therefore be predetermined for him. If other statesmen were subject to the influence of their parliaments, then he was obliged to conform to the wishes, not, of course, of a parliament, but of the people, and in particular of the Party. If he were not to do what was expected of him he would not do away with the problem under discussion, but rather destroy his own significance.

Now he had given the German people definite promises: first of all to free them by some means or another from the sufferings caused them by the Treaty of Versailles. For the means he had to adopt to achieve this he had received general plenary powers from the German people, which had taken the form of an enabling act passed by the Parliament. If he did not keep his promises these plenary powers would become null and void. Even if perhaps no immediate result was to be expected from this, yet the psychological effect of the nonfulfillment of his pledges might be very considerable.

Here he was obliged to add that the objective, which he had set himself when building up the Party, and later the State, had been a limited one. It was in certain respects the antithesis of imperialism. He did not want here to go into details about the reasons for or the value and advantages of this policy, but only to point out the fact that the racial basis of the National Socialist Party, and with it of the German people, excluded any form of imperialism. Furthermore, he had never left the outside world in any doubt that he knew perfectly well how to distinguish between what was possible and what was impossible. He knew that it was impossible to unite all the Germans in Europe. Nor did the German ethnic groups who lived farther away from the Reich expect to be united with the Reich. Besides, he had excluded all questions of this kind which would open up old wounds afresh, and in which the success obtained would be out of all proportions to the weight of the sacrifices made.

People in Britain had often reproached him, because they thought that the appetite grew with eating, and that probably after the attainment of one objective he would again and again make fresh demands. He was obliged, however, to point out that nothing to support a development of this kind was to be found in his whole conduct. Where Germany had recognized frontiers as final, this recognition had become perfectly evident in practice in all spheres of policy and literature. The position was in fact thus:

- 1) Germany had brought about an understanding with Poland despite the greatest hindrances of an internal, territorial, and economic nature.

2) Germany had, of her own free will, limited the strength of her fleet to a definite proportion of British naval power.<sup>15a</sup> The precondition for this agreement was, of course, the mutual determination never again to make war on the other contracting party. If, therefore, Britain were to continue to make it plain that in certain circumstances she would intervene against Germany, this precondition for the Naval Agreement would cease to hold good, and it would be more honest for Germany to denounce the agreement.

On the British Prime Minister's interpolating the question whether this denunciation would be contemplated by Germany before any possible conflict broke out, or on the actual outbreak of such a conflict, the Führer replied that if Britain constantly proclaimed the possibility of intervention against Germany, while Germany herself had concluded the Naval Agreement with the intention of never again going to war with Britain, a one-sided disadvantage for Germany was bound to result, and that it would, therefore, be more sincere and more honest in such a case to terminate the treaty relationship.

3) Germany had assured the Netherlands and Belgium of treaty guarantees and her renunciation of claims for treaty revision.

4) After the settlement of the Saar question, and without taking up the problem of Alsace-Lorraine once more, Germany had declared to France that there were now no territorial questions outstanding between the two countries.

Germany, had, nevertheless, put forward a general demand in all clarity. The 10 million Germans who lived in Austria and Czechoslovakia, and whose earnest desire it was to return to the Reich to which they had belonged for a thousand years, must be enabled in all circumstances to return to it. In the case of the 7 million Germans in the Ostmark this demand had been met. The return to the Reich of the 3 million Germans in Czechoslovakia he (the Führer) would make possible at all costs. He would face any war, and even the risk of a world war, for this. Here the limit had been reached where the rest of the world might do what it liked, he would not yield one single step.

Mr. Chamberlain asked in this connection whether the difficulties with Czechoslovakia would then be at an end with the return of 3 million Sudeten Germans to the Reich. The question was being asked in Britain whether this was all that Germany was demanding, or whether she was not aiming over and above this at the dismemberment of the Czechoslovak State.

The Führer replied that, apart from the demands of the Sudeten Germans, similar demands would, of course, be made by the Poles,

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<sup>15a</sup> Refers to the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of June 1935.



Hungarians, and Ukrainians living in Czechoslovakia, which it would be impossible to ignore in the long run, but that he was, of course, not their spokesman.

He then continued his previous argument by pointing out that in the case of Austria, Italy had had opposite interests, but she had recognized the inevitability of the development and adjusted her attitude accordingly. Simultaneously with the *Anschluss* of Austria with Germany he (the Führer) had guaranteed the Italo-German frontier and likewise the frontier with Yugoslavia and Hungary.

Thus there remained only one problem outstanding, that of Czechoslovakia, which he would solve by one means or another. This he was absolutely determined to do. He would also choose his own time in order to bring about a rapid solution. He was 49 years old, and, if Germany were to become involved in a world war over the Czechoslovak question, he wished to lead his country through the crisis in the full strength of manhood and not to have to carry out this task say, at an advanced age, or even to leave it to a successor.

The Czechoslovak question would then, of course, be the last major problem to be solved. There would indeed still be the Memel question, but here Germany would be satisfied if Lithuania carried out the Memel Statute strictly.

Reverting to the Czech question, the Führer remarked that he would, of course, be sorry if a world war should result from this problem. This danger was, however, incapable of making him falter in his determination. He did not wish to postpone the solution of this question, but to undertake it himself.

Finally, Germany would, of course, always continue to press her demand for colonies; this was at any rate not a warlike demand. However, it would have to be granted one day, and Germany would never recede from it.

With regard to the Czechs, he was obliged, however, to assert once more that he would solve this question by one means or another. He did not wish that any doubts should arise as to his absolute determination not to tolerate any longer that a small, second-rate country should treat the mighty thousand-year-old German Reich as something inferior.

With reference to the Führer's remarks on the Anglo-German Naval Agreement, the British Prime Minister observed that he could quite understand the German attitude up to a certain point. A very reasonable agreement on the strength of their respective fleets had been concluded at the time, in the belief that there could be no question of a war between the two countries. If the situation had now changed so much that the possibility of a war had to be taken into

account, then the foundations upon which the Naval Agreement rested had indeed disappeared. Up to this point he was able to follow the Führer, but he was obliged, however, to add that on the German side no proper distinction was made between a threat and a warning. After 1914 Britain had been reproached from many quarters because she had not made her intentions sufficiently clear. The World War might perhaps have been avoided, these critics said, if Britain had made her attitude clearer. When two peoples were on the point of becoming involved in a conflict with each other, they ought therefore to be fully aware beforehand of the consequences of such a conflict. Britain had acted on this assumption and had uttered no threats but had only issued a warning. It was now the business of the Führer to make his decisions on the basis of these facts, which were known to him. Great Britain could not be reproached for giving the warning, on the contrary, she could have been criticized for failing to do so.

The Führer replied that he could follow the British Prime Minister's line of argument to a certain extent, but he still believed that things often reached such a pitch that from a certain moment onward not much more could be done to change the unalterable course of events. In his opinion a British warning would probably have come too late in 1914 as well, since the difficulties had by then reached too advanced a stage.

Reverting to the naval question, the Führer stated that he was obliged to adhere to the fundamental view that the basis of this treaty was to be found simply and solely in a kind of obligation for both parties not to make war on each other in any circumstances. If, therefore, Britain showed from time to time that nevertheless she was obliged in certain circumstances to reckon with a conflict with Germany, then in this way the logical basis for the Naval Agreement was done away with. While one party undertook a voluntary limitation of its naval strength, the other party left all possibilities open, and the disadvantage for the former party made itself strongly felt precisely at the time when the warning was given.

Mr. Chamberlain thanked the Führer for his clear and frank exposition of the German attitude. He believed he had rightly understood the Führer to say that he had made the demand for the return of 10 million Germans to the German Reich for racial reasons. Seven million Germans had returned to the Reich through the incorporation of Austria. Three million Sudeten Germans must in any circumstances be restored to the Reich. But the Führer had given the assurance that thereafter no territorial demands could exist any longer in other regions, which might give rise to conflicts between

Germany and other countries. He (the British Prime Minister) had also understood the Führer to say that he was prepared even to run the risk of a world war in order to secure the return of these 3 million Germans to the Reich. At the moment he did not wish to make any further observation on this than that it ought to be possible for the Führer and himself to prevent a world war on account of these 3 million Sudeten Germans.

He had, furthermore, understood the Führer to say that Czechoslovakia could not continue to exist as a sort of spearpoint aimed at Germany's flank. If the Sudeten Germans were once restored to the German Reich, would the part of Czechoslovakia still remaining also be regarded as a dangerous spearpoint in Germany's flank?

The Führer replied that this would be the case as long as the Czechoslovak State had alliances with other countries, which made it a menace to Germany. Moreover, Czechoslovakia had hitherto been a source of great expense to Germany, since she had made it necessary for her to make her Air Force twice as strong as she had originally intended.

The British Prime Minister asked whether German misgivings regarding this role of Czechoslovakia's would be overcome if one succeeded in changing the relations between this country and Russia in such a way that, on the one hand, Czechoslovakia would be released from her obligations toward Russia in the event of an attack on that country and, on the other hand, she (Czechoslovakia), like Belgium, would be deprived of the possibility of assistance from Russia or another country.

The British Prime Minister referred to the fact that Great Britain was not interested in the Sudeten German question as such. It was an affair between the Germans (or Sudeten Germans) and the Czechs. Great Britain was only interested in the maintenance of peace.

To this the Führer replied that peace had already ceased to exist in Czechoslovakia. For whole decades the German population had been oppressed there, and, with the growth of the prestige and power of the German Reich, they gradually began to rebel against this oppression. The violent measures adopted by Czechoslovakia, the shooting of Sudeten Germans, and the Czech attitude, which was assuming more menacing forms from day to day, was definitely not calculated to solve the difficulties; on the contrary, hatred would only increase all the more.

The British Prime Minister went on to say that as a practical man he had set himself the question as to how an eventual decision regarding the inclusion of the Sudeten Germans in the Reich was to be carried out in practice. For the Sudeten Germans did not live in a

compact area but were fairly scattered, and even if those areas were allotted to Germany in which 80 percent of the total population was German, there would always remain quite a number of inhabitants of German descent in the remaining part of the Czechoslovak State. It was, therefore, not only a question of a new delimitation of frontiers but also, if that were the case, of a transfer of certain sections of the population.

The Führer replied that, in his opinion, of course only the Sudeten German region as a whole could be taken into consideration, and that in every place where there was a majority for Germany, the territory in question would have to go to Germany. In this connection there would have to be an exchange of minorities after that, and in particular with due regard also to the German language enclaves in Czech territory.

He (the Führer) was, however, afraid that all these discussions were of a purely theoretical nature, since the march of events was continuing at a rapid pace. Whole villages in the Sudeten German region had been evacuated by their inhabitants, 10 thousand refugees were already on German soil, places had been attacked with gas, the number of dead already amounted to 300. It was clear that he (the Führer) could not tolerate these proceedings any longer. He had made his intentions plain at Nuremberg, and it was a mistake to assume that these had been merely empty phrases. He could in no circumstances tolerate this persecution of Germans, and he was firmly resolved to act quickly.

The British Prime Minister then proposed to address a joint appeal to both parties in Czechoslovakia, so as to provide the opportunity for mutual discussions to be carried out in a calmer atmosphere. It was clear that, if the information received by the Führer was correct, conditions in the Sudeten German region were almost untenable. However, experience often showed that reports which first seemed grave proved on closer examination to be less serious.

The Führer then replied that he could not possibly address an appeal of this kind to the Sudeten German population. He could not be expected to give the victims of Czechoslovak persecution admonitions as well. One should also take into consideration the fact that the nervous tension among the inhabitants of the frontier regions had so increased as to be almost unbearable. From German territory there could be heard the sound of artillery fire directed against defenseless Sudeten German villages, and at the same time whole divisions were concentrated on the German side and the air force units stood in readiness, and it constituted an immense degree of nervous tension, if, in face of all these preparations, Germany

was obliged to look on while old German towns, such as Eger, were attacked by the Czechs.

In addition, one should also take the following facts into consideration:

Germany had indeed once, in 1918, failed in her duty. However, in the course of her two thousand years of history she had always borne herself bravely and heroically. And if the British were just, they would be obliged to admit that this had also been the case during the last great war. Now the Germans regarded the Czechs as being cruel and cowards at heart, and it was, therefore, not difficult to imagine the feelings of the German population when they saw how their own countrymen were being oppressed by this inferior people. If he (the British Prime Minister) would only imagine Britain's being enslaved by an inferior people, then his blood would surely boil just like that of the Germans in the case of Czechoslovakia.

After the Führer had once more emphatically rejected the idea of an appeal to the two parties, the British Prime Minister stated that he would now drop this proposal, but he was obliged to ask himself why the Führer had let him come to Germany when he (the Führer) was apparently firmly resolved to proceed in a quite definite direction and not to consider the idea of an armistice.

The Führer replied that he thought it necessary today or tomorrow to go into the question whether perhaps a peaceful settlement of the question was still possible after all. He was obliged, however, to emphasize once more that he was firmly determined in any circumstances to decide this question in one way or another within the shortest possible time.

Moreover, he pointed out that Czechoslovakia had made use of the British Prime Minister's journey to order mobilization and call up ten age groups.

The British Prime Minister emphasized afresh that when it was a matter of saving human lives all chances must be explored to the very last. He was, therefore, repeating his proposal to bring about a kind of armistice and added that he was prepared to agree to a breathing space of this kind of limited duration.

The Führer replied that an immediate pacification of the Sudeten region could be achieved if the Czech State police were withdrawn and confined to barracks. Furthermore, it seemed to him important—and this in answer to the question as to the further course of the conversations—what attitude Britain was adopting with regard to the Sudeten region. Would Britain agree to the secession of these areas and an alteration in the present constitution of Czechoslovakia,

or would she not? If Britain could assent to a separation of this kind, and this could be announced to the world as a fundamental decision of principle, then, no doubt, it would be possible by this means to bring about a large degree of pacification in the regions in question. It was, therefore, a matter of knowing whether Britain was now prepared to assent to the detachment of the Sudeten German districts on the basis of the right of national self-determination, and in this connection he (the Führer) was obliged to observe that this right of self-determination had not just been invented by him in 1938 specially for the Czechoslovak question, but that it had already been brought into being in 1918 in order to create a moral basis for the changes made under the Treaty of Versailles. The conversations could continue on these lines, but the British Prime Minister must first of all state whether he could accept this basis or not, namely, the secession of the Sudeten German region by virtue of the right of self-determination.

The British Prime Minister expressed his satisfaction that they had now got down to the crux of the matter at last. He was not in a position to make categorical statements for the whole of the British Government. Besides, he was obliged, of course, to consult France and Lord Runciman also. But he could give it as his own personal view that, now that he had heard the Führer's motives and now that he saw the whole situation in a clearer light, he was prepared to ascertain whether his personal opinion was also shared by his colleagues in the Cabinet. He could state personally that he recognized the principle of the detachment of the Sudeten areas. The difficulty seemed to him to lie in the implementation of this principle in actual practice. In these circumstances he wished to return to England in order to report to the Government and secure their approval of his personal attitude. At the same time he was proposing that on both sides they should be perfectly clear in their own minds about the practical methods of implementing this principle, for it involved the solution of a whole series of problems of organization and administration.

The Führer stated that he would gladly spare the British Prime Minister a second journey to Germany, for he was much younger and could undertake journeys of this kind, but he was afraid that, if he were to come to England, anti-German demonstrations would complicate rather than simplify the situation. But, in order to shorten the Prime Minister's journey somewhat, he was proposing for their next meeting the Lower Rhine district, Cologne or Godesberg.

The British Prime Minister then asked the Führer what would happen in the meantime, and whether it would not be possible to ensure that the situation did not deteriorate any further.

The Führer replied that the danger of such a deterioration in the situation of course existed, with the result that the mighty military machine which Germany had built up would have to be set in motion. But once this machine was in motion it would no longer be possible to stop it. If major incidents, cases of frontier violation and the like, were to occur, the danger would be increased to the utmost limits.

But even at the risk of this being interpreted as weakness, as perhaps the British press would interpret it, he was prepared to give an assurance that, if at all possible, he would not give the order to set the military machine in motion during the next few days, unless a completely impossible situation should arise. In that case, of course, all further discussions would be useless.

It was plain that everyone in Germany would be pleased if the afore-mentioned inevitable and essential result of the inclusion of the Sudeten Germans in the Reich could be achieved by peaceful means. He (the Führer) would be particularly glad if in connection with this an improvement in Anglo-German relations could be brought about. The attitude of Britain and France had been incomprehensible to him. While Britain had given the Irish their freedom without a war, and while the French had allowed the Saar to be returned to Germany, despite perhaps definite misgivings from the economic and military point of view, both countries were resolved on a warlike conflict in a matter in which they actually had absolutely no direct interest. France had permitted the plebiscite to be held in the Saar Territory, but if a plebiscite were to be held in the Sudeten region, she was then ready to go to war with Germany, a war which would naturally be a matter of life and death. That sort of attitude was completely incomprehensible to him.

The British Prime Minister declared that Britain had for her part never adopted an attitude of this kind; she had only striven for a just and peaceful solution. She was prepared to acknowledge certain principles, and was only concerned with the implementing of these principles in actual practice. He was asking the Führer once more how order could be maintained in the political situation during the few days necessary for the deliberations of the British Cabinet.

The Führer replied that the British Government ought really to induce Czechoslovakia to halt her mobilization measures. These measures might easily lead to another May 21, and in that case a very grave situation would certainly arise.

The British Prime Minister replied that he understood from the Führer's words that both he and the Führer wished to do everything in their power in order to keep the political situation as calm as possible during the days in question. The Führer had declared to him

that he could do little in the actual situation. He hoped, nevertheless, that he would do what lay in his power in order to keep developments in peaceful channels, and he could say, on his part, that he himself would make every possible effort in that direction.

The Führer declared that he would also do everything; nevertheless, he could not issue a public proclamation.

After an observation by the Führer on the value of German friendship, the Prime Minister stated in conclusion that Britain was not so much concerned about the advantages accruing to her from friendship with Germany, but that she rather yielded to a natural tendency on the part of the British toward friendship with Germany.

Finally, the following brief press communiqué on the conversation was agreed upon:

"The Führer and Reich Chancellor had a conversation with Mr. Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, on the Obersalzberg today, during the course of which there was a comprehensive and frank exchange of views on the present situation. The British Prime Minister is returning to England tomorrow to confer with the British Cabinet. In a few days a new conversation will take place."

Submitted herewith to the Führer in accordance with instructions.

SCHMIDT<sup>16</sup>

*Counselor of Legation*

BERCHTESGADEN, September 15, 1938.

No. 488

139/126061, 126029

*The Under State Secretary (Woermann) to the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*<sup>17</sup>

BERLIN, September 15, 1938.

The article by Mussolini in the *Popolo d'Italia*, which I herewith enclose, clearly contains a hint to us, especially in the sentence which I have underlined in blue;<sup>18</sup> Mussolini even makes himself the Führer's spokesman.

I certainly do not think that any answer is necessary. If this should be done in Berlin or Rome we should certainly receive instructions.

WOERMANN

[Note in Woermann's handwriting:] The press has been instructed from higher quarters to give prominence to the article.

<sup>16</sup> Counselor of Legation Dr. Paul Otto Schmidt, official interpreter of the Foreign Ministry and personal interpreter to Hitler.

<sup>17</sup> Longhand note: "Nothing is to be done about this. BR[ÜCKLMEIER]"

<sup>18</sup> The version attached to the document is a reproduction of the letter in the German press.



[Enclosure]

Article From "*Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*" of September 15, 1938  
(No. 432)

MUSSOLINI'S "LETTER TO RUNCIMAN"

Published in the *Popolo d'Italia*—Plebiscite demanded

D.N.B., MILAN, September 15, 1938.

Under the title "Letter to Runciman" Mussolini has published the following article in the *Popolo d'Italia*:—

"When you left London for Prague a few weeks ago the world was not clear why you had gone, in what capacity, and with what responsibilities. Was your mission official? Was it unofficial? All this remained wrapped in a kind of London fog. Was your task solely one of mediation, or were you to appear at a certain moment as an arbitrator? Anyway, you reached Prague with a staff of colleagues and the attention of the whole world was concentrated upon you.

Everyone had to admire your zeal in going to so much trouble. In these few weeks you must have read dozens of memoranda and hundreds of letters, you must have received dozens of people and had discussions with leaders of all nationality groups, because there is not only a Sudeten German problem, there is also a Hungarian, a Polish, and a Slovak problem; as many problems as the nationalities with which Beneš' republic was 'inflated' at Versailles.

I believe that in your heart you have already reached this conclusion: just as there is no Czechoslovak nation, neither is there a Czechoslovak State. You, Mr. Runciman, have not come upon a family where a minimum of affection and understanding prevails as it does amongst persons of the same blood. No, the 'component parts' of the Czechoslovak family are of different races and cannot tolerate one another. They are animated not by a centripetal but a centrifugal force. Constraint alone holds them together. If that constraint ceased to exist the phenomenon of Czechoslovak disruption would be inevitable and irresistible.

Versailles should have created a Bohemia—historical designation with a purely Czechoslovak population. However, Versailles wanted to evolve a Czechoslovak State—an entity which never existed—and brought into being an artificial State, which bore within itself the elements of weakness and dissolution from its birth.

I believe, Mr. Runciman, that you have found the situation in the condition which I have described, and perhaps you asked yourself what was left for you to do. (In fact there was talk of your returning to London.) But no. After Hitler's speech you were in a fine position, Mr. Runciman. You could do and accomplish something which would go down to history. The time for compromise is past. Karlsbad has been outstripped. Beneš, as an old parliamentarian, has lost the race. You, Mr. Runciman, ought simply to propose a plebiscite to Beneš, not only for the Sudeten Germans but for all the nationalities who ask for it.

Will Beneš refuse the plebiscite? If so, you could give him to understand that Great Britain will think twice before plunging into war in order to preserve a State which is fictitious and monstrous even in its geographical shape, a State which has so often been described as a crocodile State or a sausage State. If London says it will not move, nobody else will move, in spite of all the machinations of the great Masonic powers of the Grand Orient. The game is really not worth the candle. If Hitler proposed to annex 3½ million Czechs, Europe would have reason to be alarmed and to make a move. But Hitler has no intention of doing this. The writer of this letter is in a position to tell you—confidentially—that if 3½ million Czechs were offered to him as a present Hitler would politely, but firmly, decline to accept them.

The Führer is concerned and anxious about 3½ million Germans and about them only. No one can deny him that right; no one can oppose the fulfillment of such a duty, least of all we Italians, who have precedents of the same kind.

Courage, Mr. Runciman. Propose the plebiscite—or rather plebiscites. It is a fine and delicate task. There are compact zones where the plebiscite will mean annexation, pure and simple, to the sister nations. On the other hand there are zones where the races are terribly intermingled and where a clean cut is impossible. Here a regime of so-called equalized cantons or something like it could be applied, which, among other things, would be in the democratic tradition.

After the plebiscite zones had been fixed, the only things to be determined would be the date, the procedure, and the control, which could be an international one, such as was the case at the Saar plebiscite and which yielded such satisfactory results.

I have an idea, Mr. Runciman, that this letter will interest you. When the affair is settled it will mean a further simple alteration to the map of Europe and the removal of a seat of disorder and unrest. Should Prague be 'deflated' in a peaceful manner, it would be stronger and safer and could pursue its way unmolested, relieved of the dead weight of hostile nationalities.

While at present it is a practical impossibility for Italy to pursue a friendly policy toward the Czechoslovakia of today, she could do this with the Bohemia of tomorrow. In this way the new political territorial position would bring about a new settlement and create new possibilities and, above everything else, Europe would be spared another war.

Millions of people are of the opinion that this is an absolute necessity.

Frontiers drawn in ink can also be altered in ink.

It is another matter if the frontiers have been shaped by the hand of God or made by the sacrifice of human lives."

## No. 489

139/126006

*Letter From the Leader of the Sudeten German Party (Henlein) to the Führer*<sup>19</sup>

[c. SEPTEMBER 15, 1938.]

MY FÜHRER: I informed the British delegation yesterday that the basis for further negotiations could no longer be the eight Karlsbad points, but only the achievement of a union with the Reich.

It is probable that Chamberlain will propose such a union.

In the event of its being approved by you, my Führer, as a short-term solution by stages, permit me to submit two proposals:

1) No plebiscite, but immediate cession of regions with more than 50 percent German population (demand 1918 figures).

2) Occupation of this region within 24 hours (48) by German troops (reason: to put an end to further murders resulting from Czech fanaticism).

Enclosed is the draft of a proclamation.<sup>20</sup>

Heil my Führer!

Faithfully yours,

KONRAD HENLEIN

[Penciled note:] Letter to the Führer accompanying proclamation.

## No. 490

337/197179/1-2

*Special Announcement of the German News Agency*

No. 255, Pages 29-30  
(39 F)

BERLIN, September 15, 1938.

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

PROCLAMATION BY KONRAD HENLEIN TO THE SUDETEN GERMANS AND  
THE WHOLE WORLD

D.N.B. Eger. September 15. Konrad Henlein, the leader of the Sudeten German Party, issues the following proclamation to the Sudeten Germans, the German people, and the whole world:

Fellow Countrymen!

As the bearer of your confidence and aware of my responsibility, I hereby declare before the whole world that by the employment of machine guns, armored cars, and tanks against the defenseless Sudeten Germans, the Czech people's system of oppression has reached a climax. By this the Czech people have made it obvious

<sup>19</sup> This is a copy of the original, but is initialed by Weizsäcker and dated the 16th.

<sup>20</sup> The D.N.B. report of the proclamation (document No. 490, *infra*) is dated September 15, 1938; this letter and the draft proclamation (not printed here) are undated but must be September 15, or earlier.

to the whole world that it is finally impossible to live together with them in one State. Experience gained during 20 years of domination by force, and especially the heavy sacrifices of human life during the last few days, compel me to declare the following:

1) In 1919 we were forced into the Czech State against our will by the withholding of our right to self-determination, which had been solemnly promised to us.

2) Without ever renouncing our right to self-determination we have attempted, at the greatest sacrifice, to do everything possible to safeguard our existence within the Czech State.

All attempts to persuade the Czech people and their responsible representatives to accept an honorable and just settlement have been wrecked by their implacable determination to destroy us.

In this hour of Sudeten German misery I come before you, the German people, and the whole civilized world, and declare that:—

*We wish to live as free Germans! We want peace and work again in our homeland! We want to return to the Reich!*

*God be with us and our righteous struggle!*

KONRAD HENLEIN

No. 491

337/197170

*The German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 367 of September 15

PRAGUE, September 15, 1938—2:53 p.m.

Received September 15, 1938—4:50 p.m.

Deputy Kundt, in the exercise of his duty as president of the Sudeten German Parliamentary Club, and to give support to the Sudeten Germans remaining here, has returned to Prague on his own initiative and is keeping in touch with the Legation. However, the situation is such that even Kundt's possibilities of obtaining information about measures and decisions taken by Party leaders at Eger are strictly limited.

Yesterday, Kundt had a private talk with Lord Runciman, whom he requested to use his influence with the Czechoslovak Government to secure protection for those Sudeten Germans who were living as individuals, or as a small minority, within Czech territory. Kundt pointed out to Runciman that, regardless of how the situation developed, the Czechs would only serve their own interests. As representative of the Sudeten German Party he put himself at the disposal of the Government for direct discussions on all these matters, and would be glad if he be specially confirmed in this capacity vis-à-vis Hodza with the authority of Runciman. Kundt asked Runciman to

inform the British Government that in his (Kundt's) opinion, plebiscite was only thing possible at present. His Lordship promised to transmit this to London.

Lord Runciman declared himself willing in principle to undertake this mission, which he described as extremely difficult.

EISENLOHR

No. 492

139/126049

*The German Minister in Yugoslavia (Heeren) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 97 of September 15 BELGRADE, September 15, 1938—7:30 p.m.  
Received September 15, 1938—10 p.m.

Stoyadinovich, whom I visited today in connection with another matter, expressed his opinion of the German-Czech crisis to the effect that a satisfactory solution now only appeared to him possible if it were based on the lines indicated in the Führer's speech, namely, granting full right of self-determination to Sudeten Germans. Yugoslavia was completely calm. His attitude, as Prime Minister, toward the Sudeten German question was the same as it had been toward the Austrian question (an internal affair of the German people).

Prime Minister stated that he had discussed the same question yesterday with Bastide, former French Minister of Commerce. Bastide had said that France had committed a fatal error in not making the Austrian question the occasion for coming to an understanding with Germany about the limitation of German political aims. Bastide hoped that this would be rectified now in the Sudeten German question.

Stoyadinovich considers chief difficulty of position to be Franco-British suspicion of possible extension of political aims of a Germany steadily becoming stronger. He, Stoyadinovich, had already expressed his conviction to Chamberlain during his visit to London, that Führer's wish for understanding with Great Britain was earnest and absolutely sincere. The Prince Regent also had always preached the same doctrine in London.

HEEREN

## No. 493

28/19053

*Circular Telegram From the German Foreign Ministry to German Missions Abroad*<sup>21</sup>

[BERLIN,] September 15, 1938—9:40 p.m.

No. 222 of September 15 Received [Prague,] September 15, 1938.

For Head of Mission or deputy personally.

In order to be able to supply authorities abroad with money shortly before the commencement and in the course of a war, if direct transfers are not possible, I request you to ascertain whether trustworthy firms or individuals are available in your capital, who are ready and in a position to receive large payments and transmit them quickly and unobtrusively to the authorities abroad.

In order not to arouse attention, only such agents can be considered who are in normal circumstances in the habit of receiving large payments from abroad and of making them.

I request you to forward in cipher and by the speediest means, addresses of such organizations, amounts they could handle, and the senders who are to serve as cover for the transfers, together with any other necessary details.

PRÜFER<sup>22</sup>

## No. 494

139/126056-57

*The German Ambassador in Italy (Mackensen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 240 of September 15 ROME, September 15, 1938—11:50 p.m.  
Received September 16, 1938—3:20 a.m.

Count Ciano, whom I visited today for the first time since my return, started conversation with emphatic statement that Italy would remain at our side regardless of how the situation developed. Referred to Duce's open letter to Runciman,<sup>22a</sup> which gave Mussolini's views in clearest form, and proposed a solution to question of future form of present Czech State which could well serve as a basis. Czechoslovakia moreover heading toward civil war, even if we do not wish to describe the present state of affairs as such. Information

<sup>21</sup> The copy bears the initial of the Counselor of Legation in Prague (Hencke) but must have been sent to other Missions at the same time.

<sup>22</sup> Head of the Personnel and Estimates Department of the Foreign Ministry.

<sup>22a</sup> See document No. 488, p. 798.

given him by Alfieri<sup>23</sup> on telephone during our talk, to effect that Czechoslovak Cabinet was in permanent session and had just passed decree dissolving Sudeten German Party, signified that Sudeten German Party declared illegal and would be accompanied by direct consequences. Under these circumstances he wondered whether visit of Chamberlain, who in any case would not be able to act immediately, had not come too late. On the other hand, we could not be expected, as I had confirmed to him, to tolerate any longer—especially since the Führer's speech—the Czech terror which was hourly costing dozens of Sudeten Germans their lives. Chamberlain's personal courage in the face of public opinion in his own country must doubtless be acknowledged, but at the same time his journey to Obersalzberg was a sign of the internal weakness of the British Empire, which he described as being hollow within and past its prime. In his opinion France would make no move; if she did "so much the better." Our information to the effect that French Military Attaché stated France would reply to certain German military measures on our western frontier with similar measures on her eastern frontier was correct. However, he did not take this seriously, even though he had in the meantime received additional reports on such measures, albeit of a very restricted nature, taking place on the Italian frontier. Italy was so strong on her Alpine border that she could only hope that the French would attempt a thrust there.

As regards Yugoslavia, the Minister had told him a few days ago, on instructions from Stoyadinovich, that Yugoslavia would follow Italy's lead, and had made one stipulation only, namely, Hungary must not attack Czechoslovakia. But—and this seems to exceed Stoyadinovich's previous statements—exception to be made in the case of Hungary only temporarily joining in a possible German action against Czechoslovakia. He, Ciano, had informed Budapest accordingly.

Italian Ambassador in Ankara had recently reported that he had the impression that Turkey and Greece would not intervene if Yugoslavia remained neutral.

Ciano repeatedly stressed the fact that Italy was anticipating any development with complete calm and composure, and asked us again to do everything to come to an agreement with Mussolini as soon as possible, so as to enable the latter to act accordingly. I answered him that in this connection he had recently had from us assurances of our good will toward such an understanding, which, however, might in certain circumstances be limited by the tempo of developments.

MACKENSEN

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<sup>23</sup> Minister of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda.

CHAPTER VI  
THE SEPTEMBER CRISIS; GODESBERG  
(SEPTEMBER 16-23)

No. 495

139/126083

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann)*

BERLIN, September 16, 1938.

The Italian Ambassador<sup>24</sup> telephoned me today at 10:45 a.m. and gave me the following information:

Mussolini wishes to make an important speech on Sunday, September 19, at Trieste, and to deal in particular with the Czechoslovak question. He wishes to do this in full agreement with Germany. Mussolini does not wish only to sketch in the general outline, but to go into detail as well. For the most part he wishes to adhere in it to the line of argument in his article in the *Popolo d'Italia*.<sup>24a</sup> He has instructed the Ambassador to convey immediately his wish to the Führer in the form of a special message, with the request to be informed as far as possible about the general lines and details. Mussolini is considering proposing, among other things, a plebiscite similar to that in the Saar, in which Italy would be allotted a similar role to that in the Saar plebiscite. He would be particularly grateful if he could receive a reply to this in the course of today, through the Italian Ambassador in Berlin.

This communication was telephoned through to Herr Brückelmeier at Berchtesgaden at 11:45 a.m. today, with the request that the Reich Minister should be informed without delay at Munich airport or elsewhere, and his instructions sought.

WOERMANN

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<sup>24</sup> Dr. Bernardo Attolico.

<sup>24a</sup> See document No. 488, p. 798.



## No. 496

330/195811-12

*Memorandum for the Under State Secretary (Woermann)*

*Regierungsrat* Wetz of the Gestapo Office rang up at 4 p.m. and informed me that the arrest of the 150 Czechoslovak nationals was completed. He requested information as to whether the Czechoslovak Government had already been notified that, in the event of Sudeten Germans who had been sentenced under martial law being executed in Czechoslovakia, a corresponding number of persons held in custody here would be shot each time. Herr Wetz asked whether the carrying out of death sentences had already been reported from Czechoslovakia and requested that the matter should be speeded up so that, if that should be the case, a start might be made at once in carrying out the measures threatened. Moreover, there were already a number of inquiries from the Czechoslovak diplomatic and consular authorities here to hand, which dealt with today's arrests. He was still undecided how these inquiries should be answered.

Herr Wetz was informed that the Czechoslovak Government had not been notified so far. The affair was at present being dealt with by the Reich Minister, who had not issued any further instructions so far. I told Herr Wetz, furthermore, that the opinion of the Foreign Ministry would be communicated to him.

Submitted herewith to the Under State Secretary.

VON STECHOW<sup>25</sup>

BERLIN, September 16, 1938.

## No. 497

139/126076-77

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 373 of September 16

PRAGUE, September 16, 1938—6:10 p.m.  
Received September 16, 1938—9:40 p.m.

With reference to my report of August 6, A. III. 2. h.<sup>26</sup>

1) Kundt yesterday had conversation with French Professor Brunet, who told him he had been sent as a private observer to Czechoslovakia on instructions from Daladier and Bonnet. Paris had not received a sufficiently clear picture of Runciman's activities,

\* Official of Political Division IV.

\* Document No. 340, p. 539.

and had therefore appointed its own source of information, particularly as de Lacroix, the Minister, appeared to be following completely in the wake of Czechoslovakia.

Kundt believes he convinced Brunet by his explanations that immediate plebiscite, aiming at union of Sudeten German territory with Reich, is only method still practicable of maintaining peace. Brunet still intended yesterday to report to Daladier to this effect. Moreover, Kundt also appealed to Brunet to use his influence in Paris to this end, so that Sudeten Germans in Czech region would be protected against violence of the Czechs.

2) Lord Runciman, before his journey back to London, called Kundt to him, to take leave of him and thank him for his sympathetic cooperation. Kundt had impression that Runciman and Ashton-Gwatkin would not return to Prague. The remaining members of the Mission . . . (group mutilated) Henderson, Stopford, and Stevens, stated they wished to remain in Prague until the second Führer-Chamberlain discussion; they placed themselves at Kundt's disposal for further inquiries at any time. (. . . two groups mutilated) had impression that British took a pessimistic view of Berchtesgaden discussion.

3) No news so far of fresh incidents. According to information from Sudeten German Party deputies remaining in Prague, who are in touch by telephone with various places in the provinces, it appears that calm prevails at the moment. Appeal by various German mayors to population to keep the peace was obeyed.

Reports of unrest in Prague not in accordance with facts.

4) Martial law extended to sixteen districts.

HENCKE

### No. 498

28/19043

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*<sup>27</sup>

[Telegram]

[BERLIN,] September 16, 1938—6:45 p.m.

Received [Prague,] September 16, 1938.

URGENT

No. 232 of September 16

One hundred and fifty Czechoslovak citizens of Czech descent were arrested in Germany last night. This measure is a reply to the arrest of Sudeten Germans since the Führer's speech on Septem-

<sup>27</sup> Nuremberg document 2855-PS. This copy comes from the Prague Legation files and bears the initial of the Chargé d'Affaires (Hencke).

ber 12. Please ascertain, if possible by return, number of Sudeten Germans arrested as far as possible. Number of persons arrested in Czechoslovakia provisionally estimated at 400 by Gestapo. Report by telegraph.

WOERMANN

[Marginal note dated September 17, initial indecipherable:] Impossible for me to ascertain facts, as already reported to Chargé d'Affaires.

No. 499

139/126079

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) and the Military Attaché of the German Embassy in France (Kühlenthal) to the German Foreign Ministry and War Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

PARIS, September 16, 1938.

No. 464 of September 16 Received September 16, 1938—10:15 p.m.

To: 1. War Ministry, General Staff Section 3.

2. Foreign Ministry.

Italian Military Attaché<sup>28</sup> has given me the following information today: He had in recent days frequently spoken with French General Staff officers both of high and low rank in the War Ministry on official matters. He had gained impression that in the General Staff they desired a peaceful solution, and that they would also become reconciled to the peaceful incorporation of the Sudeten German districts, but that on the outbreak of warlike complications between Germany and Czechoslovakia France would intervene under all circumstances. He had heard several General Staff officers from different bureaus express the view that war between France and Germany would have to come sometime, and that this would be better under present circumstances than later on. He further described the prevailing mood in the General Staff as completely calm and firm. From other information he assumed that with the present call-up a fraction of each of the three age groups of the *disponibilité* (strength unknown) had been called up; that a further fraction of the three age groups had received orders to hold themselves in readiness, while the remaining fraction had not yet received their papers. On the basis of reinforcements in frontier army districts, the retention of the older active age group, which he already regards as the whole annual class [*Annuität*], and also the increased call-up of

<sup>28</sup> General Count S. Visconti Prasca.

reservists, he estimates the present strength of the French Army at about 800,000 men. Furthermore, he estimates the number of African natives on paid employment in France to be so high that four new African divisions could be formed from them.

KÜHLENTHAL  
BRÄUER

No. 500

1613/387059-60

*Circular Telegram From the German Foreign Ministry to German Missions Abroad*

URGENT

BERLIN, September 16, 1938.  
(Pol. I 2143 g)

To all European Missions  
also to the German Embassy  
in Ankara  
Tokyo  
Rio de Janeiro  
Buenos Aires  
Santiago  
Washington  
and the German Legation  
in Cairo  
Montevideo  
La Paz  
Lima  
Quito  
Bogotá  
Guatemala  
Mexico  
Havana  
Pretoria  
and the German Consulate in Geneva

To Head of Mission for personal information.

Führer told Chamberlain yesterday, in conversation at Obersalzberg, he was firmly resolved to put an end in one way or another to the intolerable conditions in Sudetenland within a very short time. Autonomy for Sudeten Germans is no longer being considered, but only cession of the region to Germany. Methods of doing this are still to be arranged. Chamberlain has indicated personal approval. He is now consulting British Cabinet and is in communication with Paris. Further meeting between Führer and Chamberlain planned for very near future. Führer does not wish expected leakages about the conference to originate on German side.

*Postscript for Rome:* Attolico has been notified. Suggest Italian Government should also be informed by you.

*Postscript for Warsaw:* Lipski will be notified today. Please inform Beck confidentially immediately. Notice that Lipski yesterday announced urgent claim to extension of any plebiscite to Teschen area.<sup>29</sup> Have taken note of this purely as information, also referred him to London.

*Postscript for Budapest:* Please inform Kanya confidentially. Hungarian Minister will be similarly instructed here. Latter has made known here wish of his Government for equality of treatment for Hungarian minority.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 501

1613/387070

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Poland (Wühlisch) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

WARSAW, September 16, 1938.

No. 59 of September 16 Received September 17, 1938—12:45 a.m.

(Pol. I 2154 g)

Reference telegram No. 162 (Pol. I 2143 g) of September 16.<sup>30</sup>

Acting on instructions have today communicated confidential information to Foreign Minister Beck. M. Beck thanked me for information, which was of greatest importance for Polish Government. At same time he asked me to communicate the following confidentially to the German Government:

In reply to inquiries by the British and French Governments about Polish attitude, he had stated, in agreement with Cabinet, that all solutions by compromise to the Czechoslovak problem so far considered were now out of date, and that, in Polish opinion, a settlement could only be reached on the basis of the right to self-determination. If it should come to a plebiscite in the minority regions of Czechoslovakia, Poland would also expect that due consideration should be given to Polish minorities. The Polish Ambassadors in London, Paris, Rome, and Bucharest, and also the Ministers in Belgrade and Budapest, have already been instructed early today to communicate this point of view to the Governments concerned.

WÜHLISCH

<sup>29</sup> See footnote 36, p. 817.

<sup>30</sup> See document No. 500, *supra*.

## No. 502

139/126090-91

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*<sup>81</sup>

Telegram

No. 375 of September 16 PRAGUE, September 16, 1938—8:55 p.m.  
Received September 17, 1938—12:45 a.m.

1. Representative of Sudeten German Party here says he is unable to give reliable data on losses caused to date by Sudeten German rising.

Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior announces in all: 27 dead, including 11 Sudeten Germans, 13 members of the Czechoslovak administration (police, *gendarmerie*, 1 soldier), and 3 Czech civilians.

According to this statement, details of killed are:

September 12:

1 Czech civilian in Oberaltstadt

September 13:

4 gendarmes in Haberspirk  
1 Sudeten German in Eger  
1 Sudeten German in Tachau  
1 Czech, 1 Sudeten German in Schönriesen  
1 Sudeten German Nemanitz  
3 gendarmes in Schwaderbad  
1 soldier in Pernstein, 1 Sudeten German  
1 Sudeten German  
1 Sudeten German in Chodau  
1 Sudeten German in Joachimstal  
1 Czech in Komotau  
1 gendarme in Gossengrün

September 14:

1 gendarme, 3 Sudeten Germans (including one woman),  
2 Czechs in Eger

September 15:

1 gendarme in Sebastiansberg  
1 Sudeten German official in Grenzwald near Eger.

2. According to reports to hand up to now, calm prevails in the whole Sudeten German area. In Jechnitz the Social Democrats have the upper hand after the flight and/or arrest and imprisonment of young Sudeten Germans.

Czechoslovak Government takes the view that at present, with the exception of Schwaderbad, where frontier incident must be avoided, they have the situation in hand.

<sup>81</sup> See document No. 507, p. 818, and footnote 37 thereto.

3. Alleged transfer of Sudeten German Party headquarters to Reich German territory is strongly emphasized by Czech press and radio. According to private information this anti-Henlein propaganda is said to have been not without effect on section of Sudeten Germans in Northeast Bohemia.

4. Reaction to decree for surrender of arms cannot yet be ascertained.

HENCKE

No. 503

139/126088

*The German Minister in Hungary (Erdmannsdorff) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 92 of September 16 BUDAPEST, September 16, 1938—9:42 p.m.  
Received September 17, 1938—3:15 a.m.

[Marginal note:] Reference Pol. I 2143 g.<sup>32</sup>

Foreign Minister expressed thanks for information and laid great emphasis on claim to equality of treatment for Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia. Otherwise Hungarian Government would go to the limit.

Ingram<sup>33</sup> had told Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires in London Vansittart's pledge to this effect probably referred only to event of autonomy being granted to Sudeten Germans but not to cession of territory. Czechoslovakia was no longer capable of living if she lost other minorities as well. The Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires raised objections to this discrimination.

Foreign Minister informed me in strict confidence that today's Cabinet meeting would probably decide on supplementary call-up of 80,000 reservists in addition to 40,000 hitherto.

Hungarian Government has made strong protest against Czech mobilization measures on Hungarian frontier.

War Minister promised far-reaching concessions in matter of German wishes regarding flight of aircraft over Hungarian territory, landing facilities, etc., in event of war. Commander of Vienna *Luftkreis* will arrive here Monday for discussions on this.

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>32</sup> See document No. 500, p. 810.

<sup>33</sup> Mr. E. M. B. Ingram, head of the Southern Department in the Foreign Office.

## No. 504

139/126089

*The German Ambassador in Spain (Stohrer) to the German Foreign Ministry*<sup>33a</sup>

Telegram

SAN SEBASTIAN, September 16, 1938—10:30 p.m.

Received September 17, 1938—12:45 a.m.

No. 264 of September 16

Spanish Foreign Minister asked me to call on him immediately on my return from Germany; during my visit to Burgos today Jordana<sup>34</sup> showed he was extremely worried about the consequences which might result for Nationalist Spain from warlike settlement of Czech question and intervention by France in conflict. French Foreign Minister had let him know that French General Staff intended to march into Catalonia and occupy ports of Red Zone in Southern Spain as one of its first measures. Besides this he knew from another source that France was preparing advance against Spanish Morocco. Bonnet's communication might only be a threat, yet it was always certain that cause of Spanish Nationalist Revolution would be placed in the greatest danger at the present moment by warlike complications in Central Europe. He had instructed Spanish Ambassador in Berlin to draw attention of German Government to these grave anxieties. Rumor circulated here that France was attempting to secure Franco's neutrality in European conflict expressly described as false by Foreign Minister. German liaison officer at headquarters reports that in view of events in Central Europe very depressed mood and scarcely concealed dissatisfaction with us prevails there, because when choosing moment for settlement of Sudeten question we did not appear to take into consideration the cause of Nationalist Spain which we have been supporting so energetically.

STOHRER

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<sup>33a</sup> This document is also reproduced in vol. III.<sup>34</sup> General Count Francisco Jordana, Vice President and Foreign Minister of the Nationalist Government, 1938-39.



## No. 505

2129/464764

*Circular Despatch From the German Foreign Ministry to German Missions Abroad*BERLIN, September 16, 1938.  
(Pol. I M 3358 g)

To German Embassies  
in London  
Moscow  
Paris  
Rome  
German Legations  
in Bucharest  
Prague  
German Consulate  
in Geneva

A report, to be treated with reserve, arrived from Brussels on the 12th of this month on information by an agent, to the effect that the Belgian Government had received the two following telegrams:

1) From the Belgian League of Nations representative that Litvinov and Comnène<sup>35</sup> had reached an agreement whereby the Rumanian Government would tolerate the passage of Russian troops in the event of a conflict between Germany and Czechoslovakia. The Rumanian Government would of course protest against the violation of Rumanian territory, but would offer no armed assistance to the passage of troops.

2) From the Belgian Ambassador in Paris to the effect that the Secretary General of the Western European branch of the Comintern had informed the British and French Governments that, in the event of the outbreak of a European conflict, the Comintern would cease its activity in France and Great Britain.

For the Minister:  
VON BÜLOW-SCHWANTE

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<sup>35</sup> Nicolae Petrescu Comnen, Rumanian Foreign Minister, March to December 1938.

## No. 506

139/126084-86

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the  
Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 16, 1933.

The Hungarian Minister informed me during his visit today that Field Marshal Göring had invited him to Karinhall today. The chief reason for this request had been the Field Marshal's view that Hungary was not doing enough in the present crisis. The Hungarian press was keeping comparatively quiet. There was complete calm prevailing in the Hungarian minority districts in Czechoslovakia in contrast to the Sudeten German ones, and the Hungarian Ministers in the various capitals were not making a practice of going to the Foreign Minister twice or three times a day, in contrast to their Czech colleagues. Finally, neither the Hungarian Government nor even the leader of the Hungarian minority had demanded in clear terms the detachment of the Hungarian region from Czechoslovakia. The Hungarian Minister defended himself against these complaints, but by his own statements recognized them as being partly in accordance with the facts, while at the same time giving definite reasons for the Hungarian attitude.

The Field Marshal then reverted to relations between Hungary and Yugoslavia. He told the Hungarian Minister that he, the Field Marshal, as the second man in the State, could give him a definite assurance that Yugoslavia would take no action if Hungary were to march, not on the first day but say three to four days later. He, M. Sztójay, was skeptical about this statement; he could not quite see why Yugoslavia would in the event of a Hungarian attack regard the alliance as being in force and march on the first day, but, on the other hand, not on the third or fourth day. However, the Field Marshal told him that he had made quite certain of this in a conversation with a Yugoslav personage, whom he did not name. I took this opportunity to inform the Hungarian Minister in strict confidence that, according to a telegram from our Ambassador in Rome, the Yugoslav Minister there had made a similar statement to the Italian Government on instructions from Stoyadinovich, of which Budapest had already been informed by Count Ciano.

The Field Marshal finally gave M. Sztójay practically the same information about the Berchtesgaden conversation as is set down in the telegram for information to our Missions abroad. The Field Marshal does not seem to have made any statements over and above this to M. Sztójay.

After the conversation the Hungarian Minister telephoned Budapest and spoke to M. Csáky, and then in the course of the afternoon received instructions from M. Kanya to make the following statement to the Field Marshal and at the same time to the Foreign Ministry as well:

1. The Hungarian press and the Hungarian ethnic group in Czechoslovakia would be activated to an increased extent from now on; in particular the Hungarian press would in the next few days be writing in a completely different key from hitherto.

2. The Hungarian Ministers in Prague and London would be instructed to inform the respective Governments that Hungary was demanding a plebiscite for the Hungarian minority districts. He, Sztójay, had received the same instructions for Berlin, and he was making use of the conversation with me to carry out these instructions. His instructions were to inquire of the Field Marshal and the Foreign Ministry whether the Führer could not do something to associate himself publicly with the Hungarian demands. In reply to this I told the Minister that it would, of course, be difficult for the Führer to appear in the role of spokesman for other ethnic groups than the German one.

3. Complete understanding had been reached between Hungary and Poland. Regarding this M. Sztójay remarked in the course of the conversation that Poland was not making any claims on Slovakia, but only to the Teschen district,<sup>36</sup> and certain minor frontier rectifications in Slovak territory regarding which complete agreement had been reached down to the last detail. It would thereby be presupposed that Slovakia would receive far-reaching autonomy within the framework of the Hungarian State.

The Hungarian Minister will carry out these instructions when seeing the Field Marshal tomorrow (Sunday). He intends to go to Budapest on Saturday night and to return here during Monday.

WOERMANN

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<sup>36</sup>The southern part of the frontier Duchy of Teschen, formerly in Austrian Silesia, had been assigned to Czechoslovakia on July 28, 1920, by the Conference of Ambassadors in Paris, although the Polish population greatly outnumbered the Czech. The portion of the Teschen area handed over to Czechoslovakia included the important coal-mining district of Karvinna. Cf. document No. 588, p. 915.

## No. 507

330/195833-34

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*<sup>87</sup>

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, September 17, 1938.

No. 229

(zu Pol. I 924 g. Rs.)

I. Please inform the Czech Government verbally at once as follows:

The Reich Government have decreed that

a) Czechoslovak nationals of Czech descent (including Czech-speaking Jews) will at once be arrested in the Reich in equal numbers with Sudeten Germans arrested in Czechoslovakia since beginning of current week.

b) In the event of sentences of death passed on Sudeten Germans as a result of martial law being carried out, an equal number of Czechs will be shot in the Reich.

For information:

Measure a) is already so far in operation that 150 Czechoslovak nationals have been arrested here. Yesterday the Czechoslovak Chargé d'Affaires<sup>88</sup> protested against the arrests, on his own initiative. He was told that it was a matter of countermeasures against arrests of Sudeten Germans.

II. If the orders for or execution of death sentences by court martial are known to you, please always report at once by telephone and confirm by telegram.

III. As already requested by telephone, please send, if possible by return, total number of Sudeten Germans killed or wounded in riots since September 12, if possible with details of name, place, and date.

WOERMANN

<sup>87</sup> Nuremberg document 2854-PS. The copy printed is from the Foreign Ministry files and is dated September 17, and bears the serial number 229 (i.e., previous to 232, the serial number of document No. 498, p. 808, which is dated September 16). This telegram was actually sent as telegram No. 234 on the 17th. Substantially the same text appears on a document (not printed here) dated September 16, which was initialed and amended by Ribbentrop.

<sup>88</sup> M. Schubert.

## No. 508

147/78584

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 17, 1938.

On the 15th of this month, late in the evening, the Polish Ambassador rang me in Berchtesgaden, on instructions from Minister Beck, in order to give me the following information.

Minister Beck wished us to know that, in the event of a solution of the Czech question by a plebiscite, the Polish Government would demand categorically corresponding treatment for the Teschen region.<sup>39</sup> The Polish Government would in no case yield in this matter.

I replied to the Polish Ambassador on the telephone that I would take note of this communication purely as information, but presumed that the Polish Government meant this for London. M. Lipski replied that M. Beck was arranging for a corresponding *démarche* to be made in London, as well as in Paris and Rome.

The Ambassador then added that there was complete accord with the Hungarians regarding Poland's fundamental attitude on this matter.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 509

139/126174

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, September 17, 1938.

As previously on other occasions, the Italian Ambassador has again urged upon me the useful part which Italian troops could play—as they did in the Saar plebiscite—in the forthcoming cession of the Sudetenland to Germany.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>39</sup> See footnote 36, p. 817.

## No. 510

F5/0018

*Unsigned Memorandum, Presumably by the Foreign Minister*

No. 254a

## MEMORANDUM

With reference to Mussolini's wish, communicated to us by the Italian Ambassador,<sup>40</sup> to be more precisely informed about our future intentions in Czechoslovakia, as he intends to make a speech on Sunday in Trieste and hopes by this to lend support to our plans, I gave the following information by telephone to the Italian Ambassador:

- 1) The situation in Czechoslovakia is deteriorating hour by hour and has already become intolerable.
- 2) The immediate withdrawal of all military and police forces is the primary requisite.
- 3) The only possible solution today would be the liberation of all foreign nationalities from union with the State.
- 4) Germany will settle this problem in one way or another, by peaceful means or by military intervention.

I further asked the Italian Ambassador, in the Führer's name, to convey to Mussolini his most sincere thanks for his intention to advocate the German point of view. I spoke to him intentionally on only a few points concerning the aims we were pursuing, and beyond that we were leaving it entirely to Mussolini's free will to say what he would. There was moreover no doubt that, with chaos increasing in Czechoslovakia, the Bolshevik element was gaining ground, just as in Spain. For this reason the necessity arose of achieving an immediate radical solution.

BERCHTESGADEN, September 17, 1938.

## No. 511

139/126106-07

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

## MINUTE

I asked the Czech Chargé d'Affaires to call on me today and told him the following:

We had received news that a considerable number of age groups had been called to the colors in Czechoslovakia about the 14th of the month. The whole picture of measures taken was that of secret

\* See document No. 495, p. 806.

general mobilization by the Czechs. I drew the Chargé's attention to the consequences Czech action might have, such as Czechoslovakia had undertaken in May of this year. The Führer's opinion on this matter could certainly not have escaped the Czech Government.

The Chargé thereupon declared, giving an official reply immediately, that the measures taken involved not numerous but only one age group, and of this, only the infantry and observer sections. The calling-up concerned had been necessary to man certain military establishments in the frontier regions for security reasons, which from the recent course of events appeared to be threatened. The Chargé wished to add that in France certain frontier measures had also been taken which we certainly had not regarded as a threat, besides which the Führer had indeed also spoken of measures taken against Czechoslovakia. I replied that I had requested the Chargé to call on me in order to talk about the measures in Czechoslovakia, and to draw his attention to the consequences of military undertakings there. Moreover I took note of his declarations, but believed, however, that the usefulness of military contingents remaining in the Sudeten German area would be thoroughly discussed now by other competent authorities.

When the Chargé turned the conversation to the arrest of Czechs in Germany and to a note alleged to have been handed to the Foreign Ministry today, I referred him on this matter to the discussion initiated by the German Chargé d'Affaires in Prague.

BARON VON WEIZSÄCKER

BERLIN, September 17, 1938.

No. 512

2185/472215

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Under State Secretary (Woermann)*

Message telephoned to the Reich Minister:

Herr Schacht, president of the Reichsbank, called on me to inform me that in the next few days a loan will have to be issued for the purpose of raising money. I was in agreement with the president that a public issue of the loan is out of the question, since this would also have to be advertised publicly. This advertisement could not be made without giving the impression that the Czech crisis had already been surmounted. The loan is therefore to be placed unobtrusively among certain financial institutions.

WEIZSÄCKER

BERLIN, September 17, 1938.

## No. 513

139/126095

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

PRAGUE, September 17, 1938—11:10 a.m.

Received September 17, 1938—1:05 p.m.

VERY URGENT

No. 377 of September 17

In continuation of telegram No. 375 of the 16th.<sup>41</sup>

1) Sudeten German Party Deputies here are receiving information that move of Sudeten German Party Executive across frontier, allegedly interpreted as a flight, has caused a crisis in the confidence of the Sudeten Germans in their leaders. Reported appeals by mayors who belong to Sudeten German Party to maintain peace and order and also to refrain from subversive activities are regarded by Sudeten German Party representatives in Prague as revolt against Henlein's call for revolution.

2) The Czechoslovak Government is exploiting manifestations for attempts to cause a split in Sudeten German Party. Yesterday Rector and Deans of German University and Technical High School here were forced by the Ministry of Education to sign statements condemning the "treasonable activities of Konrad Henlein." Similar action is arranged for today in the case of German professors. Professors are making efforts to evade decision. In order to give support to that section of the professors in particular whose confidence in Henlein is shaken, I regard it as expedient that German radio should stigmatize without delay the pressure exerted on rectors and deans by the Ministry of Education.

Reports by German radio stations on situation here are increasing uneasiness among Reich-Germans and desire to leave the country.

HENCKE

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<sup>41</sup> Document No. 502, p. 812.



## No. 514

139/126102

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV (Stechow) for  
the Foreign Ministry*

## MEMORANDUM

The German Legation in Prague (Counselor of Legation Hencke) communicated the following by telephone at 12:45 p.m.:

Rumors of the defection of various leading Sudeten German Party men were confirmed both by the Czech press and the Sudeten German Party. In reply to a question whether it was not just a matter of technical measures which were connected with the dissolution of the Sudeten German Party, Hencke expressed the opinion that the reports were not interpreted thus in Prague.

Hencke further communicated that the arrest of numerous Czechs in Germany had caused a great sensation, and opinion in Prague had hardened a great deal. According to Prague press reports, the editor in chief of a Czech newspaper in Vienna was among those arrested. Hencke asked whether this report was correct, since it was of importance for German newspaper correspondents in Czechoslovakia. A certain feeling of uneasiness was prevalent among the Germans in Prague. Otherwise everything was calm in Prague and the rest of the country.

The Czechoslovak banks were solvent and the *krona* was being quoted at the normal rate.

Hencke furthermore made an urgent request for the dispatch of the telegram promised by Herr Eisenlohr to be speeded up, since he attached great importance to the instruction in view of the present situation.

VON STECHOW

BERLIN, September 17, 1938.

## No. 515

139/126093

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) and the Military Attaché of the German Legation in Czechoslovakia (Toussaint) to the German Foreign Ministry and the Supreme Headquarters of the Wehrmacht*

Telegram

No. 378 of September 17 PRAGUE, September 17, 1938—1:50 p.m.  
Received September 17, 1938—3:30 p.m.

For Supreme Headquarters, *Wehrmacht*, Attaché Section.

Spreading of the news that Sudeten German Party leaders had fled has had a crushing effect in the German area. Czechoslovak Government at present really master of situation. Czech self-assurance increased; sharp rejection of plebiscite in press and speeches. Military measures amount to general mobilization, but are less apparent on the surface.<sup>42</sup> Total strategic concentration and formation of reserve divisions ought to be completed by September 20. Beginning of troop movements from Slovakia toward the west confirmed by reliable source.

Chargé d'Affaires asks that above telegram be regarded as addressed also to Foreign Ministry.

TOUSSAINT  
HENCKE

## No. 516

139/126094

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 380 of September 17 PRAGUE, September 17, 1938—3 p.m.  
Received September 17, 1938—5:15 p.m.

Consulate Brünn reports:

"Regard myself bound to telegraph the following: As a result of German radio reports, widespread fear psychosis has arisen among German population. Hence large-scale exodus, in particular of women and children, although complete calm prevails in Moravia-Silesia, of which I have received confirmation by personal communications from agents from all parts of the district covered by the Consulate."

<sup>42</sup> General mobilization was not proclaimed till September 23, though the Army was believed to be mobilized to the extent of 40 percent before that date.

No incidents of any importance have occurred anywhere for days; meetings of Germans and singing of German songs in a few places have had no repercussions. Opinion frequently held among Germans that radio grossly exaggerates. In this way belief in its reliability shaken, especially as its inaccuracy established in individual cases by direct information. On the other hand, as result of these radio reports Czechs are very exasperated with German element here because of supposedly false reports. Position and morale of Germans not strengthened but weakened by radio. This view shared by leader of the Sudeten German Party here.

HENCKE

## No. 517

28/19035

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

[BERLIN,] September 17, 1938—4:37 p.m.

Received [Prague,] September 17, 1938—6 p.m.

No. 236 of September 17

As result of consultation with Minister Eisenlohr, request that Reich-Germans in regions with Czechoslovak population be instructed, without attracting attention and only verbally, to send women and children out of country. Herr Fischer, A.O., agrees.

WOERMANN

## No. 518

139/126113-14

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 381 of September 17 PRAGUE, September 17, 1938—4:46 p.m.

Received September 17, 1938—7:45 p.m.

In continuation of telegram No. 373 of the 16th.<sup>43</sup>

1) This morning Deputy Kundt expressed his views on the situation to a member of the Legation as follows:

<sup>43</sup> Document No. 497, p. 807.

Lack of leadership in Sudeten German Party in conjunction with German radio announcements, of which no one knew whether they were to be regarded as instructions, had brought about a state of complete panic and uncertainty in the Sudeten German area. Marienbad district, where population confidently follows instructions of Senator Ludwig Frank, is an exception. Officials of Sudeten German Party down to local leaders for the most part not at their posts, having either fled, being in hiding, or been arrested. Local leaders, for the most part Sudeten German mayors and village authorities, are partially carrying on their duties. (Two groups missing) F.S. has either disappeared or been arrested. According to information from Karmasin, leader of Carpatho-German Party, that too had to cease its activity, house-to-house searches going on in Party offices. Kundt advised Deputy Karmasin to urge in the Moravian Provincial Presidency that permission be given for a branch of the Parliamentary Club in Pressburg.

Chauvinistic and Leftist circles had prevailed against more moderate policy of Beneš and Czerny. In the Agrarian Party a violent struggle was going on for and against Beneš. Party Leader Beran said that agreement with Germany could be reached in a few days if Hodza resigned. In view of information in his possession, Kundt thinks it possible that on Tuesday a Leftist *Putsch* will be staged to overthrow Beneš and Hodza.

2) General impression that Czech attitude stiffened. In view of Czechs, the Sudeten German Party's attempt at a rising failed because of leaders' failure to act, and serious split caused in Sudeten German Party. Government has succeeded in convincing Missions well disposed toward us, such as Italians, Hungarians, and Yugoslavs, of this.

3) Kundt asks urgently that no use should be made of the estimate of the situation in 1) on the German radio.

HENCKE

## No. 519

139/126117

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

PRAGUE, September 17, 1938—9:58 p.m.

No. 384 of September 17 Received September 18, 1938—12:10 a.m.

(Pol. I 924 Top Secret)

Reference telegram No. 234 of the 17th.<sup>44</sup>

Have just carried out instructions at 7:20 p.m. and at same time handed Foreign Minister's deputy, M. Krno, text of Reich Government resolution.

M. Krno received communication politely and promised to forward it to Foreign Minister Krofta who was at Cabinet meeting at the time. As personal observation, M. Krno declared that German measures were at variance with international law. I stated that I was obliged to refuse to discuss the matter. Krno further expressed hope that an end might be put as soon as possible to present intolerable state of affairs. In this connection, Czechoslovak Government had also regarded efforts of British Prime Minister with gratitude. I maintained a purely receptive attitude.

Conversation lasted three minutes altogether.

At 8:20 p.m. M. Krno told me on the telephone that so far not a single court-martial sentence had been passed.

HENCKE

## No. 520

139/126119

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 386 of September 17

PRAGUE, September 17, 1938—midnight.

Received September 18, 1938—1:50 a.m.

In continuation of telegram No. 381 of the 17th.<sup>45</sup>

Baron von Gregory and Attaché Dr. Betz, who have returned from an official journey to Asch, Eger, and Selb in Bavaria, report on their impressions as follows:

<sup>44</sup> See footnote 37, p. 818.<sup>45</sup> Document No. 518, p. 825.

1) Mood of Sudeten German population extraordinarily depressed as a result of departure of practically all Party officials. Yesterday and today complete calm prevailed in Asch, Eger, and the Karlsbad district.

2) The crossing of the frontier by Konrad Henlein and the chief leaders of the Sudeten German Party, which took place at Asch with a considerable convoy of cars, is known to local Czech and German population, and in particular to the Czechoslovak customs officials.

3) The leaders of the Sudeten German Party stationed in Selb stated that Konrad Henlein was staying until this morning in a castle near Selb. Gregory spoke with Sebekovsky, who is thoroughly *au fait* with the crisis due to breakdown of confidence in Sudeten German population. Sebekovsky said that purpose of K. H. Frank's visit to the Führer and Reich Chancellor had been to obtain consent for the formation of Sudeten German Legion to raise the morale of the German population inside Czechoslovakia by fresh activity.

4) Contents of telegram 371 of September 16<sup>46</sup> on situation in Eger on September 15 confirmed in all essentials by Gregory's investigations.

5) Gregory has reported direct to the Propaganda Ministry on the damaging by Czech soldiers near Lubenz of the Reich flag on the car of a member of the Legation. I shall send a note of protest to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

HENCKE

### No. 521

2369/494966-68

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 424 of September 17

LONDON, September 17, 1938.

Received September 18, 1938—9:50 a.m.

(Pol. IV 6165)

Yesterday evening, accompanied by von Selzam, Counselor of Legation, I was present at Heston airport to welcome back the British Prime Minister. Lord Halifax and several senior members of the Cabinet were present. In addition, hundreds of spectators had assembled outside the airport and gave the Prime Minister a hearty ovation. Mr. Chamberlain thanked me most cordially for my brief words of welcome. He said he had been very pleased indeed

\* Not printed.

with the exceptionally warm reception he had received officially in Germany and from all sections of the population. "They were very kind. I had a great time!" Sir Horace Wilson and Mr. Strang also said they were highly satisfied with their visit. The Prime Minister then went to the microphone and gave the following short address:—

"I have come back again rather quicker than I expected, after a journey which, if I had not been so preoccupied, I should have found thoroughly enjoyable. Yesterday afternoon I had a long talk with Herr Hitler. It was a frank talk, and it was a friendly one, and I feel satisfied now that each of us fully understands what is in the mind of the other.

You won't, of course, expect me to discuss now what may be the results of that talk. What I have got to do now is to discuss them with my colleagues—and I would advise you not to accept prematurely any unauthorized account of what took place in the conversations.

But I shall be discussing them tonight with my colleagues and with others, especially Lord Runciman. And later on, perhaps in a few days, I am going to have another talk with Herr Hitler.

Only this time he has told me that it is his intention to come halfway to meet me—he wishes to spare an old man another long journey."

When he spoke the last words—to the effect that the Führer intended to come to meet him halfway in order to spare an old man the effort of a long journey at the next visit—the crowd broke out into spontaneous applause.

The Prime Minister went straight away to his home, where he had a discussion with the "Inner Cabinet." He was also received by the King in the evening.

Today's morning press is full of speculations as to what was discussed at the Obersalzberg, which I need not go into now. Important in assessing public opinion is the fact that only the Liberal press continues to oppose the plebiscite idea seriously. The presumable reason for this is the fact that Mr. Chamberlain did not personally inform Sir Archibald Sinclair, leader of the uninfluential Liberal Party in the House of Commons, about the situation in the same way as he informed Mr. Attlee, leader of the Opposition, the Labor Party. I would state here that a personal enmity has existed between Sinclair and the Prime Minister for a long time.

For the rest, the entire press, and *The Times* in particular, emphasizes that any use of force by Germany at the present moment would destroy all efforts toward a peaceful settlement.

TH. KORDT

## No. 522

139/126126-28

*Foreign Ministry Minute*

On instructions from the State Secretary I communicated the following by telephone to Counselor of Legation Hewel,<sup>47</sup> Obersalzberg, at 8:45 p.m. this evening:

1) In accordance with instructions from the Reich Minister, the State Secretary gave information to the British Embassy (the Ambassador was not there in person, because he was on the golf course) at 3:30 p.m. today concerning the failure to forward the minutes of the conversation between the Führer and Chamberlain.<sup>48</sup>

2) The British Ambassador had just informed the State Secretary that he had immediately acquainted the British Prime Minister with the information in paragraph 1).<sup>49</sup> According to the British Ambassador this had produced a strong feeling of resentment in the British Prime Minister, apparently for the following reasons:

The British Prime Minister had conferred with the Führer for about two to two and one-half hours solely in the presence of Counselor of Legation Schmidt, the German interpreter, in whom the British Government had complete confidence. In view of this Mr. Chamberlain regarded it as a matter of course that a copy of the minutes of this conversation would be placed at the disposal of the British Government. He, the British Ambassador, was now instructed to request either an unofficial or else an abridged version of the record. He had received that very night instructions by telegraph to make a complaint regarding this matter to Baron von Weizsäcker, the State Secretary, tomorrow morning and to demand an unofficial or abridged version of the minutes.

Baron von Weizsäcker, the State Secretary, refused for his part to have an abridged version of the minutes drawn up or to have any other document on the conversation forwarded to the Ambassador, since his instructions were clear regarding this. He had, however, stated that he was prepared to forward the British Ambassador's statements to Berchtesgaden.

3) The British Ambassador had informed the State Secretary that the attention of the British and French Governments had been drawn by the Czech Government to the fact that the Czech Government had information on German troop concentrations and move-

<sup>47</sup> On the personal staff of Ribbentrop.

<sup>48</sup> A note of this conversation with the Secretary of the Embassy was made on September 19 and is printed as document No. 532, p. 839. For the Chamberlain-Hitler conversation, see document No. 487, p. 736.

<sup>49</sup> I.e., of the communication recorded in document No. 532, p. 839.



ments which made it imperative for the Czech Government to proceed to full mobilization. The British Government had thereupon advised the Czech Government to refrain from mobilization as long as conversations between Germany and Britain were in progress. The French Government had probably tendered the same advice in Prague. (The latter for our information.)

4) The British Ambassador had finally informed Baron von Weizsäcker, the State Secretary, that, on instructions from his Government, he was to warn us against accepting any sort of report or statement concerning the subject matter of the conversations between the British and French Ministers, which would be published this evening. Only the official communiqué to be issued on them was authentic—anything else was gossip.

BERGMANN

SEPTEMBER 18.

No. 523

330/195840-42

*Text of the Joint Communication by the British and French Governments to the President of Czechoslovakia*<sup>50</sup>

Translation

SECRET

English text of the joint communication handed by the British and French Governments to President Beneš, as agreed at the Anglo-French consultations of Sunday, September 18, 1938.

1) The representatives of the French and British Governments have been in consultation today on the general situation, and have considered the British Prime Minister's report of his conversation with Herr Hitler. British Ministers also placed before their French colleagues their conclusions derived from the account furnished to them of the work of his Mission by Lord Runciman. We are both convinced that, after recent events, the point has now been reached where the further maintenance within the boundaries of the Czechoslovak State of the districts mainly inhabited by Sudeten Germans cannot, in fact, continue any longer without imperiling the interests of Czechoslovakia herself and of European peace. In the light of these considerations, both Governments have been compelled to the conclusion that the maintenance of peace and the safety of Czecho-

<sup>50</sup> The document in the file is a translation made in the Foreign Ministry. The English text is given in the British White Paper (Cmd. 5847), which states that the proposals were presented to the Czechoslovak Government on September 19.

slovakia's vital interests cannot effectively be assured unless these areas are now transferred to the Reich.

2) This could be done either by direct transfer or as the result of a plebiscite. We realize the difficulties involved in a plebiscite, and we are aware of your objections already expressed to this course, particularly the possibility of far-reaching repercussions if the matter were treated on the basis of so wide a principle. For this reason we anticipate, in the absence of indication to the contrary, that you may prefer to deal with the Sudeten German problem by the method of direct transfer, and as a case by itself.

3) The area for transfer would probably have to include areas with over 50 percent of German inhabitants, but we should hope to arrange by negotiation provisions for adjustment of frontiers, where circumstances render it necessary, by some international body, including a Czech representative. We are satisfied that the transfer of smaller areas based on a higher percentage would not meet the case.

4) The international body referred to might also be charged with questions of possible exchange of population on the basis of right to opt within some specified time limit.

5) We recognize that, if the Czechoslovak Government are prepared to concur in the measures proposed, involving material changes in the conditions of the State, they are entitled to ask for some assurance of their future security.

6) Accordingly, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom would be prepared, as a contribution to the pacification of Europe, to join in an international guarantee of the new boundaries of the Czechoslovak State against unprovoked aggression. One of the principal conditions of such a guarantee would be the safeguarding of the independence of Czechoslovakia by the substitution of a general guarantee against unprovoked aggression in place of existing treaties which involve reciprocal obligations of a military character.

7) Both the French and British Governments recognize how great is the sacrifice thus required of the Czechoslovak Government in the cause of peace. But because that cause is common both to Europe in general and in particular to Czechoslovakia herself, they have felt it their duty jointly to set forth frankly the conditions essential to secure it.

8) The Prime Minister must resume conversation with Herr Hitler not later than Wednesday, and earlier if possible. We therefore feel we must ask for your reply at the earliest possible moment.

## No. 524

139/126129

*Minute for the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, September 19, 1938.

On Sunday the 18th at 7:30 p.m. the British Ambassador informed the State Secretary as follows:

The British and French Governments have received the following communication from the Czechoslovak Government:

The Czechoslovak Government knows that considerable troop movements are taking place on German territory near the Czech frontier, and these have caused Czechoslovakia for her part to order *total* mobilization.

The British Government has advised the Czechoslovak Government to refrain from the proposed measures while the Anglo-German negotiations were still pending. Moreover, the Ambassador thought that Paris had given similar advice. ("I understand Paris did the same.")

SIEGFRIED

## No. 525

139/126133

*Minute by an Official of the State Secretary's Office (Siegfried) for the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, September 19, 1938.

The British Ambassador informed the State Secretary, on Sunday the 18th at 7:30 p.m., of the following: Uneasiness was felt in Great Britain as a result of the thousands of rumors regarding the course of the Anglo-French discussions. The British Government requested that the communiqué which would be issued at the end of the discussions should be regarded as the only authentic account, and all reports circulated other than this communiqué should be disregarded in Germany.

SIEGFRIED

## No. 526

139/126159

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, September 19, 1938.

The British Ambassador transmitted to me by telephone at 12:15 p.m. today the following message from Mr. Chamberlain to the Führer, with the request for its immediate onward transmission:

"I have now got so far with my consultation that I anticipate that it will be possible to resume my conversation with Your Excellency on Wednesday, September 21.

If Your Excellency will inform me whether this date will be convenient to yourself, I hope to be able to confirm appointment definitely."

WOERMANN

BERLIN, September 19, 1938.

I dictated the above text to Reich Minister's Secretariat at Berchtesgaden (Frl. Krüger) at 12:30 p.m. today. Berlin, September 19, 1938.

## No. 527

139/126148-49

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, September 19, 1938.

In accordance with instructions which Herr Brückelmeier sent me from Berchtesgaden, I today told the British Ambassador at 2 p.m. that the Führer thanked Mr. Chamberlain for his communication<sup>51</sup> and accepted the proposal that the conversation should take place on Wednesday at Godesberg. Accommodation would be arranged for at this end. Further details would be discussed with the British Embassy.

In addition I proposed to the Ambassador, in accordance with instructions, that a press communiqué in simple terms should again be jointly drawn up and issued simultaneously.

The British Ambassador rang me up afterward at 4:45 p.m. and said that Mr. Chamberlain thanked the Führer for his communication and would make known the exact date of his arrival as soon as possible. He doubted whether it would be possible to issue the press communiqué today. Mr. Henderson remarked that this was

<sup>51</sup> See document No. 526, *supra*.

probably due to the fact that Mr. Chamberlain had certain preparations to make first.

The British Ambassador further stated that in the main the same people as last time would come from London, with the addition of two further shorthand typists. He, the Ambassador, would bring with him two Embassy Secretaries and two officials for dispatching the necessary telegrams. It transpired from this that there would be five in his party and that about seven people would come from London. Accordingly, about twelve bedrooms and, in addition, the necessary working rooms will be wanted.

WOERMANN

No. 528

139/126140-42

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 393 of September 19 PRAGUE, September 19, 1938—5:20 p.m.  
Received September 19, 1938—9:15 p.m.

Deputy Kundt gave information to a member of the Legation who told him of Konrad Henlein's wish that no further statements should be issued:

1) Kundt had today informed Malypeter, the chairman of the Permanent Parliamentary Committee, by letter, that Sudeten German representatives would not take part in this committee's discussions, as the result of the continuation of the Berchtesgaden talks between Führer and Chamberlain must first be awaited.

Furthermore, discussion by remaining Sudeten German Party functionaries took place in Prague, under Kundt's chairmanship in his capacity as club president, when political situation was discussed, especially insofar as it concerns Germans in districts with a predominantly Czech and Slovak population. Deputy agreed that an attitude of wait and see must be adopted. D.N.B. communiqué on this.

Publication took place before Henlein's instruction became known.

2) Sudeten German Party organization is more or less intact only in Marienbad, as Senator Frank has not released Party functionaries from their obligations. Young Sudeten Germans of military age in the Marienbad area hiding in the woods and are ready for action at any time.

3) Sudeten German Legion<sup>52</sup> has started with small-scale actions. Apart from attack on Customs Post in Asch, a sawmill and swimming baths, both incidentally German owned, have been set on fire in Rumburg.

4) When Sudeten German Party leaders left Prague Labor Exchange in haste, list of F. S. members in Prague was left behind. Police discovered this list during house-to-house search and are taking action against Sudeten Germans appearing on it. Kundt is endeavoring to warn those concerned.

5) Czechs were continuing attempts to create a split among the Sudeten Germans. Rohn, Sudeten German *Bürgermeister* of Reichenberg, who is also chairman of German Union of Teachers, has been forced to sign declaration condemning Konrad Henlein's action as high treason.

Pressure is also being brought to bear by Cabinet Office on provincial press to condemn Henlein, and it is being threatened that even a neutral attitude would entail consequences for newspaper editors.

Kundt has contacted editors concerned. Newspapers will not give way to pressure and will present united front should action be taken against any one paper.

The attitude of the Sudeten German editors of provincial newspapers in Brux, Asch, and Eger deserves special mention. The editors partially took over the duties of the Sudeten German Party official administration.

6) Rumors were increasing that Communist disturbances might be expected on Tuesday or Wednesday in Prague. Legation has also had reports about this from other sources.

HENCKE

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<sup>52</sup> Henlein issued a proclamation on September 17, declaring that "The extreme emergency has arisen. In taking up arms and forming the Sudeten German Free Corps, we are therefore claiming for ourselves the right born of necessity exercised by peoples at all times." The *Freikorps* was formed on the German side of the frontier.

## No. 529

139/126143

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) and the Military Attaché of the German Legation in Czechoslovakia (Toussaint) to the German Foreign Ministry and the Supreme Headquarters of the Wehrmacht*

Telegram

No. 394 of September 19

PRAGUE, September 19, 1938—5:50 p.m.  
Received September 19, 1938—9:18 p.m.

To the Supreme Headquarters, *Wehrmacht*, Attaché Section.

Calm prevails in German-speaking territory as result of military and police pressure.

Completion of mobilization and deployment is being carried out in an orderly manner.

Defensive measures carried out as on May 20.

Immediate frontier territory occupied with troops to an extent far exceeding that in May. Formation of greater reserves not yet discernible. Brünn and Prague partly free of larger troop formations.

Transport movements from Slovakia to West. Am attempting to ascertain if Fifth Army is being formed.

Germans called up are being employed on labor service under guard. Partly treated as convicts.

TOUSSAINT  
HENCKE

## No. 530

139/126145

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 396 of September 19

PRAGUE, September 19, 1938—5:50 p.m.  
Received September 19, 1938—9:15 p.m.

With reference to telegram No. 234 of the 17th.<sup>53</sup>

Sudeten German Party Deputies here state that they are unable to give even approximate figures for the number of Sudeten Germans arrested. This was not even possible for the Prague district. The Consular branch office at Eger also reports that it is not in a position to do so for the time being.

<sup>53</sup> See footnote 37, p. 818.

Consulate at Brünn estimates the number of arrests in Moravia at about 60, Consulate at Reichenberg 150 to 200 for its district, 30 to 40 of which in town of Reichenberg.

HENCKE

No. 531

139/126157

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 400 of September 19 PRAGUE, September 19, 1938—10:20 a.m.

Received September 20, 1938—12:30 a.m.

1) I learn the following from the Hungarian Minister:

a) Ministerial Counselor Cermak, the prospective Czechoslovak Minister to Budapest, who a few days ago described plebiscite as unacceptable, today informed M. de Wettstein that the Czechoslovak Government "no longer adopted the standpoint of absolute negation."

b) Alexandrovsky, the Soviet Minister here, has stated to a Head of a Mission that, in the event of war, the Soviet Union could give no military assistance to Czechoslovakia if France remained neutral. The Soviet Government was indeed not pledged to do this under the treaty terms.

2) The Polish Military Attaché here informed Colonel Toussaint that the Polish Legation were convinced that the question of a European war was no longer acute. Poland would, moreover, put up military resistance to a possible Russian attempt to march through, and would also exercise strong pressure on Rumania to refuse passage to the Russian Army.

3) Publication of British proposals by press here has made great impression on population, groups of whom discuss the position in the streets. Observers gain the impression that the Anglo-French attitude is weakening the Czech will to resist, which was still manifest yesterday.

4) Activity shown by Communists, who are stirring up population through press. For example, *Rote Fahne*,<sup>54</sup> which appears twice daily, may well be most widely read paper in Czechoslovakia today.

Evidently the Government too are expecting Communist plots. They have of their own accord strengthened police protection of the Legation and taken measures for blocking the approaching streets.

HENCKE

<sup>54</sup> Organ of the German Communist Party in Czechoslovakia.



## No. 532

139/126130-32

*Minute by an Official of the State Secretary's Office (Siegfried) for the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, September 19, 1938.

In reply to the British Prime Minister's wish, expressed repeatedly and urgently by the British Ambassador on behalf of his Government, to receive a copy of the notes prepared by Counselor of Legation Schmidt on the Führer's conversation with Chamberlain at Berchtesgaden, the State Secretary on behalf of the Reich Minister answered the British Embassy on Sunday, September 18, about 4 p.m.<sup>54a</sup> (As the Ambassador was not available, Harrison, Secretary of Embassy, received the answer, which was as follows:)

1) The State Secretary has discussed the British wish with the Reich Minister, who, after consultation with the Führer, states that there is no official memorandum.

2) Counselor of Legation Schmidt has, for some considerable time, had strict injunctions not to hand over memoranda on State conversations drawn up unilaterally by him.

3) If an exchange of such documents is intended or desired in conversations between leading personalities, persons must be brought in by each party concerned to take down notes on the conversation each for himself.

4) We, on the German side, are convinced that Chamberlain correctly understood the Führer in every respect, so that there was no room for misunderstanding, and, moreover, the Führer is always ready to repeat what he said.

5) Field Marshal Göring had not been in possession of the notes requested by the British, but only had notes by Major General Bodenschatz.

6) The Reich Minister recalls that on the occasion of his conversation with Lord Halifax in March last the notes prepared at the time and exchanged with the British led to certain misunderstandings, so that the method of preparing notes unilaterally had not stood the test. It is therefore not practicable to repeat this method, but rather to resort to the suggestion made in point 3.

The British Ambassador telephoned the following reply to the State Secretary on this communication at 7:30 p.m.:

1) Harrison, Secretary to the Embassy, had immediately forwarded the communication to London. He—the Ambassador—was thereupon instructed to say that Chamberlain was very much upset by the news. Telegraphic instructions to the Ambassador were on the way, telling him to call on the State Secretary on Monday morning and protest against the German attitude. Chamberlain had the feeling that he had been taken in. It was his duty to give the Cabinet an *exact* report of his conversation with the Führer. This

<sup>54a</sup> See document No. 522, p. 830.

conversation had lasted 2½ hours and he could not be expected to have everything in his head. He had naturally expected that the memorandum of Counselor of Legation Schmidt, who had taken notes during the conversation, would be put at his disposal too. The British had complete confidence in Schmidt's *comptes rendus*. After today's experience they would have to bring their own man with them the next time.

[2)] The Ambassador asked the State Secretary to send him some kind of extract or abbreviated version of Schmidt's, or of another memorandum, before the protest which he must make on Monday. The State Secretary answered that, according to the precise instructions given to him, he was not in a position to do anything. Moreover, he hoped that Henderson's *démarche* would not amount to a protest, and said he was prepared to inform Berchtesgaden of the conversation which had taken place.

SIEGFRIED

No. 533

139/126139

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

LONDON, September 19, 1938—9:10 p.m.

No. 427 of September 19

Received September 20, 1938—12:50 a.m.

Ambassador Grandi has just informed me of the contents of his conversation today with Halifax. The British Government, through their Minister in Prague, have communicated their plan for a peaceful settlement of the Czechoslovak question to the Czechoslovak Government. A similar *démarche* was made by the French Minister in Prague. Both Governments have brought strong pressure to bear for acceptance, which alone will enable the Czech Government to prevent the complete collapse of the State. Halifax hoped that the answer would be received tomorrow, and that on Wednesday Mr. Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, can go to Godesberg for the talk planned with the Führer and Reich Chancellor.

When Grandi asked the British Foreign Secretary whether he could give him any information on the contents of the plan, Halifax politely but firmly refused: it was British Government's wish that the plan should be communicated and explained to the German Reich Chancellor by Chamberlain personally. Until then, therefore, they could make no statement whatever on its contents.

In conclusion Italian Ambassador told me that he considered this . . . (group missing) of the British Government very reasonable, and so he had made no efforts whatever to learn more details.

KORDT

## No. 534

2369/494975

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*<sup>55</sup>

Telegram

No. 244 of September 19

BERLIN, September 19, 1938.  
(e.o. Pol. IV 6210)

Drafting Officer: Counselor of Legation Dr. Altenburg.

Please inform Deputy Kundt, at the request of Konrad Henlein, that he should, without delay, get in touch with the Slovaks to persuade them to raise their demands for autonomy in the course of tomorrow.

ALTENBURG

[Marginal note:] Draft after consultation and in agreement with the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*.

## No. 535

139/126385

*The German Minister in Bulgaria (Rümelin) to the State Secretary  
in the German Foreign Ministry (Weizsäcker)*

SOFIA, September 19, 1938.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: Something occurred to me a few days ago about which I would like to tell you. In 1922, when, among other things, I was in charge of Czech affairs, Tusza<sup>56</sup> the then Czech Minister—a former Prime Minister—told me one day that during the peace negotiations Masaryk and Beneš had stated that, in order not to have too many Germans in the new State, they were prepared to cede purely German areas around Eger to Germany.

This suggestion was turned down at the time by Clemenceau and Lloyd George, because after the defeat no new territory might be given to Germany. I tell you this as it might be of use on the present occasion, and state that at the time two Czech Ministers in Sofia—Pawlu and Maxa<sup>57</sup>—confirmed to me the correctness of Tusza's statements.

Kindest regards, Heil Hitler!

Yours,

RÜMELIN

<sup>55</sup> Nuremberg document 2858-PS.<sup>56</sup> Vlastimil Tusar, Prime Minister, 1919-20.<sup>57</sup> Bohdan Pavlu, Czech Minister in Sofia, 1922-27; Prokop Maxa, Czech Minister in Sofia, 1931-39.

## No. 536

330/195849-57

*Note by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the  
Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, September 19, 1938.

To Counselor of Legation BRÜCKELMEIER,  
*Grand Hotel, Berchtesgaden.*

I submit herewith:

1) A memorandum on the plebiscite in Czechoslovakia. This memorandum has been drawn up by Herr Gaus (*Min. Dir.*) on the basis of conversations between the interested departments of the Foreign Ministry, and with participation of representatives of the Sudeten German Party. The *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* was not eventually represented, as its responsible members were not in Berlin.

2) A memorandum by the Political Department of the Foreign Ministry on the questions arising in connection with the plebiscite in the Sudeten German territory. This memorandum was drafted before it became known here that Imredi and Lipski were arriving at Obersalzberg on the 20th. This second memorandum is only intended for the Reich Minister and is not suitable for submission to other quarters.

WOERMANN

[Enclosure 1]

*Memorandum on the Plebiscite in Czechoslovakia*

## I.

With a view to a possible agreement with the British on the settlement of the Sudeten German question by a plebiscite, the following solution, after consultation with the representatives of the Sudeten German Party, should be given preference:

1) The plebiscite area should be determined beforehand by laying down demarcation lines. These would comprise, on the one hand, the territories mainly inhabited by Germans, contiguous to the present Reich frontier, and on the other, the so-called German language enclaves (Brünn, Iglau, Olmütz, etc.). The figures for the population on October 28, 1918 (day of the foundation of the Czechoslovak State), which are taken from the Austrian census of 1910, would serve as a basis for determining the demarcation lines. In this connection certain rounding off will have to be effected in the interests of a clear frontier demarcation.

2) Anyone born in the plebiscite territory up to and including October 28, 1918, would be entitled to vote. In this way it will be possible to eliminate the effects of the displacements of population which have taken place in Czechoslovakia since 1918 for political reasons. Besides, proof of birth in the plebiscite area, and consequently of the right to vote, is easily furnished by documentary evidence.

3) The Czechoslovak troops and State police must leave the plebiscite area forthwith. It would mean no delay worth mentioning if, in their place, an occupation force of British, Italian, and possibly French military contingents were to enter the territory. This idea is particularly appropriate as it would facilitate acceptance by the Czechs of the demand for evacuation of the area.

4) The maintenance of public order and the holding of the plebiscite should be effected by the Sudeten German police authorities who could be placed under the general supervision of an international commission, probably also composed of British, Italians, and, possibly, Frenchmen.

5) The plebiscite should be carried out by communes. The result of the plebiscite is to be decided, however, both for the block settlement area and also for each language enclave, on the uniform principle of an absolute majority of the votes cast. After the establishment of the result the plebiscite area can be occupied at once by the State for which the majority opted.

This proposal is the only one which makes possible a practical, simple, and speedy decision with regard to the future frontiers. It has, in particular, the advantage that it renders superfluous negotiations regarding the final frontier or its delimitation by an international authority. However, as has already been stated, it lays down the condition that demarcation lines shall be so determined that they can, at the same time, represent the future frontier of the Reich. As the language frontier follows a quite irregular line, with numerous deep reentrants and salients (particularly in North Moravia), it is inevitable that the demarcation line, to conform to the needs of a State frontier, must to a certain extent include in the plebiscite zone territory inhabited by the Czechs. If necessary, it could be considered whether, as compensation for this inclusion of Czech territory, claim to certain German-language enclaves could be foregone in principle.

A map with demarcation lines which embodies the above points of view has been prepared by the Sudeten German Party, and the sole copy available has already been sent to Berchtesgaden.

## II.

In the event of the British rejecting this simple and easy procedure and if, notwithstanding, an attempt be made to reach an agreement, the question is to be considered of holding a plebiscite,

without a previous determination of demarcation lines, in all communes of the "historic provinces" (Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia—possibly excluding the Teschen area—) which, according to the census of 1910, possessed a German majority (or even a minority of at least 20 percent). The assessment of the results of the plebiscite and the delimitation of the frontiers must then be carried out by an authority still to be designated. Hence, the difficult question immediately arises as to what this authority shall be and on what principles it should make its decisions. In any case it must be envisaged that, with this procedure, the final decision may be subject to considerable delay, during which time the population groups involved would be in a continuous state of unrest.

In the case of this solution it would further be necessary to contemplate a special settlement for the Hultschin territory,<sup>58</sup> which is inhabited by a population whose language is Czech but whose sympathies are German. This could probably only be effected by an immediate annulment of the cession which was enacted without consultation of the inhabitants under the dictated Treaty of Versailles. The same procedure could then also be applied to the areas which, pursuant to the dictated Treaty of Saint Germain,<sup>59</sup> were taken from the provinces of Upper and Lower Austria without reference to the population and adjudicated to Czechoslovakia.

[Enclosure 2]

*Memorandum by the Political Department of the Foreign Ministry  
on the Questions Arising in Connection With the Plebiscite in the  
Sudeten German Territory*

BERLIN, September 19, 1938.

The memorandum submitted today on the possibilities for a plebiscite in, and frontier delimitation of, the Sudeten German territory, leaves undecided the question of the fate of the Rump Czech State, the questions arising in Slovakia and, finally, the question of Eastern Silesia (Teschen area).<sup>60a</sup> The following may be mentioned in this connection:

I. Much as we are interested primarily in the fate of the Sudeten Germans and the fate of the Rump Czechoslovak State, we should not, from considerations of foreign policy, leave it entirely to other

<sup>58</sup> The Hultschin (Hlučín) enclave—to the north of the industrial Mährisch-Ostrau area—had a population of 50,000, of whom about 80 percent spoke a Moravian-Czech dialect.

<sup>59</sup> The Treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye, September 10, 1919, established the frontiers of the succession States to the defunct Austro-Hungarian Empire.

<sup>60a</sup> See footnote 36, p. 817.

States (Italy, Great Britain) to advocate a fulfillment of the Polish and Hungarian wishes. Just as Mussolini has already, in his Trieste speech,<sup>60</sup> made himself spokesman for the Hungarian and Polish demands, we too should find a formula to make known our solidarity with the wishes of these two States.

II. As regards the fate of the Rump Czech State the most far-reaching alternative, namely, that of annexation, is, for the moment, excluded from the scale of possible solutions, which extends from simple annexation to acquiescence in complete State independence, with or without international guarantee, or otherwise the discussion on the conditions governing the right of self-determination for the Sudeten Germans would be pointless.

The Sudeten German Party has already, as I hear in confidence, submitted a proposal to the Führer which considers the various contingencies, and voices the opinion that the solution lies in an independent Czech State with special ties to the German Reich. In this connection it is envisaged that the Rump Czech State should be bound to the German Reich by an economic and customs union and be subject to German military supremacy. On the other hand, this proposal of the Sudeten German Party does not seem to envisage German intervention in the sphere of the police and in that of race policy, etc. At the same time, the concept of an international guarantee is rejected, as this could lead to continuous interference by the guarantor Powers.

The demand for the establishment of German military supremacy would naturally include within itself the demand for a denunciation of the Czechoslovak alliances directed against Germany. If a program so far reaching as the one here demanded by the Sudeten German Party is not desirable or practicable at the moment, the claim for the denunciation of these alliances should be made independently.

III. With regard to the East Silesian area (Teschen), we ought probably to support the settlement Poland desires, although there is a German minority in this territory also.

IV. According to a statement by the Hungarian Minister, an agreement between Poland and Hungary is under discussion, pursuant to which, besides the Teschen territory, certain small territories on the Polish-Slovak frontier will go to Poland. For the rest, according to this same source, Poland has disinterested herself in Slovakia.

Naturally it remains of considerable political importance to Germany what solution is found for the Slovak question. At the same time it can be assumed forthwith that the Hungarian fringe, with

<sup>60</sup> September 18, 1938; cf. document No. 495, p. 806.

or without plebiscite, will go to Hungary. With regard to the Pressburg area, German claims should probably not be put forward, although the town of Pressburg itself, as a town in a predominantly Magyar district, had, at any rate before the war, a German majority. It is said that Hungary has already been given assurances to this effect by authoritative German quarters.

As regards the rest of Slovakia, the Hungarian aim is doubtless that this should go to Hungary; to be sure, with a large measure of autonomy. We should not oppose this aim. The argument adduced against this, that hereby a common frontier would be established between Hungary and Poland, should not deter us. If a plebiscite were to be held in this territory, and the questionnaire put: "Do you wish to join Hungary? Do you wish to form an independent State?" or "Do you still wish to remain in a Rump Czechoslovakia?" it cannot be foreseen with certainty what the result would be. In any case, an option for Hungary is not to be anticipated with certainty.

V. Finally, there must be a special settlement regarding the Ukrainians in Czechoslovakia.

VI. The settlement of the Sudeten German question should in no wise be delayed by the taking up and discussion of the questions treated above. Hence, in the conversations with the British, an endeavor is to be made to obtain a temporary differentiation between the Sudeten German problem on the one hand and the remaining problems on the other. This must be made palatable to the Hungarians and Poles.

WOERMANN

### No. 537

139/126161-62

*The British Ambassador in Germany (Henderson) to the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*<sup>61</sup>

BERLIN, September 19, 1938.

MY DEAR STATE SECRETARY: I have been instructed by Lord Halifax to tell you that he is most reluctant to convey to the Prime Minister, who, he feels, would most properly be resentful, the intimation which you made yesterday to a Secretary of this Embassy in regard to the record made by Dr. Schmidt of the conversation between the Reich Chancellor and Mr. Neville Chamberlain at Berchtesgaden.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>61</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>62</sup> See documents Nos. 522 and 532, pp. 830 and 839. For the record itself, see document No. 487, p. 786.



The Prime Minister naturally assumed that he would receive a copy of this record; indeed if he had for a moment thought otherwise, he would of course have arranged for an interpreter of his own to be present. In point of fact, before the Prime Minister and his advisers left Berchtesgaden the latter actually asked members of the German delegation how soon the record would be available, and the only point raised by the German delegation was that the Chancellor must see it first. Had Mr. Chamberlain then been aware of the attitude which it is now proposed to adopt, he would certainly have made the strongest possible protest against it.

In conclusion, I am to point out that the decision which is said to have been arrived at as a result of the discussions last March, but of which neither the Embassy here nor the Foreign Office in London has had any intimation whatsoever, cannot in any sense be regarded as a justification for the attitude which is now being adopted.

Yours sincerely,

NEVILLE HENDERSON

[Marginal note:] Dictated by telephone to competent official at Berchtesgaden for submission to State Secretary. Copy sent to office of RM and U.S.S. SI[EGFRIED], September 19.

No. 538

1632/389795

*The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A/1357

Moscow, September 19, 1938.

(Pol. IV 6299)

Subject: Rumors of a Soviet-Rumanian agreement to support Czechoslovakia.

Reference to instruction of the 10th instant—Pol. IV 5887/38.<sup>63</sup>

It has not been possible to ascertain any confirmation here about the conclusion of an agreement between the Soviet Union and Rumania to the effect that Rumania has given the Soviets permission to fly over their territory and transport troops and war materials through the country, while the Soviets have renounced claims<sup>64</sup> to Bessarabia for 25 years.

According to information available here, Rumania will not permit the passage of Soviet troops. On the other hand, it can be assumed that Rumania will permit the passage of Soviet aircraft, though perhaps only under protest. Only one line could be used to forward war material by rail and that one is technically in poor condition.

<sup>64</sup> Not printed.

It cannot therefore be expected that large consignments of war material can be dispatched by rail from the Soviet Union to Czechoslovakia via Rumania.

See also the memorandum by von Herwarth, Secretary to the Legation, submitted to the Foreign Ministry on September 12 of this year.<sup>64</sup>

SCHULENBURG

No. 539

139/126163

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Under State Secretary (Woermann)*

BERLIN, September 20, 1938.

The British Ambassador called on me at 10 o'clock this morning, to make the following statement to me:

The British Government is not at the moment in a position to state the exact time of Chamberlain's arrival in Godesberg. The fixing of the time still depends upon the Czech answer to yesterday's British *démarche*.<sup>65</sup> London wishes to know what Prague thinks before there is any meeting in Godesberg. In these circumstances a meeting could hardly be anticipated before Wednesday afternoon. The British Prime Minister wishes now on this occasion to give the most emphatic assurance that this announcement does not imply any element of uncertainty regarding Britain's political attitude or any evasion or wavering. The situation must not be disturbed by action of any sort before the meeting takes place. It is also to be urgently recommended that our press should adopt a somewhat calmer tone. At this last suggestion I openly laughed at Henderson; the rest I promised Henderson to transmit at once to Obersalzberg. I took the transmission in hand immediately after.

At about 2 o'clock Henderson telephoned to me again to say that the Prime Minister knew that the Czechs could not reply before the early afternoon, when the most important members of the British Cabinet would meet, so that an announcement to us regarding the time of the Godesberg interview was only to be expected in the latter part of the afternoon. This information, too, I at once transmitted to the Obersalzberg.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>64</sup> This may refer to document No. 411, p. 666, which was handed by Schulenburg to the Foreign Ministry on September 2 (not 12).

<sup>65</sup> See document No. 523, p. 831.

## No. 540

2369/494982-83

*The German Ambassador in Poland (Moltke) to the German  
Foreign Ministry*

PV 47/9.38

WARSAW, September 20, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 6298)

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Poland's more active attitude in the Czechoslovak question.

The Polish attitude toward the Czech problem has become considerably more active during the last few days. At the very outset, it is true, the claim was put forward here that the Poles must receive concessions in the Teschen region<sup>66</sup> of Silesia equal to those secured by the Sudeten Germans, but the Polish Government has hitherto refrained from making any special statement of its position. Only when, after the discussion in Berchtesgaden,<sup>67</sup> the impression was created here that the assent of the Western Powers to a plebiscite in the Sudeten German regions was to be expected, does M. Beck seem to have decided to adopt a stronger and more outspoken line. It is clear that he had become anxious that Poland might arrive too late on the scene, and that an international settlement might come into force which would be limited to a solution of the Sudeten problem, leaving the other minorities out of account. Accordingly, as early as the 16th instant, Polish *démarches* were undertaken in the capitals of the European powers concerned, reminding them categorically of the existence of the Polish demands. Further, the manning of the Polish-Czech frontier was ordered. When M. Beck communicated this to me on the 17th instant, he observed that it amounted to nothing more than a step occasioned by the crossing of the frontier by numerous deserters and by the far-reaching Czech military measures, but in taking it they, on the Polish side, wished to "avoid any demonstration."

This reserve, too, has in the meantime been deliberately given up. After it had become known here that the new Anglo-French plan contemplated a cession of the undoubtedly German territory of the Sudetenland without a plebiscite, the demand was raised yesterday through diplomatic channels by the Poles, in their turn, for a frontier revision without plebiscite. At the same time the statement was issued through the Government press that no power on earth could prevent the union of Polish territory beyond the Olsa with the

<sup>66</sup> See footnote 36, p. 817.

<sup>67</sup> On September 15, 1938.

mother country, "independently of the form assumed by the final settlement of the German-Czech conflict." This tendency found even clearer expression at a mass demonstration in Kattowitz, arranged in avowed accord with the Government, at which the resolution was adopted that "the moment had come for freeing the Poles beyond the Olsa and that this territory must at once be given back to Poland." The above-mentioned military measures on the Polish-Czech frontier now also assumed the character of a demonstration, today's press containing an official communication announcing very conspicuously that special formations of the frontier guards had undertaken the protection of the Polish-Czechoslovak frontier. This evening, however, an article circulated by the semiofficial press agency, *Iskra*, goes still further, the papers receiving express instructions to print it. In this article the demand for the Teschen territory is once more repeated in the strongest language and expression given to Poland's determination to liberate it, if necessary, by armed force.

MOLTKE

No. 541

330/195872

*Letter From the Prime Minister of Hungary (Imredy) to the  
Führer*

SEPTEMBER 20, 1938.

FÜHRER AND REICH CHANCELLOR: Information has reached us recently, not only through the press but also from other sources, that the Czechoslovak question is to be settled with the utmost consideration for the interests of the Sudeten German population, but that, on the other hand, the demands of the Hungarian, Polish, and other nationalities are not to be considered in any way.

I certainly do not need to draw your attention to the fact that such a settlement would not only arouse the greatest indignation in Hungarian public opinion but would also be opposed by the Hungarian Government most energetically. We have brought this point of view to the notice of both the British and French Governments in no uncertain terms.<sup>67a</sup>

For Your Excellency's personal information, I should like to add that the Hungarian Government will oppose, with all the means at their disposal, any solution ignoring the interests of the Hungarian minority, and will not shrink from resorting to measures which lie outside the diplomatic sphere of action.

<sup>67a</sup> Cf. document No. 551, p. 860.

We know that we shall not remain alone in this struggle, and are convinced that our point of view will be completely understood by Your Excellency.

With the highest regard,

IMREDY  
*Royal-Hungarian Prime Minister*

No. 542

139/126165

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 403 of September 20 PRAGUE, September 20, 1938—4:05 p.m.  
Received September 20, 1938—5:15 p.m.

With reference to telegram of the 20th, No. 401.<sup>68</sup>

1) Report, according to which Czechoslovak Government has decided to accept Anglo-French proposals,<sup>69</sup> has in the meantime been circulated by usually well-informed journalistic and diplomatic circles here.

One of those present at the Cabinet meeting confidentially informed a member of the Legation that the meeting had been a dramatic one and that several Ministers had left in tears.

2) Czechoslovak Government now seems concerned to find language suggesting patriotic withdrawal which will be intelligible to Czech people, with some such phrases as security of the integrity of the Czech people. Account is taken of danger of revolution stirred up by Communists and Czech chauvinists in event of some glib and hurried statement by the Government regarding acceptance of proposals. People are, therefore, to be gradually prepared for new situation, for which wireless and press are making use of British and French views. Press today already shows signs of this gradual preparation.

3) Possibility of serious internal conflict none the less present on considerable scale. Beran<sup>70</sup> is one of the Czech politicians who could perhaps influence their people in favor of a German settlement and, in given circumstances, might take over leadership. I would, therefore, suggest that—as far as this seems consistent with our political line—indulgence might provisionally be shown to Beran in the matter of personal attacks (Vienna radio).

<sup>68</sup> Not printed.

<sup>69</sup> See document No. 523, p. 831.

<sup>70</sup> Rudolf Beran, the leader of the Czech Agrarian Party. See also footnote 28, p. 115, and footnote 89, p. 141.

4) Intense bitterness prevails among the population against France, already giving rise to quarrels with French nationals.

HENCKE

No. 543

139/126166-67

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 404 of September 20 PRAGUE, September 20, 1938—6:20 p.m.  
Received September 20, 1938—8:30 p.m.

In reply to telegram No. 244 of the 19th, Pol. IV 6210.<sup>72</sup>

Instructions to Deputy Kundt carried out this morning. Kundt stated he had already established contact a few days ago with the Slovak People's Party on his own initiative on the lines of Henlein's wishes. The result was the communiqué of the Slovak People's Party, published today, announcing the following demands, decided on the 19th instant:

"1) Full respect for the individuality of the Slovak people and the Slovak language.

"2) Immediate and definite solution of the Slovak question on the basis of the Treaty of Pittsburgh<sup>73</sup> and of the last parliamentary motion of the Slovak People's Party with legislative (group missing) might be Provincial Government [*Landtag*] for Slovakia."

The communiqué, which is doubtless influenced by strong consideration for the Prague Government, states that the Slovak People's Party had concluded neither written nor verbal agreements in collaboration with non-Slovak political parties. Further, attempts at a solution of the State's nationality problem by bloodshed or force are condemned in the communiqué, and the conviction is expressed that finally good relations would be established between the Czechs and the Slovaks, and thus the Czechoslovak State would be strengthened within and without. The communiqué concludes:

"We want a free and satisfied Slovak people, autonomous and happy Slovakia, unified Czechoslovak Republic. May God help us to achieve this."

Kundt will try to establish contact again with the Slovak People's Party and induce them to formulate their demands for autonomy more sharply. However, he is skeptical about the success of his efforts, as it is probable that the Slovak People's Party wants con-

<sup>72</sup> Document No. 534, p. 841.

<sup>73</sup> See footnote 4, p. 63.

tinuance of close relations with the Government. Sidor,<sup>74</sup> chief supporter of the autonomy movement, is at present completely without influence.

HENCKE

No. 544

139/126160

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, September 20, 1938.

As instructed by the Reich Minister, I transmitted to the British Ambassador on the evening of the 19th instant a letter<sup>75</sup> from the Reich Minister setting forth the reasons which have hitherto weighed against the handing over to the British of a copy of the record of the conversation between the Führer and Chamberlain.<sup>76</sup>

On the morning of the 20th instant I then stated to the Ambassador, on the occasion of his visit to the Foreign Ministry, referring to the attached letter,<sup>77</sup> that I had found this letter already in Berlin on my return yesterday. It would be better that I should not submit it at all to the Reich Minister, for expressions such as protest and the like would certainly not make matters any better. Henderson wanted to take up the question again, but I dissuaded him from this, pointing out that Dr. Schmidt would hand his record to the British delegation on Wednesday in Godesberg. In future, procedure must be in accordance with our last suggestion.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 545

1613/387101-02

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to an Official of Political Division IV in the German Foreign Ministry (Altenburg)*

SECRET

PRAGUE, September 20, 1938.  
(Pol. I 2273 g (IV))

DEAR ALTENBURG: At the moment it is extraordinarily difficult for us to estimate to what extent conditions prevailing in the Sudeten German territory do or do not run counter to Reich-German views. In these circumstances we can only depict the situation objectively

<sup>74</sup> See footnote 47, p. 125.

<sup>75</sup> Not printed, but see document No. 532, p. 839.

<sup>76</sup> Document No. 487, p. 786.

<sup>77</sup> This must refer to the letter from Sir Neville Henderson to the State Secretary, document No. 537, n. 846.

as it presents itself to us. There can be no doubt that the departure of the leaders of the Party is viewed as flight by the Sudeten German population remaining behind in the country. Among the numerous Sudeten Germans who are now in daily communication with the Legation, and whom one meets in other circumstances, I have not found a single individual who could attain even to the slightest degree of understanding of the attitude of the Sudeten German leaders, or who could find a word of justification for them. I need not waste any words in assuring you that we, naturally, do nothing to strengthen these people in their view. One thing, however, is certain, and that is that not a single man believes the German wireless reports, representing Henlein as a Haroun-al-Rashid in the Sudeten German territory. You have no idea of the extent of the crisis in confidence actually prevailing here regarding the leadership of the Sudeten German Party. Deputy Kundt and his colleagues, who have remained in Prague, have today actually implored the liaison officer of the Legation that we might at least do something to secure that the German wireless should do rather fuller justice to the facts of the situation in this country. To bring back the Sudeten German Party officials now in Germany would produce an unfavorable psychological effect upon the Germans remaining here. They would, as a result, lose confidence in the veracity of the German reports, which do in fact contain many easily demonstrable errors regarding conditions here. Thus, on the one hand, as a result of German wireless propaganda, the Sudeten Germans are uneasy at the thought that the Reich lends such strong support to the very men by whom they feel that they have been abandoned in their hour of need, without having received any clear instructions, etc. On the other hand, German propaganda supplies Czechs and Communists with the necessary material to make the division within the ranks of the Sudeten German movement still wider. Speeches like those of Sebekovsky and Sandner<sup>78</sup> are not taken seriously. In this country, at all events, they produce no effect.

I can quite well imagine that all these perhaps purely local aspects of affairs are of little importance in the framework of our great political designs, and that this entails consciously putting up with any small blemishes that we may find. I regard it, however, as my duty to give you, dear friend, at least an objective presentation of conditions here. If you consider it expedient that I should report officially on them, I will send a telegram of a suitable kind. In the meantime, please regard this information as confidential.

Yours sincerely, and Heil Hitler!

HENCKE

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<sup>78</sup> Presumably Professor Fritz Sander.



## No. 546

139/126175

*The German Minister in Rumania (Fabricius) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

BUCHAREST, September 20, 1938—7:15 p.m.

Received September 20, 1938—10:35 p.m.

No. 188 of September 20

The Polish Ambassador<sup>79</sup> also confirmed to me that no agreement of any kind has been reached between Rumania and Russia regarding the right of passage. He knew that the matter had not even been discussed. In his conversation with Comnen in Geneva, Litvinov had not so much as referred to the question. Ambassador added, as an ally of Rumania, he knew this to be so. French Minister had made two *démarches* vis-à-vis the acting Rumanian Foreign Minister. He had no information regarding the second of these. The first was concerned with well-known Stefani telegram regarding the right of passage. Frenchman asked for *démenti* to be given to report. Acting Foreign Minister refused as it would have implied that concession of passage was a possibility. Moreover, it was not France but Soviet Russia who had a right to make such a demand. The Pole believes that Rumania will remain neutral in a conflict if she possibly can. Even if Hungary, in conjunction with the occupation of Sudeten German territory by the Reich, were to march into Czechoslovakia, neither Rumania nor Yugoslavia would march.

We are not to take Rumania's measures of military preparation too seriously. Neither Army nor Air Force are ready for action.

He had previously protested against the transit flight of Russian aircraft, but without result, as the transit flight of planes purchased from Czechoslovakia was allowed by international law. Poland had ascertained that numerous Czech flying officers and crews had traveled through Poland in a west-to-east direction and these were, in many cases, the same individuals as those who flew the aircraft. Further, Czech air engines had been transported through Poland to Russia to be mounted on Russian airframes. In Bessarabia six Russian officers are said to have been arrested as spies.

FABRICIUS

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<sup>79</sup> Count Roger Raczynski, 1938-40.

## No. 547

1648/391579

*Memorandum by the Head of the Economic Department (Wiehl)  
for the State Secretary*

## MEMORANDUM

CONFIDENTIAL.

BERLIN, September 20, 1938.

The incorporation of the Sudeten German territories is, regarded from a purely economic point of view, an advantage insofar as it will materially increase German output in wood and lignite. The incorporation of the distressed Sudeten German finished-article industries, principally glass and textile, heavily dependent upon export, is more in the nature of a burden. Moreover, Sudeten German territory, as regards agricultural production, that is foodstuffs, is an exporting country. The economic advantages and disadvantages of incorporation might thus in normal times balance one another. In our present situation (very urgent need of wood; food supplies assured) the advantages predominate.

The Rump of Czechoslovakia (without the foreign border regions and without Slovakia) would represent a self-supporting economic area. It contains important and productive industries, such as pit coal and heavy industries (Mährisch-Ostrau and Skoda) sugar and paper manufactures, as well as agriculture, with which it could feed its own population.

An economic union (tariff and currency union) between the Reich and the Rump of Czechoslovakia would be also economically an advantage for us. It would, however, be synonymous with the surrender of the economic and, to a large extent, the political independence of the Rump of Czechoslovakia. A tariff union without a currency union would be technically difficult to carry out (separate control of foreign exchange, control of foreign trade) and would hardly signify any economic advantage.

This based only on a summary examination, a more detailed memorandum follows.<sup>80</sup>

Submitted to the State Secretary (in duplicate).

WIEHL

<sup>80</sup> See document No. 556, p. 865.

## No. 548

621/250630-31

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A 3738

PARIS, September 20, 1938.

(Pol. IV 6363/38)

Subject: Lecture by Deputy Montigny<sup>81</sup> "Shall France go to war for Czechoslovakia?"

I should like to call special attention to the enclosed cutting from *Le Temps* of September 21,<sup>82</sup> as the statements of Deputy Montigny quoted in it sum up excellently all the arguments which are daily used by us here. The fact that *Le Temps* reports Deputy Montigny's speech in such detail might be taken as a sign that the arguments used are being given more and more consideration here.

M. Montigny says roughly as follows: If, as in 1914, Germany forces France to defend her Alsatian brothers, naturally no Frenchman would hesitate for a moment. But if it is a matter of intervening in an armed conflict in which the French frontier is after all respected, it is one's duty first to give the matter careful consideration. He, Montigny, would strive to the utmost before public opinion and in Parliament to prevent war on account of Czechoslovakia. This war would mean a violent struggle, lasting several years, which the French soldier would have to fight practically alone. He would have to hold out until Great Britain had again assembled and trained a large army, and until the United States succeeded in altering her public opinion. In addition, France would perhaps have to fight on five fronts, namely, the eastern frontier, the Alpine and Pyrenees frontiers, in Tunisia, and in Spanish Morocco. Montigny goes on to say that from a strictly legal point of view the weakness of the Franco-Czech Treaty and its inapplicability to a situation arising from a civil war can be proved. On moral grounds, however, it appears more correct to state that the letter and spirit of the treaty clearly show that it is a matter of a treaty of assistance within the framework of article 16 of the League of Nations Covenant, that is, within the framework of collective security. France, therefore, is only obliged to take action when the League of Nations is in a position to guarantee this collective security. If this is not the case, neither a legal nor a moral obligation exists, and France has the right to act exclusively according to her own interests.

<sup>81</sup> Jean Montigny, Deputy for Seine since 1924 (Radical Socialist); advocate at Paris Court of Appeal.

<sup>82</sup> Not printed.

French security, however, continues Montigny, is completely reconcilable with a Czechoslovakia reduced in size by the separation of the Sudeten German areas—a Czechoslovakia which had, moreover, accepted a federative status, the logical consequence of which could be a guaranteed neutrality.

The deputy answers the argument that by her present nonintervention France is repeating the error of Sadowa, with the remark that intervention at the present moment would be either too late or too early; too late, because the balance of power, which until March 1936 was in France's favor, was not taken advantage of in time; too early, because, if Germany's desire for hegemony in Europe is further manifested, Germany herself will call into being a great counter-coalition of interests and fears. In the meantime, however, the workers of France must devote themselves again to hard work, the State must restore its authority, and Great Britain must introduce general conscription.

BRÄUER

No. 549

139/126184-85

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain Th. (Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 430 of September 21      LONDON, September 21, 1938—5:20 a.m.  
Received September 21, 1938—7:15 p.m.

The British Government have announced so firmly in Prague their joint course of action agreed last Sunday with the French Ministers that it deserves special recognition. They did not allow themselves to be influenced by any tricks of M. Beneš. The communiqué just given out at the Foreign Office press conference, that the Czechs have unconditionally accepted the plan, demonstrates Chamberlain's complete success.

In this morning's press, as well as in conversations with Englishmen, a new factor appears in the hope that the settlement of the Sudeten German question may be a steppingstone for a real Anglo-German understanding. In spite of the outcry of the Opposition, which was to be expected on the ground of party politics now that the decision has been made, there is a predominant desire even in Leftist circles for steps at last to be taken by both sides to secure a durable peace to Europe and the world. The Opposition, which has suddenly regained its tongue (Labor Party, Trade-unions, Sinclair Liberals, Lloyd George, and Churchill), naturally attempts to

incite the public against Chamberlain, claiming that he had quailed at the ultimatum of Dictator Hitler and had wounded British self-esteem. In this connection, I refer you to the leading article in today's *Times*, which gives a very clear rebuff to these intrigues. I have it on the best authority that Chamberlain is going to Godesberg with such a fund of good will toward Germany as no British statesman before him has had. Should he succeed in settling the Czech question, and thereby lay the foundation stone of an Anglo-German understanding, he will then wield a weapon which will enable him to defeat any opposition in this country. I am informed on good authority that, if this happens, the idea is being considered of dissolving Parliament and holding a general election. With the election slogan "An understanding with Germany," the Government can also be quite certain of putting out of business politically all those clamorers who have hitherto opposed any idea of such a reconciliation.

On the other hand, a sensible reaction can be registered to the articles, presumably in yesterday's *Völkischer Beobachter* and in various other newspapers, which advocate the complete disappearance of Czechoslovakia. In this connection, I would mention *The Times* and *Daily Telegraph*.

KORDT

No. 550

330/195792

*Unsigned Minute*<sup>83</sup>

SEPTEMBER 21, 1938.

11:40 [a.m.]

Message from Bayreuth:

*Silesian Sector:* During the night of September 20/21, 1938, the Masaryk Building, which had been converted and installed as a Czech signal station, was attacked and partly reduced to ashes in spite of heavy fire from machine guns.

*Neuendorf:* Czech Customhouse burned to the ground. Two Czechs killed, two taken prisoners. Own casualties nil. The other actions were terminated by the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht*.

Kindly forward this message to:

1. Ministry of Propaganda
2. Staff Office of Field Marshal Göring, attention  
*Oberregierungsrat Hüter*

<sup>83</sup> This is a single typescript sheet from the Under State Secretary's files, and bears an undecipherable initial, but no indication of origin.

## No. 551

139/126189

*The German Minister in Hungary (Erdmannsdorff) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

BUDAPEST, September 21, 1938—4:36 p.m.

No. 95 of September 21 Received September 21, 1938—7:15 p.m.

Foreign Minister told me: Hungarian Minister London had given Cadogan a memorandum to the effect that the Hungarian Government objected to discrimination against Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia and would support the latter's rights with all means in their power. Last night Halifax gave Hungarian Minister a written answer, saying that the British Government had noted the Hungarian demand. At present, however, only the Sudeten German question could be settled, as peace or war depended on it; the British Government relied on Hungary not to take any precipitate action; question of Hungarian minority in Slovakia could not be discussed and settled until later.

Kanya remarked that Hungarian Government, who had associated themselves with the Polish *démarche* of September 16,<sup>84</sup> insisted on immediate solution and would inform London accordingly.

ERDMANNSDORFF

## No. 552

139/126188

*The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 196 of September 21 Moscow, September 21, 1938—6:57 p.m.

Received September 21, 1938—7:15 p.m.

In a telegram from Geneva describing the atmosphere prevalent there *Izvestia* expresses the hope that Prague will reject London plan and fight; brings up idea that if blood is shed in Central Europe, France will not be able to escape fulfilling her treaty obligations. *Pravda* states Soviet Union indifferent to question which imperialist brigand falls upon this or that colony, this or that independent state, for she sees no difference between German and British brigands.

SCHULENBURG

<sup>84</sup> See document No. 501, p. 811.

## No. 553

139/126191-94

*Note From the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the  
Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 21, 1938.

The Polish Counselor of Embassy handed to me at 8:40 this evening the three attached documents, which we agreed should be forwarded to Berchtesgaden.

WOERMANN

[Enclosure]

## MEMORANDUM

## POLISH EMBASSY

The Polish Ambassador is instructed to inform the German Government that the Polish Government presented a note this afternoon to the British Government, as well as one to the Czechoslovak Government.

The text of the two notes is attached.

Further, the Polish Government has made a written *démarche* in Paris, in which it is demanded that the full consideration necessary should be given to the interests of the Polish population in Czechoslovakia, in like measure as to those of the Sudeten German population.

In this same note to the French Government, the Polish Government point out that their experiences in the years 1919 to 1921 have left them with no faith at all in Czechoslovak promises or assurances. The Polish Government lay stress, moreover, on their mistrust as regards the efficacy of the steps which have been taken as a result of the conversations carried on in London during the last few days.

[Subenclosure 1]

*Text of Note Handed Today, September 21, 1938, to the British  
Government by the Polish Ambassador in London*

EXCELLENCE: Dans ma démarche du 19 septembre cr.<sup>84a</sup> j'ai eu l'honneur d'informer le Gouvernement de sa Majesté Britannique de l'attitude de mon Gouvernement vis-à-vis du problème de la minorité polonaise en Tchécoslovaquie.

<sup>84a</sup> Abbreviation for *courant*.

J'ai tenu particulièrement à souligner qu'en se basant sur le principe de l'égalité de traitement de toutes les minorités en cause, le Gouvernement Polonais serait obligé de demander pour les territoires habités par une population de langue polonaise l'application des mêmes mesures qui seraient acceptées pour les territoires des Sudètes.

En confirmant ce point de vue, le Gouvernement Polonais ne s'inspire pas seulement du principe d'équité, mais il est aussi convaincu que la crise en Europe Centrale ne pourra être résolue d'une façon définitive sans la solution de tous les problèmes minoritaires en Tchécoslovaquie.

Le Gouvernement Polonais est fermement persuadé que cette solution ne peut être réalisée qu'en tenant compte des justes revendications de tous les groupes nationaux, et parmi ceux-ci du groupe polonais et hongrois.

Je tiens à informer Votre Excellence que, dans le cas où ce point de vue ne serait pas accepté, le Gouvernement Polonais se verrait obligé, à son plus grand regret, de faire toutes ses réserves quant à la collaboration éventuelle dans le règlement projeté des problèmes en question.

Veillez agréer . . .

[Subenclosure 2]

*Text of Note Handed Today, September 21, 1938, to the Czechoslovak Government by the Polish Ambassador in Prague*

MONSIEUR LE MINISTRE: D'ordre de mon Gouvernement j'ai l'honneur de vous communiquer ce qui suit:

1) Se référant à la déclaration du Gouvernement de la République Tchécoslovaque aux termes de laquelle le Gouvernement Tchécoslovaque s'est engagé à ne pas faire des discriminations entre la communauté nationale polonaise et aucune autre communauté nationale se trouvant au dedans des frontières de la République Tchécoslovaque, ainsi qu'en rappelant le point de vue du Gouvernement Polonais connu du Gouvernement Tchécoslovaque, et qui ainsi n'admet aucune discrimination entre les intérêts de la Pologne et ceux des autres états intéressés,—le Gouvernement Polonais attend une décision du Gouvernement Tchécoslovaque au sujet des territoires habités par la population polonaise, décision immédiate et analogue à celle que le Gouvernement Tchécoslovaque a prise à l'égard du problème allemand.

2) Etant donné ce qui précède, le Gouvernement Polonais considère que le règlement concernant la situation de la population polonaise en Tchécoslovaquie, prévue à la partie III de la Conven-



tion polono-tchécoslovaque, signée à Varsovie le 3 avril 1925,<sup>85</sup> est devenu sans objets, et en conséquence le Gouvernement Polonais dénonce ladite partie de cette Convention.

Veillez agréer . . .

No. 554

139/126176-78

*Minute by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff  
(Erich Kordt) for the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, September 21, 1938.

Counselor of Legation Brücklmeier has just given me the following information by telephone on yesterday's conversation between the Führer, Prime Minister Imredy, and Foreign Minister Kanya.

First of all, the Führer reproached the Hungarian gentlemen for the undecided attitude of Hungary in the present time of crisis. He, the Führer, was determined to settle the Czech question even at the risk of a world war. Germany demanded the entire German area. He was convinced that neither England nor France would intervene. It was Hungary's last opportunity to join in, for, if she did not, he would not be in a position to put in a word for Hungarian interests. In his opinion, the best thing would be to destroy Czechoslovakia. In the long run, it was quite impossible to tolerate the existence of this aircraft carrier in the heart of Europe. He presented two demands to the Hungarians: (1) that Hungary should make an immediate demand for a plebiscite in the territories which she claimed, and (2) that she should not guarantee any proposed new frontiers for Czechoslovakia. In certain circumstances Hungary might threaten to resign from the League of Nations and to establish a *Freikorps*. At the latest, the Czechoslovak problem would be settled by the Führer in 3 weeks' time. Prime Minister Imredy replied that Hungary had been surprised by the speed of the settlement. It had been thought in Hungary that a settlement would take a year or two. In the meantime, the Hungarian minorities had already demanded a plebiscite and the Hungarian Government would now take this matter into their own hands. Further, Hungary would immediately put in hand preparations for military action, but a time limit of 14 days was not long enough to complete them. With regard to the attitude of Yugoslavia, Prime Minister Imredy remarked that the leadership in that country was

<sup>85</sup> In April 1925, Beneš visited Warsaw and concluded a treaty of conciliation and arbitration between Poland and Czechoslovakia, a commercial treaty, and a treaty respecting the liquidation of various outstanding questions.

very weak, while it was necessary to pay very serious attention to the Francophile element in the Army. Nevertheless, perhaps the use of money and threats might achieve something there.

The Führer declared further that he would present the German demands to Chamberlain with brutal frankness. In his opinion, action by the Army would provide the only satisfactory solution. There was, however, a danger of the Czechs submitting to every demand.

Prime Minister Imredy affirmed that Hungary would only guarantee a new Czechoslovak frontier when all Hungarian demands had been satisfied. The Führer stated that Germany would give no guarantees unless every country concerned took its share in them. During the further course of the conversation, the Führer emphasized the German point of view in this matter, that such a possibility could only be discussed after every problem had been settled, including that of the Iglau language enclave. The Führer then stressed once more that he would put forward the German demands at Godesberg with the starkest realism. If, as a result, disturbances started in Czechoslovakia, he would then start military operations. It would, however, always be preferable if the pretext for this were provided by the Czechs.

Prime Minister Imredy promised to send the Führer today a document, to be treated as confidential, in which Hungarian demands would be set down in detail. The Führer intends to make good use of this document at Godesberg in talks with the British.

Counselor of Legation Brücklmeier gave me the further information that Ambassador Lipski had been requested to obtain a similar document from the Polish Government.

A memorandum has been prepared on this conversation between the Führer and the Hungarians, which will reach here this afternoon by the next courier. No memorandum has been produced as yet on the conversation with Ambassador Lipski.

ERICH KORDT

## No. 555

2369/494987

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy in Italy  
and the German Legation in Hungary*

Telegram

Rome No. 316

BERLIN, September 21, 1938.

Budapest No. 160

(Pol. IV 6346)

(IV 6513)

For Heads of Missions personally.

The Führer exhorted the Hungarian Minister at Berchtesgaden on September 20 to display more activity in the Czechoslovak question and to leave no doubt as to Hungarian demands. He desired moreover that the Hungarians should not guarantee any new frontiers of Czechoslovakia, at least not until every problem connected with Czechoslovakia had been solved. The Hungarians have also promised to let us know exactly what they desire. They promised further to take a more active part and even to put in hand military preparations.

The Polish Ambassador was likewise invited at Berchtesgaden to state precisely to us what Polish wishes were.

*Additional for Rome:* Attolico has been instructed here. Kindly inform the Italian Government.

WOERMANN

*Minute:* Ambassador von Moltke has been informed in a private letter from Herr Schliep.

## No. 556

1648/391580-81

*Memorandum by the Head of the Economic Department (Wiehl)  
for the State Secretary<sup>88</sup>*

## MEMORANDUM

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, September 21, 1938.

From the attached statement<sup>87</sup> on the respective shares of the Sudeten German area and of the Czech Rump (without including Slovakia and the Polish district) in the *industry* of the Czechoslovak Republic, it appears that the greater part of the manufactured goods industry of the Czechoslovak Republic, which is primarily dependent on export and most sensitive to crises, is located in the Sudeten German area; this is particularly the case with the paper,

<sup>87</sup> See also document No. 547, p. 856.

<sup>88</sup> Not printed.

textile, chemical, glass, and jewelry industries, as well as the pottery industry. The main advantage of the reincorporation of the Sudetenland lies in the acquisition of nearly the whole lignite industry.

As against this, the Czech Rump will retain an overwhelming proportion of the efficient industries which are less affected by trade fluctuations, in particular the heavy iron industry, the industries depending on iron, engine building, collieries, sugar refineries, the fats and oil industry, as well as the leather industry.

In the *agricultural field* the main advantage of the incorporation is in the gain of important reserves of timber. Moreover, the Sudetenland is, with the exception of hops (about 50 percent German), an agricultural surplus area, particularly as regards corn.

The Czech Rump is agriculturally self-supporting and, at least in good harvest years, is capable of exports. The production of sugar beet is sufficient to meet the demands of the Czech refineries.

No important damage would be caused to the Czech *railway traffic*, for the Bohemian railway system radiates from Prague and, therefore, the lopping off of the Sudetenland does not mean any interruption of the communications with Prague. Of course, the through line, Prague-Pardubitz-Olmütz-Oderberg-Kaschau, via Landskron, would run through German territory. At the present time, however, a second double-track through line from Prague to Kaschau, via Deutschbrod-Brünn, is already under construction and this would not be intersected by German territory.

The Bohemian *navigation* system would suffer no change through the cession of the Sudeten German area. Moravia has no navigation system of its own. The building of an Oder-Danube Canal is no more than a project at present.

As far as *power supply* is concerned, both the Sudeten German portion and also the Czech Rump are, to all intents and purposes, autarchic. Only the town of Prague obtains some of its current from the Sudeten German area (namely, from the Seestadt power station near Komotau and also, to a less extent, from the Schreckenstein generating station near Aussig).

*Minute:* Owing to the short time available, it is impossible to support the above statements, which have been discussed with Sudeten German leaders, with figures (production totals, numbers of workers). The above-mentioned Sudeten German gentlemen informed me that they had presented a number of statistics to the Führer regarding the Sudeten German share in the country's economy.

The above to be laid before the *State Secretary*.

WIEHL

## No. 557

139/126195

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann)*

BERLIN, September 21, 1938.

After Ambassador Attolico had asked me yesterday evening and this morning about the results of the talks with the Hungarians on the Obersalzberg, I telephoned today to the Minister, Count Magistrati, in his absence and informed him that the Führer had urged the Hungarians to take a more active part in the Czechoslovak question and to put forward their demands. They were further requested not to give any guarantees for any new Czech frontiers, unless all their demands were fulfilled. Finally, it was agreed in confidence that the Hungarians should also define their wishes to us.

Count Magistrati asked if the Hungarian question would also be raised by the Führer at Godesberg. I answered that I could not say, but that it could certainly be assumed that this question also would automatically arise there.

Ambassador von Mackensen is receiving somewhat more detailed information by telegram.

WOERMANN

## No. 558

139/126218

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV (Stechow) for the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

## MEMORANDUM

SEPTEMBER 22, 1938.

Vice Consul Stechele, of the branch office of the German Legation in Eger, telephoned today at 11 a.m. the following information:

The Sudeten Germans were in effective control of Eger, Franzensbad, and Asch. The national *Frontkämpferbund*,<sup>88</sup> with the help of the police authorities, was providing police duties. The Security Service received its instructions from Herr Stêchele. There still, however, remained 600 Czech soldiers in Eger, who were equipped with armored cars, hand grenades and so on. The soldiers were behaving perfectly quietly and were mostly remaining in barracks. Herr Stechele had negotiated with the officer in command who had

<sup>88</sup> The German ex-servicemen's association, with members in the Sudeten territory.

promised him not to carry out any military operations, including the blowing up of bridges and so on, unless a foreign power invaded Czechoslovak territory. He was unable to withdraw his men until he received instructions to that effect from the Ministry of War. If, however, a German invasion took place he would immediately abandon his passive attitude.

Herr Stechele made the urgent request, in order to avoid the shedding of blood, that neither German troops nor the Sudeten German *Freikorps* should be allowed to march in. Herr Stechele also requested that instructions should be sent to the postmaster in Waldsassen. He himself has just returned to Eger.

VON STECHOW

*Minute:* Herr Woermann observed over the telephone in connection with this report that he considered it extremely inadvisable for Vice Consul Stechele to continue any longer in command of the Sudeten German Security Service in Eger. He would at once issue orders for Herr Stechele to hand over command to a Sudeten German.

A[LTEBURG] September 22.

[Penciled note at side of minute:] This has been done.

### No. 559

139/126214

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 22, 1938.

The Counselor of the British Embassy<sup>89</sup> visited me this morning and made the following statement in the name of his Government:—

The French Government has informed the Foreign Office that the "Sudeten League" [*Sudetenliga*] has crossed the Czechoslovak frontier and occupied Asch. If this movement is extended, serious trouble is bound to result. The British Government urges the German Government to prevent further incursions.

I told the Counselor of Embassy that I had no reports at all of this nature.

The English text of Forbes' communication, which he read out to me, is as follows:—

"The French Government has informed the Foreign Office that Sudete-league [*sic*] has crossed Czechoslovak frontier and occupied Asch. If this movement is extended, serious trouble is bound to

<sup>89</sup> Sir George Ogilvie-Forbes.

result. The British Government most urgently urges the German Government to prevent further incursions.<sup>87</sup>

Transmitted to Godesberg by telephone at 11:30 a.m.

WOERMANN

### No. 560

139/126228

*Memorandum by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 22, 1938.

The Hungarian Minister visited me today and informed me that the Hungarian Government had carried out the same *démarche* in Prague as Poland had the day before.<sup>88</sup> They demanded the same settlement for the Hungarian minorities as for the Sudeten Germans. M. Krofta, who was presented with the *démarche*, confined himself to an acknowledgment of the communication and the remark that the Polish Minister had carried out the same *démarche*.

WOERMANN

### No. 561

139/126215

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann)*

BERLIN, September 22, 1938.

The French Ambassador<sup>89</sup> called on me today and made a *démarche* in less precise form but of similar substance to that made by the British Ambassador this morning.<sup>90</sup> He said that the French Government had been informed at 5 o'clock this morning that Asch had been occupied by the *Freikorps*. The French Government hoped that the German Government would make every effort to avoid incidents which would place the French Government in an extremely difficult position, both in the eyes of its own public and of other Governments.

I told the Ambassador that, in view of the British *démarche* made today, I had made inquiries and believed I could now state with certainty that the report of the occupation of Asch was a mere fabrication.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. document No. 553, p. 861.

<sup>88</sup> André François-Poncet.

<sup>89</sup> Document No. 559, p. 868.

As soon as I had conclusive evidence that Asch had not been occupied, I would inform the French Ambassador of this, and added that I must earnestly warn him against making *démarches* here on the strength of unchecked reports.

WOERMANN

No. 562

340/199014-44

*Minutes of the Conversation Between the Führer and Reich Chancellor and Mr. Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, at Godesberg on the Afternoon of September 22, 1938*

Mr. Chamberlain referred to the situation as it had been at the end of the conversation with the Führer at Berchtesgaden. At that time, after personally recognizing the principle of self-determination, he had promised to consult his ministerial colleagues and other statesmen, and to obtain their agreement to this principle. He had succeeded, after laborious negotiations, in persuading not only the British and French Cabinets, but also the Czechoslovak Government to agree in principle to what the Führer had demanded during the last conversation. He, Chamberlain, would now outline roughly the proposal which he could make as a result of this.

The Führer had said at the last discussion that the question of the Sudeten Germans was of an urgent nature and that a solution could no longer be delayed. He (the Führer) had further said that the Sudeten German question must be settled before any other problem could be discussed. In the meantime, therefore, Mr. Chamberlain had devoted himself solely and entirely to the Sudeten German question. Whatever importance the Führer might still attach to the principle of self-determination, he had himself admitted in the last discussion that a distinction must be made between the possible and the impossible. This distinction had also been in the minds of the British Cabinet during their last deliberations. It had been realized by the British that the principle of self-determination of peoples could not be recognized in all circumstances and in all countries as a fixed fundamental rule, because otherwise considerable difficulties would arise in other parts of Europe as well.

On the basis of self-determination all Germans in Czechoslovakia must now be given the opportunity of deciding for Germany. The question arose how this decision was to be implemented. The first means that came naturally to one's mind was a plebiscite. But the method of a plebiscite would give rise to considerable difficulties. It would mean a long delay, and it was questionable whether in the



meantime incidents and disorders would not take place in the area in question. Moreover, he (Chamberlain) had remembered the desire expressed by the Führer in the first conversation for a quick solution. The simplest method, and the one that would at the same time present least difficulty, would therefore be the attempt to manage without a plebiscite and to agree on a cession of territory by Czechoslovakia to the Reich, while taking care to see that people who, as a result of the new territorial arrangement, belonged to one particular state but preferred to live in another state, were given the possibility of doing so.

There were no difficulties to be overcome in the cession to Germany of districts where there was a preponderant German majority. But in districts where there was a mixed population, the frontier delimitation must be more carefully carried out. Here the frontier could not be systematically laid down as a rigid line, but a commission must be set up, and provided with guiding principles, while still possessing the necessary freedom of action to determine the frontier with regard to geographical, strategic, political, or other considerations. This commission must be given a basic principle as a guide to their decisions. Naturally, there must be agreement on the principles between Great Britain and Germany, and Czechoslovakia must also recognize these principles. Then the commission could decide the details of the frontier. As a guiding principle for the decision of the commission he proposed the establishment of a given percentage of Germans in relation to the total population. He was aware that this was a rather rough and ready measure, which, for example, left completely out of account those Germans who did not wish to belong to Germany. In all districts where the German population reached 80 percent, the decision presented no difficulty at all. Where, however, the proportion of Germans was smaller, an average figure must be taken as a guiding principle. He had in mind 65 percent, while it must be left to the discretion of the commission to go below this figure in individual cases.

As for the composition of the commission, he suggested three members, a German, a Czech, and a neutral. The latter would be the chairman of the commission and would have the casting vote. He added that it was a case of practical proposals and he looked forward with interest to the Führer's answer.

Moreover, it was important that people living near the frontier should be given the possibility of option, as it was impossible to draw the frontier so as to separate the two nationalities completely from one another. As already stated in the earlier conversation with the Führer, there were actually two problems facing them: the first,

that of transfer of territory, and the second the question of transfer of population. The transfer of population in its turn gave rise to difficult questions regarding property and its conveyance. As great hardships might be caused to individuals, it would be best if the frontier could possibly be drawn in such a way as to make large-scale transfers of population unnecessary.

In spite of this transfer, a minority problem would nevertheless still exist. There would still be Germans living in the Czech area who could not possibly be included in the Reich, and on the German side too there would be Czech inhabited enclaves. For such cases he had already proposed adequate safeguard for the minorities in his first conversation with the Führer.

A further question arising out of the cession of territory was that of Czechoslovak State property, buildings, banks, railways, etc. Germany could be expected to take over the State property at some valuation to be determined.

Finally, there was the question of the Czechoslovak national debt, which in his opinion should also be taken over by the German Reich in a definite proportion to the territory surrendered.

In conclusion, there was one more point to be mentioned. Through the alteration of the frontier Czechoslovakia would lose her fortifications in the mountain districts, and thus her security would be diminished. And although he (Chamberlain) recollected that the Führer had told him in his first conversation at Berchtesgaden that, apart from the Sudeten German question, Germany would make no further territorial demands, it could be understood if the Czechoslovak Government, after giving up part of their territory and the fortifications situated within it, demanded a substitute for the security which they had lost in these fortifications. He (Chamberlain) recalled that in their first conversation the Führer had spoken of Czechoslovakia as a spearhead directed against Germany's flank. The objections expressed by the Führer and the desire of the Czech Government that the acceptance of a proposal, in itself extremely unpleasant, should be made easier, could be satisfied by replacing Czechoslovakia's existing treaty alliances, with their military obligations, by a guarantee of security against unprovoked aggression. The British Government were prepared to join in an international guarantee against an unprovoked attack on Czechoslovakia, whereby this guarantee would replace the existing treaty alliances involving military obligations. The result of such a guarantee would be that Czechoslovakia would in future be able to use her own forces only for self-defense and that she would have to be completely neutral. He added further that a guarantee against an unprovoked attack

on Czechoslovakia did not, of course, mean that the frontiers of Czechoslovakia, as determined now, would be fixed in perpetuity. With the existence of such a guarantee it would also be possible to alter disputed frontiers by agreement without the use of force. He hoped that he had expressed himself sufficiently clearly.

The Führer expressed to the British Prime Minister his sincere thanks for his efforts to bring about a peaceful solution of the Czechoslovak problem. Hitherto it had not been quite clear to him what proposal Great Britain and France had submitted to Czechoslovakia, and he therefore asked if the plan just expounded by Mr. Chamberlain had been submitted also to the Czechoslovak Government.

When Mr. Chamberlain replied in the affirmative, the Führer answered that he was sorry to have to say that this plan could not be maintained. The situation was perfectly clear. It was not a question of doing an injustice to Czechoslovakia, but of redressing a 20-year-old injustice done to the German and other minorities. As a matter of principle, a man who has committed a wrong cannot complain when this is put right again. Czechoslovakia was in fact a purely artificial structure which had been called into being at the time for reasons of political expediency, without regard for the wrongs done to other countries. Three and a half million Germans had been handed over to Czechoslovakia contrary to their immediately expressed wish and in contradiction of all historical traditions. A million Slovaks had likewise been incorporated in this State, although never in history had Slovaks been ruled by Czechs. A large area had been torn from Hungary, so that almost a million Hungarians were living in Czechoslovakia against their will. In addition, in 1920, when Poland was engaged in a struggle against the Bolsheviks, Czechoslovakia had annexed the Teschen territory, which meant that some hundred thousand Poles also had been included in this country against their will. That was the genesis of a State which possessed neither history nor tradition nor natural conditions of existence. All other nationalities wanted to get out of Czechoslovakia, and only a few days ago the representatives of Hungary and Poland had told him (the Führer) that in no circumstances would they remain in Czechoslovakia. In the last 20 years the Czechs had not succeeded in winning the sympathies of these foreign nationalities; on the contrary, hatred had steadily increased.

In the course of the Berchtesgaden conversation he had already told the British Prime Minister that he was naturally speaking in the first place for the Germans. As a result of the peace treaties he had been obliged to give up so many Germans that his first

thought and his first care was naturally for them. It was his duty however to remind the British Prime Minister of the demands of the other nationalities within Czechoslovakia, and added that the latter had the sincere sympathy of the German Reich, and that peace could not be established in Central Europe until the claims of all these nationalities had been settled.

Mr. Chamberlain answered that he could very well understand part of this reasoning. As the Führer had recently spoken to him of the urgency of the Sudeten German problem, he had in the meantime devoted himself in particular to this question, and had left the other questions aside as being less urgent for the moment.

The Führer referred to the present critical stage of the Sudeten German problem. Long delay was impossible. The most important thing was to act quickly. The decision must be made within a few days. The whole world knew that military preparations had been made on both sides of the frontier. These had brought about a situation which demanded a decision one way or another. The solution could result either in a lessening of the tension or in renewed increase of tension with a resulting conflict. He must emphasize that the problem must be finally and completely solved by October 1.

The fluid situation in Czechoslovakia likewise demanded speedy action. Neither he nor the British Prime Minister could foresee what situation would prevail in Czechoslovakia tomorrow or in a few days. Today there had been a government crisis,<sup>93</sup> which might lead to a State crisis tomorrow. It was impossible for Germany to relax her watchfulness or her material preparations in return for vague assurances. In 20 years Prague had not succeeded in solving the nationality problem. Certain circles were now attempting to mobilize the mob and to arouse militant Bolshevik instincts by referring to alleged Russian support. Not an hour should be wasted. In the interests of peace, definite and clear-cut facts must be established as quickly as possible. If the above-mentioned circles in Czechoslovakia gained the upper hand, the conditions for a peaceful solution would no longer exist. The operation, which Great Britain also recognized as necessary, must be performed as quickly as possible.

Speed was also essential because of the untenable situation in the frontier areas. In 20 years 580,000 Sudeten Germans had emigrated from Czechoslovakia to Germany. According to statistics of September 20, the number of refugees alone had reached 103,780 dur-

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<sup>93</sup> The Hodza government resigned on September 22 and was succeeded by a provisional Cabinet under General Sirovy, the Inspector General of the Army.

ing the last fortnight. Whole villages had been depopulated, families had been torn asunder, the men arrested and conscripted, and their wives and children had fled across the frontier; sons parted from their parents and children from their mothers. Tempers were rising and action must be taken with all speed. The Germans and other nationals wanted to leave Czechoslovakia, while the Czechs wanted to keep them forcibly within their territory. Shooting at refugees would therefore naturally call forth help from the German side of the frontier, especially as members of the same family were often found on different sides of the frontier. Within three or four days this state of affairs would develop into a regular frontier war. It was impossible to guard every single point of the whole 2300 kilometers of the frontier. The present situation was also making extreme demands on nerves on the German side.

The British Prime Minister replied that he was both disappointed and puzzled at the attitude taken by the Führer. He (Chamberlain) had thought that the Führer, after acceptance of his demand for cession of territory, would then be ready to discuss with him the methods and procedure for putting this demand into effect. He (Chamberlain) had willingly recognized at the first conversation the justification of the Sudeten German demands. The situation could not be saved by autonomy within the Czechoslovak area. Now that he had returned with the agreement of his colleagues in the Cabinet and of the French Cabinet to the principle of cession of territory by Czechoslovakia to Germany, he could rightly say that the Führer had got from him what he had demanded. In order to achieve this, he (Chamberlain) had risked his whole political career. At the time of his first journey to Germany, he had been applauded everywhere, because people in Great Britain had thought that a personal talk with the Führer was the best means for a solution of the problem. Now, however, he was being accused by certain circles in Great Britain of having sold and betrayed Czechoslovakia, of having yielded to the dictators and so on, and on leaving England that morning he had actually been booed. All this would show the Führer the difficulties he had had to overcome, the sacrifices he had had to make in order to obtain agreement in principle to the cession of territory. He therefore could not quite understand why his proposals could not be accepted. There were bound to be incidents, and indeed on both sides. He had just received information (brought to him by Kirkpatrick during the conversation) to the effect that German troop formations had crossed the frontier at Eger. He addressed to the Führer the urgent request to attempt with him all that was humanly possible to settle matters in an orderly, peaceful

way, and not to allow the work for peace to be disturbed by shootings and incidents. Agreement had been reached in principle. It was now a question of establishing methods of applying this principle and he would ask the Führer to use his influence for moderation with all concerned.

The Führer answered that the only possibility of avoiding disturbances was to draw a frontier at once which would coincide with the language frontier and beyond which the Czechoslovaks would have to withdraw their troops and governmental authorities. Reich organizations would then enter the zone thus created. Of course the Czechs would and could maintain that the frontier envisaged by Germany did not correspond exactly to the ethnic frontier. Therefore, after the occupation by German organizations, there must be a plebiscite, and that on the basis of the population situation of 1918. It would follow the pattern of the Saar plebiscite. Just as in the Saar, all previous inhabitants who had been driven out since 1918 must vote, while the Czechs who had artificially settled in the country since that time would naturally not be entitled to vote. He (the Führer) was prepared to allow an international control commission to supervise the plebiscite. Should the result of the plebiscite be doubtful in any area, the commission could conduct its inquiries there; it could certainly be constituted by November or December, and in the meantime preparations for the plebiscite should be made.

Mr. Chamberlain asked whether a plebiscite was intended in every district, even in those where the existence of a German majority was beyond all doubt. He thought it better not to hold a plebiscite in those districts, but only in districts where the situation was doubtful. The Führer answered that it would be simplest to hold a plebiscite in the whole area, and then, when the results of the plebiscite were submitted to the frontier commission, the latter could undertake certain frontier adjustments according to the results of the plebiscite and majorities obtained. He envisaged simple majorities and he was fully prepared to hand back areas, the Czech character of which was revealed by the plebiscite on this basis.

When Mr. Chamberlain interrupted to ask if this also applied to cases of Germans who, in the plebiscite, expressed a preference to remain in the Czech State, the Führer answered that he would very gladly do without such Germans. The readjustment of the frontier on the basis of the plebiscite results must naturally be undertaken on broad lines. Each tiny local majority could not of course expect its wishes to be reflected in an abnormal extrusion of the frontier.

On the question of State property, he must remark that the part situated in the Sudeten German area had already been paid for by

the taxes of the local inhabitants; as a result of their intelligence and industry the Sudeten Germans had made even a greater contribution to the Czech State finances than corresponded to their numbers in the population. Other property, again, had originated in the old Austria, where, too, the German elements in the population had provided a considerable share of the revenue from taxes. The Czech Government therefore had no right to remove such State property or claim indemnity. Any destruction or any removal of State property would therefore be answered by Germany with suitable countermeasures.

On the question of the guarantee, the Führer stated that, insofar as Great Britain wanted to give this guarantee, this was of course her own affair. Germany could join in the guarantee for the Czech State only when all its neighbors and all the Great Powers, including Italy, had done so.

Chamberlain answered that he had not asked Germany to join in the guarantee. This was not necessary at all. He had in mind rather the conclusion of a nonaggression pact between Germany and Czechoslovakia.

The Führer answered that he could only conclude a nonaggression pact with Czechoslovakia when all problems with her neighbors, such as Poland and Hungary, had been settled. Germany had such friendly relations with these two countries in particular that it would be impossible to stab them in the back, so to speak, by concluding such a nonaggression pact.

The situation was clear: as spokesman for the Germans he could see two possibilities:

- 1) a peaceful solution, in which the new frontier would be established essentially on the lines of the ethnic frontier;
- 2) a military solution in which the new frontier would be established by the military authorities on a strategic basis.

As for the remainder of Czechoslovakia, it did not interest Germany. Moreover, he, the Führer, had known the Czech State for a long time. Every declaration by Germany with regard to a nonaggression pact would be regarded by the Czechs, in conjunction with the Anglo-French guarantee, as a kind of incitement to drop all consideration in future for the Polish and Hungarian minorities—as had been the case also with the Sudeten Germans—as the fear of attack by Germany would be removed by the pact, and the relationship to Great Britain and France would be cancelled by the guarantee.

Chamberlain said in reply to this that of course the guarantee only applied to unprovoked aggression, and that it was in the inter-

ests of France and Great Britain to see to it that Czechoslovakia caused no provocation by her treatment of minorities. Furthermore, he was not a partner in negotiations, but only a mediator, trying to help to achieve a peaceful solution which would do justice to all concerned. Public opinion in Great Britain was not favorably disposed to the proposals made by him, and it would become more unfavorable if the present conditions were made more difficult. He must be in a position to prove at home that proposals to which he had agreed were just. A plebiscite must, therefore, be carried out under conditions free from military or other pressure. Why was a plebiscite everywhere necessary at all?

The Führer answered that such a plebiscite was necessary because the Czechs would probably obstruct everything, and because it was of great importance to have a clear picture of the actual situation. Certain definite areas must be considered as a whole. A cross section of public opinion in the larger areas was desirable. Each small village could not be considered individually.

A further fundamental demand made by the Führer was the immediate release of all Germans from the Czech military and police forces. Germany had not called up any Czechs for military service, because, with the possibility of a conflict with Czechoslovakia, she did not want to force them to fight against their own countrymen.

Chamberlain then asked for the German map of the areas to be ceded by Czechoslovakia.<sup>94</sup>

The Führer pointed out that this map had been compiled from language and population maps of the years 1910, 1920, and 1930, as well as on the basis of the last Czechoslovak communal elections. A hundred and fifty thousand Sudeten Germans had left Czechoslovakia for overseas, four hundred thousand had gone to Austria, and two hundred and seventy thousand to the Reich. Besides, two hundred thousand Czechs had been settled in the Sudeten area. In citing the plebiscite on the Saar settlement as a model, he pointed out that this had not been evolved at the time by him but by a high international commission. Chamberlain pointed out the difference between the Saar, which had been under the supreme control of the League of Nations, and the Sudeten territory. According to his, Chamberlain's, proposal as well, the Germans would receive almost the same territory as under the proposed plebiscite, unless they wanted to bring in completely different principles in the determining of the frontier. He, Chamberlain, had no power to negotiate. He could only report the nonacceptance of his proposal and the

<sup>94</sup> This map is not available, but was presumably similar to the one annexed to the German memorandum presented on the following day (see appendix vi).



counterproposal made by Germany, and try to convince his own country of the correctness of his line of action. The Führer had certainly not made his task easier.

The Führer replied that his was no easy task either. The feeling of the German people was such that they would prefer the establishment of a strategic frontier, with the corresponding methods, to negotiation.

Chamberlain answered the Führer that he, the Führer, had the power to establish this strategic frontier at any time. But what was the sense of starting a conflict, which would cost human lives and mean the destruction of rich lands? In present-day circumstances, even the victor in a war had usually no real gain, and success was certain only up to a certain point; what followed was extremely uncertain. Therefore, it seemed better to him to try to find a solution by peaceful means, a solution which would give the Führer the certainty that his demands would be fulfilled.

The Führer answered that the situation was almost intolerable. At any moment, while the negotiations were going on here, there might be an explosion somewhere in the Sudeten German area which would make all efforts for a peaceful solution fruitless. The quickest and best solution would therefore be to prevent the chance of possible incidents in the disputed area by occupation by German troops and administrative bodies. He repeated that he was prepared afterward to undertake the frontier adjustments rendered necessary by the plebiscite.

In conclusion, in the presence of the Reich Foreign Minister, State Secretary Weizsäcker, Sir Nevile Henderson, the British Ambassador, and several other members of the German and British delegations, the Führer explained to Mr. Chamberlain the map of the Sudeten German areas to be surrendered, while repeating part of his above-mentioned ideas.

Mr. Kirkpatrick, of the British Embassy in Berlin, attended the conversation between the Führer and Reich Chancellor and the British Prime Minister, as recorder of the minutes.

Submitted to the Führer and Reich Chancellor according to instructions.

DR. SCHMIDT  
*Counselor of Legation*

BAD GODESBERG, September 22, 1938.

## No. 563

139/126216-17

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann)*

BERLIN, September 22, 1938.

The British Counselor of Embassy called on me again at 4 o'clock this afternoon and gave me the following information, on instructions from his Government:<sup>95</sup>

The Czech Government had established the fact that formations had marched into Asch from Germany; they had withdrawn their military personnel there. In Eger the *Freikorps* had ordered the *gendarmérie* and military personnel to hand over their arms. The latter had, however, refused to do so. SS and SA had gone to Eger from Reich territory and were actually using force. Reich-German personnel had arrived at Eger station; forty special railway officials had come from Germany. Czech military personnel had withdrawn from Falkenau. There was, however, great danger that clashes would occur. The German Government carried a great responsibility. The British Government was asking that the German Government would do everything in their power to prevent the crossing of the frontier by formations. Sir Ogilvie Forbes believed that Mr. Chamberlain, who had received similar information, had already forwarded this to the Führer. Nevertheless, he, Forbes, had been instructed to take the matter up here also. In the course of the conversation Forbes said that the reports concerning Asch had even been confirmed by the German press (*B. Z. am Mittag*, 2d edition), where a headline read: "German flag over Asch."

I told the Counselor that we had made careful inquiries and had no confirmation that the *Freikorps* had crossed the frontier and marched toward Asch. On the contrary, we had received information that the *Freikorps* had not crossed the frontier at any point, nor did it intend to do so. We had further received a report that Sudeten Germans had taken over the security service on the spot, partly even in cooperation with the Czechoslovak authorities.

Finally, I drew the Counselor's attention on the telephone to the reports in the evening press of cases of frontier violation by the Czechoslovaks.

WOERMANN

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<sup>95</sup> Cf. document No. 559, p. 863.

## No. 564

139/126202

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) and the Military Attaché of the German Legation in Czechoslovakia (Toussaint) to the German Foreign Ministry and the Supreme Headquarters of the Wehrmacht*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

PRAGUE, September 22, 1938—4:20 p.m.

No. 419 of September 22

Received September 22, 1938—5:45 p.m.

For O.K.W.:

Learn from Rumanian Military Attaché that he had encountered at midday very confident mood among Czechoslovak General Staff. Clear case of frontier having been crossed by German military formations had caused General Staff and French Military Mission to ask French Government whether Alliance now came into force. Preliminary reply had been satisfactory. Final reply not until complete clarification. I received simultaneously corresponding report from Polish and Hungarian sides. Warning from British side.

Also for Foreign Ministry.

TOUSSAINT  
HENCKE

## No. 565

139/126207

*The German Ambassador in Italy (Mackensen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 246 of September 22

ROME, September 22, 1938—6:10 p.m.

Received September 22, 1938—9:20 p.m.

Reference telegrams of September 21, Nos. 312 and 316<sup>96</sup>

Ciano acknowledged thanks for Mussolini's Trieste speech,<sup>97</sup> which he wanted to convey to the Duce without delay, with the remark that the year 1938 had been for Führer a year of overwhelming successes. Czech question could now already be regarded as fundamentally decided, even if settling of details would naturally still require weeks, possibly months. Substance of what Chamberlain would propose at Godesberg today was not known to Italians, but he no longer doubted that matters would develop in direction, not of partial, but

<sup>96</sup> For telegram No. 316, see document No. 555, p. 865. Telegram No. 312 is not printed.

<sup>97</sup> September 18, 1938.

of total solution of Czech problem. Duce in his later speeches since Trieste had left no doubt that his words were backed by guns, which were certainly on our side. Tempo of change in French attitude was quite incomprehensible. Only 4 days ago French Chargé d'Affaires here had told him with most serious expression that armed action against Czechoslovakia would immediately bring the French on the scene.

Ciano had already been informed by Attolico of substance and result of Obersalzberg conversations with Imredy, Kanya, and Lipski,<sup>98</sup> and declared himself satisfied.

MACKENSEN

No. 566

139/126225

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the  
Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 22, 1938.

At about half past six this evening the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* informed Herr von Stechow here that there was an instruction from the Führer to the effect that the *Freikorps* should occupy those Sudeten German areas which had been evacuated by Czech troops. I informed Herr Altenburg of this, who thereupon spoke with *Obergruppenführer* Lorenz and General Keitel. *Obergruppenführer* Lorenz has instructed the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* to inform the *Freikorps* (Frogner) that the area is not to be occupied. The chief reasons for this are the reports in possession of the *Wehrmacht* to the effect that well-armed Czech troops are moving up to the frontier. The *Freikorps* would by no means be a match for these Czech troops. On the other hand, the instruction of the Führer still stands insofar as small units can undertake well-reconnoitered and well-prepared minor operations on the frontier, but these, however, must not amount to an occupation.

WOERMANN

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<sup>98</sup> Cf. documents Nos. 554 and 555, pp. 863 and 865.

## No. 567

139/126226

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV (Stechow) for the Foreign Minister*

## MEMORANDUM

Herr Schmidt of the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* gave me at about 7 p.m. the following information by telephone:

1) The Command of the Sudeten German *Freikorps* has just reported as follows: Lieutenant Köchling has brought the following orders from the Führer: The *Freikorps* will occupy the areas evacuated by the Czechs. Military movements on a large scale must, however, not take place without the explicit approval of the Führer. The *Freikorps* had received arms and equipment from Germany.

2) Information was received from Bayreuth at 12:32 p.m. that the Czech General Necas<sup>99</sup> had spoken in Czech over the radio, denying that the new Czechoslovak Government considered itself as bound by the fact that the Hodza government had accepted the British plan. The Czech Army was ready to defend the present frontiers. Detailed information on this radio speech will follow.

VON STECHOW

BERLIN, September 22, 1938.

P.S. to 2) The transmitting station reports that the speech of General Mesek (?) contained no references to the British plan.

## No. 568

139/126204

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

## Telegram

No. 422 of September 22 PRAGUE, September 22, 1938—8:25 p.m.  
Received September 23, 1938—12:05 a.m.

1) Today's demonstrations in Prague—greater in extent than yesterday—took place with comparative calm and were over by early afternoon. All ages were represented; many workers, fewer women. Communists more numerous than yesterday; slogan as before: military dictatorship and defense of the frontier. Announcement of resignation of Hodza government had calming effect. Clashes spreading. To support police, which has situation in hand, officials from all political parties, including Red Corps [*Rote Wehr*], called

<sup>99</sup> General Medek, head of the Legionaries Institute, spoke on the radio on this day.

in. Military police and troops provided for protection of Legation and Castle.

2) According to reports from our offices at Eger, Reichenberg, Brünn, and Kaschau, there is complete calm there. Some demonstrations but no incidents.

Lierau, Consul at Reichenberg, reported by telephone he had achieved release of Sudeten German prisoners and had conferred with the authorities about the transfer of administration to Sudeten Germans. He also wanted to arrange for display of both flags in Reichenberg. While approving his success on behalf of the prisoners, I asked Consul Lierau, out of consideration for his official position, not to interfere in matters which it is the business of the local population to settle, without instructions from the Foreign Ministry.

3) Czechoslovak Government asserts that German SA had marched in on Warnsdorf and Sudeten German Legion near Haslau, where clash with Czechoslovak soldiers is said to have occurred. Czechoslovak Government is trying to allege from this an armed attack on their territory, which would bring the Alliance into operation. (See telegram No. 419.<sup>1</sup>)

4) Red Spanish Legation has [applied] to the Polish Legation here for transit visas through Poland for all its staff; they obviously intend to leave Prague.

5) At 6:15 p.m. still no information on formation of new Government.

HENCKE

### No. 569

139/126208

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PARIS, September 22, 1938.

No. 477 of September 22 Received September 22, 1938—9:20 p.m.

Hungarian Minister<sup>2</sup> here has informed me that the Polish Ambassador<sup>3</sup> on September 20, and he himself on September 21, had made a *démarche*<sup>4</sup> at the Quai d'Orsay to obtain equal treatment for the Polish and Hungarian minorities with the Sudeten Germans in the settlement of the Czechoslovak problem. The Hungarian note had been couched in stronger terms than the Polish, in that it had

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 564, p. 881.

<sup>2</sup> Count Sandor Khuén-Belasi-Hedervary, 1934-41.

<sup>3</sup> Juljusz Lukaszewicz, July 1938-39.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 553, p. 861, for the Polish *démarche*.

stated that, in the event of the nonfulfillment of the Hungarian demands, the tension between Hungary and Czechoslovakia would continue and would indeed be further increased, while in the Polish note there was only mention of the continued existence of tension.

The Polish *démarche* had been made to Foreign Minister Bonnet, who had adopted a rather negative attitude and had stated that the question could naturally not be examined more closely at present, but that we must wait and see how matters developed. He, the Hungarian Minister, had made his *démarche* to Massigli, because he had not been able yesterday to contact the Minister, to whom the *démarche* had been addressed. Massigli had been informed of the Polish *démarche* and Bonnet's reply, but had apparently received instructions to give the Hungarian Minister a more conciliatory reply than that given to the Polish Ambassador by Bonnet. Massigli stated that one could understand the Hungarian desire, and it was also quite natural that, if negotiations were to develop from the conversations at Godesberg, the settlement of questions concerning the Polish and Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia must follow, within the framework of a general settlement.

BRÄUER

No. 570

139/128196-97

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 431 of September 22

LONDON, September 22, 1938.

Received September 23, 1938—9:10 a.m.

This morning, accompanied by Selzam, I was at the airport when Chamberlain left. French Ambassador was also there. I greeted Chamberlain and wished him success in his mission. He thanked me warmly, but was very serious. As he wanted to arrive at Godesberg punctually at 12:30, departure was delayed. He invited French Ambassador and myself to join him in the waiting room. Very friendly conversation between three of us did not, however, touch on actual problem. I had the opportunity of talking with Sir Horace Wilson and Strang, and also with Geoffrey Dawson, editor of *The Times*.

Chamberlain and his party have left under a heavy load of anxiety. It is feared that, apart from the actual Sudeten German problem, which formed exclusively the basis of the talks between Führer and Prime Minister at Berchtesgaden, demands relating to

the Hungarian and Polish minorities will be put forward, which the British Government, even with the best will, cannot at once meet. It is naturally realized that the Czech question cannot be finally solved until the Hungarian and Polish claims are settled. The opinion is, however, that these two problems cannot be solved within the immediate program. In principle, therefore, the British Government are pursuing the same aims as we are. But they are of the opinion that they cannot, in view of public opinion, put through this solution at once.

Unquestionably opposition is growing. I refer to yesterday's speeches by Churchill, Eden, Sinclair, and the demonstrations of the Labor Party and the Trade-unions. Dawson also said emphatically that opposition to Chamberlain's policy is increasing. He thinks that if Chamberlain were to return without an understanding based on the Anglo-French plan, public opinion here would turn against Chamberlain. The Prime Minister, moreover, deserved full admiration. He was tackling the problem with extraordinary courage.

The British public is not yet prepared to accept demands for immediate fulfillment of the Hungarian and Polish wishes. There is thus a danger of a sudden change of public opinion about Chamberlain.

Shortly before his departure Chamberlain said to the journalists who were present:

"A peaceful solution of the Czechoslovak problem is an essential preliminary for a better understanding between the British and German peoples; and that, in turn, is the indispensable foundation of European peace. European peace is what I am aiming at, and I hope this journey may open the way to get it."

TH. KORDT

### No. 571

139/126232

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the  
Foreign Minister*

GODESBERG, September 22, 1938—midnight.

Prince Solms<sup>5</sup> telephoned the following to Herr Altenburg:—  
For Reich Foreign Minister and State Secretary:—Italian Ambassador rang up at 10:30 p.m. and said he had received the follow-

<sup>5</sup> Presumably Prince George Solms-Braunfels, whose mother and wife were both Italian aristocrats.



ing communication from Rome just after his talk with the Foreign Minister:

Count Ciano has had a conversation with Lord Perth<sup>6</sup> today; Ciano stated Italy was in favor of a rapid and complete settlement of the Czech question, in which the Hungarian and Polish demands must also be fulfilled. Lord Perth then asked whether Italy would take part in guaranteeing the remainder of the Czech State. Ciano replied he could make no statement on this today; but Italy would on no account participate in a guarantee unless all problems, including the Polish and Hungarian, were settled beforehand.

The Italian Ambassador requested that the foregoing be passed to the Reich Foreign Minister as soon as possible.

WOERMANN

No. 572

330/195697-98

*Letter From the British Prime Minister to the Führer<sup>7</sup>*

As from Hotel Petersberg, GODESBERG.  
September 23, 1938.

MY DEAR REICHSKANZLER: I think it may clarify the situation and accelerate our conversation if I send you this note before we meet this morning.

I am ready to put to the Czech Government your proposal as to the areas, so that they may examine the suggested provisional boundary. So far as I can see, there is no need to hold a plebiscite for the bulk of the areas, i.e. for those areas which (according to statistics upon which both sides seem to agree) are predominantly Sudeten German areas. I have no doubt, however, that the Czech Government would be willing to accept your proposal for a plebiscite to determine how far, if at all, the proposed new frontier need be adjusted.

The difficulty I see about the proposal you put to me yesterday afternoon arises from the suggestion that the areas should in the immediate future be occupied by German troops. I recognize the difficulty of conducting a lengthy investigation under existing conditions and doubtless the plan you propose would, if it were acceptable, provide an immediate easing of the tension. But I do not

<sup>6</sup>The British Ambassador in Rome.

<sup>7</sup>Printed as document No. 3 in the British White Paper, Cmd. 5847: *Correspondence Respecting Czechoslovakia, September 1938.*

The copy of the letter printed is accompanied in the file by a German translation.

think you have realized the impossibility of my agreeing to put forward any plan unless I have reason to suppose that it will be considered by public opinion in my country, in France and, indeed, in the world generally, as carrying out the principles already agreed upon in an orderly fashion and free from the threat of force. I am sure that an attempt to occupy forthwith by German troops areas which will become part of the Reich at once in principle, and very shortly afterward by formal delimitation, would be condemned as an unnecessary display of force.

Even if I felt it right to put this proposal to the Czech Government, I am convinced that they would not regard it as being in the spirit of the arrangement which we and the French Government urged them to accept and which they have accepted. In the event of German troops moving into the areas as you propose, there is no doubt that the Czech Government would have no option but to order their forces to resist, and this would mean the destruction of the basis upon which you and I a week ago agreed to work together, namely, an orderly settlement of this question rather than a settlement by the use of force.

It being agreed in principle that the Sudeten German areas are to join the Reich, the immediate question before us is how to maintain law and order pending the final settlement of the arrangements for the transfer. There must surely be alternatives to your proposal which would not be open to the objections I have pointed out. For instance, I could ask the Czech Government whether they think there could be an arrangement under which the maintenance of law and order in certain agreed Sudeten German areas would be entrusted to the Sudeten Germans themselves—by the creation of a suitable force, or by the use of forces already in existence, possibly acting under the supervision of neutral observers.

As you know, I did last night, in accordance with my understanding with you, urge the Czech Government to do all in their power to maintain order in the meantime.

The Czech Government cannot, of course, withdraw their forces nor can they be expected to withdraw the State Police so long as they are faced with the prospect of forcible invasion; but I should be ready at once to ascertain their views on the alternative suggestion I have made and, if the plan proved acceptable, I would urge them to withdraw their forces and the State Police from the areas where the Sudeten Germans are in a position to maintain order.

The further steps that need be taken to complete the transfer could be worked out quite rapidly.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN

## No. 573

340/198998-9002

*Letter From the Führer to the British Prime Minister*<sup>8</sup>

BAD GODESBERG, September 23, 1938.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: A thorough examination of your letter, which reached me today, as well as the necessity of clearing up the situation definitely, leads me to make the following communication:—

For nearly two decades the Germans, as well as the various other nationalities in Czechoslovakia, have been maltreated in the most unworthy manner, tortured, economically destroyed, and, above all, prevented from realizing for themselves also the right of the nations to self-determination. All attempts of the oppressed to change their lot failed in the face of the brutal will to destruction of the Czechs. The latter were in possession of the power of the State and did not hesitate to employ it ruthlessly and barbarically. England and France have never made an endeavor to alter this situation. In my speech before the Reichstag of February 22, I declared that the German Reich would take the initiative in putting an end to any further oppression of these Germans. I have in a further declaration during the Reich Party Congress given clear and unmistakable expression to this decision. I recognize gratefully that at last, after 20 years, the British Government, represented by Your Excellency, has now decided for its part also to undertake steps to put an end to a situation which from day to day, and, indeed, from hour to hour, is becoming more unbearable. For if formerly the behavior of the Czechoslovak Government was brutal, it can only be described during recent weeks and days as madness. The victims of this madness are innumerable Germans. In a few weeks the number of refugees who have been driven out has risen to over 120,000. This situation, as stated above, is unbearable, and will now be terminated by me.

Your Excellency assures me now that the principle of the transfer of the Sudeten territory to the Reich has, in principle, already been accepted. I regret to have to reply to Your Excellency that, as regards this point, the theoretical recognition of principles has also been formerly granted to us Germans. In the year 1918 the Armistice was concluded on the basis of the Fourteen Points of President Wilson, which in principle were recognized by all. They were, however, in practice broken in the most shameful way. What interests me, Your Excellency, is not the recognition of the principle that this

<sup>8</sup> Document No. 4 in British White Paper, Cmd. 5847.

territory is to go to Germany, but solely the realization of this principle, and the realization which both puts an end in the shortest time to the suffering of the unhappy victims of Czech tyranny, and at the same time corresponds to the dignity of a Great Power. I can only emphasize to Your Excellency that these Sudeten Germans are not coming back to the German Reich in virtue of the gracious or benevolent sympathy of other nations, but on the ground of their own will based on the right of self-determination of the nations, and of the irrevocable decision of the German Reich to give effect to this will. It is, however, for a nation an unworthy demand to have this recognition made dependent on conditions which are not provided for in treaties nor are practical in view of the shortness of the time.

I have, with the best intentions and in order to give the Czech nation no justifiable cause for complaint, proposed—in the event of a peaceful solution—as the future frontier, that nationalities frontier which I am convinced represents a fair adjustment between the two racial groups, taking also into account the continued existence of large language islands. I am, in addition, ready to allow plebiscites to be taken in the whole territory which will enable subsequent corrections to be made, in order—so far as it is possible—to meet the real will of the peoples concerned. I have undertaken to accept these corrections in advance. I have, moreover, declared myself ready to allow this plebiscite to take place under the control either of international commissions or of a mixed German-Czech commission. I am finally ready, during the days of the plebiscite, to withdraw our troops from the most disputed frontier areas, subject to the condition that the Czechs do the same. I am, however, not prepared to allow a territory which must be considered as belonging to Germany, on the ground of the will of the people and of the recognition granted even by the Czechs, to be left without the protection of the Reich. There is here no international power or agreement which would have the right to take precedence over German right.

The idea of being able to entrust to the Sudeten Germans alone the maintenance of order is practically impossible in consequence of the obstacles put in the way of their political organization in the course of the last decade, and particularly in recent times. As much in the interest of the tortured, because defenseless, population as well as with regard to the duties and prestige of the Reich, it is impossible for us to refrain from giving immediate protection to this territory.

Your Excellency assures me that it is now impossible for you to propose such a plan to your own Government. May I assure you

for my part that it is impossible for me to justify any other attitude to the German people; since, for England, it is a question at most of political imponderables, whereas, for Germany, it is a question of primitive right of the security of more than 3 million human beings and the national honor of a great people.

I fail to understand the observation of Your Excellency that it would not be possible for the Czech Government to withdraw their forces so long as they were obliged to reckon with possible invasion, since precisely by means of this solution the grounds for any forcible action are to be removed. Moreover, I cannot conceal from Your Excellency that the great mistrust with which I am inspired leads me to believe that the acceptance of the principle of the transfer of Sudeten Germans to the Reich by the Czech Government is only given in the hope thereby to win time so as, by one means or another, to bring about a change in contradiction to this principle. For if the proposal that these territories are to belong to Germany is sincerely accepted, there is no ground to postpone the practical resolution of this principle. My knowledge of Czech practice in such matters over a period of long years compels me to assume the insincerity of Czech assurances so long as they are not implemented by practical proof. The German Reich is, however, determined by one means or another to terminate these attempts, which have lasted for decades, to deny by dilatory methods the legal claims of oppressed peoples.

Moreover, the same attitude applies to the other nationalities in this State. They also are the victims of long oppression and violence. In their case, also, every assurance given hitherto has been broken. In their case, also, attempts have been made by dilatory dealing with their complaints or wishes to win time in order to be able to oppress them still more subsequently. These nations, also, if they are to achieve their rights, will, sooner or later, have no alternative but to secure them for themselves. In any event, Germany, if she—as it now appears to be the case—should find it impossible to have the clear rights of Germans in Czechoslovakia accepted by way of negotiation, is determined to exhaust the other possibilities which then alone remain open to her.

Yours sincerely,

ADOLF HITLER

## No. 574

340/199003-4

*Letter From the British Prime Minister to the Führer\**

As from Hotel Petersberg, GODESBERG.  
September 23, 1938.

**MY DEAR REICHSKANZLER:** I have received Your Excellency's communication in reply to my letter of this morning, and have taken note of its contents.

In my capacity as intermediary, it is evidently now my duty—since Your Excellency maintains entirely the position you took last night—to put your proposals before the Czechoslovak Government.

Accordingly, I request Your Excellency to be good enough to let me have a memorandum which sets out these proposals, together with a map showing the area proposed to be transferred, subject to the result of the proposed plebiscite.

On receiving this memorandum I will at once forward it to Prague and request the reply of the Czechoslovak Government at the earliest possible moment.

In the meantime, until I can receive their reply, I should be glad to have Your Excellency's assurances that you will continue to abide by the understanding, which we reached at our meeting on September 14 and again last night, that no action should be taken, particularly in the Sudeten territory, by the forces of the Reich, to prejudice any further mediation which may be found possible.

Since the acceptance or refusal of Your Excellency's proposal is now a matter for the Czechoslovak Government to decide, I do not see that I can perform any further service here, while on the other hand it has become necessary that I should at once report the present situation to my colleagues and to the French Government. I propose, therefore, to return to England.

Yours faithfully,

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN

\* Document No. 5 in the British White Paper, Cmd. 5847.

## No. 575

139/126258

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann)*

BERLIN, September 23, 1938.

The American Ambassador,<sup>10</sup> to whom I had made complaints this morning regarding the extremely unfavorable attitude of the American press, called on me once more this afternoon. He told me he had telegraphed to Washington immediately. In addition, he had got into touch with his Paris colleague, who for his part was likewise under the impression that the American press was ill-disposed, and who had already telegraphed to this effect to Washington. The American Ambassador in Paris had today received a reply from Washington that the State Department was striving for an improvement in the tone of the press. The Ambassador said for his part that he greatly disapproved of the attitude of the press. The United States was not in danger in any way and it did not become the American press to throw oil on the fire. He was requesting that the whole conversation should be kept strictly confidential.

WOERMANN

## No. 576

1613/387084

*The Czechoslovak Legation to the German Foreign Ministry*

IMMEDIATE

(Pol. I 2228 g)

Nr. 10486/38

## NOTE VERBALE

Following the announcement in today's German daily press of twelve alleged executions under martial law in the Czechoslovak Republic, the Czechoslovak Legation is instructed to inform you officially that these reports are entirely without foundation.

Up till now not one death sentence by court-martial has been carried out in the Czechoslovak Republic.

BERLIN, September 23, 1938.

[Marginal notes:]

(1) Handed to me at 4:45 p.m. today by the Czech Chargé d'Affaires. H[EINBURG] September 23.

<sup>10</sup> Hugh R. Wilson.

(2) Telephoned to Godesberg by H[err] Kordt. H[EINBURG] September 23.

(3) Contents communicated by telephone to Dr. Best (Gestapo). v[ON] S[TECHOW] September 23.

### No. 577

139/126254

*The German Ambassador in Italy (Mackensen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 250 of September 23      ROME, September 23, 1938—7:15 p.m.  
Received September 23, 1938—10:10 p.m.

Villani, the Hungarian Minister, who called on me today, confirmed to me that he had informed Count Ciano on instructions yesterday that the Hungarian Government had made it known officially in London and Prague that they would not tolerate any discrimination against Magyar minority in Czechoslovakia in comparison with other minorities. Ciano had noted this with some satisfaction, especially since, as Minister added, Rome had recently pressed strongly in Budapest for Hungary to take such a step. In the course of yesterday's conversation Ciano had described military preparedness of France and Britain as very incomplete, and in contrast to this set on record that "Italy was ready down to the last detail."

MACKENSEN

### No. 578

139/126242

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 427 of September 23      PRAGUE, September 23, 1938—7:35 p.m.  
Received September 23, 1938—10:10 p.m.

1) The Sirovy Cabinet neither approaches the character of a military government nor that of a cabinet of national concentration [*Konzentrationskabinett*]. It is far rather a presidential government, composed of officials subservient to Beneš, with a general tendency toward the Left. The only figures of any importance in the Cabinet are General Sirovy, who is regarded by the mass of the people as guarantor of the preservation of Czech honor at a time of emergency, and Cerny, the new Minister for the Interior, hitherto President of the Province of Moravia, who ostensibly is closely con-



nected with the Agrarians, but who, in fact, is a Beneš man. For the rest, Agrarian influence is hardly represented. Negotiations are going on at present for the extension of the Cabinet by the inclusion of Slovaks.

Government is to be regarded as a transitional Cabinet which may within a short time be replaced by a Party Cabinet. Its task is to maintain law and order, and carry out the frontier revision.

The aim of its foreign policy may well be to obtain a guarantee of the Czechoslovak Rump State by the European Powers. Until this guarantee is obtained Sirovy wishes to attempt to maintain the Czech executive authority in the Sudeten German territory and does not wish to give up the possibility of defending the State frontier. Decisive in this connection is the generally prevailing view that Germany is seeking a pretext for war, so that she will not have to declare herself satisfied with the Sudeten German territory alone. Hence also the military reoccupation of part of the frontier territory, and the placing of troops in readiness between March and Waag.<sup>11</sup>

2) Feverish measures taken in Prague for defense against air attack. Construction of gun and machine gun emplacements.

3) Complete quiet prevails in the capital at the moment. However, Communist plots are feared. Important Government offices occupied by military. Railway guards strengthened. Communist printing press has been searched and put under seal. Communist newspaper *Pravo Lidu* suspended. No reports of disturbances from the provinces.

HENCKE

No. 579

139/126236-37

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

LONDON, September 23, 1938—8:33 a.m.

No. 433 of September 23

Received September 23, 1938—9 p.m.

Mr. Steward,<sup>12</sup> the Prime Minister's Press Adviser, has just given Dr. Hesse, D.N.B. representative here, the following information:

Chamberlain's position has been made extremely difficult by latest events in Godesberg. Persons friendly to Germany, of whom

<sup>11</sup> Two tributaries of the Danube in Moravia and Slovakia respectively; in Czech, the Morava and the Váh.

<sup>12</sup> George F. Steward, a journalist, attached to the Prime Minister's Secretariat. Cf. footnote 56, p. 621.

Steward himself is one, are beginning to be afraid that the Prime Minister will not be able to hold out in face of the revolt of public opinion which is brewing in England. He referred to the 2,000 meetings of the Labor Party called for the week end and to growing opposition within the Conservative Party itself. In view of this state of affairs Chamberlain could not continue as he had been doing without exposing himself to the danger of immediate overthrow. The consequence would be the formation of a Cabinet under Eden and Churchill, which could only be described as a War Cabinet.

Steward added that the atmosphere, which a week ago had been definitely favorable to German wishes, threatened to swing over to the opposite extreme as a result of German press propaganda. He stated that German propaganda acted like the threat of an ultimatum and thus hit the Englishman in his most tender psychological spot. No British Prime Minister could afford to give the impression that he was acting under threat of force.

In conclusion, Steward said that he had no authority for giving Dr. Hesse this information. But he had felt obliged to give him his impression of the actual state of affairs candidly and in an entirely friendly manner.

From private statements by a friend of Halifax's it appears that the foregoing ideas correspond to the views of Government circles here.

KORDT

No. 580

139/126238

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram  
Transmitted by telephone

VERY URGENT

LONDON, September 23, 1938—9 p.m.  
No. 434 of September 23 Received September 23, 1938—9:10 p.m.

The views of a third party on the present mood of the British public, repeated in telegraphic report No. 433, are entirely shared by me.

KORDT

## No. 581

139/126243

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) and the Military Attaché of the German Legation in Czechoslovakia (Toussaint) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 428 of September 23 PRAGUE, September 23, 1938—11:30 p.m.  
Received September 24, 1938—3:15 p.m.

For Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht*, Attaché Section.

Sirovy Cabinet, which has strong tendencies toward the Left, is regarded as a government for carrying out the frontier revision. Determination to defend the frontier of the State against "humiliating demands" is expected of it.

Troop movements on frontier, partly of battalions which are returning from the Prague area to the front, are reported. Troop concentrations between March and Waag continue. General Faucher has resigned his post as head of the French Military Mission, and has placed himself at the disposal of the Czech General Staff.

Extensive measures against air attack taken in Prague. No demonstrations.

TOUSSAINT  
HENCKE

## No. 582

139/126253

*The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to the German Foreign Ministry*<sup>13</sup>

Telegram

IMMEDIATE Moscow, September 23, 1938—11:59 p.m.  
No. 197 of September 23 Received September 24, 1938—1:15 a.m.

I learn in strict confidence from the Polish Chargé d'Affaires.<sup>14</sup>

Potemkin requested the Polish Chargé to call on him this morning and handed him a paper without heading which he had signed, and which contained the following: "Soviet Government has learned of Polish troop concentration on the Czechoslovak frontier as preparation for invasion of Czechoslovakia. In spite of circulation of this alarming news no Polish *démenti* has been issued. The Soviet Government must now declare that, if no *démenti* is issued and Polish

<sup>13</sup> The gist of this report was also received by the Foreign Ministry by telephone from the Polish Embassy in Berlin.

<sup>14</sup> T. Jankowski.

troops should cross the Czechoslovak frontier, they would be compelled to denounce the Polish-Soviet Pact of Nonaggression<sup>16</sup> pursuant to article 2." The Polish Chargé immediately informed Warsaw and received instructions by telephone to hand Potemkin a note in the same form to the effect that the Polish Government had the incontestable right, without rendering account, to undertake all measures which appeared to them necessary for the security of Polish territory. The Polish Government were aware of the possibility of the denunciation of the Nonaggression Pact. The Polish Chargé d'Affaires carried out these instructions this evening and also added by word of mouth, in accordance with instructions, that the Polish Government were all the more astonished over the Soviet step as the Polish Government had taken no special measures on the Polish-Czechoslovak frontier.

The French Ambassador was asked to call on Potemkin this afternoon, evidently to be informed of the Soviet *démarche* with the Polish Embassy.

SCHULENBURG

No. 583

340/199045-71

*Memorandum on the Conversation Between the Führer and Reich Chancellor and Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, at Godesberg on the Evening of September 23, 1938*

The conversation took place in the presence of the Reich Foreign Minister, State Secretary von Weizsäcker, Sir Horace Wilson, Sir Neville Henderson, and Mr. Kirkpatrick.

In his introductory remarks the Führer first thanked the British Prime Minister in his own name as well as in the name of the German people for his efforts to secure a peaceful solution of the Czechoslovak problem. He, the Führer, knew that for Mr. Chamberlain, these efforts had not only involved a great physical strain, but that great political courage had also been required to carry out this effort in the cause of peace. The negotiations had indeed been difficult. And even if the Führer's ancestors came from Lower Saxony and he could also say that both the Prime Minister and he himself were of northern origin, it was still difficult to find a common basis in a matter which two peoples regarded from completely different angles. For England the Czechoslovak question was a problem of general policy and general principles. For Germany, on the other hand, it was a question of national life and national honor. In spite of the different angles from which Great Britain and Germany

<sup>16</sup> Signed in 1932 and renewed in 1935.

viewed the problem under discussion, he (the Führer) hoped that it would still be possible to find a peaceful solution together. If this were achieved, the success would in large measure be due to Mr. Chamberlain.

Chamberlain answered that he much appreciated the words in which the Führer had thanked him for his efforts. He had listened with special pleasure to the Führer's last remarks in which he had expressed his hope that a peaceful solution was still possible. He assumed that the Führer would state this hope in more concrete form, for it had been agreed that a memorandum stating the German proposals was to be submitted by the Germans.

Thereupon the German memorandum<sup>16</sup> was handed to the British, the Führer stating that it contained essentially ideas and suggestions which he had already stated in the course of previous conversations.

In the last few years Germany had had to tackle a series of national questions, the solution of which had been a vital necessity. Unfortunately Great Britain had often not only been completely indifferent to Germany's efforts, but had even adopted an attitude opposed to Germany, especially in the British press. This was the first occasion on which Germany felt she could say with some satisfaction that Great Britain on her part was striving for a solution in a spirit friendly to Germany of the one remaining question at issue. If these efforts led to success, this might well be regarded as a turning point in Anglo-German relations.

Chamberlain answered that the achievement of such a turning point in relations between these two countries was "his great ambition."<sup>17</sup> He hoped very much that a peaceful solution of the question at issue could be found, a solution which he would defend with all his power, even if it were perhaps not altogether agreeable to certain sections of public opinion in Great Britain. For he, too, believed that then a turning point in the relations of both countries would come about. Hitherto he himself had already exerted extraordinary efforts to make progress in this direction. He must, however, state with regret that so far he had met with only "very little response"<sup>17</sup> from the Führer. The Führer had told him that if he, Chamberlain, succeeded in getting the principle of cession of territory to Germany accepted, at the first talk at Berchtesgaden, a discussion could take place on methods and procedure for carrying out this principle. He had now done what the Führer asked. The principle of cession of territory had been accepted, not only by Great Britain

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<sup>16</sup> Document No. 584, p. 908. The copy there printed is that dispatched to the Foreign Ministry in Berlin.

<sup>17</sup> This phrase is repeated in English in parentheses in the original.

and France, but also by Czechoslovakia. He had therefore thought that Germany would now be prepared to discuss methods and procedure for applying it. Instead of this, Germany had refused even to consider the British proposals. It had been categorically stated that certain things must be done and done quickly. The Germans were not prepared to enter into any discussion as to how the above-mentioned principle could be put into execution peacefully and in an orderly manner.

Here the Führer interjected that the British gentlemen naturally regarded the Czechoslovak question in a purely objective way. For Germany, on the other hand, it was a problem which stirred the country's emotions deeply, so that the consequences of conditions in Czechoslovakia were gradually coming to be felt as intolerable. The British must just imagine that a territory outside Great Britain was inhabited by 3½ million British, and that within 14 days alone 120,000 British refugees had poured into Great Britain; then people in Great Britain would not be able to regard the problem with detached calm. In the case of Czechoslovakia it was a question for Germany of a long-standing wrong which had lasted 20 years and had now led to an open crisis. This wrong could now no longer be tolerated. Germany of course fully recognized the British efforts toward a solution. In the prevailing circumstances, however, the case of Czechoslovakia could not be made a touchstone for methods and procedure, as the question had far greater significance, and brought quite different emotionally conditioned reactions into play.

Chamberlain again complained that, in spite of their recognition of his personal efforts, the Germans had not examined the British proposals properly and were now hastily and precipitately making for a solution by force which would entail frightful losses in human life and great suffering for those involved in the catastrophe. At this point, the Führer interjected that Chamberlain was mistaken if he thought that his ideas and suggestions had not been examined by the Germans. He (the Führer) had had no idea that the British would be prepared to undertake the role of mediator. He had already been determined to settle the question quite differently, and the German memorandum, which had now been handed over, was the result of the fact that the British proposals had been examined and taken into consideration. The British must not forget that the view was widely held in Germany that it would be best to do away with the Czechoslovak State altogether and establish frontiers according to purely strategic considerations. If the German memorandum did not adopt this view, then this was to be regarded as a result of the British suggestions.

Chamberlain went on to say that he could not believe that the Führer, just for the sake of a few days,<sup>18</sup> would be prepared to gamble away all chances<sup>19</sup> of collaboration between Germany and Great Britain, and of the achievement of a durable peace and lasting welfare among the nations.

He (Chamberlain) had been fully in favor of a reasonable solution. No one could reproach him with having been unreasonable during these discussions. In these proposals he had been guided by healthy understanding of human nature. If everything were upset now, there was a fearful risk that all prospects of a peaceful solution would be destroyed. If a little more time were allowed a clash might possibly be avoided, but if time limits were set in the memorandum, which in one case expired even as early as September 26, then a clash was inevitable.

At this point a message was brought to the Führer that Beneš had just (10:30 p.m.) announced over the Czechoslovak radio general mobilization in Czechoslovakia.<sup>20</sup> When the Führer communicated this information to the British, they were extremely taken aback, and Chamberlain said that a development which he had long feared had occurred.

When the Führer thereupon stated that now, of course, the whole affair was settled, Chamberlain contradicted him and described the mobilization in Czechoslovakia as an understandable measure of precaution on the part of the Czechs. In itself mobilization was not an offensive measure, but could very well be regarded as a defensive measure.

The Führer answered that now that mobilization had once taken place, the Czechs would not dream of ceding any territory to Germany. Chamberlain disagreed. The Czechs, urged by Great Britain and France, had already agreed to the cession of territory. They would not go back on this assurance. It still remained a matter of settling the question of the practical execution of this assurance.

The Führer replied that the Czechs, by their mobilization, would naturally force him to take countermeasures. He must state, however, that the Czechs had mobilized first. Chamberlain contradicted this. Germany had mobilized first. She had 1½ million men under arms, and had stationed tanks and aircraft in large numbers on the Czech frontier; that had represented a threat to Czechoslovakia.

<sup>18</sup> The phrase "just for the sake of a few days" is written in English with pencil in the margin.

<sup>19</sup> The phrase "I can't believe that the Führer will be prepared to gamble away all chances, etc." appears in English in parentheses in the original.

<sup>20</sup> Beneš gave the order for general mobilization at 10 p.m. See document No. 591, p. 920.

The Führer had often told him, Chamberlain, that he did not trust the word of the Czechs. On the Czech side the situation was similar; there, too, it was thought that the Führer's words concealed completely different intentions, and therefore mobilization had been ordered as a precautionary measure.

The Führer denied that Germany had mobilized. The world would be able to note the difference between the peacetime army and an army at war strength when Germany actually ordered mobilization. He, the Führer, had expressly stated that the present state of affairs would not last. He had his duty toward the German people. For 18 years all attempts to reach a peaceful settlement with Czechoslovakia had failed.

Chamberlain replied that in the course of the conversations the Führer had repeatedly told him that in the Sudetenland people were being shot, persecuted, and driven from the country, and that this was an intolerable situation which must come to an end. If, however, this end were brought about by a solution by force, then there would be infinitely more loss of life and the result would be infinitely more destruction and devastation. For, even if the war could be limited to Czechoslovakia, it would cause quite considerable losses.

The Führer here recalled the German proverb: "Better an end to terror than terror without end [*Lieber ein Ende mit Schrecken als ein Schrecken ohne Ende*]."

Chamberlain asked the Führer whether the German memorandum was really his last word and whether he was really resolved to go no farther, when agreement had already been so nearly reached.

The Führer answered that the memorandum was indeed his last word and that, moreover, he must repeat that the Czech mobilization compelled him to take certain military measures.

Chamberlain answered that in these circumstances there was no point in continuing the conversations. He had done his utmost, his efforts had failed. He was going away with a heavy heart, for the hopes with which he had come to Germany were destroyed. But his conscience was clear. He had done everything humanly possible to bring about a peaceful solution.

Herr von Ribbentrop, Reich Foreign Minister, pointed out to Mr. Chamberlain that he had made his last remarks without having carefully studied the German memorandum, and confirmed that that afternoon Chamberlain had asked the Führer, through Sir Nevile Henderson and Sir Horace Wilson, to submit to him a memorandum on the German point of view, which he would then transmit to the Czech Government, with a request for an immediate decision. In response to the British request, this memorandum had been drawn



up by the Germans and contained German proposals for a peaceful solution of the Czech problem. He (Herr von Ribbentrop) merely wanted to make it clear that Chamberlain had actually made his statements without a knowledge of the memorandum and that, if it were now asserted by the British that Germany had not proposed a peaceful solution, this represented an altogether novel way of negotiating.

Chamberlain replied that in his remarks the Reich Foreign Minister had not taken into consideration the fact that the Führer himself had stated at the beginning of the talks that the memorandum contained essentially the same proposals as had already been made in the course of the conversation. It might therefore be said that there was in fact nothing new, and that everything contained in the memorandum was already known to the British side. It was very important for him, Chamberlain, to know "whether the Führer would hold his hand."<sup>21</sup>

The Führer asked what Chamberlain meant by "hold his hand [*nichts unternehmen*]."

Chamberlain replied that he must ask himself whether by Germany's military measures in face of the Czech mobilization, about which the Führer had previously spoken, the invasion of Czech territory by German troops was not perhaps to be understood?

The Führer answered that the military measures of which he had spoken were not tantamount to an invasion of Czechoslovakia. As long as the negotiations were in progress, he would not invade that country.

Chamberlain answered that, in these circumstances, he would be prepared, according to the Führer's proposal, to submit the German memorandum to the Czech Government and to ask the latter for an early reply. He was doing this on the Führer's assurance that there would be no invasion. He would not give up hope of peace until peace was finally destroyed.

The Foreign Minister, Ribbentrop, referred to the fact that, in spite of the acceptance by Czechoslovakia of the cession of territory arranged by Chamberlain, things had been brought more and more to a head through intolerable measures within Czechoslovakia itself, until this evening when the mobilization order had been announced. It was wrong to maintain that Chamberlain's efforts for peace had met with no success with the Führer. Such a complaint should be addressed to Prague. The situation was in fact as follows: Great Britain and France as well as the Czech Government had accepted the cession of territory. The difference existing at the moment was

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<sup>21</sup> This phrase is repeated in English in parentheses in the original.

really only on one point. The Führer rightly regarded the words and basic declarations of Czechoslovakia with the deepest mistrust. He wanted to see deeds, and that quickly. Quick action was also necessary because the state of mind brought about by the mobilization order would lead to the very situation which Mr. Chamberlain wanted to avoid. It could not be said that efforts for peace had failed, but, if peace were to be preserved, action must be taken quickly, and not delayed by any questions of procedure.

Chamberlain answered that to him the most difficult point seemed to be the extremely short time limit set in the memorandum. If, as was to be assumed, the Czech Government published the memorandum after they received it, it was to be expected that the form in which it was drawn up would have a deplorable effect on public opinion in Great Britain and abroad. In form it was an ultimatum and not a document of negotiation.

The Führer answered that the German document was a memorandum and not an ultimatum. After 2 days' negotiations in Godesberg they had now reached a point where concrete proposals had to be made. After the vicissitudes of the negotiations, which had now lasted nearly a fortnight, a concrete proposal which could form a basis for acceptance or rejection by Czechoslovakia was necessary. Furthermore, in face of the Czech mobilization, Germany was obliged to envisage military measures, which in their turn would perhaps cause certain consequences in other countries. That would lead to a state of tension, which could not last and must be ended as quickly as possible. For this reason, too, time limits had been set in the German memorandum.

Chamberlain repeated that in its present form the memorandum would have a very bad effect on public opinion in Great Britain and other countries. It was couched in the language of a conqueror who dictated his will to the conquered, laid down everything in precise terms, and left no time for discussions on measures for the peaceful and orderly execution of the existing basic plans. He (Chamberlain) fully understood that there was no time to be lost. But even so, the memorandum did not need to contain formulas and time limits amounting to an ultimatum.

The Führer pointed out that Mr. Chamberlain had not yet studied the German document sufficiently to express a final opinion on it. He asked him to state more precisely what he objected to in the German memorandum. The fact remained that Czechoslovak territory would be ceded to Germany. Agreement on that had been reached by all sides. Cession meant that at a given time Czech troops and police would have to leave the district and German troops

would occupy it. The whole thing was only a question of dates and time limits, which was apparently causing difficulties here, but in any case the moment for evacuation would certainly come.

Chamberlain repeated that he would naturally fulfill his duty as mediator by forwarding the document to Czechoslovakia. But at the same time he thought it right to point out most emphatically the very bad impression which the document would have on public opinion, mainly because of its form. He would go through it in detail and make observations on the individual points. He could, however, repeat at once that the worst feature in the German memorandum was the time limit which was in part, from a purely material point of view, completely insufficient for the execution of the most necessary preparatory measures. For the rest, it was naturally the business of the Czechs to say whether they accepted the memorandum or not. If they accepted it, then of course he agreed with the Führer that there was no time to lose. Moreover, he would ask the Czechs to answer as soon as possible. If the Czechs accepted the memorandum he would do all in his power to prevent unreasonable delays. He said this in full consciousness of the responsibility which he was undertaking.

The Führer answered that the Czechs had now mobilized for the second time; the first time had been on May 21. The Czech mobilization would cause Germany to call up further strong classes of reservists. The situation thus created could not last long. Quite apart from the growing unrest on the frontier, Germany could not keep 90 to 100 divisions under arms indefinitely and do nothing but wait. On the other hand, he was forced to resort to comprehensive calling-up of reservists, because he would not be fulfilling his duty to his country if he did not take precautionary measures. It was quite possible that the new Czech Government would no longer adhere to the promises made by their predecessors. In England this would certainly be received with great indignation. Germany, however, would thereby be placed in an extremely difficult position. It would therefore be best if the period of uncertainty were made as short as possible, as had been done in the German memorandum.

At this point in the discussion the British withdrew for a short private consultation.

When the conversation was resumed, the Führer stated that, instead of the several time limits in the German memorandum, he was prepared to set one single date, if that would facilitate Chamberlain's task. He therefore proposed the substitution of all time limits mentioned in the memorandum by a provision according to which

the Czech Government would have to surrender the area marked on the enclosed map<sup>21a</sup> by October 1.

Chamberlain answered that in his capacity of mediator he was naturally not in a position either to accept or reject proposals by the Führer; he could only transmit them. However, he fully appreciated the Führer's consideration on the point.

Thereupon the whole German memorandum, which was submitted only in the German text, was read out in English and individual points explained.

Chamberlain then mentioned the British proposal to divide the territory to be ceded into a zone to be occupied immediately, comprising those areas which were definitely "preponderantly German,"<sup>22</sup> and a further zone where the preponderance of the German element was less definite. In the British view it was considered better if immediate occupation were confined to the first-mentioned areas, while those areas in which the preponderance of the German population was not established with such absolute certainty should be occupied by Germany only after a plebiscite, and according to the results of that plebiscite. If it were possible for the Führer to accept this proposal, it would greatly ease the situation.

The Führer answered that he had examined these ideas carefully with his military advisers. Unfortunately, they had reached the conclusion that the proposal could not be put into effect for purely technical reasons. In many cases the railways and roads to be used in the occupation passed through those areas which, according to the British proposal, were not to be occupied by Germany at once. Having regard to this, therefore, the British proposal could not be agreed to for technical reasons. Moreover, he (the Führer) certainly did not demand that the Czechs should evacuate the language enclave of Iglau; for that would be an impossible demand on the same grounds. Besides, it was important that a visible authority should be set up in just those areas which were less uniformly German, and then peace and order would at once be restored. The fact must also be taken into consideration that in the area occupied by the Czechs there were large German-language enclaves, not only in West Czechoslovakia but also, above all, in the eastern areas, which to a certain degree formed the counterpart of the disputed areas occupied by Germany. Sir Horace Wilson once again explained to the Führer the British proposal in relation to the last-mentioned point by saying that all areas in which the German population amounted to at least

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<sup>21a</sup> The map has not been found, but see appendix VI, which is taken from the German White Book, *Verhandlungen zur Lösung der Sudetendeutschen Frage, 1935, Nr. 1.*

<sup>22</sup> This phrase is repeated in English in parentheses in the original.

80 percent of the total population were to be occupied immediately by German troops, and that the remainder of the area was to be occupied immediately after the result of the plebiscite was established. The difference between the British and the German view lay only in the fact that Germany wanted to occupy at once a larger area, only perhaps to give up again certain parts after the plebiscite in the course of the frontier adjustment; according to the British plan, a smaller area would be occupied at first, to which later, after the plebiscite, further areas would be added.

In answer to these statements the Führer repeated the arguments he had already advanced.

When Chamberlain suggested that the area not to be occupied by German troops at first might perhaps be guaranteed by international troops, the Führer answered that things had gone too far in Czechoslovakia for the German population to be burdened yet again by an international occupation.

Chamberlain then put the further question, what protection Germany would provide within the area to be occupied by her for the Czechs living there, and also for those Germans who were known to be opposed to an *Anschluss*. He raised this point because he expected that questions of this kind would be addressed to him in Great Britain, and he asked the Führer to tell him what answer he could give.

The Führer said that a reference to the Saar plebiscite and the conditions under which it had taken place would certainly suffice in this instance. If anyone engaged in Communist activities in Germany today, he was punished. That would, of course, also apply to the occupied areas. If anyone had taken part in or were guilty of the murder of Germans, he would naturally be brought to account for this also in the occupied areas.

After the discussion of the redrafting of certain passages of the German memorandum in the light of the foregoing exchange of ideas, the conversation, which had begun about 11 p.m. came to an end about 1:45 a.m. When leaving the hall of the hotel Chamberlain bade a hearty farewell to the Führer; he said he had the feeling that a relationship of confidence had grown up between himself and the Führer as a result of the conversations of the last few days, in the course of which each side had spoken very frankly, without the other side taking offense. He did not cease to hope that the present difficult crisis would be overcome, and then he would be glad to discuss other problems still outstanding with the Führer in the same spirit.

The Führer thanked Chamberlain for his words and told him that he had similar hopes. As he had already stated several times, the Czech problem was the last territorial demand which he had to make

in Europe. In addition, as already mentioned, Germany would of course bring up the colonial problem. However, this was not a war-like demand and had nothing to do with mobilization.

Chamberlain replied that in the questions to be discussed after the solution of the Czech crisis he still had in mind further and greater problems, and took his leave with a hearty "*Auf wiedersehen.*"

Submitted herewith to the Führer and Reich Chancellor according to instructions.

DR. SCHMIDT  
*Counselor of Legation*

BERLIN, September 25, 1938.

No. 584

2369/495018-20

*Memorandum Handed by the Führer to the British Prime Minister*<sup>23</sup>

(Pol. IV 6522)

To be forwarded to Herr Woermann, the Under State Secretary, immediately.

The State Secretary is of the opinion that the diplomatic missions concerned should be informed of the broad outlines as soon as possible, and above all and primarily, Prague, as quickly as possible.

MEMORANDUM

Reports which are increasing in number from hour to hour regarding incidents in the Sudetenland show that the situation has become completely intolerable for the Sudeten German people and, in consequence, a danger to the peace of Europe. It is therefore essential that the separation of the Sudetenland agreed to by Czechoslovakia should be effected without any further delay. On the attached map<sup>24</sup> (the map will be brought along by the delegation) the Sudeten German area which is to be ceded is shaded red. The areas in which, over and above the areas which are to be occupied, a plebiscite is also to be held are drawn in and shaded green.

The final delimitation of the frontier must correspond to the wishes of those concerned. In order to determine these wishes, a certain period is necessary for the preparation of the voting, during which disturbances must in all circumstances be prevented. A situation of parity must be created. The area designated on the attached map as a German area will be occupied by German troops without taking account as to whether in the plebiscite there may prove to be in this or that part of the area a Czech majority. On the other hand, the Czech territory is occupied by Czech troops without regard to the question whether, within this area, there lie large German

<sup>23</sup> Document No. 6 in the British White Paper, Cmd. 5847.

<sup>24</sup> See appendix VI.

language islands, the majority of which will without doubt avow their German nationality in the plebiscite.

With a view to bringing about an immediate and final solution of the Sudeten German problem the following proposals are now made by the German Government:—

1. Withdrawal of the whole Czech armed forces, the police, the *gendarmérie*, the customs officials, and the frontier guards from the area to be evacuated as designated on the attached map, this area to be handed over to Germany on October 1.

2. The evacuated territory is to be handed over in its present condition (see further details in appendix). The German Government agree that a plenipotentiary representative of the Czech Government or of the Czech Army should be attached to the headquarters of the German military forces to settle the details of the modalities of the evacuation.

3. The Czech Government discharges at once to their homes all Sudeten Germans serving in the military forces or the police anywhere in Czech State territory.

4. The Czech Government liberates all political prisoners of German race.

5. The German Government agrees to permit a plebiscite to take place in those areas, which will be more definitely defined, before at latest November 25. Alterations to the new frontier arising out of the plebiscite will be settled by a German-Czech or an international commission. The plebiscite itself will be carried out under the control of an international commission. All persons who were residing in the areas in question on October 28, 1918, or were born there prior to this date will be eligible to vote. A simple majority of all eligible male and female voters will determine the desire of the population to belong to either the German Reich or to the Czech State. During the plebiscite both parties will withdraw their military forces out of areas which will be defined more precisely. The date and duration will be settled by the German and Czech Governments together.

6. The German Government proposes that an authoritative German-Czech commission should be set up to settle all further details.

Godesberg, September 23, 1938.

#### APPENDIX

The evacuated Sudeten German territory is to be handed over without destroying or rendering unusable in any way military, commercial, or traffic establishments (plants). These include the ground organization of the air service and all wireless stations.

All commercial and transport materials, especially the rolling stock of the railway system, in the designated areas, are to be handed over undamaged. The same applies to all public utility services (gas works, power stations, etc.).

Finally, no foodstuffs, goods, cattle, raw material, etc. are to be removed.

This is the text of the memorandum and its appendix which the Führer handed to the British Prime Minister this evening, and which the latter has promised *to forward* to the Czech Government.

Telephoned at 2:45 a.m. on September 24, 1938, by Counselor of Legation Altenburg to the transmitting station for onward dispatch.

SEPTEMBER 24, 1938.

No. 585

139/126259

*Memorandum by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the Foreign Minister*<sup>25</sup>

BERLIN, September 23, 1938.

To RM Secretariat with the request to transmit to Godesberg.

The Hungarian Minister informed me that the British Minister had yesterday undertaken a very strong *démarche* in Budapest. He had represented that the Hungarian military measures clearly indicated an attempt to intimidate the Czechoslovak Government, and had registered a protest against the adoption of such measures in Hungary. The Minister had expressed an urgent warning, and added that the British Government must decline all responsibility for the consequences of military action. Kanya, the Foreign Minister, had emphatically repudiated these charges. It was the Czechs who were guilty of provocation and not the Hungarians. As far as Hungary was concerned these were purely defensive measures. (According to a well-known confidential source Kanya had, on the contrary, promised the British Minister that no further military measures would be taken.)

WOERMANN

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<sup>25</sup> The substance of this and of the following document had been telephoned to Woermann by the Hungarian Minister, Sztójay, earlier on September 23, and had been confirmed by Sztójay in writing in a personal letter to Woermann dated the same day (330/195731-32).



## No. 586

139/126257

*Memorandum by the Under State Secretary (Woermann)*<sup>26</sup>

BERLIN, September 23, 1938.

The Hungarian Minister has informed me that Hungary has the following wishes in respect of the Czechoslovak question, and has already transmitted them directly to Godesberg:

- 1) Reincorporation into Hungary of the Hungarian-inhabited territories of the present Czechoslovakia (inhabited by Hungarians).
- 2) Practical guarantee of the right of self-determination for the Slovaks and Ruthenians incorporated in the present Czechoslovakia.

WOERMANN

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\* See document No. 585, *supra*, and footnote 25 thereto.

CHAPTER VII  
THE SEPTEMBER CRISIS; MUNICH

No. 587

330/195641-45

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Department of the  
Foreign Ministry (Wiehl)*

(e. o. W III 7289)

MEMORANDUM ON THE DEPARTMENTAL DISCUSSION OF SEPTEMBER 24,  
1938, IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY REGARDING THE ECONOMIC PREPARA-  
TIONS FOR THE EVENT OF A TEMPORARY GERMAN MILITARY OCCU-  
PATION OF THE SUDETEN GERMAN TERRITORY

Present:

Min. Dir. Wiehl	Foreign Ministry
Counselor of Legation Clodius	“ “
Min. Rat. Schefold	Reich Ministry for Food and Agriculture
Min. Dgt. Landwehr	Reich Ministry for Eco- nomics
Min. Dir. Wucher	Reich Finance Ministry
Inspector General Hossfeld	“ “ “
Min. Dir. Osthoff	Reich Transport Ministry
Min. Dir. Leibbrand	“ “ “
Director of Railways, Ebeling	“ “ “
Min. Dir. Waldeck	“ “ “
Min. Dgt. Gramsch	Four Year Plan
Rb. Dir. Schniewind	Reichsbank Directorate
Rb. Dir. Wilhelm	“ “
Colonel Stap	General Staff
Major Schue	Supreme Headquarters of <i>Wehrmacht (Luft- waffe)</i>
— <i>Kapitän zur See</i> Bürkner	Supreme Headquarters of <i>Wehrmacht</i> (Foreign Section)

Min. Dir. Wiehl read by way of introduction the text of the memorandum which on September 23 had been delivered to the British Prime Minister in Godesberg for transmission to the Czechoslovak Government,<sup>27</sup> and opened for discussion the preparations which are to be made by the individual departments for the event contemplated in the memorandum.

The result of the discussion:

1) *Reichsmark currency to be introduced* immediately in the territory to be occupied with a rate of exchange for Czech crowns which has yet to be established. This is necessary for the simple reason that the military forces moving in, and the personnel of the German State Railways taking over, will only be furnished with mark currency. The Reichsbank is considering whether it will be necessary and expedient to enlist the services of the Sudeten German branches of the German *Kreditanstalt* in Prague for the issue of Reichsmark currency.

2) *German currency legislation* is to be applied immediately in the territory to be occupied, at least insofar as is necessary to prevent the drain of currency abroad.

3) *Frontier security personnel* are immediately to be moved up to the demarcation line, and control is to be so arranged that prohibited traffic of currency and goods across the line will be prevented.

4) *The supervision of the present Reich frontier* is to be maintained until further notice for police reasons. Also this frontier will remain for the time being the authorized place for levying German customs duties (see, however, 5 h).

5) The following distinctions are to be made with regard to *goods traffic*:

- a) Import of Sudeten German goods to Germany.
- b) Export of German goods to the Sudeten German territory.
- c) Export of Sudeten German goods to the Rump Czech State.
- d) Import of Czechoslovak goods to the Sudeten German territory.
- e) Importation from the Rump Czech State to Germany.
- f) Exportation from Germany to the Rump Czech State.
- g) Export of Sudeten German goods to other countries.
- h) Importation from other countries to the Sudeten German territory.

*Under a)* The import of Sudeten German goods to the German customs area shall be allowed duty free. In view of the scarcity of goods which is prevalent in Germany this [regulation] will in general prove unexceptionable as far as German industry is concerned. On the other hand, care must be taken that raw materials present in

<sup>27</sup> Document No. 584, p. 908.

the Sudeten German territory are not bought up and removed to the territory of the Reich proper, to the consequent prejudice of Sudeten German production. This should be secured by means of the issue of notices of sales restrictions through administrative channels, and by supervision by the occupation authorities.

*Under b)* The export of German goods to the Sudeten German territory shall likewise be duty free. The fears expressed by the Sudeten Germans that the Sudeten German territory may be inundated with unwanted goods are not shared by the departments represented. However, the matter must be discussed again with the Sudeten German representatives.

R.E.M. [Reich Food Ministry] will take the necessary measures for providing the Sudeten German territory with foodstuffs.

*Under c)* It is undesirable that the export of Sudeten German goods to the Rump Czech State should be subjected by the Prague Government to Czechoslovak import duties and regulations, as this would mean a limitation of the previous sales market of the Sudeten German territory. Efforts must therefore be made in the German-Czech Commission to bring about a position in which at least an agreed quota of Sudeten German goods may be imported duty free into the Rump Czech State, as was formerly the case in the Saar territory. The sales restrictions pursuant to article *a)* will provide against the undesirable drain of raw materials, etc., into the territory of the Rump Czech State.

The necessary arrangements as to the method of payment for the export of Sudeten German goods into the Rump Czech State are to be made with the Czech Government through the German-Czech Commission.

*Under d)* Importation from the Rump Czech State into the Sudeten German territory shall likewise be duty free for the present, so as to avoid placing a sudden burden on the outstanding orders of Sudeten German business undertakings. Possible efforts of the Czech Government to prevent exports, particularly raw materials, to be opposed where possible. Measures to be taken on the present German customs frontier to ensure that goods which have been imported duty free from the Rump Czech State into the Sudeten German territory shall not enter the area of the Reich proper without payment of duty.

The necessary arrangements as to the method of payment for imports from the Rump Czech State into the Sudeten German territory are to be made in the German-Czech Commission.

*Under e)* Importation from the Rump Czech State to Germany will proceed in accordance with existing arrangements. It will be

possible to import Czech goods to the extent of the existing quotas. Duty will be levied pursuant to the rates in force on the present customs frontier.

*Under f)* The existing German-Czech arrangements are to be observed for exportation from Germany into the Rump Czech State providing that the Czech Government does not take measures against importation from Germany. The Czech customs clearance can only take place at the demarcation line.

*Under g)* The continuance of exportation from the Sudeten German territory to other countries is to be promoted where possible. There is no question of levying [Reich] German duties in this case. Exportation to countries with no exchange control is to be proceeded with pursuant to German currency regulations. In the case of exportation to countries which have clearing arrangements with Czechoslovakia, an arrangement is to be made in the German-Czech Commission with regard to the payment of the proceeds of the export.

*Under h)* Duty is to be paid on goods which are imported from third countries into the Sudeten territory. Effort is to be made in this connection to levy duty either at a rate corresponding to that of the [Reich] German or the former Czech import duties, whichever is the lower. The R.F.M. (Reich Finance Ministry) will consider whether and in what manner such duties are to be levied.

WIEHL

### No. 588

1339/353339-44

*The German Ambassador in Poland (Moltke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

P.V. 47

WARSAW, September 24, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 6504)

Subject: Polish claims to the Teschen territory.<sup>28</sup>

So-called Teschen Silesia originally consisted of the present disputed area between the rivers Olsa and Ostrawica, with the addition of the Bielitz district and the main part of Upper Silesia. After the cession of Upper Silesia to Prussia (1742) Teschen Silesia was amalgamated with the Bielitz area to form one administrative unit, "Eastern Silesia."

Whereas, after the downfall of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the Bielitz district with the towns of Bielitz, Skotschau, and Polnisch Teschen went to Poland, the western part of the area, with the towns

<sup>28</sup> See footnote 36, p. 817.

of Tschechisch Teschen, Friedek, Polnisch and Mährisch Ostrau, Karwin, Freistadt, and Jablonkau, passed into the possession of Czechoslovakia, after sharp disputes between Poland and Czechoslovakia.

This territory, the cession of which Poland now claims, covers an area of 1,269 square kilometers and has about 300,000 inhabitants. In its national composition this area is the typical example of a three-cornered state, in which German, Polish, and Czechoslovak races intermingle. According to Czech calculations the proportion of Poles is some 80,000, whereas the Polish estimate puts the number of Poles in the area at 200,000. According to conservative estimates the Polish community numbers about 120,000. Poland, of course, includes over and above this the 40,000 Polish nationals (among them about 15,000 Jews) living in this territory. It is not an exaggeration to put the number of Germans in this area at 30,000. The Polish population consists for the most part of the so-called Slonsaks who, like the population of Upper Silesia, speak a kind of Polish patois, the so-called Slonsak dialect which contains many Czech elements.

The struggle between Poland and Czechoslovakia for possession of the Teschen area goes back almost a thousand years. Until the middle of the fourteenth century Teschen belonged to Poland, at which time the Polish King, Casimir the Great (in the Treaty of Trecin [*sic*], 1335<sup>29</sup>), renounced this territory in favor of the Crown of Bohemia. The Teschen dynasty of the Piasts thus became feudatories of the Bohemian Crown. When the House of Piast became extinct (seventeenth century) the country was annexed by the House of Hapsburg as a vacant fief, and remained part of Austria-Hungary until 1918. Even during the war, when the downfall of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was being prepared by Czechs and Poles, Beneš claimed for Czechoslovakia the whole of so-called Eastern Silesia, including the parts which in the meantime had become Czech as well as Polish. At the same time Poland announced claims to this territory on historical and ethnographical grounds. Poland originally wanted to leave Czechoslovakia in possession of the area of Friedek and that west of Freistadt, inhabited predominantly by Czechs. When the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy occurred the Poles set up a National Council in Teschen and the Czechs a National Council in Polnisch Ostrau. As early as November 1918, both Councils established a provisional demarcation line, which on the whole respected ethnic considerations. According to this the Poles received the districts of Bielitz, Teschen, Freistadt, Karwin, and Oderberg, while the Czechs received Polnisch Ostrau and the Friedek district, as well as the right to maintain a railway guard at Oderberg.

<sup>29</sup> The Treaty of Trenčín is meant.

In spite of this agreement a Czech attack took place as early as January 1919, on the territory granted to Poland, which was now occupied by Czech troops as far as the Olsa. Only the Bielitz district and the town of Polnisch Teschen now remained to Poland who, at that time, was not in a position to ward off the Czech attack, because all her forces were engaged in a war against the so-called West Ukraine Republic. The Poles regarded the Czech attack as the brutal exploitation of an emergency. When the attempt was made to drive back the Czechs by arousing patriotic fervor, severe unrest resulted which finally culminated in a kind of guerrilla warfare. As the Poles did not succeed in driving the Czechs out of the territory, the Polish Government suggested a plebiscite to the Council of Four, and insisted, particularly to Wilson and Lloyd George, on the right of self-determination of peoples. Clemenceau was also won over to this idea. In 1920, therefore, an International Plebiscite Commission, whose duty it was to carry out the plebiscite, set to work in Teschen.

Meanwhile, the plebiscite, which in the Polish view would have resulted in a great victory for Poland, did not take place. Poland was now involved in a serious struggle against the Soviet Union. When the Soviet Russian Army was advancing on Warsaw, and Poland had to ask for help from the Western Powers, Beneš again took advantage of Poland's extremity to force the final cession of the territory between the Olsa and the Ostrawica to Czechoslovakia without a plebiscite. In view of the serious danger threatening the Polish State by a further advance of the Soviet Russian Army, the Polish Government had to submit to this pressure. The Council of Ambassadors took up the Czech claims and on July 28, 1920, decided on the final partition of the former administrative unit of Eastern Silesia, and awarded the territory between the Olsa and the Ostrawica to Czechoslovakia. Poland was compensated by the Entente and also by Czechoslovakia for the loss of this territory with the prospect of obtaining part of Upper Silesia. The development of the Teschen question is, therefore, a kind of prelude to the later development in the struggle for upper Silesia.

The decision of the Council of Ambassadors met with violent opposition from the Polish people and also from a large section of the population in the disputed territory. The attitude of the Czechs, who had twice exploited Poland's extremity in an extortionate way, has never been forgotten by the Poles. In the Treaty of Friendship between Poland and Czechoslovakia in 1921, the new frontier was at any rate recognized. A further recognition followed in the Minorities Agreement of 1925. The measures taken by the Czechs

to suppress and "Czechify" the Polish element occupied the Polish population in ever increasing degree in the following period. Until the conclusion of the Polish-German Agreement this did not appear much on the surface, because up to that time all national forces in Poland were absorbed in the Polish-German dispute. Immediately after the agreement was reached with Germany, Poland's attitude to Czechoslovakia changed, and at the same time the Polish claim for the return of the Teschen territory was once more publicly asserted with full emphasis.

The Teschen territory is of special importance because of its economic wealth. The coal field of Karwin and Ostrau is said to be very productive and has specially good mining conditions. Moreover, Ostrau hard coal produces valuable smelting coke. The coal mines are for the most part owned by Count Larisch and Count Welcbeck. Furthermore, there are ironworks with 5,000 employees in the Teschen area in Trzyniec. The Wittkowitz ironworks (22,000 employees) are situated west of the Ostrawica, and therefore do not come into the territory originally claimed by the Poles. In any case, maps have been published during the last few days showing the Polish claims, and in these the district in which Wittkowitz is situated would also fall to Poland.

The unique transport situation of the territory also deserves special mention. Oderberg, where lines from north to south and from east to west intersect, is one of the biggest railway junctions.

According to population maps published by official Polish quarters, the eastern part of the territory is populated almost exclusively by Poles, while the western half is predominantly Czech. If, in spite of this, Poland today claims possession of the territory by appeal to the right of self-determination, it does so on the grounds that the Teschen territory forms a uniform whole which once belonged to Poland, and in which even today the Polish population is numerically the largest.

Finally, it should be mentioned in this connection that Poland is also raising further claims to Czechoslovak territory, namely, east and west of Zakopane, in the Orawa district and in the Zips, where there are a few communities with Polish inhabitants.

VON MOLTKE



## No. 589

1585/382853-54

*The Acting Counselor of the German Embassy in Great Britain  
(Selzam) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A 3956

LONDON, September 24, 1938.  
(Pol. II 2952/38)

Subject: British public and German propaganda.

The spontaneous and enthusiastic demonstrations accorded to Chamberlain on the occasion of his first flight to Berchtesgaden were characteristic of the reaction produced in British public opinion by his bold decision. A period which led to the closing of the ranks of the British people and to extreme tension came to a sudden end; from a frankly anti-German attitude there developed one which had friendly aspects. People were ready to forget what had previously stood in the way of an Anglo-German *rapprochement*, and to follow Chamberlain on his course. When the Prime Minister then returned from Berchtesgaden and succeeded in quick succession in inducing the French, and then the Czech Cabinet as well, to accept his plan based on our racial demands, the public here was still prepared to support the Prime Minister's policy, in spite of the opposition expressed.

About two days before his departure for Godesberg, a sudden change in public opinion set in. This arose, and daily assumed more dangerous aspects, as a result of German press and radio propaganda against Czechoslovakia, which is regarded here as being grossly exaggerated. This propaganda was felt to be extravagant, even hysterical, when, in spite of the published acceptance by the Czechs of the Anglo-French plan, it went a step farther and became the champion of Polish and Hungarian desires, and seized upon and advocated the idea of the destruction of Czechoslovakia.

The distrust of the aims of our policy, which up to now could be noted latently and vaguely here and there, and which found expression in the speeches of Eden, Churchill, and Attlee, as well as in the resolutions passed by the Labor Party and the trade-unions, gained ground everywhere. It extended to all circles of the population without exception, when on the 23d instant the news came that the Godesberg talks would not now be continued. Today's leading articles from *The Times* and *Daily Telegraph*, which are enclosed,<sup>30</sup> are typical of this distrust on the part of the public here. The important passages in them were written before this morning's joint Anglo-German communiqué was published.

<sup>30</sup> Not printed here.

If we desire a normalization and improvement of Anglo-German relations, the attitude of the British public, as generally demonstrated late yesterday evening, must serve as a warning signal. It is true that this morning there is a slightly less tense atmosphere. But if our aims were to become other than purely racial, if we digressed from our present policy of wiping out the consequences of the sins of Versailles, and instead advocated imperialist ideas, we must reckon with the fact that the British nation as a whole will be ready to wage a war against Germany which, in actual fact, it does not want.

SELZAM

## No. 590

330/195648

*The Under State Secretary (Woermann) to the German Minister to Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr)*

BERLIN, September 24, 1938.

DEAR HERR EISENLOHR: Could you possibly mark on a plan of town X, the district you wish to be exempted?<sup>31</sup> Or should I arrange this in Prague?

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

WOERMANN

TO HERR EISENLOHR,  
*Hotel Esplanade,  
Bellevue Str. 16.*

## No. 591

139/126246

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 431 of September 23

PRAGUE, September 24, 1938.

Received September 24, 1938—12:10 a.m.

Czech radio announces general mobilization at 10:30 [p.m.] On further inquiry at the Foreign Ministry, threat of war to Czechoslovakia is given as reason.

HENCKE

<sup>31</sup> This presumably refers to the suggestion that, in the event of a German air attack on Prague, the diplomatic quarter, round the Hradcany, should be spared. See document No. 623, p. 951. Eisenlohr had recently been summoned to Berlin for prolonged official consultations.

## No. 592

139/126247

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

PRAGUE, September 24, 1938—1:40 a.m.

No. 433 of September 23

Received September 24, 1938—4:30 a.m.

Thirty minutes before the promulgation of the order for general mobilization, Ministerial Counselor Cermak, Director of the European Department of the Foreign Ministry, who cannot move about owing to illness, asked me to visit him privately at 8 p.m., in order to acquaint me of the following in person:

Beneš and the Syrový government were ready to accept any dictated settlement [*Diktat*] if Germany would allow the Czechs to live as an independent State in the area inhabited by them. Only the Communists wanted war. Cermak accounted for the new troop movements toward the frontier, which I described as incomprehensible and provocative, by referring to "the Czechs' crazy fear of a war aimed at completely annihilating the State." The Sudeten German territory could be evacuated in a few days. An instruction from authoritative Reich-German quarters asking Sudeten Germans to maintain order would greatly ease the situation and would allay Czech fears. Czech executive authorities had received the order to exercise the greatest restraint; however, they could not be given general instructions to allow themselves to be shot defenselessly. In isolated cases they had, notwithstanding, done this. The new federal states would become practically a vassal state of Germany, and this state of affairs had been accepted. Cermak implored me (group missing) to transmit his observations this very night to the Foreign Ministry as those of a well-known partisan of the German point of view.

HENCKE

## No. 593

139/126251

*The German Ambassador in Poland (Moltke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 67 of September 23      WARSAW, September 24, 1938—1:41 a.m.  
 Received September 24, 1938—3:30 a.m.

With regard to Soviet threat concerning denunciation of Non-aggression Pact in the event of a Polish attack on Czechoslovakia (compare today's D.N.B. announcement), Beck, the Foreign Minister, caused me to be informed that he attached no special importance to this step. It was merely a propaganda gesture. The head of the Foreign Ministry's Press Department expressed himself in more reserved terms at this evening's press conference, and referred to the impression which the news had created in France.

MOLTKE

## No. 594

139/126297

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in the United States (Thomsen) and the Military Attaché of the German Embassy in the United States (Bötticher) to the German Foreign Ministry and the Supreme Headquarters of the Wehrmacht*

Telegram

WASHINGTON, September 24, 1938—12:37 p.m.  
 Received September 24, 1938—9 p.m.

No. 260 of September 24

For the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht*.

Conversations with leading authorities of the United States Army show that policy here is governed by the desire to avoid measures which could appear to provoke war. There is understanding for the German demand on Czechoslovakia, especially with regard to the liberation of the Sudeten Germans, and it is hoped that a solution will be attained by peaceful means. The armed forces and political circles are united in their conviction that America should avoid taking sides with the so-called democracies. There is pronounced antipathy toward Russia, as it is believed that the latter is attempting to incite powers against one another so as to promote Communism. The desire for the maintenance of peace at present overshadows considerations regarding America's conduct in the event of war. It is probable that America would at first hold back and

that, correspondingly, the goods coming within the field of the neutrality legislation—hence also aircraft—would not be exported, while raw materials and other goods would immediately be available to Britain and France on condition of cash and carry and of transport in British and French ships. Still no military preparations whatever in the United States of America; nor any measures for setting industrial mobilization in motion, or for export of raw materials for war. No important news regarding military preparations of Great Britain, France, and Russia. Czech mobilization followed with anxiety.

BÖTTICHER  
THOMSEN

No. 595

139/126299

*The German Minister in Yugoslavia (Heeren) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 105 of September 24 BELGRADE, September 24, 1938—9:35 p.m.  
Received September 25, 1938—4 a.m.

The development of the Czech political crisis is leading the population more and more to adopt the view that the complete dismemberment of Czechoslovakia for the benefit of Germany, Hungary, and Poland is intended. As a consequence, there is a sharp increase of the feeling of Slav solidarity with Czechs and Russians. Large numbers of nationalists from Sokol<sup>22</sup> and Narodna Odbrana<sup>23</sup> circles are also taking part in the street demonstrations arranged by Left Wing circles since yesterday. Energetic intervention by the police has, up to the present, everywhere prevented demonstrations from assuming greater dimensions.

HEEREN

<sup>22</sup> The Czech national gymnastic movement had affiliations in other Slav countries, and a large Yugoslav contingent had visited the Sokol Festival in Prague in July.

<sup>23</sup> The original Narodna Odbrana was the body which led the national movement among the Serbs before 1918.

## No. 596

139/126295-96

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 418 of September 24 PRAGUE, September 24, 1938—10:10 p.m.

Received September 25, 1938—4 a.m.

1) Hungarian Minister acquainted me with the following: He had been asked to call on the Foreign Minister at 6 p.m. When he arrived at the appointed hour, the British Minister was with Krofta to deliver a memorandum. After Newton's departure, Krofta had told Wettstein that he had really wanted to inform him of the answer to the Hungarian *démarche* regarding the territorial question, but that he must ask to be excused as, in consequence of the latest occurrences, he was not yet in a position to do so. He did not wish to imply, however, that the Czechoslovak Government rejected the Hungarian demands in principle.

With regard to the memorandum delivered by Newton, Krofta remarked that the British Minister had expressly stated that he was only delivering the memorandum, and was giving no advice in connection with it. This communication was only being made in fulfillment of a promise which Chamberlain had made to the Führer. Krofta added that, so far, he had only had a cursory glance at the memorandum, to which no maps had been attached. As far as he could see, the German demands went beyond the Anglo-French proposals and seemed to him to be unacceptable.

The Foreign Minister said nothing at all regarding the Hungarian and Polish questions apart from the above-mentioned remark.

2) The Italian Military Attaché here again had a conversation today with General Blaha, Chief of the Military Chancery of the State President, and he gave Colonel Toussaint the following information as regards its gist:

Czechoslovakia was ready in principle for the cession of the Sudeten German territory, as outlined in Anglo-French proposals, after a suitable joint settlement of details. The position had altered, however, as now the nation's honor was at stake, which had been deeply wounded by German propaganda. Hence the moral conditions were lacking for obtaining the great sacrifice demanded of Czechoslovakia. Besides, particular attention would also have to be given to the interests of Czechoslovakia's land defenses when drawing up the new frontier. The position was complicated by Hungarian and Polish demands. Military circles here had the im-

pression that Germany was working for the complete disintegration of Czechoslovakia. Hence the will to resist had stiffened in the last few days.

Please inform Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht* also.

HENCKE

No. 597

139/126314

*The German Foreign Ministry to German Missions Abroad*

Telegram

SECRET

BERLIN, September 24, 1938.

(Pol. IV 6423)

To the Missions as stated in enclosure.<sup>34</sup>

(Telegram for information)

At the Godesberg meeting there was complete understanding between the Führer and Chamberlain that the Sudeten German area should pass to Germany as quickly as possible. Certain differences of view existed only with regard to details of procedure.

Germany cannot give up the demand for military occupation of the area with a Sudeten German majority before a plebiscite has taken place, as the situation is completely intolerable for the Sudeten Germans and has become a danger to European peace.

Now that the British Prime Minister has undertaken to transmit the German demands to the Czechoslovak Government, the onus of preserving peace is exclusively theirs. In face of the rumors and panic-mongering spreading through a great part of the outside world, I ask you to point out that the Führer and Chamberlain were unanimous in the aim of preserving peace, and to refer to the exemplary calm and moderation with which the further course of the Czechoslovak question is being followed in Germany.

WOERMANN

<sup>34</sup> Enclosure not printed.

## No. 598

139/126330-31

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 25, 1938.

The British Ambassador telephoned me at 11 o'clock this morning to ask two questions:

1) Interest was being shown in London—presumably by the Cabinet—in the exchange of population between the Sudeten German area and the remainder of Czechoslovakia, and also in the question of the option. He—the Ambassador—had been asked whether it was really the Führer's opinion to have as many Germans as possible and as few Czechs as possible within his frontiers after the transfer of the Sudeten German area to the German Reich. I answered that personally I had understood it to be so. Probably this was also stated in the notes which Mr. Kirkpatrick had made.<sup>25</sup> It would be best if in this respect the British Government relied on what the Führer himself had said.

2) The British Ambassador further mentioned the question of German willingness to guarantee minority rights to the Czechs who remained on German soil, insofar as similar rights were guaranteed to Germans remaining in Czech territory.

I answered the Ambassador saying that there was no mention of this in the memorandum. But this matter had certainly been discussed by the Führer and Chamberlain, and London should refer to what the Führer had said. I myself was not in a position to make any precise definitions regarding the memorandum, or to supplement the Führer's statements. In my opinion, it would be dangerous to add to the clear decision at Godesberg by statements in conversations between the Ambassador and myself, as they would only confuse the picture. One should accept the situation as it existed at Godesberg on the morning of the 24th and continue to build on this basis.

WEIZÄCKER

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<sup>25</sup> I.e., of the Godesberg conversations.



## No. 599

139/126320

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

LONDON, September 25, 1938—2:38 p.m.

No. 438 of September 25

Received September 25, 1938—3:20 p.m.

To be submitted immediately.

The British Prime Minister would greatly appreciate it if the Führer and Reich Chancellor would decide to give a personal audience to Lt. Gen. Sir Frederick Maurice, President of the British Legion, tonight. Sir Frederick is arriving at Tempelhof at 10:30 tonight by transport aircraft. Message could reach him there, or also at the Kaiserhof Hotel if necessary.

It is a question of handing over a proposal, which, in the Prime Minister's view, would be calculated to ensure the carrying out of the demands laid down in the German memorandum.

I have the honor to recommend most urgently the proposed audience with the Führer.

TH. KORDT

## No. 600

139/126336-38

*Minute by the Foreign Minister*

RM 255

At midday today Prague radio broadcast a Czech manifesto which was taken up and circulated further by London.<sup>36</sup> In this manifesto it is asserted that the Ministers of Great Britain and France had accompanied the new German demands to the Czech Government on the evacuation of the Sudetenland with the statement that they could no longer answer for Czechoslovakia's not mobilizing. At the end of the manifesto it was further asserted that the Czech mobilization had taken place with the knowledge, advice, and assent of the British and French Governments.

Acting on this, and after consultation with the Führer, I received the British Ambassador at 5 o'clock this afternoon and confronted him with the assertion in the manifesto. Sir Nevile Henderson at once stated officially and categorically, for repetition to the Führer, that both assertions were untrue. The first assertion contradicted

<sup>36</sup> A statement was, however, issued in London pointing out that the broadcast from Prague needed correction.

itself, as at the time of the Czech mobilization there had been no question of German proposals or demands. The second assertion was also untrue. The British Government had neither known of, nor advised, nor agreed to the Czech mobilization. On the contrary the facts were as follows: In the previous week the British Government had strongly urged Czechoslovakia to refrain from mobilization, so as not to aggravate the situation. A few days ago—either immediately before, or during the Godesberg talks—the British Government, in the face of further urgent requests from the Czech Government, no longer considered themselves to be in a position to take the responsibility of dissuading Czechoslovakia from mobilizing, for, if such advice had been given again, the British Government, in the event of a German invasion of Czechoslovakia, would have been morally obliged to render armed aid to Czechoslovakia. In answer to repeated Czech requests, the British Government had therefore said that they could neither advise nor dissuade; if the Czech Government mobilized now, they did so on their own responsibility. The British Government, however, had warned them of the possible consequences of mobilization. In fact, therefore, mobilization had taken place without either the knowledge, advice, or assent of the British Government.

In reply to a further question by me, Sir Nevile again stated that this attitude had been adopted by the Foreign Office and without the British Prime Minister's previous knowledge, for during the evening session of September 23 to 24 the latter had been as surprised by the Czech mobilization as we ourselves.

I asked Henderson to let me have by return, if possible today, a written confirmation of his verbal statements, and also suggested that he should ask Chamberlain what he intended to do to correct this Czech manifesto in public. I made it clear to him how important this was for the Führer's confidence in Chamberlain and for Great Britain's position in the conflict. Only a public repudiation of Prague's allegations could settle the matter.

RIBBENTROP

BERLIN, September 25, 1938.

## No. 601

28/18985

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, September 25, 1938—8:32 p.m.

Received Prague, September 25, 1938—9:30 p.m.

No. 278 of September 25

In continuation of today's telegraphic instruction.<sup>37</sup> The Reich Minister issues the following instruction:

The Legation and the (word missing) are now to advise Reich citizens in Czechoslovakia to leave the country immediately and return to Germany.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 602

139/126326

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 461 of September 25 PRAGUE, September 25, 1938—9:40 p.m.

Received September 26, 1938—12:10 a.m.

I hear from reliable source that Foreign Minister Krofta today handed the Polish Minister note in reply to *démarche* reported in telegram No. 421 of September 22.<sup>38</sup> This says Czechoslovak Government accepts Polish demands in principle but reserves statements in amplification of this until later.

So far Hungarian Minister has received no reply.

HENCKE

<sup>37</sup> Telegram No. 276 is not printed. It gave no order for Reich citizens to leave, but suggested that women and children should be advised to do so by word of mouth.

<sup>38</sup> Not printed. For text of Polish *démarche*, see document No. 553, p. 861.

## No. 603

28/17921-23

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 462 of September 25 PRAGUE, September 25, 1938—11:30 p.m.

I. The following is a picture of the political situation today, as seen from Prague:

Judging from Czechoslovak press, Prague radio, measures by authorities, as well as statements by Government circles, the Czech attitude toward Germany is stiffening increasingly. If the proclamation of general mobilization was perhaps dictated by fear of a German attack after the expected breakdown of the Godesberg talks and by fear of a Communist rising, the present Czech attitude must give the impression that Beneš is ready to let it come to war. Change from far-reaching willingness to yield to manifest obstinacy, combined with particularly sharp measures toward Germany, occurred during last 2 days. Reasons for this might be:

- 1) Note handed by British and French Ministers here to Foreign Minister Krofta, presumably on afternoon of September 23, to the effect that, in view of developments at Godesberg and German military measures, their Governments could no longer expect Czechoslovakia to remain passive.
- 2) Favorable reaction of world press to Czechoslovakia's mobilization.
- 3) Calling up of reservists in France.
- 4) Soviet Russian note to Poland.
- 5) Great Britain's failure so far to support the German memorandum.

In unofficial, but obviously officially inspired statements, Czech Government officials and military authorities express the view that Prague Government no longer bound by Anglo-French proposals. The following arguments are advanced:

- a) In official statements Germany has characterized the Anglo-French proposals as superseded.
- b) Germany is not prepared to give an unconditional guarantee for the rump of the Czechoslovak State.
- c) Even after acceptance of the Anglo-French proposals by Czechoslovakia, Germany organized or allowed the penetration of armed troops into the territory of this State. The Reich therefore wants war at all costs, not only to acquire the Sudeten German area, but to annihilate the whole State.
- d) Same tendency is shown by German radio propaganda, which was intensified after Czechoslovakia had given way.

In this connection, I would like to express the view that Beneš today really believes he can count on French and Russian, perhaps also British, armed support if Germany attacks. He therefore no longer fears that a war would mean the final annihilation of his country. In spite of this, however, he will give way if Great Britain and France make it clear to him that they will leave Czechoslovakia in the lurch if their proposals are not fulfilled. In view of the situation created by the mobilization and the renewed impetus given to Czech chauvinism, renewed recognition of Anglo-French proposals can hardly avoid serious political disturbances within the country.

II. Sudeten Germans are being arrested in increasing numbers all over the country. Unofficial reason given for this is that Konrad Henlein and German radio had ordered Sudeten Germans not to obey the order for mobilization. Reich and Henlein had thus incited Sudeten Germans to actions hostile to the State, against which the Government had to protect itself in an emergency. There is evidence to prove severe ill-treatment of Sudeten German prisoners.

III. In the last few days some twenty Reich-Germans were reported arrested for no obvious reason. Ill-treatment is also suspected in individual cases. The arrests are described—also unofficially—as reprisals for arrest of Czechoslovaks in Germany.

IV. Ban on Communist paper *Rudé Právo* removed since yesterday. According to reliable information, Government has instructed press to refrain from criticizing Soviet Russian foreign policy in the immediate future.

HENCKE

No. 604

139/126341-42, 330/195675

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PARIS, September 25, 1938.

No. 490 of September 25

Received September 25, 1938—11 p.m.

1. The new mobilization measures ordered after the conclusion of the Godesberg negotiations are being carried out in a calm and orderly manner throughout the whole country. Nervous strain is being felt as such by French population, but tolerated so far. Prime Minister Daladier acknowledged the people's attitude in a statement to the press yesterday, and described the mobilization measures taken as being designed to put the country in a position to follow calmly and with dignity the present diplomatic negotiations on the main-

tenance of which peace depends. New situation has also had its influence on social conflicts, as, by a resolution of the workers, local strikes have been called off in consideration of political developments abroad.

2. Situation can be described by saying that the state of preparedness has been intensified, although the basic trend of mood, which in Government and people is set on the preservation of peace, is unchanged. Whole attention is therefore being concentrated on German memorandum of September 23 and on possibility of reaching peaceful settlement of Czechoslovak question. Today's *Temps* sees in the memorandum a basis for discussion and expresses the wish that, in view of the catastrophe which would threaten Europe if war came, this possibility should be taken advantage of.

3. In judging the future attitude of France, the fullest account must be taken that it is feared here that Germany is pursuing aims extending beyond the settlement of the Czechoslovak question, which in the long run threaten the security of France. If we can reassure the French on this point, the desire for peace, which is strongly marked here, will prevail. But if the conclusion is drawn here from the definition of our aims in the Czechoslovak question, or from our methods, that we would not stop after the settlement of the Sudeten German question, and would continue to pursue our aims by force, warlike developments might more easily be set in motion than would be the case during the present inclination for a peaceful settlement.

BRÄUER

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CORRECTION TO TELEGRAM FROM PARIS, No. 490 OF SEPTEMBER 25

3. In judging the future attitude of France, the fullest account must be taken of the apprehension existing here that Germany is pursuing wider aims going beyond the settlement of the Czechoslovak question, which in the long run threaten the security of France.

EMBASSY

## No. 605

139/126322

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain (Th. Kordt) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

LONDON, September 26, 1938—12:02 a.m.

No. 440 of September 25 Received September 26, 1938—1:30 a.m.

Prime Minister asked me to transmit the following strictly confidential information:

Reports to be expected in immediate future in British and foreign press on final Czech rejection of German memorandum<sup>39</sup> are not last word. Chamberlain asks that statement on result of his action be awaited.

The immediate publication of the memorandum is, I learn in confidence, the work of the Czechoslovak Legation here. Downing Street is indignant at this arbitrary action.

KORDT

## No. 606

139/126340

*The German Ambassador in Poland (Moltke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

WARSAW, September 26, 1938—4:45 a.m.

No. 68 of September 25 Received September 26, 1938—6 a.m.

I am informed that Czech reply to Polish note regarding Teschen question<sup>40</sup> will be presented here tomorrow in the form of a personal letter from Beneš to the Polish President. Reply is said to state willingness to negotiate about frontier revision.

It is obviously a fresh attempt to make Poland break away from the anti-Czech front. Beck yesterday told the Rumanian Ambassador here that the French, too, are urging Prague to show the greatest possible consideration for Polish wishes.

The Polish Foreign Ministry appears, after the experience with Beneš so far, to look upon the Czech offer with skepticism, believing it to be an obstructive maneuver.

<sup>39</sup> The German memorandum in document No. 584, p. 908; the Czech rejection was embodied in a letter handed by the Czechoslovak Minister in London, M. Jan Masaryk, to the Foreign Secretary on September 25 (document No. 7 in the British White Paper, Cmd. 5847).

<sup>40</sup> Cf. document No. 553, p. 61; see also document No. 602, p. 929.

Czechoslovak Minister was sent for this evening by Count Szembek, Deputy [Foreign] Minister, who told him bluntly that Polish Government now expected a formal reply to their note by return. It was too late for negotiations; on the contrary, unconditional acceptance of Polish demand was expected.

I hear from a reliable source that the efforts of the French Ambassador<sup>41</sup> to influence Marshal Rydz-Smigly, which were followed with great interest by Polish circles here, have also been unsuccessful.

MOLTKE

No. 607

139/126356-57

*The German Foreign Ministry to Various German Missions Abroad*

Telegram

BERLIN, September 26, 1938.

(Pol. IV 6524)

To: German Embassy, Paris	No. 445.
"        "        London	No. 308.
"        "        Rome	No. 326.
"        "        Tokyo	No. 263.
"        "        Washington	No. 266.
"        "        Warsaw	No. 175.
German Legation, Prague	No. 285.
"        "        Budapest	No. 170.
"        "        Belgrade	No. 168.
"        "        Bern	No. 103.
"        "        Bucharest	No. 208.
German Embassy, Moscow	No. 154.
"        "        Salamanca	No. 382.

For Head of Mission.

For personal information only.

This afternoon the Führer received Sir Horace Wilson, introduced by a personal letter from Chamberlain.<sup>42</sup> The course of the conversation was as follows:

1) British Government has proposed that direct German-Czechoslovak negotiations should immediately be opened; by the wish of both sides, British Government would be present at these negotiations. Führer described proposal as useless as long as Czechoslovak Government had not accepted Godesberg memorandum. When it had been accepted, direct German-Czechoslovak negotiations on the details of the memorandum, as provided for in the memorandum, could take place.

<sup>41</sup> Léon Noël, 1935-39.

<sup>42</sup> Document No. 619, p. 944.



2) Führer told Wilson he could not tolerate further delays. He therefore expected a Czechoslovak answer by 2 p.m. on Wednesday, September 28.

3) Horace Wilson is remaining here today and is having a further talk with the Führer on the morning of the 27th.

*Postscript for Rome:* Italian Ambassador here has been informed.

*Postscript for Tokyo:* Japanese Ambassador here has been informed.

*Postscript for Warsaw:* Polish Ambassador here has been informed.

*Postscript for Budapest:* Hungarian Minister here has been informed.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 608

147/78610

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 26, 1938.

The Polish Ambassador today told me the following:

Without previous warning or inquiry the Czech Government had broken off all communication (rail and telephone) with the outside world, and in particular with Poland, Germany, and Hungary. To bring home to the Czech Government the incorrectness of their step, the Polish Government would like to state in Prague that communications with Poland will only be restored if such a step is decided on in negotiations between Prague and Warsaw. To secure uniformity, Warsaw wished to know whether we and the Hungarians would be prepared to take similar action. The Polish Government's idea is based on a conversation which he, Lipski, had some time ago with Field Marshal Göring for the purpose of exerting economic pressure on the Czech Government.

The Reich Minister, to whom I reported the matter, has given the following orders: it should be agreed with the Polish and Hungarian Governments, in collaboration with the internal authorities concerned, not to resume outward traffic communications with Czechoslovakia until further notice. If the Czech Government approaches the authorities concerned about resumption, the present state of isolation of Czechoslovakia must be maintained on some pretext for the present.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 609

1863/423026

*Unsigned Foreign Ministry Minute<sup>43</sup> for the Foreign Minister*

(Pol. IV 6621)

The Rumanian Minister in Rome has given, in the name of his Government, the following secret information to the Italian Foreign Minister:

1) Rumania is being subjected to very heavy pressure to allow transit rights to Soviet troops in the event of a German attack on Czechoslovakia. Rumania has emphatically refused to grant this request.

2) Rumania fully appreciates Hungary's hopes of regaining the areas which once were hers and now belong to Prague. In the name of his Government, the Rumanian Minister requested the Italian Government to exert their influence in Budapest so as to prevent any impulsive action which might make the international situation more difficult for Rumania, especially with respect to the treaties of the Little Entente. Lastly, Rumania pointed out that her attitude would have to be reconsidered if Hungary increased her demands to include areas which did not contain Hungarian populations.

Minister Ciano replied to M. Zamfirescu that the alliances of the Little Entente must be considered as dissolved, in view of the substantial changes in the status of one of the signatories. The Italian Foreign Minister also inquired what attitude Rumania would adopt in the event of a Polish-Soviet conflict. The Rumanian Minister answered that without doubt Rumania would take the side of Warsaw and that, in any case, the alliance with Poland would have precedence over any obligation to Prague.

• BERLIN, September 26, 1938.

## No. 610

139/126332

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, September 26, 1938.

The British Ambassador telephoned to me yesterday evening a request from the British Prime Minister that the Führer should take

\* This minute was initialed by Weizsäcker, who forwarded it to Ribbentrop.

no notice of any reports on the course of his present negotiations with the French and the Czechs unless they came directly from himself. Any press or other messages which might appear previously should be disregarded as pure guesswork.

The Ambassador informed me further, not acting on instructions but from his own personal knowledge, that Chamberlain's position and policy were threatened by increasing difficulties. It was therefore especially important at this time not to upset British policy by false moves.

This message was forwarded in the evening to the office of the Reich Minister to be given to him.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 611

139/126372

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 26, 1938.

At 12:45 p.m. today the Italian Ambassador informed me that the Duce, in his speech today at Verona, again made and emphasized the erroneous statement to effect that the German memorandum to the British had set the time limit as October 1, for the acceptance or refusal of the memorandum. Mussolini made this error for the first time in Padua.<sup>44</sup> In spite of the fact that he, Attolico, had in the meantime had the matter cleared up, the Duce insisted in Verona that the present week was one of waiting and patience in which a peaceful and just settlement could be found. Mussolini's speeches during the last few days contained a rising crescendo on (a) 100 percent German-Italian solidarity, and (b) the necessity of doing the utmost to preserve peace.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 612

2369/495032

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 26, 1938.

(Pol. IV 6582)

The American Ambassador<sup>45</sup> visited me at 1 p.m. today and said he came in a purely private capacity. I must be aware that Roose-

<sup>44</sup> September 24, 1938.

<sup>45</sup> Hugh R. Wilson.

velt had sent a telegram to the Führer and Beneš, urging a peaceful settlement of the conflict. He showed me the text of this telegram.<sup>46</sup> The object of his visit was not so much to draw attention to the telegram as to ask what he was to say to Washington. He was going to speak to Washington today between 2 and 3 p.m. and wanted to give a reassuring impression. He believed that the Führer had promised Chamberlain not to resort to any forceful measures until a decision was made about the discussions already initiated. I told the Ambassador that I had no exact information, but his statement was certainly not correct. The Führer had doubtless reserved the right to use armed force in the event of anything very suspicious happening in Czechoslovakia. For the rest, it is now Czechoslovakia's turn to make a statement and I did not think, extraordinary circumstances apart, that anything of a military nature would happen before the Czech reply was to hand. The Ambassador said he would speak on these lines and thought that this was bound to have a reassuring effect.

*Note.* Contents of Roosevelt's telegram to the Führer and Beneš have already been broadcast by London on short wave and are now being received by D.N.B. The Press Department is holding this matter back pending receipt of instructions as to how much of it is to be published.

WOERMANN

### No. 613

830/195582

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

PARIS, September 26, 1938.

No. 493 of September 26 Received September 26, 1938—2:30 p.m.

I estimate the present political situation here as follows:

1) As the semiofficial press of this morning makes clear, and as has been confirmed to me by reports from the most varied sources, a mood has set in in the Cabinet which condemns any further yielding to the German demands.

2) The German Godesberg memorandum is considered quite unacceptable in its present form, inasmuch as it goes far beyond the Anglo-French proposals which were worked out after Berchtesgaden and accepted by Prague. In the German memorandum there is no longer any question of an agreement between equal partners, but of

<sup>46</sup> Document No. 632, p. 958.

dictation to a country conquered in war, on which draconic armistice conditions are imposed. The argument of the German radio and press that Germany is behaving in exactly the same way as France when she occupied Alsace is not having a favorable psychological effect. The Führer had only demanded at Berchtesgaden the reincorporation of the Sudeten Germans, and not that the territory and status of Czechoslovakia should be under tutelage.

3) The desire for a peaceful solution remains as before. England and France stand by the proposals which Chamberlain handed to the Führer. The delimitation of the frontiers of the areas which are to be transferred to Germany must, however, be carried out by an international commission. Pertinax in *Ordre* claims to know from yesterday's Cabinet Council that, as the very last concession and to satisfy the prestige of the Führer, occupation of certain outlying Sudeten German districts, not contained within the Czech lines of fortification, might be allowed.

4) Should German troops cross the present frontiers of Czechoslovakia *without* previous agreement with London and Paris, then at the very least general mobilization could no longer be avoided. If it really comes to a war, then the French people will stand solidly behind their Government.

BRÄUER

## No. 614

139/126358-60

*Lord Rothermere*<sup>43</sup> to the Foreign Minister

Telegram

CONFIDENTIAL

LONDON, September 26, 1938.

In the name of our old friendship and our common desire for peace between our peoples I do urge Your Excellency to use your influence to postpone the decisive movement of October 1st to a later date that time may be given to allay present passions and provide opportunities for reaching adjustments of details.

ROTHERMERE

14 Stratton House, Picadilly,  
London

<sup>43</sup> The British newspaper proprietor, owner of the *Daily Mail* and other daily newspapers. This telegram is in English in the original.

## No. 615

*The Foreign Minister to Lord Rothermere*

## Telegram

Thank you for your telegram, to which I reply as follows:

On February 22 the Führer stated that he would not tolerate any further oppression of the Sudeten Germans. Six months have since passed without M. Beneš having done anything at all to alter the position of the Sudetenland, in spite of his promises. On the contrary, the oppression of the Sudeten element has increased month by month. Today, complete terror and conditions similar to those in the Spanish Civil War reign there. Abandoned and burned-out villages, countless dead, wounded, missing, and 190,000 Sudeten German refugees are the result of this policy of extermination by the Czechs. It can therefore no longer be a question now of allaying any passions, but of putting an end immediately to this suffering in the Sudetenland. From experiences of the last twenty years, no one in Germany has the least confidence in M. Beneš' word. M. Beneš has already told the British and French Governments that he is ready to cede the Sudetenland to Germany. If this promise of M. Beneš is really sincerely meant, then he will accept the German memorandum. For this memorandum demands, after all, nothing more than the immediate implementation of M. Beneš' promise to hand over the Sudetenland to Germany, with a time limit of October 1, by which time the transfer must be completed. Should M. Beneš not accept the memorandum, then it is my unshakable conviction that he has never seriously considered the cession of the Sudetenland. I hope that Mr. Chamberlain's honest and energetic efforts will succeed in making the Czechs see reason, even at the last hour, and inducing them to accept our proposals. Even you, my dear Lord Rothermere, will, however, understand, being one of our old friends, that even the Führer's remarkable patience, evident for months in this vital question of the existence or nonexistence of 3½ million Germans, has its limits. No British statesman in his position could act otherwise. The idea that, because of this problem, which is of purely secondary importance for Britain, peace between our two nations could be broken, seems to me madness and a crime against humanity. Germany has pursued a strict policy of understanding toward Britain. She desires peace and friendship with Britain, but if foreign Bolshevik influences gain the upper hand in British policy, Germany is prepared for any eventuality. The responsibility for such a crime could, however, in the eyes of

the world, never fall on Germany, as you, my dear Lord Rothermere, know best of all.

Your old friend,

RIBBENTROP

SEPTEMBER 26, 1938.

### No. 616

330/195586

#### *Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker)*

BERLIN, September 26, 1938.

With the consent of the Reich Minister, I forwarded yesterday to General Keitel the suggestion that, if the Sudeten area were peacefully occupied, a joint military occupation court should be established, to which a civil section and a representative of the Foreign Ministry might be attached. General Keitel accepted the suggestion. He is thinking, however, on the lines of an amalgamation of this Central Office with the Commander in Chief of the Army, since the vast distances in the Sudeten area seem to make a Governor's Court impracticable in the Sudeten country itself.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 617

330/195599-600

#### *The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PRAGUE, September 26, 1938—3:35 p.m.

No. 464 of September 26 Received September 26, 1938—6:35 p.m.

In continuation of my telegram No. 462 of the 25th.<sup>48</sup> Minister Krno, the representative of the Foreign Minister, told me, on the occasion of my inquiry about arrests, that the Prague Government held as previously to the Anglo-French proposals. This had been clearly stated in answer to the German memorandum. Czechoslovakia desired, however, that her national interests should be considered and, above all, that her new frontiers should be guaranteed. It was inconceivable that, Czechoslovakia having now accepted the terrible sacrifice demanded of her, a war should break out over its practical application. A way must be found of transferring the Sudeten German area to the Reich peacefully and so as not to wound Czechoslovak national honor. He cited, just as an example, the

<sup>48</sup> Document No. 603, p. 930.

Zwittau language enclave, adjacent to the Prague-Brünn railway line, which Czechoslovakia could not possibly transfer. In such cases a solution must be sought by a transfer of population. When I mentioned, as evidence of the obstructive Czech attitude, the general mobilization, the persecution of Germans, the attitude of press and radio, as well as semiofficial statements, Minister Krno attempted to explain these by the fear of the tiny Czech people for their mighty neighbor, who threatens them with overwhelming military force. He admitted the increased bitterness of the people, but a democratic government could influence them far less than the Führer could the German people, including the Sudeten Germans. The Foreign Ministry by no means approved anti-German measures and fought stubbornly against mounting opposition. Neither the attitude of the press nor certain observations against accepting the Franco-British proposals had been inspired by the Government, but they reflected the excited state of mind of the people which, although not decisive, was extremely difficult to control at the moment. A relaxation of the mental tension of the Czech people could be immediately realized if only the Führer would utter a kindly word assuring them their independent existence and paying some regard to Czech requirements in the delimitation of the frontier and other arrangements.

I pointed out as against this that, according to my information, the German memorandum did not depart from the text of the Anglo-French proposals. Czech behavior in the last few days was therefore all the more incomprehensible and, because of it, the whole atmosphere had been very considerably worsened.

Other impressions seem to show that the stiffened attitude here, described more in detail in my telegram No. 462, has not altered as compared with yesterday.

HENCKE



## No. 618

330/195605-06

*Copy of Statement by the British Prime Minister*<sup>49</sup>ISSUED BY THE OFFICE OF THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER  
ON SEPTEMBER 26, 1938

I have read the speech of the German Chancellor<sup>50</sup> and I appreciate his references to the efforts I have made to save the peace.

I cannot abandon those efforts since it seems to me incredible that the peoples of Europe, who do not want war with one another, should be plunged into a bloody struggle over a question on which agreement has already been largely obtained.

It is evident that the Chancellor has no faith that the promises made will be carried out. These promises were made, not to the German Government direct, but to the British and French Governments in the first instance.

Speaking for the British Government, we regard ourselves as morally responsible for seeing that the promises are carried out fairly and fully, and we are prepared to undertake that they shall be so carried out with all reasonable promptitude, provided that the German Government will agree to the settlement of terms and conditions of transfer by discussion and not by force.

I trust that the Chancellor will not reject this proposal, which is made in the same spirit of friendliness as that in which I was received in Germany and which, if it is accepted, will satisfy the German desire for the union of the Sudeten Germans with the Reich without the shedding of blood in any part of Europe.

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\* This is in English in the original. A German translation accompanied this document in the file.

<sup>50</sup> On the evening of the 26th Hitler made a speech in the Sportpalast, Berlin, in which he declared that the cession of the Sudetenland was his last territorial demand, and that he had no further claims for the revision of the Versailles Treaty. He did not wish to annex any Czechs; on the contrary, he was prepared to guarantee the remaining Czechoslovak State, after the separation of the German areas.

## No. 619

330/195618-20

*Letter From the British Prime Minister to the Führer*<sup>51</sup>

10 DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL, [LONDON].

September 26, 1938.

MY DEAR REICHSKANZLER: In my capacity as intermediary I have transmitted to the Czechoslovakian Government the memorandum which your Excellency gave me on the occasion of our last conversation.

The Czechoslovakian Government now inform me that, while they adhere to their acceptance of the proposals for the transfer of the Sudeten German areas on the lines discussed by my Government and the French Government and explained by me to you on Thursday last, they regard as wholly unacceptable the proposal in your memorandum for the immediate evacuation of the areas and their immediate occupation by German troops, these processes to take place before the terms of cession have been negotiated or even discussed.

Your Excellency will remember that in my letter to you of Friday last I said that an attempt to occupy forthwith by German troops areas which will become part of the Reich at once in principle and very shortly afterward by formal delimitation would be condemned as an unnecessary display of force, and that, in my opinion, if German troops moved into the areas that you had proposed, I felt sure that the Czechoslovakian Government would resist and that this would mean the destruction of the basis upon which you and I a week ago agreed to work together, namely, an orderly settlement of this question rather than a settlement by the use of force. I referred also to the effect likely to be produced upon public opinion in my country, in France, and, indeed, in the world generally.

The development of opinion since my return confirms me in the views I expressed to you in my letter and in our subsequent conversation.

In communicating with me about your proposals, the Government of Czechoslovakia point out that they go far beyond what was agreed to in the so-called Anglo-French plan. Czechoslovakia would be deprived of every safeguard for her national existence. She would have to yield up large proportions of her carefully prepared defenses and admit the German armies deep into her country before it had been organized on the new basis or any preparations had been

<sup>51</sup> This is in English in the original. It appears as document No. 9 in the British White Paper, Cmd. 5847.

made for its defense. Her national and economic independence would automatically disappear with the acceptance of the German plan. The whole process of moving the population is to be reduced to panic flight.

I learn that the German Ambassador in Paris has issued a communiqué which begins by stating that as a result of our conversations at Godesberg your Excellency and I are in complete agreement as to the imperative necessity to maintain the peace of Europe. In this spirit I address my present communication to you.

In the first place, I would remind your Excellency that as the Czechoslovakian Government adhere to their acceptance of the proposals for the transfer of the Sudeten German areas there can be no question of Germany "finding it impossible to have the clear rights of Germans in Czechoslovakia accepted by way of negotiation." I am quoting the words at the end of your Excellency's letter to me of Friday last.<sup>52</sup>

On the contrary, a settlement by negotiation remains possible and, with a clear recollection of the conversations which you and I have had and with an equally clear appreciation of the consequences which must follow the abandonment of negotiation and the substitution of force, I ask your Excellency to agree that representatives of Germany shall meet representatives of the Czechoslovakian Government to discuss immediately the situation by which we are confronted with a view to settling by agreement the way in which the territory is to be handed over. I am convinced that these discussions can be completed in a very short time and, if you and the Czechoslovakian Government desire it, I am willing to arrange for the representation of the British Government at the discussions.

In our conversation, as in the official communiqué issued in Germany, you said that the only difference between us lay in the method of carrying out an agreed principle. If this is so, then surely the tragic consequences of a conflict ought not to be incurred over a difference in method.

A conference such as I suggest would give confidence that the cession of territory would be carried into effect, but that it would be done in an orderly manner with suitable safeguards.

Convinced that your passionate wish to see the Sudeten German question promptly and satisfactorily settled can be fulfilled without incurring the human misery and suffering that would inevitably follow on a conflict, I most earnestly urge you to accept my proposal.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN

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<sup>52</sup> Document No. 573, p. 889.

## No. 620

397/212769-72

*The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A/1427

Moscow, September 26, 1938.

Subject: Attitude of the Soviet Union in the Czechoslovak question.

Until very recently the Soviet press treated the Czech question on the whole with reserve and accompanied reports on the events with only slight commentaries. In these there was no mention of Russian support for Czechoslovakia. Soon after the beginning of the dispute, that is at the end of May, an article in *Red Star* referred to the text of the Soviet-Czechoslovak Pact of Assistance, which says that the Soviet Union is obliged to help Czechoslovakia only if France goes to the help of the Czechs.

During Lord Runciman's negotiations in Prague the Moscow press described his mission as interference in the internal affairs of Czechoslovakia which was quite uncalled for.

In the last phase of the dispute, after the visit of Mr. Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, to Berchtesgaden, it appeared from Russian press reports and in particular from the Geneva telegrams in *Izvestia* inspired by Litvinov, that Moscow hoped for a rejection by Prague of the London plan. If blood were once shed, France, according to one Geneva report, would, perhaps after a change of Cabinet, fulfill her treaty obligations after all. This, according to other commentaries, would bring about intervention by Great Britain. After Prague's acceptance of the Anglo-French ultimatum, the Soviet press emphasized that the population of Czechoslovakia in no way agreed with the Government's attitude, and that the Hodza government had no right to speak in the name of the people.

The diplomatic activity of the Soviet Government can be seen from the following: in his speech to the Plenary Session at Geneva on the 21st of this month, Litvinov stated among other things that a few days before Litvinov's departure for Geneva the French Government had for the first time made inquiries in Moscow about the Soviet attitude in the event of an attack on Czechoslovakia. He, Litvinov, had answered that the Soviet Government would fulfill their treaty obligations and, together with France, would render help to Czechoslovakia "in the ways available to us" [*auf den uns erreichbaren Wegen*]. The Soviet Army Command was prepared to enter into immediate consultations on necessary measures with the French and Czech military authorities. Apart from that it was desirable to bring the matter before the League of Nations, possibly on the

grounds of article 11,<sup>53</sup> in order to mobilize public opinion and to clarify the position of certain states whose passive support would be of exceptional value. Further it would be necessary, in order to avoid an armed conflict, to call an immediate conference of the European Great Powers and other interested states to prepare a collective *démarche*. Litvinov further said that "3 days ago" (that is on September 18 or 19) the Czechoslovak Government asked the Soviet Government for the first time whether they would render direct and effective help in accordance with the treaty, if France came to the help of Czechoslovakia in fulfillment of her obligations. The Soviet Government had given a clear and positive answer to this.

From these remarks of Litvinov's it appears that the Soviet Union is making her support absolutely dependent on the French rendering help first. It is also clear that no firm agreements have been made with Rumania in Moscow, and at the same time Litvinov's statements show the Russian desire to take a hand in the diplomatic negotiations over the Czech question.

As is seen from Prague reports of September 21 published here, no more hope then existed in Prague of help from the Soviet Union. A Tass report said that the Czech Telegraph Agency was spreading a false report started by the Agrarian Party to compromise the Soviet Union, namely a false report to the effect that no support whatever could be expected from Moscow. The Czech Telegraph Agency's report emphasized at the same time that, in view of the present situation in Geneva, the procedure proposed by the Soviet Union was hopeless.

On 22d of this month at a committee meeting at Geneva Litvinov returned to the Czech question. The Soviet Union, he observed, was being reproached with violating her treaty obligations toward Czechoslovakia. This was not the case at all. The Moscow Government could well have renounced the Pact of Assistance after the acceptance by Prague of the Anglo-French ultimatum, but they had not done so because they set store by the fulfillment of international obligations. When, after the acceptance of the ultimatum, the Czechs asked whether the Soviet Union would feel bound by the

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<sup>53</sup> Article 11 of the Covenant of the League of Nations reads:

"Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. In case any such emergency should arise, the Secretary-General shall, on the request of any Member of the League, forthwith summon a meeting of the Council.

It is also declared to be the friendly right of each Member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly or of the Council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends."

Czechoslovak-Soviet Treaty if Germany made fresh demands, if the Anglo-German talks broke down, and if Czechoslovakia decided on armed defense of her frontiers, he, Litvinov, had answered, that the Czechoslovak-Soviet Treaty would come into force when France rendered help under the conditions stated.

This renewed statement of Litvinov's shows that the attitude of the Soviet Government in the Czechoslovak question has not changed. As far as the above-mentioned "conditions" in the Czechoslovak inquiry are concerned, Litvinov adheres to his old attitude that Czechoslovakia cannot provoke Germany at all. As the Geneva correspondent of the *New York Times*, quoted by the Soviet press, writes of Litvinov's speech, Litvinov is making every effort to get France to fulfill the obligations undertaken by her in the Franco-Czechoslovak Pact of Mutual Assistance.

COUNT VON DER SCHULENBURG

No. 621

2369/495050-53

*The German Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Schulenburg) to the German Foreign Ministry*

A/1428

Moscow, September 26, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 6784)

Subject: Soviet *démarche* to the Polish Embassy here on the Czechoslovak question.

In continuation of previous report.<sup>54</sup>

On the morning of September 23 Potemkin, the Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, summoned the Polish Chargé d'Affaires, handed over a note, and made a statement by the Soviet Government on the Czechoslovak question, which was concerned mainly with alleged Polish troop concentrations on the Polish-Czechoslovak frontier. On the same day at 7 o'clock in the evening the Polish Chargé d'Affaires gave Potemkin his Government's answer. At the same time as the Polish Chargé d'Affaires paid his second visit to Potemkin, if not before, the Polish Government published a communiqué on both statements, which was printed in the Polish press on September 24. Whereas the Soviets as a rule publish communiqués on diplomatic negotiations of this kind immediately, this time *Izvestia* of the 26th was the only paper so far to publish an official statement, together with editorial comment, which is enclosed in German translation. As far as the contents of the written statements of both Governments are concerned, the Soviet

<sup>54</sup> Document No. 620, p. 946.

and the Polish communiqués agree almost word for word. The only difference is that the Soviets make no mention at all of the additional verbal statement by the Polish Chargé d'Affaires that the Polish Government was surprised by the *démarche* of the Soviet Government as they had taken no measures on the Polish-Soviet frontier (not "on the Polish-Czechoslovak frontier," as stated in the other report), whereas the Polish communiqué contains this verbal statement.

In their statement the Soviet Government do not refer to the Pact of Mutual Assistance with Czechoslovakia, which, as is well known, makes Soviet help dependent on French intervention. The Soviet Government declares, on the other hand, that in the event of a Polish invasion of Czechoslovak territory they would denounce the Polish-Soviet Nonaggression Pact. This formula, which lays no obligation on the Soviet Union, is intended to give the impression to Poland and to the world that in the event of a Polish invasion of Czechoslovakia the Soviet Union for her part will take action against Poland. This is intended to warn and intimidate Poland. By hinting at this step, the Soviet Union presumably wishes to indicate to France that by exerting pressure on Poland she has really done something for Czechoslovakia. The incident throws a significant light on relations between the Soviet Union and Poland.

SCHULENBURG

[Enclosure]

*Tass*

FROM THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS .

On September 23, V. P. Potemkin, Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, handed to M. Jankowski, Polish Chargé d'Affaires, the following statement in the name of the Soviet Government:

"The Soviet Government has received information from various sources that troops of the Polish Government were concentrated on the Polish-Czechoslovak frontier and are preparing to cross the above-mentioned frontier and occupy by force part of the territory of the Czechoslovak Republic. In spite of the wide circulation and the alarming nature of these reports the Polish Government has so far not denied them. The Soviet Government expects that this denial will be immediately forthcoming. If, notwithstanding, such a *démenti* is not forthcoming, and if in confirmation of this report Polish troops actually cross the frontier of Czechoslovakia and occupy Czechoslovak territory, the Soviet Government considers it timely and necessary to point out to the Polish Government that, in view of an act of aggression committed by Poland against Czechoslovakia,

they will be compelled, on the basis of article 2 of the Nonaggression Treaty concluded on July 25, 1932, between the Soviet Union and Poland, to denounce this treaty without notice."

Also on September 23 the Polish Chargé d'Affaires communicated to Comrade Potemkin the following reply of the Polish Government.

"1. The measures taken in connection with the defense of the Polish State are the exclusive concern of the Polish Government, who are not obliged to give explanations to anyone.

2. The Polish Government is fully acquainted with the text of the treaties which they have concluded."

The grandiloquent and arrogant tone of the Polish answer to the Soviet Government's warning is very characteristic. In the press of Poland's actual ally, Fascist Germany, which had already been informed by Warsaw of the "bold" Polish reply to the Soviet Government, the Polish reply was received with shouts of enthusiasm and cries of encouragement. An instance of more importance however is characteristic. In their answer the Polish Government hasten to state that the measures which gave rise to the warning of the Soviet Government were only taken in defense of the Polish Republic. Such a statement might perhaps be reassuring if the Polish Government used the idea of defense in the meaning normal in general human relations. It is quite another matter if Poland regards defense in the same way as Japan, who only defends herself by invading other countries with her armies. Future events will show whether Poland prefers the generally current or the specifically Japanese meaning of the idea of defense.

EDITOR

### No. 622

139/126376-77

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 26, 1938.

The Spanish Ambassador,<sup>55</sup> who had been told in answer to his inquiry that the Reich Minister and the State Secretary were definitely unable to see him this morning and that it was doubtful if they would be able to in the afternoon, visited me today and gave me the following information:

He had been requested by his Government to come to Spain for a short stay and had returned this morning. He had received in-

<sup>55</sup> Marquis de Magaz, 1937-40.



structions to point out to the Reich Foreign Minister, and through him to the Führer himself, the catastrophic effect the outbreak of a European war would have on Nationalist Spain. Spain possessed reliable information that France desired to occupy the entire east coast of Spain, including the railway lines leading to it, so as to safeguard her troop transports from North Africa. Apart from that, it was to be expected that the Spanish possessions overseas would be lost immediately and that France would occupy Minorca. Portugal's attitude was doubtful, in view of her friendship with England, which was closer than her friendship with Nationalist Spain. The Spanish Nationalist Government appreciated that it was materially impossible for Germany to give Spain any effective help in the event of a European war; this would particularly be the case if England entered the war. The Spanish Government was therefore under the necessity of making an attempt to open negotiations with England and France concerning the neutrality of Nationalist Spain if a war broke out; the Government, however, in accordance with the terms of the German-Spanish Protocol,<sup>56</sup> wished to secure beforehand German assent to the step. The Ambassador requested that the Führer should be informed of this move before he made his speech this evening. The Ambassador further requested that, if it were at all possible, an answer to his inquiry should be given to him today.

I told the Ambassador again, as on previous occasions, that I fully appreciated Spanish anxiety, but that I did not believe either England or France would enter into a war.

During the conversation, the Ambassador mentioned that in his journey through France yesterday he had observed that mobilization was in full swing. Mobilization was proceeding smoothly.

WOERMANN

No. 623

340/199079

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann)*

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, September 26, 1938.

Herr von der Heyden-Rynsch, acting under instructions, left a map of Prague with the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht* and expressed at the same time the desire of the Foreign Ministry that, in any air raids on Prague, the quarter surrounding the Hradschin should be spared as far as possible.<sup>57</sup> One of the reasons for

<sup>56</sup> This secret protocol was signed on March 20, 1937, and contained a clause binding both Governments to "maintain continuous contact in order to reach agreement on questions of international policy touching their common interests."

<sup>57</sup> Cf. document No. 590, p. 920.

this request is that the majority of the legations are situated in the immediate vicinity of the Hradschin, among them both the German Legation and Swiss Legation, which would probably take over the representation of German interests if war broke out.

Today *Kapitänleutnant* Souchon of the Supreme Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht* visited me and, in accordance with his instructions, gave me the following information:

General Keitel has already brought this question to the notice of the Führer, who, after consulting Field Marshal Göring, reserved to himself the decision for any such attack. General Keitel must conform to this decision. If any alteration is desired, the Reich Minister must discuss this with the Field Marshal or with the Führer himself.

WOERMANN

### No. 624

139/126374

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 26, 1938.

I communicated to the Italian Ambassador that the Spanish Ambassador had informed us that the Spanish Government was compelled to make an attempt to open negotiations with Britain and France regarding the neutrality of Spanish nationals in the event of war.<sup>58</sup> We wished to hear the views of Italy before we answered. In general, Spanish neutrality seemed to us preferable to any participation by Spain in the war. Eventually Spain might be advised to issue a unilateral declaration of neutrality instead of negotiating with the two Western Powers about her neutrality.

WEIZÄCKER

### No. 625

2369/495033

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy in Poland*  
Telegram

No. 174

BERLIN, September 26, 1938.  
(e. o. Pol. IV 6588)

For Ambassador personally.

We have received a report dated September 24 from confidential source to effect that you have twice visited Beck to persuade him

<sup>58</sup> See document No. 622, p. 950.

to bring about Polish cooperation with Germany. Beck had firmly refused and said Poland will continue to maintain her independent attitude. Same source states Beck had told you he will not meet the Führer.

Request telegraphic report on above assertions, apparently circulating in Warsaw.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 626

2369/495024-26

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy  
in Great Britain*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

No. 305

BERLIN, September 26, 1938.

(Pol. IV 6540-1/38)

Continuation of today's telegram *en clair* No. 304.<sup>59</sup>

I request you to inform the British Government immediately, either by letter or by delivering an *aide-mémoire* in the following terms, of the verbal answer given by the Führer to the proposal of Sir Frederick Maurice:

The Führer and Reich Chancellor, in deference to the wish of the British Prime Minister, has granted a private interview to Lt. Gen. Sir Frederick Maurice, President of the British Legion. The General presented to him his proposal, of which Mr. Chamberlain is cognizant, for the carrying out of the demands laid down in the German memorandum of September 23. He proposes that, instead of an occupation by German troops as envisaged in the German memorandum, detachments of the British Legion should march into the Sudeten German districts and supervise both the plebiscite and also the transfer of the territory to be separated from Czechoslovakia.

As this proposal has received Mr. Chamberlain's approval, the Führer and Reich Chancellor attaches importance to letting him know his opinion, which he has already given to Sir Frederick Maurice.

The Führer and Reich Chancellor is most appreciative of the initiative of the British Legion, whose activities he has always followed and supported with the greatest sympathy. He does not, however, consider that the proposal now made by the President of the Legion is practicable in its present form. Having regard to the

<sup>59</sup> Not printed. It gave an outline of the conversation between Hitler and Sir Frederick Maurice (see document No. 631, p. 957).

situation in the Sudeten German areas, it is impossible to renounce the proposal put forward in the German memorandum that they should be occupied by German troops. The increasingly chaotic conditions there do not allow energetic measures to be postponed any longer. To give an idea of these conditions, it is only necessary to mention the fact that already no less than 190,000 Sudeten German refugees have crossed the frontier into Reich territory. An occupation by detachments of the British Legion, even if carried out with the greatest expedition, would take far too long and would besides raise insoluble technical difficulties.

As against this, the Führer and Reich Chancellor is of the opinion that the proposal of Sir Frederick Maurice could be realized in a different way. The Führer and Reich Chancellor would agree to detachments of the British Legion being given the task later on of marching into those districts in which, according to paragraph 5 of the German memorandum, there is to be a plebiscite as soon as the German and the Czech troops have been withdrawn from them to allow the plebiscite to take place.

Sir Frederick Maurice has given his own approval to this modification of his proposal.

VON RIBBENTROP

No. 627

2129/464528-29

*The German Ambassador in Italy (Mackensen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

ROME, September 26, 1938.

No. 255 of September 26

In today's conversation I mentioned to Ciano reports according to which the Yugoslav Minister here is said to have informed him during a visit of the day before yesterday, which was conspicuously announced in the press, about an alleged modification of the Yugoslav attitude in the event of a conflict with Czechoslovakia.

Ciano declared that Stoyadinovich had not altered his previous attitude in any way, and that Italy was exerting every effort in Budapest to urge the greatest possible restraint. Ciano allowed it to be understood here that we were probably also doing the same thing. Stoyadinovich must not be maneuvered by Budapest into a position which would enable the Yugoslav Opposition to remind him justifiably of obligations under the pact of the Little Entente.

Ciano added that the Yugoslav Minister had not called to see him on Saturday on his own initiative but had been summoned, as Ciano desired to make representations to him on statements of his colleague in Tirana, who was hawking reports round Albania to the effect that Italy would like to exploit a general conflagration as a pretext for swallowing Albania.

MACKENSEN

No. 628

2369/495028

*The German Minister in Denmark (Renthe-Fink) to the German Foreign Ministry*<sup>60</sup>

No. 339 M

COPENHAGEN, September 26, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 6560)

Subject: Oslo Powers

According to information given to me in confidence by one of the Ministers of the Oslo Powers,<sup>61</sup> the latter have discussed in detail at Geneva what their attitude will be if the Czechoslovak problem leads to a European war. It has been agreed to adopt an attitude of wait-and-see at first, as long as the conflict remains restricted to Germany and Czechoslovakia. However, should the conflict assume greater proportions and develop into a war between Germany and a Great Power, the individual Oslo Powers will at once declare themselves neutral.

VON RENTHE-FINK

No. 629

1339/353346

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 466 of September 26

PRAGUE, September 26, 1938—7 p.m.  
Received September 26, 1938—11:20 p.m.  
(Pol. IV 6530)

In continuation of telegram No. 461 of the 25th.<sup>62</sup> Polish Minister here told me the following about the Czechoslovak note on cession of territory received yesterday:

<sup>60</sup> From a penciled list on this document it seems probable that this despatch was circularized to Missions abroad.

<sup>61</sup> See footnote 14, p. 784.

<sup>62</sup> Document No. 602, p. 929.

Note contained assent to "territorial rectifications"; no mention of their extent. Czechoslovak Government, however, reserved supplementary information until later. Minister considers quick Czech reply as favorable omen. In his view note represents suitable basis for negotiation. Remains to be seen how Czechs interpret idea of rectification.

Minister judges present political situation as follows: under pressure from Left Wing parties Beneš has created a very tense atmosphere by his measures, especially mobilization. President would undoubtedly fight even now; if he could count on British, French, and Russian help. On the other hand, he wants to avoid localized war insofar (group missing) foreign national territory is concerned. Beneš hovers between these two extremes. If Great Britain and France had insisted from the start, President would carry Anglo-French proposals into effect. Certain demands in memorandum—Minister did not know which—considered by Czechs as humiliating. In last few days idea of national honor brought strongly to the front by the Czechs.

HENCKE

### No. 630

139/126369

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

PRAGUE, September 26, 1938—9:45 p.m.

No. 467 of September 26

Received September 27, 1938—9:10 a.m.

With reference to telegram No. 421 of September 22.<sup>63</sup>

The following reply to his *démarche* of September 22 has been handed to the Hungarian Minister<sup>64</sup> today:

"Les déclarations de Mr. le président Benesch auxquelles a fait allusion Mr. le ministre de Hongrie dans sa démarche du 22 septembre 1938, n'ont pu avoir trait qu'à un traitement égal des nationalités dans le cadre de l'état. Les négociations avec les gouvernements de la France et de Grande-Bretagne se sont déroulées sur une base différente.

Le gouvernement tchecoslovaque se déclare cependant prêt à engager des négociations amicales avec le gouvernement de Hongrie."

Foreign Minister Krofta also added verbally: "The Czechoslovak Government is prepared to concede to citizens of the Czechoslovak

<sup>63</sup> Not printed. This telegram reported the Polish and Hungarian *démarches* recorded in documents Nos. 553, 554, and 560, pp. 861, 863, and 869.

<sup>64</sup> Dr. János Wettstein, 1933-39.

State of Hungarian nationality the rights defined in the Nationalities Statute, which was drawn up during the negotiations with the German citizens of the Czechoslovak State." According to this the Czechoslovak reply constitutes a flat refusal of Hungarian demands.

HENCKE

No. 631

340/199083-86

*Memorandum on the Conversation Between the Führer and Reich Chancellor and Sir Frederick Maurice, President of the British Legion (an Association of British Ex-Servicemen), in the Presence of Herr von Ribbentrop, Reich Foreign Minister*

SIR FREDERICK MAURICE pointed out that, as President of the British Ex-Servicemen's Association, he had been the first to advocate the restoration of friendly relations between German and British ex-servicemen. As was well known, he had been very successful in these efforts. Only last week 800 German ex-servicemen under the leadership of the Duke of Coburg had been in Great Britain, and he had said goodbye to them only last Saturday.

The British Legion had now worked out and submitted to Mr. Chamberlain a scheme to facilitate the carrying out of the German memorandum. Mr. Chamberlain had approved the plan on condition that the Führer too was in agreement.

The British Legion's plan, in German, was then read out.<sup>65</sup> It consists essentially in the suggestion to send immediately 10,000 members of the British Ex-Servicemen's Association to the area to be occupied by Germany. The British ex-servicemen would merely exercise the function of "neutral witnesses" during the handing over of the territory to Germany and also during the plebiscite.

THE FÜHRER replied that the transfer of the territory must take place by October 1. For purely technical reasons and because of the time factor it was impossible to distribute 10,000 British ex-servicemen throughout the territory in question by that time. The transfer must be made direct to Germany.

If, however, the British Legion would undertake the function of neutral observer during the plebiscite, he (the Führer) would gladly accept the plan.

SIR FREDERICK MAURICE answered that he had suggested his plan so that the putting into effect of the German memorandum should not give rise to disorders, which might be caused during the plebi-

<sup>65</sup> Not printed.

scite by false reports of alleged pressure on the population. He also could see that the 10,000 men could not be at their posts by October 1.

THE FÜHRER again stated that he welcomed very much the second part of the British proposal, especially as he had already expressed his readiness to withdraw the troops during the plebiscite from those areas in which a vote was to be taken, provided that the Czechs, for their part, did the same. The British Legion could therefore be looked upon as the control body accepted by Germany for the plebiscite, for he (the Führer) was afraid that a very long time would be needed for the formation of an international commission, and he would like if possible to hold the election in November, so that by Christmas true peace would reign. Germany had faith in the objectivity of the British ex-servicemen, while the Czechs, for their part too, could have no objection to the proposal, as Great Britain was prepared to give a guarantee for Czechoslovakia.

Submitted, according to instructions, to *the Führer and Reich Chancellor*.

DR. P. SCHMIDT  
*Counselor of Legation*

BERLIN, September 26, 1938.

No. 632

330/195628-29

*The President of the United States to the Führer*<sup>66</sup>

Telegram

WASHINGTON, September 26, 1938.

To His Excellency Adolf Hitler, Führer and Chancellor of the German Reich, Berlin.

The fabric of peace on the continent of Europe, if not throughout the rest of the world, is in immediate danger. The consequences of its rupture are incalculable. Should hostilities break out, the lives of millions of men, women, and children in every country involved will most certainly be lost under circumstances of unspeakable horror.

The economic system of every country involved is certain to be shattered. The social structure of every country involved may well be completely wrecked.

The United States has no political entanglements. It is caught in no mesh of hatred. Elements of all Europe have formed its civilization.

The supreme desire of the American people is to live in peace. But in the event of a general war they face the fact that no nation

<sup>66</sup> In English in the original.



can escape some measure of the consequences of such a world catastrophe.

The traditional policy of the United States has been the furtherance of the settlement of international disputes by pacific means. It is my conviction that all people under the threat of war today pray that peace may be made before, rather than after, war.

It is imperative that peoples everywhere recall that every civilized nation of the world voluntarily assumed the solemn obligations of the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 to solve controversies only by pacific methods. In addition, most nations are parties to other binding treaties obligating them to preserve peace. Furthermore, all countries have today available for such peaceful solution of difficulties which may arise treaties of arbitration and conciliation to which they are parties.

Whatever may be the differences in the controversies at issue, and however difficult of pacific settlement they may be, I am persuaded that there is no problem so difficult or so pressing for solution that it cannot be justly solved by the resort to reason rather than by the resort to force.

During the present crisis the people of the United States and their Government have earnestly hoped that the negotiations for the adjustment of the controversy which has now arisen in Europe might reach a successful conclusion.

So long as these negotiations continue, so long will there remain the hope that reason and the spirit of equity may prevail and that the world may thereby escape the madness of a new resort to war.

On behalf of the 130 millions of people of the United States of America and for the sake of humanity everywhere, I most earnestly appeal to you not to break off negotiations looking to a peaceful, fair, and constructive settlement of the questions at issue.

I earnestly repeat that so long as negotiations continue differences may be reconciled. Once they are broken off, reason is banished and force asserts itself.

And force produces no solution for the future good of humanity.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

## No. 633

330/195623-27

*The Führer to the President of the United States*

Telegram

BERLIN, September 27, 1938.

To His Excellency the President of the United States of America,  
Mr. Franklin Roosevelt, Washington.

In your telegram received by me on September 26 Your Excellency addressed an appeal to me in the name of the American people, in the interest of the maintenance of peace, not to break off negotiations in the dispute which has arisen in Europe, and to strive for a peaceful, honorable, and constructive settlement of this question. Be assured that I can fully appreciate the lofty intention on which your remarks are based, and that I share in every respect your opinion regarding the unforeseeable consequences of a European war. Precisely for this reason, however, I can and must decline all responsibility of the German people and their leaders, if the further development, contrary to all my efforts up to the present, should actually lead to the outbreak of hostilities.

In order to arrive at a fair judgment regarding the Sudeten German problem under discussion, it is indispensable to consider the incidents in which, in the last analysis, the origin of this problem and its dangers had its cause. In 1918 the German people laid down their arms in the firm conviction that, by the conclusion of peace with their enemies at that time, those principles and ideals would be realized which had been solemnly announced by President Wilson, and just as solemnly accepted as binding by all the belligerent Powers. Never in history has the confidence of a people been more shamefully betrayed than it was then. The peace conditions imposed on the conquered nations by the treaties concluded in the *faubourgs* of Paris have fulfilled none of the promises given. Rather they have created in Europe a political regime which made of the conquered nations world pariahs without rights, and which must have been recognized in advance by every discerning person as untenable.

One of the points in which the character of the dictates of 1919 was most clearly revealed was the founding of the Czechoslovak State and the establishment of its frontiers without any consideration for history or nationality. The Sudetenland was also included therein, although this area had always been German and although its inhabitants, after the destruction of the Hapsburg Monarchy, had unanimously declared their desire for *Anschluss* to the German

Reich. Thus the right of self-determination, which had been proclaimed by President Wilson as the most important basis of national life, was simply denied to the Sudeten Germans.

But that was not enough. In the treaties of 1919 certain obligations with regard to the German people, which according to the text were far reaching, were imposed on the Czechoslovak State. These obligations too were disregarded from the first. The League of Nations has completely failed in the task assigned to it of guaranteeing the fulfillment of these obligations. Since then the Sudetenland has been engaged in the severest struggle for the maintenance of its German character.

It was a natural and inevitable development that, after the recovery of strength of the German Reich and after the reunion of Austria with it, the desire of the Sudeten Germans for preservation of their culture and for closer union with Germany increased. Despite the loyal attitude of the Sudeten German Party and its leaders, differences with the Czechs became ever stronger. From day to day it became more evident that the Government in Prague was not disposed seriously to consider the most elementary rights of the Sudeten Germans. On the contrary, they attempted by increasingly violent methods to enforce the Czechization of the Sudetenland. It was inevitable that this procedure should lead to ever greater and more serious tension.

The German Government at first did not intervene in any way in this development and maintained its calm restraint even when, in May of this year, the Czechoslovak Government proceeded to a mobilization of their army, under the purely fictitious pretext of German troop concentrations. The renunciation of military counter-measures in Germany at that time, however, only served to strengthen the uncompromising attitude of the Prague Government. This was clearly shown by the course of the negotiations for a peaceful settlement of the Sudeten German Party with the Government. These negotiations produced the conclusive proof that the Czechoslovak Government was far removed from treating the Sudeten German problem in a fundamental manner and bringing about an equitable solution.

Consequently, conditions in the Czechoslovak State, as is generally known, have in the last few weeks become completely intolerable. Political persecution and economic oppression have plunged the Sudeten Germans into untold misery. To characterize these circumstances it will suffice to refer to the following:

We reckon at present 214,000 Sudeten German refugees who had to leave house and home in their ancestral country and flee across

the German frontier, because they saw in this the last and only possibility of escaping from the revolting Czech regime of force and bloodiest terror. Countless dead, thousands of wounded, tens of thousands of people detained and imprisoned, and deserted villages, are the accusing witnesses before world opinion of an outbreak of hostilities, and as you in your telegram rightly fear, carried out for a long time by the Prague Government, to say nothing of German economic life in the Sudeten German territory systematically destroyed by the Czech Government for 20 years, and which already shows all the signs of ruin which you anticipate as the consequence of an outbreak of war.

These are the facts which compelled me in my Nuremberg speech of September 13 to state before the whole world that the deprivation of rights of 3½ million Germans in Czechoslovakia must cease, and that these people, if they cannot find justice and help by themselves, must receive both from the German Reich. However, to make a last attempt to reach the goal by peaceful means, I made concrete proposals for the solution of the problem in a memorandum delivered to the British Prime Minister on September 23, which in the meantime has been made public. Since the Czechoslovak Government had previously declared to the British and French Governments that they were already agreed that the Sudeten German settlement area should be separated from the Czechoslovak State and joined to the German Reich, the proposals of the German memorandum aim at nothing else than to bring about a prompt, sure, and equitable fulfillment of that Czechoslovak promise.

It is my conviction that you, Mr. President, when you realize the whole development of the Sudeten German problem from its inception to the present day, will recognize that the German Government have truly not been lacking either in patience or in a sincere desire for a peaceful understanding. It is not Germany who is to blame for the fact that there is a Sudeten German problem at all and that the present untenable conditions have arisen from it. The terrible fate of the people affected by the problem no longer admits of a further postponement of its solution. The possibilities of arriving at a just settlement by agreement are therefore exhausted with the proposals of the German memorandum. It now rests, not with the German Government, but with the Czechoslovak Government alone, to decide if they want peace or war.

ADOLF HITLER

## No. 634

340/199088-96

*Memorandum on the Conversation Between the Führer and Reich Chancellor and Sir Horace Wilson in the Presence of Herr von Ribbentrop, Reich Foreign Minister, and the British Ambassador, and Also Mr. Kirkpatrick of the British Embassy*

SIR HORACE said that he had followed the Führer's speech in the Sportpalast<sup>67</sup> with interest. He could not but congratulate him on the magnificent reception accorded him there. It must have been a great moment for him. Both the Prime Minister and he himself had noticed with appreciation various references in the speech to points raised by Chamberlain.

Then Sir Horace referred to Chamberlain's statement yesterday, of which the Führer would doubtless be aware. He only wished to call attention once again to one point in this statement. The Prime Minister had assumed moral responsibility for the execution of the Czech obligation. He was going back to London now and would report to the Prime Minister on the present situation; had the Führer any message for Chamberlain?

THE FÜHRER replied that he had no further message for Mr. Chamberlain, beyond his sincere thanks once again for his efforts to maintain peace.

SIR HORACE WILSON said that, after hearing his report, Chamberlain for his part would make the position clear to the Czechs, with whom the decision then lay.

THE FÜHRER thereupon replied that in his opinion the Czechs could only give one answer: acceptance of the memorandum, which left every possibility for the future open to them, since Germany certainly did not wish to rob them of anything, and he (the Führer) had even promised to give them a guarantee as soon as matters were settled with the other neighboring States.

Finally, SIR HORACE said he wished to say one thing more, and he would try to say it in the tone which Chamberlain would have used had he been himself present. Many Englishmen, and he was one of them, wished heartily to enter into a discussion with Germany on all questions outstanding between the two countries. In view of the shortness of time at our disposal, he did not wish to enumerate these matters, and would merely say that, in the opinion of the British, a period of great economic prosperity throughout the world must result from the settlement of all these questions. On the British side there was also this earnest desire for a discussion and an agree-

<sup>67</sup> See footnote 50, p. 943.

ment with Germany. He, Sir Horace, remembered that the Führer had once described Britain and Germany as bulwarks against the forces of destruction, particularly from the East. He himself and many other Englishmen had not forgotten these words of the Führer. In the next few days, within one or two weeks, the course of events would be decided, and according to the course they took, this discussion with Britain could take place or not, as the case might be.

The situation was as follows: if Czechoslovakia accepted the German memorandum, well and good; if she refused no one knew where the ensuing conflict would end. If Germany attacked Czechoslovakia, France, as Daladier had informed the British and had moreover declared publicly, would fulfill her treaty obligations to Czechoslovakia, as Germany knew very well. If this occurred and the French forces were thereby to become actively engaged in hostilities with Germany—whether or not this would occur, he did not know—then Britain would feel herself obliged to support France.

THE FÜHRER said that the words "if France's forces were to become actively engaged in hostilities with Germany," could only mean that France would attack Germany, since Germany for her part had no intention of attacking France.

SIR HORACE repeated the following once again, in view of the importance of the statement: If the Czechs accepted the German memorandum, well and good, but if they refused and were attacked by Germany, France had informed Britain that in this event she would fulfill her treaty obligations to Czechoslovakia. The French had, however, chosen their words very carefully, and he was therefore rendering exactly the form chosen by the French. They had not said they would attack Germany, but only that they would fulfill their treaty obligations to Czechoslovakia. In what form they would do this he, Sir Horace, did not know. But if, in the fulfillment of her obligations to Czechoslovakia, France decided that her forces must become actively engaged in hostilities against Germany, then, for reasons which would surely be clear to the Führer and to everyone familiar with the situation, Britain would feel herself obliged to support France.

THE FÜHRER said that it all boiled down to the fact that if France attacked Germany, then Britain would render assistance to France. In that case it was most probable that war would break out between us within 6 days. If Czechoslovakia rejected the memorandum, then he was firmly resolved to smash that country. Then France would probably attack Germany, Britain would support France and there you would have a conflict. He repeated that the Czechs had to choose between acceptance and refusal. He assumed that they

would refuse, because they knew that in this event they could count on support by France and Britain. In the event of the rejection of the memorandum, he would destroy Czechoslovakia. France would thereupon attack Germany, Britain would support France, and within 6 days general warfare would have broken out. And for what reason? Only because Czechoslovakia refused to accept a memorandum which meant nothing more than the fulfillment of pledges already made.

SIR HORACE WILSON replied that he understood the Führer very well. On one point he did not quite agree with him. Whether France would attack Germany, he, Sir Horace, did not know. France had only said that she would fulfill her treaty obligations and only the further course of events would show in what form this might happen.

THE FÜHRER replied that in any case he had made his preparations. It was not for nothing that he had spent 4½ thousand million marks on the Rhineland fortifications. He must, however, state that they were gambling recklessly with the chance of a world war, simply because a small nation had been able for 20 years to leave her obligations unfulfilled, and it was most wounding to a great Power such as Germany to be regarded by Britain, at such a critical time, as being apparently less important than Czechoslovakia.

SIR HORACE WILSON apparently wished to continue the conversation, but the British Ambassador advised him against doing so. On his departure, while alone with the Führer in the room, he said to him that a catastrophe must be avoided at all costs and he would still try to make the Czechs sensible. ("I will still try to make those Czechs sensible.")<sup>87a</sup>

THE FÜHRER replied that he would welcome that, and further repeated emphatically once more that England could wish for no better friend than the Führer. In all his writings and speeches he had always expressed his wish for friendship with England.

Submitted herewith to the Führer and Reich Chancellor according to instructions.

DR. P. SCHMIDT  
*Counselor of Legation*

BERLIN, September 27, 1938.

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<sup>a</sup> This sentence is in English in the original.

## No. 635

340/199097-103

*Letter From the Führer to the British Prime Minister*<sup>88</sup>

BERLIN, September 27, 1938.

DEAR MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I have in the course of the conversations once more informed Sir Horace Wilson, who brought me your letter of September 26,<sup>89</sup> of my final attitude. I should like, however, to make the following written reply to certain details in your letter:—

The Government in Prague feels justified in maintaining that the proposals in my memorandum of September 23 went far beyond the concession which it made to the British and French Governments and that the acceptance of the memorandum would rob Czechoslovakia of every guarantee for its national existence. This statement is based on the argument that Czechoslovakia is to give up a great part of her prepared defensive system before she can take steps elsewhere for her military protection. Thereby the political and economic independence of the country is automatically abolished. Moreover, the exchange of population proposed by me would turn out in practice to be a panic-stricken flight.

I must openly declare that I cannot bring myself to understand these arguments or even admit that they can be regarded as seriously put forward. The Government in Prague simply passes over the fact that the actual arrangement for the final settlement of the Sudeten German problem, in accordance with my proposals, will be made dependent, not on a unilateral German decision or on German measures of force, but rather, on the one hand, on a free vote under no outside influence, and, on the other hand, to a very wide degree on German-Czech agreement on matters of detail to be reached subsequently. Not only the exact definition of the territories in which the plebiscite is to take place, but the execution of the plebiscite and the delimitation of the frontier to be made on the basis of its result, are in accordance with my proposals to be met independently of any unilateral decision by Germany. Moreover, all other details are to be reserved for agreement on the part of a German-Czech commission.

In the light of this interpretation of my proposals and in the light of the cession of the Sudeten population areas, in fact agreed to by Czechoslovakia, the immediate occupation by German contingents demanded by me represents no more than a security measure

<sup>88</sup> Document No. 10 in the British White Paper, Cmd. 5847. The copy found in the Foreign Ministry file is an unsigned and undated draft, amended in Weizsäcker's handwriting.

<sup>89</sup> Document No. 619, p. 944.



which is intended to guarantee a quick and smooth achievement of the final settlement. This security measure is indispensable. If the German Government renounced it and left the whole further treatment of the problem simply to normal negotiations with Czechoslovakia, the present unbearable circumstances in the Sudeten German territories, which I described in my speech yesterday, would continue to exist for a period, the length of which cannot be foreseen. The Czechoslovak Government would be completely in a position to drag out the negotiations on any point they liked, and thus to delay the final settlement. You will understand after everything that has passed that I cannot place such confidence in the assurances received from the Prague Government. The British Government also would surely not be in a position to dispose of this danger by any use of diplomatic pressure.

That Czechoslovakia should lose part of her fortifications is naturally an unavoidable consequence of the cession of the Sudeten German territory agreed to by the Prague Government itself. If one were to wait for the entry into force of the final settlement, in which Czechoslovakia had completed new fortifications in the territory which remained to her, it would doubtless last months and years. But this is the only object of all the Czech objections. Above all, it is completely incorrect to maintain that Czechoslovakia in this manner would be crippled in her national existence or in her political and economic independence. It is clear from my memorandum that the German occupation would only extend to the given line, and that the final delimitation of the frontier would take place in accordance with the procedure which I have already described. The Prague Government has no right to doubt that the German military measures would stop within these limits. If, nevertheless, it desires such a doubt to be taken into account, the British and, if necessary, also the French Government can guarantee the quick fulfillment of my proposal. I can, moreover, only refer to my speech yesterday in which I clearly declared that I regret the idea of any attack on Czechoslovak territory and that, under the condition which I laid down, I am even ready to give a formal guarantee for the remainder of Czechoslovakia. There can, therefore, be not the slightest question whatsoever of a check to the independence of Czechoslovakia. It is equally erroneous to talk of an economic rift. It is, on the contrary, a well-known fact that Czechoslovakia, after the cession of the Sudeten German territory, would constitute a healthier and more unified economic organism than before.

If the Government in Prague finally evinces anxiety also in regard to the state of the Czech population in the territories to be occupied,

I can only regard this with surprise. It can be sure that, on the German side, nothing whatever will occur which will preserve for those Czechs a similar fate to that which has befallen the Sudeten Germans consequent on the Czech measures.

In these circumstances, I must assume that the Government in Prague is only using a proposal for the occupation by German troops in order, by distorting the meaning and object of my proposal, to mobilize those forces in other countries, in particular in England and France, from which they hope to receive unreserved support for their aim, and thus to achieve the possibility of a general warlike conflagration. I must leave it to your judgment whether, in view of these facts, you consider that you should continue your effort, for which I should like to take this opportunity of once more sincerely thanking you, to spoil such maneuvers and bring the Government in Prague to reason at the very last hour.

## No. 636

139/126386

*The State Secretary (Weizsäcker) to the German Minister in Bulgaria (Rümelin)*

BERLIN, September 27, 1938.

DEAR HERR RÜMELIN: I was very much interested in your recollections of 1922.<sup>79</sup> It is probable that Chamberlain will defend himself in the House of Commons tomorrow by reading out statements by Labor Party people, which at the time were also directed against the incorporation of the Sudeten Germans in the new Czech State.

As a matter of fact the conflicting parties are already almost in agreement, and yet I cannot see more than a 50 percent chance of a peaceful outcome.

All good wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours,

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 637

139/126387

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann)*

BERLIN, September 27, 1938.

*Ministerialdirigent* Bracht from the [office of the] *Reichsführer-SS* and Chief of the German Police today asked me whether there were any objections to his going to Asch in order to obtain information about the preparations for occupation. As Asch is in German

<sup>79</sup> See document No. 535, p. 841, to which this letter is a reply.

hands and occupied by SS, I said that I had no objection. Herr Bracht mentioned in this connection that the SS had received occupation assignments from the Führer and that he, Herr Bracht, had been specially instructed to take advance measures regarding organization falling within the province of the police.

WOERMANN

No. 638

139/126381-83

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the Foreign Minister*<sup>71</sup>

BERLIN, September 27, 1938.

The Spanish Ambassador again called on me today and asked whether I could now give him an answer to his *démarche* of yesterday regarding the neutrality agreement between Spain and Britain/France in the event of a European war.<sup>72</sup>

I began by saying once again to the Ambassador that I did not believe in any entry of the two Powers into a European war, but the Ambassador would not allow himself to be convinced of this. I then said to him that it had not yet been possible for the Reich Minister to make a decision and that, as he would understand, in this matter we must first discuss matters with our Italian friends. Today, therefore, I could only give him a personal impression following a discussion which had taken place here in the Foreign Ministry about his *démarche*. This impression was that we could not understand Spain's wishing to conclude a neutrality agreement with Powers which, in the Spanish view, would be our enemies. We could well understand that, during the Civil War, Spain would not be in a position to take an active part in fighting on our side, if France were to attack her. Instead of this, however, it would suffice if at an appropriate moment Spain were to issue a declaration of neutrality. We could not, however, imagine at all what exactly the contents of such a neutrality agreement should be.

The Ambassador said in reply that in a war the National Government would certainly come forward on the side of Germany and Italy, if it was not actually involved in civil war. It was, however, obvious that Spain, upon whose energies the Civil War had already made a heavy claim, could not stand up against a French attack. He then repeated that they had absolutely reliable news according to which the French General Staff intended to occupy Catalonia

<sup>71</sup> The distribution list in the margin of this document requests Pol. I to keep the O. K. W. informed.

<sup>72</sup> See document No. 622, p. 950.

and the whole of Eastern Spain. Spain was quite unwilling to make any kind of concessions to the two Powers in such a neutrality agreement. The situation was rather such that Spain must expect that France would immediately after the outbreak of European hostilities march into Spain without any declaration of war, unless this possibility was previously eliminated. Spain wanted therefore simply to declare to France and Britain that she was neutral in the conflict and in return would receive a declaration from France and Britain that these Powers would not on their part attack Spain.

In conclusion, the Ambassador again asked that he might receive a reply if possible today or tomorrow, as the matter was of the utmost urgency for Spain.

Rome Embassy will be informed of the subject matter of the conversation.<sup>74</sup>

WOERMANN

No. 639

147/78612

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 27, 1938.

The Polish Ambassador today gave me the following information:

A note from Prague concerning the Polish claims<sup>75</sup> was delivered in Warsaw today, and also a letter from Beneš to the Polish President. The latter had also been explained verbally by Krofta. The subject was territorial concessions to Poland, and also the effort to reach a better understanding between Poland and Czechoslovakia. Furthermore, the French and British Ambassadors in Warsaw had made *démarches* stating that Prague considered the Polish claims to be legitimate.

Today the following demands had been made by Poland in Prague:

- 1) Separation of the purely Polish areas from Czechoslovakia,
- 2) Exercise of the right of self-determination for the Polish minority in the rump territory.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>74</sup> Cf. document No. 641, p. 972.

<sup>75</sup> In answer to the note of September 21 (document No. 553, p. 861). See also documents Nos. 602 and 606, pp. 929 and 933.

## No. 640

139/126395-96

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) to the  
German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

PRAGUE, September 27, 1938—1:05 p.m.

No. 473 of September 27

Received September 27, 1938—3:30 p.m.

Preparations for war being made everywhere in Prague. Evacuation of the capital being prepared. Total blackout in parts for last three nights. Trenches in all parts of the city. Population show attitude of calm fatalism.

2) Diplomatic Corps preparing to move to the proposed seat of the Czechoslovak Government at St. Martin "near Rosenberg" in event of war, within very short time.

3) Countless arrests of Sudeten Germans. Consulate at Brünn estimates 10,000 in its area alone, among them Sudeten German Party officials who remained behind. Arrests of Reich-Germans continue; 26 cases in all reported in last few days; actual number probably greater. It is doubtless a case of taking hostages and reprisals.

4) Order given to Reich-Germans on September 25 to leave country immediately being carried out as far as technically possible. Evacuation extremely difficult, first on account of interrupted communications, further because in many places Czechs refuse to let Reich-Germans leave on the grounds that Czechoslovaks illegally arrested in the Reich and others are being detained.

Important part played by alleged ill-treatment by German police at Brambach of Czech passengers in special train.

In the interests of Reich-Germans here please persuade competent German authorities to refrain from measures not absolutely necessary which make exchange difficult.

5) Hostile attitude of Czech population toward Germans, also toward members of Legation, growing.

6) Radio sets confiscated throughout the country on the grounds of the State Defense Law. Reich-Germans, therefore, for the most part unable to hear Führer's speech yesterday.

HENCKE

## No. 641

139/126365-66

*The German Ambassador in Italy (Mackensen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

ROME (QUIRINAL), September 27, 1938—1:30 a.m.

VERY URGENT

Received September 27, 1938—4:15 a.m.

No. 254 of September 26

With reference to today's telephone conversation with Under State Secretary.

Ciano, whom, according to instructions, I this evening acquainted with the statements of the Spanish Ambassador,<sup>76</sup> had immediately before received similar information from Attolico, although I had the impression that it was in more general form, as obviously chief emphasis was laid, according to Ciano, on communication of news that the Führer had already rejected Chamberlain's proposal for direct Berlin-Prague negotiations and advanced the date for Prague's favorable answer from October 1 to 2 p.m., September 28.

Magaz's information roused Ciano to a state of mind toward Spain which I can only describe as intense indignation. Spanish Ambassador here had told him about 10 days ago about Franco's anxiety over development of the situation in Central Europe, and how it might react on Spanish mainland and also in Morocco in view of France's well-known intentions, and had merely added the question as to what view was taken here of further military aid for Franco in the event of a general conflict, but did not say a word about or even hint at the possibility of talks with Great Britain or France on neutrality. He had answered the question by pointing out that things were still developing and the matter was therefore not acute. The day before yesterday the Spanish Ambassador had again called on him, without making any further reference to this subject. The conversation had only turned on the question of withdrawal of certain Italian troops whom Italy had wanted to recall.

Ciano feels that Franco's ideas expressed in Berlin are a direct betrayal of the common cause. Franco obviously completely forgets the common sacrifices, Italy's more than three thousand dead, and the six billions sacrificed by Italy. He must reserve, until after consultation with the Duce, statement on Italy's answer if the Ambassador eventually raised a similar question here, which so far he has not even shown signs of doing.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. document No. 622, p. 950.

Ciano then went on to consider the situation which would arise in Spain on the outbreak of a general conflict, which under the influence of Attolico's statement he seemed to expect and, without committing himself in any way, expressed the view that the Italians might consider concentrating their (approximately) 32,000 men and 240 airmen in Spain at Palma, which he described as a suitable base in view of what he considered the definitely pro-Italian attitude of its inhabitants.

At the end of the conversation Ciano led me to the wide-open window overlooking the busy Corso to show me how completely normal everyday life was, in spite of all alarming reports, although every Italian knew "that perhaps the day after tomorrow field grey will dominate the street scene."

MACKENSEN

No. 642

2369/495034

*The German Ambassador in Poland (Moltke) to the German  
Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 69 of September 26      WARSAW, September 27, 1938—1:48 a.m.  
Received September 27, 1938—5 a.m.  
(Pol. IV 6589)

Reference telegram No. 174 of September 26.<sup>77</sup>

Report mentioned is complete fabrication throughout.

I spoke to M. Beck once again after my return, on September 17; subject of conversation was Berchtesgaden. I did not attempt "to use my influence toward cooperation between Poland and Germany," because practical cooperation already exists and great emphasis on this point would not be advisable in view of M. Beck's disposition. It is also untrue that M. Beck had rejected the idea of cooperation, and that he was said to have stated that Poland wished to maintain an independent attitude in future. As I have already reported (cf. my telegram of September 17),<sup>78</sup> he gave me on the contrary in the conversation, quite unasked for, very confidential information about Polish troop concentrations, in which confirmation of practical cooperation must certainly have been mentioned. He further remarked in this connection that he was giving this information exclusively to the German Government. It is correct to say that Beck attached great importance to achieving Polish aims as far as possible inde-

<sup>77</sup> Document No. 625, p. 952.

<sup>78</sup> Not printed.

pendently, and that he is trying particularly to avoid giving the outside world any impression of dependence on Germany. That is naturally also known in political circles here and may well have been the origin of the false reports there.

No mention was made in conversation with Beck of a visit to the Führer or of any other intended visits.

MOLTKE,

[Marginal note:] Submitted to Under State Secretary.

I request instructions in dealing with this matter. ALTENBURG, September 27.

### No. 643

139/126391

*The German Minister in Sweden (Wied) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT STOCKHOLM, September 27, 1938—1:25 p.m.  
No. 47 of September 27 Received September 27, 1938—3:15 p.m.

The King of Sweden summoned me to his presence today, without having asked his Foreign Minister beforehand. He made urgent request that the Führer and Reich Chancellor might extend time limit of October 1 by ten days, since world war otherwise inevitable and blame would be laid solely at Germany's door. I replied that blame lay entirely with Western Powers, who had looked on inactive at continued extermination of Sudeten German element, and the King of Sweden promised for his part to use his influence with France and Britain so that they might induce Czechoslovakia to accept conditions for above new time limit. His love for Germany was warmly expressed during conversation, and likewise his grave fear of the inevitability of a German defeat in a world war in view of the present combination of the Powers.

Should be grateful if the above could also be communicated to Field Marshal Göring, as the King of Sweden requested particularly that he should be kept informed.

WIED



## No. 644

147/78613

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 27, 1938.

This evening I showed the Polish Ambassador on a map prepared by the Headquarters of the *Wehrmacht* the demarcation line which, in the view of our *Wehrmacht*, should be observed between Polish and German troops if it came to an advance on Czechoslovakia. I added that it would no doubt be advisable if the Polish Military Attaché agreed on details with our military authorities tomorrow.

In reply M. Lipski said that he too was expecting maps from Prague indicating the Polish sphere of interest in Czechoslovak territory. He thought it would be useful if we discussed this delimitation of spheres again tomorrow and that then the military authorities should contact one another.

I agreed to this procedure.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 645

139/126419

*The German Minister in Hungary (Erdmannsdorff) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 101 of September 27

BUDAPEST, September 27, 1938.

Received September 27, 1938—8:10 p.m.

Learn in the Foreign Ministry:

Czechoslovak Foreign Minister<sup>79</sup> yesterday informed Hungarian Minister in Prague,<sup>80</sup> in answer to note of September 22, former promises of similar treatment of all minorities were given on the supposition that they would remain within the Czech State. Czech Government prepared to grant to Hungarian minority the Nationality Statute envisaged for the Sudeten Germans before the breakdown of the negotiations. Hungarian Government will not acquiesce in this.

Hungarian Minister in Belgrade<sup>81</sup> reports increasing deterioration of Yugoslav attitude toward Hungary and Germany, and stiffening opposition to Stoyadinovich's foreign policy under French and

<sup>79</sup> Dr. Kamil Krofta, 1936-38.

<sup>80</sup> Dr. János Wettstein, 1933-39.

<sup>81</sup> Baron György Bakach-Besseney, 1938-41.

Czech financial influence. He has suggested a statement by prominent Hungarian personalities, according to which Hungary would regard present frontier with Yugoslavia as final and would abandon Hungarian irredentist aims in Yugoslavia; Hungary for her part ready to do this, but fears similar demand from Rumania.

Hungarians know from a reliable source that Stoyadinovich has described as premature Comnen's suggestion that Yugoslav and Rumanian Governments should state in Budapest that obligation of military assistance between Treaty Powers still in force.

ERDMANNSDORFF

No. 646

139/126409

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia (Hencke) and the Military Attaché of the German Legation in Czechoslovakia (Toussaint) to the German Foreign Ministry and the Supreme Headquarters of the Wehrmacht*

Telegram

No. 481 of September 27

PRAGUE, September 27, 1938.

Received September 27, 1938—10 p.m.

For Supreme Headquarters, the *Wehrmacht*, Attaché Section.

Calm in Prague. Last mobilization measures carried out by evacuation of supplies. Operational staff has left Prague. Headquarters probably in Kolin. Call-up of men over forty is prepared for, but not yet carried out. According to information from Italian Military Attaché, Prague is defended by 47 antiaircraft batteries, which change position every day. Press and radio strengthen the Czech people in their belief that France, Great Britain, and Russia have already given a binding promise of military help.

Yugoslavia and Rumania made *démarche* in Budapest announcing military intervention by them in the event of an attack by Hungary on Czechoslovakia.

Carpatho-Ukraine is almost entirely cleared of troops.

The 29th Infantry Regiment is said to have been moved from Neuhaus eastward beyond Brünn.

According to the estimate of the Military Attaché here, the total call-up is 1,000,000; field army 800,000. According to one estimate the strength of the field army is put too *high*. Since the cordoning-off of the Legation by the police no military information of any kind can be obtained.

TOUSSAINT  
HENCKE

## No. 647

139/126410

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) and the Military Attaché of the German Embassy in France (Kühlenthal) to the German Foreign Ministry and War Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

PARIS, September 27, 1938.

No. 502 of September 27 Received September 27, 1938—10:40 p.m.

1. War Ministry, General Staff, Section 3.
2. Supreme Headquarters, the *Wehrmacht*.
3. Foreign Ministry.

1) The French mobilization measures in continuous progress have so far anticipated total mobilization that I reckon with the completion of the deployment of the first sixty-five divisions on the German frontier by the sixth day of mobilization.

This acceleration and the deployment measures adopted so far, when taken in conjunction with the development in the political situation, now make it appear probable that, in the event of belligerent measures by Germany, general mobilization and immediate attack will take place, in all probability from Lower Alsace and from Lorraine in the direction of Mainz.

2) A report, not so far checked, says that on Monday 300 British aircraft, mostly bombers, landed on airfields in Northern France.

Yesterday's call-up of reservists with mobilization code number 6 is confirmed today.

3) It is noteworthy that in the present situation, when all States in any way concerned are taking military measures, the Franco-Italian Alpine frontier remains completely unaffected. Neither on the French side nor, as I learn from the Italian Military Attaché here, on the Italian side have any serious emergency measures been taken.

KÜHLENTHAL  
BRÄUER

## No. 648

139/126398-99

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

PARIS, September 27, 1938.

TOP SECRET

Received September 27, 1938—10:20 p.m.

No. 503 of September 27

For Reich Minister personally.

I. De Brinon<sup>82</sup> forwards me, with the request for onward transmission, following written statement of facts which he says he ascertained in conversations today:

The Ministers de Monzie<sup>83</sup> and Pomaret<sup>84</sup> will advocate in the Cabinet a formula for the Czechoslovak question which in broad outline is to provide more or less for the following:

1) France and Britain will guarantee the speedy carrying-out of the cession of the Sudeten German territory to Germany "*selon les dispositions envisagées par les conversations Chamberlain-Hitler.*"

2) German troops will move into the Sudeten German territory on October 1, the occupation of the territory assuming the character of a symbolic transfer; there is great anxiety to have contingents from other nations taking part in this entry by German troops, restricted preferably to French, British, and Italian, or only French and British units.

3) Guarantee of the Czech State in its new frontiers after settlement of the "problem of the nationalities" by treaty.

II. Owing to the observation under which de Brinon is kept, I have had no opportunity of asking him which territory is to be ceded to us and to be occupied by us according to the plan outlined in paragraph 1. Brinon will probably call on me this evening at my house; I shall subsequently forward any further information during the night. Brinon requests that a statement of policy be forwarded before the Cabinet meeting which will probably take place tomorrow (September 28). To ensure that the statement of policy is forwarded in time, it should reach me by 9 o'clock on Wednesday morning at the latest.

III. According to reports from various sources, opinions were divided at today's Cabinet meeting on the question of accepting our memorandum. Bonnet, whose influence has certainly waned considerably, Monzie, and Pomaret were for yielding. A section of the

<sup>82</sup> See footnote 99, p. 257, and footnote 91, p. 485.

<sup>83</sup> Minister of Public Works, 1938-40; Republican Socialist Union.

<sup>84</sup> Minister of Labor, 1938-39; Republican Socialist Union.

Cabinet was wavering in its attitude. There is particular anxiety on account of the time limit of October 1. It is interesting to note that Cabinet has already refused today to confer plenary powers on Prime Minister enabling him to sign order for general mobilization. Monzie and Pomaret are contemplating resigning if the Cabinet maintains its intransigent attitude.

IV. Excitement is great in Chamber and Senate circles. They would like to reach agreement with us if at all possible. (Flandin's letter in yesterday's *Temps*, with which you are acquainted, is typical of the mood of the Flandin group.) A certain amount of assistance from us, however slight, of which very many Deputies and Senators would surely be willing to make use, in order to overcome the general feeling of helplessness, appears indeed necessary for this, especially since military preparations are being continued on a considerable scale and opposition is growing. If a solution is not found by October 1 and our entry into Czechoslovakia leads to an armed conflict, the view is held that the Chamber and Senate will consent to general mobilization and assistance being given to Czechoslovakia. The population is growing accustomed to the idea of war despite an inherent strong aversion, and is becoming reconciled to it. At any rate, no opposition is to be expected from their ranks in the event of war, especially since the working class have been incited against German regime for ideological reasons.

BRÄUER

## No. 649

139/126424

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium (Bargen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 54/27

BRUSSELS, September 27, 1938.

Received September 28, 1938—12:30 a.m.

Also for War Ministry.

Belgian Government have decided, according to communiqué just published, to complete the military security measures taken in last few days. It has ordered army to be brought up to *ped de paix renforcée*. Six age groups called up under this order. Government remark in communiqué that measure had been dictated solely by desire for security and peace. Communiqué further stated that Government had approved economic measures made necessary by the situation. These involved the supplying of Belgium with food and raw materials in the event of war.

The measures taken are far reaching. They constitute the last stage before general mobilization. Reason for the somewhat overhasty military preparations is to be found on the one hand in growing fear of European war, and on the other hand in desire to try to maintain neutrality. Determination of King and Government to adhere to neutrality unshaken. Mood throughout country antiwar, alarmed, and anxious. Unfriendly feelings toward us are increasing. In event of war, sympathy of people, even in ranks of Flemings, would be with our enemies.

BARGEN

## No. 650

139/126422-23

*The German Minister in Rumania (Fabricius) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 194 of September 27

BUCHAREST, September 27, 1938.

Received September 28, 1938—12:55 a.m.

Today I visited Foreign Minister Comnen, who has returned from Geneva. He considers position still hopeful since speech by Führer and Reich Chancellor, as agreement in principle is obvious; misunderstandings only exist as to procedure. He sees practical solution in proposal contained in Führer's speech to entrust British Legion with occupation of disputed territory until plebiscite carried out, as Beneš maintains Germany is demanding too much and did not wish to cede disputed territory to Germany forthwith. Moreover, lack of frontier guarantees is very difficult for Beneš to accept and time is very short. I referred Comnen to text of speech regarding guarantee, and emphasized that Germany could certainly not guarantee frontiers as long as question of Polish and Hungarian minorities, not actually being dealt with by us, still remained unsettled; otherwise we should be in the position of opposing principle of right of self-determination for those ethnic groups which we claimed for our own. As regards the time limit, it must be understood that tension had lasted far too long and must finally be overcome, and there was danger of Jews and Communists launching a fresh campaign of lies against us. Comnen, who did not associate himself with this argument, asked whether the Rumanian Government or the King could still do anything to contribute toward a peaceful settlement. I replied: Decision now rests with Beneš since the Führer's speech. C[omnen] said in that case he would try once more to exert influence on Prague.

C[omnen] then referred to numerous discussions on Hungary which he had held with Field Marshal Göring and other leading authorities while he was in Berlin. He asked me to point out to Berlin how important it was for Hungary to stay out of a war. Because a Hungarian attack on Czechoslovakia would entail Rumanian intervention based on the existing treaty, and added to my question: "Naturally, only an unprovoked attack." Finally, however, he wished to make the following statement to me for further transmission to Berlin: Rumania is not pledged to intervene by any other treaty apart from the one already known to us. In spite of numerous *démarches* which had been made even quite recently from various quarters, he could give me his word of honor that the Rumanian Government was not bound in any way; they did not wish for war with Germany and would do their utmost to prevent one; they wished to remain neutral.

I answered Comnen that I should be very pleased to pass this statement on. When I asked how matters stood regarding flight of Soviet Russian aircraft to Czechoslovakia, C[omnen] replied that he had no information up to date; unfortunately Rumania did not yet possess the necessary instruments for detecting whether the aircraft were crossing over Rumania and if so, how many. Neither had she enough anti-aircraft guns.

As regards this question he could tell me that right of passage had not been discussed in Geneva either. Litvinov had been the only diplomat who had been (group missing) not to ask him because he knew the answer would be in the negative. During the conversation C[omnen] emphasized the good impression made in Rumania by the Führer's words about the finality of Germany's frontiers after settlement of the Sudeten German problem.

FABRICIUS

### No. 651

139/126430

*The German Ambassador in the United States (Dieckhoff) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 267 of September 27

WASHINGTON, September 27, 1938.

Received September 28, 1938—2:30 a.m.

I gather from many statements that Chamberlain's speech on the radio made deep impression everywhere here. Comments are all to effect that it is no longer a matter of the justification or nonjustification of the German point of view in the Sudeten German question,

but of the fundamental question of force or peaceful negotiation. If Hitler follows the path of negotiation, offered to him once again by Chamberlain today, he would show by this that he was concerned only with the solution of the Sudeten German question, and he would get practically all he is demanding; if, however, he takes the path of force, he would prove that he had a program of conquest which goes beyond the Sudeten German area; if the latter is the case, resistance must be offered as a matter of principle, since otherwise this dynamic force would continually have repercussions.

There is reason to assume that this view is also the view of the American Government, who are doing everything to suppress the existing but decreasing isolationist tendency among the American people, so that, when the moment comes, the whole weight of the United States can be thrown into the scale on the side of Britain. I consider it my duty to emphasize this very strongly.

DIECKHOFF

No. 652

139/126427-28

*The German Ambassador in Poland (Moltke) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 70 of September 27

WARSAW, September 27, 1938.

Received September 28, 1938—8:50 a.m.

Foreign Minister Beck asked me to call on him today in order, as he expressly remarked, to give me some confidential information about political events here during the last few days, in view of the grave situation and the loyal relations existing between our two Governments.

First of all he referred to the *démarche* by the Soviet Government,<sup>85</sup> of which you are aware, which he again described as a meaningless piece of propaganda. He believed that the Polish answer had been clear and to the point. In this connection he wished to draw attention once again to the fact that for the Polish Government there could never be any question of any form of cooperation with the Soviet Union, so long as the latter interfered in European affairs. That was an irrefutable principle of Polish policy. Even if he could assume that we were aware of this, he would still believe that, in such grave times as today, it was useful to repeat this principle once again. Poland had the impression, moreover, that Ru-

<sup>85</sup> See documents Nos. 582 and 621, pp. 897 and 948.



mania also agreed with this view and that one could rely on King Carol in any case.

M. Beck then turned to the Czechoslovak question. He mentioned that the reply from the Prague Government concerning the Teschen region, received here yesterday, contained no fresh point of view. According to other information—he was clearly alluding here to the communication from Beneš handed yesterday to the Polish President—it now appears definite that the Czechs are ready to negotiate on territorial questions. On the French and British side urgent *démarches* had been made simultaneously to bring Poland to a state of readiness to negotiate. The Polish Government had just this evening addressed a note to the Prague Government in which, with reference to an agreement concluded as early as 1919 with the Czech Government, a plebiscite was demanded for the disputed area, while the districts possessing an unquestionably Polish population must be ceded immediately to Poland. With regard to the suggestion made to him of undertaking a guarantee for the Czech Rump State, he advanced the view that he could only assume further Polish responsibility for Czechoslovak territory in agreement with Germany and Hungary.

M. Beck finally remarked that he hoped that no clash with German interests would occur in the areas claimed by Poland. He had today dispatched all the documents by plane to Ambassador Lipski, who would then be in a position to formulate the Polish territorial claims in detail.

MOLTKE

No. 653

139/126431-33

*The German Ambassador in the United States (Dieckhoff) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

WASHINGTON, September 27, 1938.

No. 268 of the 27th

Received September 28, 1938—9:45 a.m.

Following is text of telegraphic appeal which President Roosevelt addressed to the Führer and Reich Chancellor at 10 p.m. today.<sup>86</sup>

DIECKHOFF

<sup>86</sup> The text is in English in the original and is accompanied by a German translation.

His Excellency Adolf Hitler,  
Chancellor of the German Reich,  
Berlin.

I desire to acknowledge your Excellency's reply to my telegram of September 26.<sup>87</sup> I was confident that you would coincide in the opinion I expressed regarding the unforeseeable consequences and the incalculable disaster which would result in the entire world from the outbreak of a European war.

The question before the world today, Mr. Chancellor, is not the question of errors of judgment or of injustices committed in the past; it is the question of the fate of the world today and tomorrow. The world asks of us, who at this moment are heads of nations, the supreme capacity to achieve the destinies of nations without forcing upon them as a price the mutilation and death of millions of citizens.

Resort to force in the Great War failed to bring tranquillity. Victory and defeat were alike sterile. That lesson the world should have learned. For that reason, above all others, I addressed on September 26 my appeal to your Excellency and to the President of Czechoslovakia and to the Prime Ministers of Great Britain and of France.

The two points I sought to emphasize were, first, that all matters of difference between the German Government and the Czechoslovak Government could and should be settled by pacific methods; and, second, that the threatened alternative of the use of force on a scale likely to result in a general war is as unnecessary as it is unjustifiable. It is, therefore, supremely important that negotiations should continue without interruption until a fair and constructive solution is reached.

My conviction on these two points is deepened because responsible statesmen have officially stated that an agreement in principle has already been reached between the Government of the German Reich and the Government of Czechoslovakia, although the precise time, method, and detail of carrying out that agreement remain at issue.

Whatever existing differences may be, and whatever their merits may be—and upon them I do not and need not undertake to pass judgment—my appeal was solely that negotiations be continued until a peaceful settlement is found, and that thereby a resort to force be avoided.

Present negotiations still stand open. They can be continued if you will give the word. Should the need for supplementing them become evident, nothing stands in the way of widening their scope into a conference of all the nations directly interested in the present controversy. Such a meeting to be held immediately—in some neutral spot in Europe—would offer the opportunity for this and correlated questions to be solved in a spirit of justice, of fair dealing, and, in all human probability, with greater permanence.

In my considered judgment, and in the light of the experience of this century, continued negotiations remain the only way by which the immediate problem can be disposed of upon any lasting basis.

<sup>87</sup> Documents Nos. 632 and 633, pp. 958 and 960.

Should you agree to a solution in this peaceful manner, I am convinced that hundreds of millions throughout the world would recognize your action as an outstanding historic service to all humanity.

Allow me to state my unqualified conviction that history, and the souls of every man, woman, and child whose lives will be lost in the threatened war, will hold us and all of us accountable should we omit any appeal for its prevention.

The Government of the United States has no political involvements in Europe and will assume no obligations in the conduct of the present negotiations. Yet in our own right we recognize our responsibilities as a part of a world of neighbors.

The conscience and the impelling desire of the people of my country demand that the voice of their Government be raised again, and yet again, to avert and to avoid war. Franklin D. Roosevelt

## No. 654

C34/000361

*Memorandum by the Führer's Adjutant (Schmundt)*<sup>88</sup>

TOP SECRET MILITARY

SEPTEMBER 28, 1938.

At 1 p.m. on September 27, the Führer and Supreme Commander of the *Wehrmacht* ordered the movement of the *Sturmabteilungen* from their training areas to action stations.

The *Sturmabteilungen* (about 21 reinforced regiments or 7 divisions) must be so ready for action that operations against "Green" are possible from September 30, the decision having been taken at 12 noon one day previously.

SCHM[UNDT]

[Footnote in Schmundt's handwriting:] The order was conveyed to General Keitel at 1:20 p.m. by Major Schmundt.

## No. 655

140/75543

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister.*

BERLIN, September 28, 1938.

At 11 p.m. yesterday the British Ambassador handed me the letter, enclosed in translation, addressed to the Reich Minister, along with a new British plan for a solution of the present crisis. The Ambassador then explained verbally: the plan had nothing to do with the Führer's letter of today's date to Chamberlain.<sup>89</sup> These two communications had crossed. He, the Ambassador, personally thought that the plan was out of date. Had it been submitted a fortnight

<sup>88</sup> Taken from the Schmundt file (Nuremberg document 388-PS).

<sup>89</sup> i.e., of September 27, document No. 635, p. 966.

or three weeks ago, it might perhaps have been of use. Thus he personally no longer believed in the usefulness of the plan. Nevertheless, he was handing it over as instructed and left it at that.

The Ambassador continued that what was serious—and this was also obvious from the enclosed plan—was the shortness of time under which the crisis labored. If he had to give any advice, it would be to make the time limits more elastic than we had so far done. Above all he proposed that definite decisions should be postponed until after today's meeting of the House of Commons.

After this statement by the British Ambassador a further short conversation took place, in the course of which the Ambassador threw on the table a copy of the Anglo-French plan, allegedly from Sir Horace Wilson's papers. The Ambassador said that, though the paper was secret, he was giving it to me personally. I did not read the paper in the Ambassador's presence.

WEIZSÄCKER

[Enclosure 1]

340/199104-6

*The British Ambassador in Germany (Henderson) to the German Foreign Minister*<sup>89a</sup>

BERLIN, September 27, 1938.

DEAR REICH MINISTER: His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has instructed me to transmit to the Führer and Reich Chancellor the enclosed plan which represents a reasonable scheme for the cession of the Sudeten German area to Germany, as accepted in principle by the Czech Government. The French Government has also agreed to this plan. It has been handed to the Czechoslovak Government with the intimation that in the opinion of His Majesty's Government it represents the best means of securing an orderly transfer of the territories, to the cession of which the Czechoslovak Government has already agreed.

As Your Excellency will remember, the main argument of the Führer's speech last night was that Czechoslovak promises were worthless and that M. Beneš will never carry them out. However, in this connection His Majesty's Government wish to point out to the Reich Chancellor that in this matter he is dealing with the British and French Governments and not with the Czech Government. The Chancellor's statement that he must occupy the areas in question by October 1 at the latest leaves no time for working

<sup>89a</sup> The copy printed is from a German translation of the original prepared in the Foreign Ministry.

out the conditions, on the basis of which an understanding on the cession was reached. Nevertheless, this could be arranged in the shortest possible time and therefore His Majesty's Government propose the enclosed timetable, for the carrying out of which they would undertake their share of responsibility.

I would be grateful if you would submit the plan to the Führer.  
Yours sincerely, NEVILLE HENDERSON

[Enclosure 2]

334/196810-11

1) German troops would occupy the territories of Egerland and Asch outside the Czech line of fortifications on October 1.

2) German and Czech plenipotentiaries would meet a British representative at some town in Sudetenland on October 3. The British representative would have equal voting rights with his German and Czech colleagues.

On the same day an International Boundary Commission, consisting of German, Czech, and British members, would meet.

On the same day, if possible, observers and also, if possible, a British Commission would arrive. Later, four British officers could be added; observers, commission, and troops would be under the command of the Boundary Commission. The duty of the meeting of plenipotentiaries would be:

a) To arrange for the immediate withdrawal of Czech troops and State police.

b) To lay down broad lines for the protection of minorities in the ceded territory, and also to safeguard their rights to opt and to withdraw their property, similar arrangements being made for the German minority in the new Czechoslovakia.

c) To determine the instructions based on the Anglo-French plan to be given to the International Boundary Commission for the delimitation of the new frontier with the utmost speed.

3) The entry of German troops into the zone in which the plenipotentiaries have indicated that their arrangements are complete. This might be the whole area, but that might not be possible as early as October 10, as the Czech forces might not have been completely withdrawn and there would be a risk of clashes with the incoming German forces. The International Boundary Commission must, however, have delimited the final line by October 31, and the Czech forces and police must have been withdrawn over that line and the German troops must have occupied up to that line by that date at the latest.

4) The meeting of plenipotentiaries will have to consider whether both<sup>89b</sup> agreements [*beide Vereinbarungen*] should be made for an improvement of the frontier delimited by the Boundary Commission in October, in order better to meet local, geographical, and economic requirements in the various localities. It would be for consideration whether local plebiscites would be necessary or desirable for this purpose.

5) As soon as possible, negotiations to be started between Germany, Great Britain, France, and Czechoslovakia for the purpose of—

a) agreeing on joint measures for demobilization or withdrawal of troops and

b) revising Czechoslovakia's present treaty relationships and instituting a system jointly guaranteeing the new Czechoslovakia.

#### No. 656

140/75544-45

*Minute by the State Secretary (Weizsäcker) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 28, 1938.

This morning at 8:30 the French Ambassador telephoned me to say that he had been instructed to request a personal audience with the Führer. At the last moment the French Government wanted to make one more attempt to avert the impending disaster. It was a question of a proposal which went further than anything so far put forward by the British or French. In outline it suggested the occupation of all four sides of the Bohemian quadrilateral by German troops; districts comprising Czech fortifications were also to be occupied. Of course Czech troops would have to remain behind as guards for these fortifications. The smooth carrying out of this occupation would, as far as possible, be guaranteed by the French Government. The new element in this plan was not only that it went further than anything so far proposed to us, but also the fact that the plan was not yet known to the Czechs. We, Germany, were being consulted first. If we agreed, the French Government would demand acceptance from the Czech Government. If Czechoslovakia refused, conclusions could be drawn which he did not need to define more closely. The French Government thought that the Führer was resolved on final decisions as from this afternoon. Therefore they wanted to lose no time in making their last effort through him, the Ambassador.

The Ambassador knew the British plan<sup>90</sup> which had been handed

<sup>89b</sup> Possibly a misprint for "further" [*weitere*].

<sup>90</sup> See document No. 655, *supra*.

to Herr von Ribbentrop last night and submitted to the Führer. M. Poncet was of the opinion that this plan was in any case useless.

WEIZSÄCKER

. No. 657

140/75556-57

*Telephone Message From the Representative of the Dienststelle  
Ribbentrop in London (Hesse)*<sup>91</sup>

LONDON, September 28, 1938—10:40 a.m.

Sir Horace Wilson today told me the following:

Everything depends on the Führer's proposal being put in a different form. This above all is important for the British Government, while they are ready to agree to all the demands of the plan and to undertake a guarantee to the effect that the plan should actually be carried out. The present form of the plan, however, is such as to make it impossible for any democratic government, especially the French, to advise the Czechs to accept it. The present plan is regarded psychologically as the application of brute force,<sup>92</sup> because it has the effect of suppressing the freedom of a nation. The British Government are prepared to accept all our actual demands except on one point, that of military occupation, which is completely unacceptable. On the other hand, any other form of occupation by police or British troops is possible. If it is impossible to dissuade the Führer from insistence on the full acceptance of his plan, Great Britain will declare war on us because of the violation of democratic freedom, as the whole nation is convinced that the highest values are at stake. If, on the other hand, we were to give way *on the form*, the Government would be prepared to push through all our demands with the Czechs and French. But if we marched today, everything would, without a doubt, be at an end. A proposal to accept our plan but to undertake a guarantee of its execution vis-à-vis the Czechs was impossible, as the very *form* of our present plan was an insurmountable obstacle in the way of the British Government recommending its acceptance to the Czechs. He emphasized that nothing would be more welcome to Great Britain than if the Czechs capitulated on their own account. But he could see no means of bringing about a Czech capitulation.

Wilson said that in his speech today Chamberlain would still leave the door open, and would not declare that Great Britain would

<sup>91</sup> Dr. Fritz Hesse, who had served as D.N.B. representative in London since 1935, and who was employed by the London Embassy as adviser on press matters. Cf. document No. 579, p. 895.

<sup>92</sup> The words "*unerklärlich sei*," which appear here in the text, are apparently a typist's error.

go to war against us, if we put our plan into execution. If, however, we actually marched, Chamberlain would make this declaration.

DR. HESSE

No. 658

140/75565

*The German Minister in Hungary (Erdmannsdorff) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

BUDAPEST, September 28, 1938—1:50 p.m.

No. 105 of September 28

Received September 29, 1938—3 a.m.

\* Foreign Minister<sup>93</sup> informed me Hungarian Minister in Prague today handed over a note demanding right of self-determination for all minority questions in Czechoslovakia, separation of Hungarian populated areas, and avoidance of discrimination in the treatment of the Hungarians. Hungarian Government considered it expedient to begin negotiations simultaneously with other interested states.

Krofta accepted the note for transmission to his Government, and stated as his personal view that at the present moment the Czechoslovak Government could not negotiate on this basis, for that would mean a complete transformation of Central Europe which would also affect other states, namely, Yugoslavia and Rumania. The latter would certainly not agree to such a change. The Czechoslovak Government themselves had no reason to start negotiations of this kind. Position of Hungarian Government is weakened by the fact that, as the Polish Foreign Minister confidentially told the Hungarian Minister, the Czechoslovak Government have declared their readiness to surrender a zone of territory inhabited by Poles, and to allow a plebiscite in a second zone, and this, in Beck's opinion, would fulfill two-thirds of the Polish demands. Italian Foreign Minister advised Hungary again yesterday not to intervene in the conflict at once, in order not to make Stoyadinovich's position more difficult, so that he can find a means of getting out of his obligations under the Little Entente. Italian Government are trying to exert a calming influence in Belgrade and Bucharest, where the British are inciting people to strong action against Hungary. Mussolini had told the Hungarian Military Attaché that Italy will regard any attack by Yugoslavia on Hungary as a hostile act. According to assertion of Rumanian Foreign Minister, Rumanian Government will forbid Russians to march through.

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>93</sup> Kálmán Kanya, 1933-38.



## No. 659

140/75553

*Minute by the Under State Secretary (Woermann) for the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 28, 1938.

Ambassador von Mackensen told me by telephone that the Spanish Ambassador had yesterday made a *démarche* in the Italian Foreign Ministry, but not vis-à-vis Ciano personally, on the neutrality of Spain in a European conflict. This *démarche* was not made with the same *empressement* as in Berlin. According to Ciano's very brief and hastily given information, Herr von Mackensen did not think that the Spanish Ambassador had spoken of a neutrality agreement with France and Great Britain.

The answer given to the Spanish Ambassador by the Italian Foreign Ministry was to the effect that Italy could understand Spain's remaining neutral, but expected that this neutrality would be maintained without prejudice to Italy's interests, and that Spain would unobtrusively grant Italy certain advantages.

I will make the following statement to the *Spanish* Ambassador at 5 o'clock this afternoon:

We could understand Spain's remaining neutral for the duration of the Civil War, but considered it completely superfluous for Spain to negotiate on this beforehand with other powers. We expected Spain to exercise a completely benevolent neutrality toward us, and on occasion to grant us certain advantages *sub rosa*, which were still to be discussed. At present I could not give him any definite information on the question of leaving the Condor Legion in Spain in the event of Spain's remaining neutral. Furthermore, I was completely convinced that there was no basis for the Spanish step.

WOERMANN

## No. 660

1863/423027-28

*The Hungarian Legation in Germany to the German  
Foreign Ministry*<sup>94</sup>

## MEMORANDUM

BERLIN, September 28, 1938.

(Pol. IV 6811)

Stoyadinovich expressed to Kanya his fear that, in the light of his information, the Hungarian Government had designs on the Slovak and Ruthenian areas besides the purely Hungarian areas. At the same time he stated that:

- 1) if the Hungarian Government would give a satisfactory declaration regarding the security of Yugoslavia,
- 2) if Hungary would state which areas of Slovakia we claim, he would be prepared, provided our claims did not extend to Slovak and Ruthenian areas, to attempt mediation in Prague, so that Prague should return to Hungary the Hungarian-inhabited areas.

From this it can be seen that Stoyadinovich would be ready to accept, or that he is reconciled to, the reassimilation of the Hungarian areas, but does not want a further strengthening of Hungary. He is apparently afraid that if Ruthenes and Slovaks declared in favor of Hungary, and Hungary were thus strengthened, this might eventually become dangerous for Yugoslavia.

M. Kanya would be grateful if, in the interests of Hungary, Germany could, without mentioning the above information, but in the course of normal conversations, state in Belgrade that the Hungarian point of view, which aims at:

- a) the return of the Hungarian-inhabited areas,
- b) the practical realization of the right of self-determination for Ruthenians and Slovaks,

did not imply an aggressive attitude toward Yugoslavia, and that, in view of present-day circumstances, this would be the only correct solution.

<sup>94</sup> The document bears the comment (in Weizsäcker's handwriting): "Handed to me today by the Hungarian Minister," and instructions for the interested Missions to be circularized.

## No. 661

140/75566-68

*The German Ambassador in Italy (Mackensen) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

ROME, September 28, 1938—5 p.m.

No. 258 of September 28

Received September 28, 1938—8:45 p.m.

In continuation of today's telephonic information.<sup>95</sup>

Ciano, whom I went to see this morning in connection with telegraphic instruction 328 (Pol. III 3312) of the 27th of this month,<sup>96</sup> asked me if he might anticipate the discussion on the Spanish question by some essential and more important information on the general situation:

Very early this morning Lord Perth<sup>97</sup> had asked for an interview with him on a most urgent matter. He had received Lord Perth at 10 o'clock. Urgently referring to the extraordinary tension of the situation, which led one to fear the outbreak of a conflict with incalculable consequences in certain circumstances even within a few hours, Lord Perth explained to him on behalf of his Government that, after exhausting all existing possibilities, the British Government, in the interests of the preservation of peace, now saw but one remaining possibility—that of making use of the tried friendship of the Duce for the Führer. He had therefore been instructed to ask the Duce to consider whether, in view of his efforts for the maintenance of peace, he was prepared and in a position to use his influence with the Führer so that the latter would grant a time limit which would give sufficient scope for a peaceful outcome. If such an attempt were impossible or unsuccessful, the course of events could no longer be checked; the British Empire would make a suitable response to a possible German military attack on Czechoslovakia.

Ciano stated that he had replied that, filled with the thought of the enormous responsibility of this fateful hour, he would at once request the Duce's decision.

He informed the Duce immediately and was empowered by him to instruct Ambassador Attolico with all speed to go to the Reich Foreign Minister or, as was urgently desired, to the Führer, personally, and inform him as follows:

- 1) Mussolini, as always, stood unreservedly by the Führer;
- 2) To acquaint him with the British proposal and at the same time to state that a postponement perhaps still offered a possibility

<sup>95</sup> See document No. 659, p. 991.

<sup>96</sup> Not printed, but see last sentence of document No. 638, p. 969.

<sup>97</sup> The British Ambassador.

of a settlement of the conflict in another way. It was, of course, a matter for the Führer to decide whether—in view of military considerations—he was in a position to accede to the British wish and to grant a delay of 24 hours. (The period of 24 hours originates, as I learned in answer to a question, not from the British but from the Duce.)

3) Whatever the Führer's decision may be, the Duce will stand by him.

Ciano added that Attolico had immediately been instructed to this effect.

British Ambassador was already in his anteroom to receive information on what the Duce had done.

He, Ciano, asked me to transmit his statements to authoritative departments in my Government, in spite of the instructions given directly to Attolico. Lord Perth, to whom I spoke briefly in Ciano's anteroom on my way out, was received by the Foreign Minister for a second talk immediately after me.

MACKENSEN

No. 662

1613/387107-14

*The German Foreign Ministry to German Missions Abroad*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, September 28, 1938.

(Pol. I 2292 g)

To the Missions and Consulates listed in the Annex.<sup>98</sup>

In continuation of telegram . . .

As will be well known to you through the agency of press and radio, the Führer, Mussolini, Chamberlain, and Daladier are meeting in Munich on September 29, at the Führer's invitation. The Führer's invitation followed after the Governments of Great Britain and France had indicated a readiness to make far-reaching concessions with regard to the German wishes. The prospects of maintaining peace are thereby considerably increased.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>98</sup> Not printed. The list includes most German Embassies, Legations, and Consulates.

## No. 663

334/196804-05

*Statement Issued to the Press by the German Foreign Ministry*<sup>99</sup>

BERLIN, September 28, 1938.

The Führer has invited Benito Mussolini, the Head of the Italian Government; Neville Chamberlain, the Prime Minister of Great Britain; and Daladier, the French Prime Minister, to a conference. The statesmen have accepted the invitation. The discussion will take place in Munich on the morning of September 29.

Both the Government of Great Britain and the French Government have today submitted new proposals for the solution of the Czechoslovak crisis. In this connection Mr. Chamberlain, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, has offered to meet the Führer again for a personal discussion. At the same time Mussolini has offered his assistance in the search for an immediate solution. In view of the inevitable German reaction to the terror in the Sudeten German territory, the Czechoslovak crisis allows of no further delay; on the contrary, the position categorically demands an immediate solution. Having regard to this state of affairs and to the fact that the proposals to date do not meet the situation as regards justice, prompted by the desire to make a last effort to bring about the peaceful cession of the Sudeten German territory to the Reich, the Führer has invited the Heads of the Governments of Italy, France, and Great Britain to a personal conference. It is to be hoped that, even at the eleventh hour, this conference will lead to an agreement on the measures to be put into effect immediately for the transfer of the Sudeten territory promised by the Czechoslovak Government.

## No. 664

397/212745

*The German Embassy in the Soviet Union to the German Foreign Ministry*

Moscow, September 29, 1938.

Subject: United States *démarche* vis-à-vis the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

On September 28, Kirk, the United States Chargé d'Affaires here, handed over a communication from the Government of the United

<sup>99</sup> This statement appeared in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* on September 29. The first paragraph is described as an "official announcement," the remainder as a report from the D.N.B.

States to Potemkin, the Deputy Foreign Minister, in which the "Head of the U.S.S.R. or the Soviet Government" was urged to address similar appeals to Germany and Czechoslovakia to those which the President of the United States had addressed to the Heads of both States. Such an expression of universal opinion might, even at the last minute, influence the further development of events and contribute toward the maintenance of peace. The Deputy Foreign Minister pointed out in his answer that the policy of the Soviet Union followed unswervingly the aim of universal peace. He did not agree to the suggestion of a direct step in Berlin and Prague but, following Litvinov's line of thought, subscribed to Roosevelt's proposals for the summoning of an international conference. Thereby the Soviet endeavor to enter into the negotiations of the European Great Powers once again becomes manifest.

The text of both declarations is hereby submitted in a cutting from the *Deutsche Zeitung* of the 29th of this month.<sup>1</sup>

T[IPPELSKIRCH]

No. 665

1863/423162-64

*The Führer's Chancellery to the Foreign Ministry*

Minister of State and Chief of Führer's  
and Reich Chancellor's Presidential Chancellery.

BERLIN, October 10, 1938.

(Pol. IV Abst. 373)

Two enclosures—(Telegrams from Slovaks).<sup>2</sup>

Submitted in *original* to the Foreign Ministry as a sequel to previous communications of similar kind on the non-German ethnic groups in Czechoslovakia as being within the competence of the Foreign Ministry. No answers or acknowledgments have been given.

For the Minister:

KIEWITZ

<sup>1</sup> Not printed here. The *Deutsche Zeitung* was a German paper published in Moscow.

<sup>2</sup> The two original telegrams are in the file. The first is in Slovak, the second in Czech.

[Enclosure 1]

Telegram

No. 051

BUDAPEST, September 29, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 7215/38)

To Adolf Hitler, Chancellor, Munich.

Leaders of the Slovak nation arrested and placed under police and military supervision. Unable to speak with them. I appeal to Your Excellency in this solemn hour when the leaders of the Slovak nation are unable to protect the interests of the people; in the name of our leaders and of the Slovak people, intercede in favor of self-determination. We want to secede from the Czech Republic. We demand a plebiscite for Slovakia to be carried out under the protection of the German and the Italian Army. Mr. Chancellor, we believe in you.

IMRO MOCIK  
former Secretary of the  
Slovak (Hlinka) People's Party

[Enclosure 2]

Telegram

No. 011

HANOVER, September 29, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 7215/38)

To Adolf Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain, and Daladier, Munich.

Please put as Czech title to the memorandum: "Where short-sightedness reigns, the prosperity of the State soon withers."

UHLÍR

No. 666

140/75590

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Embassy in Poland*

Telegram

No. 195

BERLIN, September 29, 1938.

For information:

In yesterday's conversation between State Secretary and Lipski, the latter showed a map, in which two lines had been drawn, one in fact being a demarcation line for the event of peaceful occupation, and a line running further to the west marking the boundaries of the Polish "sphere of interest." State Secretary stated that he could not at the moment go into the question of the sphere of interest and showed blue demarcation line as desired by us to fix boundaries of

operational sphere on both sides in event of hostilities. No material differences of opinion seem to have existed about this line during the conversation; it was agreed, should the necessity arise, to discuss the matter again. As I have not myself been informed about the details of the conversation, a further communication follows.

WOERMANN

No. 667

2369/495066-67

*Memorandum by the German Ambassador in the Soviet Union  
(Schulenburg)*

Moscow, September 29, 1938.  
(Pol. IV 6893)

Today I called on M. Potemkin, at present Chief of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs,<sup>3</sup> to discuss current affairs with him. P. immediately mentioned the Czechoslovak question; his annoyance over the course of events was quite obvious.

P. said it was really impossible to hold a conference on the fate of a country without that country being represented. What was happening now was the rebirth of the "notorious" Four Power Pact, which wanted to force its will on Europe, and whose first appearance he had witnessed—several years ago in Rome.<sup>4</sup> The Soviet Government firmly maintained that the Czech dispute should be solved by a *general* conference. The Soviet Union had already made a proposal to that effect in March last (after the Austrian *Anschluss!*). The view of the Soviet Government was now fortunately supplemented by President Roosevelt's suggestion.

P. continued: the Powers now taking part in the destruction of Czechoslovakia would bitterly regret their submission to militant nationalism. In the first place, Poland, for there were "a great many" Germans in Poland; in particular it must not be forgotten that several million Ukrainians were living in Poland, who were already beginning to "move." Italy too would have to accept this and lose her South Tyrol.

P. then asserted that the day before yesterday, that is, September 27, the Polish Minister, Papée, had delivered an ultimatum in Prague in which Warsaw demanded the evacuation by Czechoslo-

<sup>3</sup> i.e., while Litvinov was abroad attending the meeting of the League of Nations Assembly.

<sup>4</sup> In March 1933, the proposal for a four-power pact had been made by Mussolini to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Sir John Simon, when they visited Rome.



vakia of the Teschen area within 48 hours; otherwise the Polish Army would march.

I let P. go on talking and merely pointed out that in his speech on Monday the Führer had renounced all further intentions of acquiring territory in Europe, and that in consequence of that M. Litvinov could bury his fears for "a conquest of the Ukraine by us." P. answered that it was not certain whether National Socialist doctrine regarded the Soviet Union and the Soviet Ukraine as being in Europe.

P. then asked me why Signor Mussolini was so deeply interested in Polish and Hungarian claims to Czech territory; his last speeches showed this clearly. I replied that I had no information; presumably it is Signor Mussolini's view that a final settlement of the Czech minority problem would be the best thing for Czechoslovakia herself. P. then said that the real reason for the Duce's attitude was that he did not want to lose his "bases" in Central Europe to us. We should beware of Signor Mussolini!

SCHULENBURG

No. 668

28/18960

*The German Foreign Ministry to the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

BERLIN, September 29, 1938—12:45 p.m.

Received Prague, September 29, 1938—2:30 p.m.

No. 299 of September 29

Since Czechoslovak Government have announced to the British Government their rejection of the Godesberg memorandum, the prospect of a peaceful solution of the conflict has greatly diminished. In a letter dispatched in the evening of September 27,<sup>5</sup> Führer made certain suggestions and comments to Chamberlain for a peaceful settlement within the framework of Godesberg memorandum; in particular he again stated that in a peaceful settlement the demarcation line would not be crossed by German troops, and urged the British Government to give a guarantee for this to the Czechoslovak Government. After the British, French, and Czechoslovak Governments had agreed that the Sudeten German areas were to be ceded to Germany, it is completely incomprehensible that the preservation of peace should be wrecked on details of execution. Nevertheless,

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 635, p. 966.

in view of the desperate situation of the Sudeten Germans and the well-known tactics of Czechoslovakia and the Western Powers, German demands for military occupation of the territory to be surrendered cannot be abandoned. Therefore the preservation of peace lies solely in the hands of Czechoslovakia, as well as of France, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union, who encouraged the Czech attitude by holding out, even if not in completely clear terms, a prospect of armed help in the event of a German-Czech conflict.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 669.

330/195691-96

*Two Foreign Ministry Drafts of Agenda for the Munich Conference*

[c. SEPTEMBER 29, 1938.]

DRAFT 1

PROGRAM FOR THE MUNICH CONFERENCE

I

MEETING OF THE FOUR HEADS OF GOVERNMENT

1) Delimitation of the territory which is to be severed from Czechoslovakia without plebiscite and incorporated in the Reich.

2) Delimitation of the territory in which a plebiscite will be held, with option for Germany or Czechoslovakia.

3) When will the evacuation by Czechoslovakia of the territory under 1) begin, and when will it end?

4) When will the occupation by German troops of the area under 1) begin and when will it end?<sup>6</sup>

5) Undertaking of a guarantee by Great Britain, France, and Italy for the completion of the evacuation.

6) What administration will be in force in the plebiscite territory laid down under 2) (evacuation by Czechoslovakia and occupation by international troops)?

7) The laying down in principle of the procedure for the plebiscite (date, questionnaire, right to vote, supervision by international commission).

8) Assessment of the result of the plebiscite (according to communes, or according to the entire territory, language enclaves).

<sup>6</sup> Pencil marginal note in Woermann's handwriting: "3) Territory to be occupied by October 1, 1938, in accordance with Map II; 4) Fixing of date for remaining territory in accordance with Map I."

9) Demarcation of the final frontier by an international commission; exchange of populations.

10) Fixing of the time limit by which the Government in Prague have to accept the Munich resolutions; and the form of the transmission of these resolutions to the Government in Prague.<sup>7</sup>

11) Establishment of a drafting committee.

## II

### MEETING OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE

Drafting of a protocol on the resolutions passed under 1) which is to be signed by the four Heads of Government. Drafting of the telegram to be transmitted to the Government in Prague.

## III

### FINAL MEETING OF THE FOUR HEADS OF GOVERNMENT

1) Signature of the documents drawn up by the drafting commission.

2) The setting up of the commissions.

a) The commission for laying down the details of the evacuation.

b) The plebiscite commission.

c) The boundary commission.<sup>8</sup>

3) The powers of both commissions, the fixing of the time and place of their work.

*German demands.*

The cession in principle of the entire Sudeten German territory (cf. map attached to German memorandum) to the Reich shall take place under the following conditions, subject to corrections which may ultimately result from the plebiscite in the disputed territories:

1) Evacuation to begin on October 1.

2) The Guarantor Powers, Great Britain, France, and Italy, will guarantee to Germany that the evacuation of the territory shall be completed by October 10, without any existing installations having been destroyed. (See annex to German memorandum.)

3) The conditions governing the evacuation will be laid down in detail by an international commission in which Germany, Great Britain, France, Italy, and Czechoslovakia are represented.

4) Disputed territories will be occupied by international forces until the plebiscite has been completed. Under the terms of the memorandum the conditions of the Saar plebiscite shall be considered as forming the basis of the plebiscite.

The final demarcation of the frontiers will be carried out by an international commission.

5) The occupation, by stages, of the predominantly German territory by German troops will begin on October 1.

<sup>7</sup> Here a penciled note is inserted: "10a) Hungary, Poland?"

<sup>8</sup> Added in pencil.

## DRAFT 2

## PROGRAM FOR THE MUNICH CONFERENCE

## I

## MEETING OF THE FOUR HEADS OF GOVERNMENT

1) Delimitation of the territory to be occupied by the German troops on October 1 in accordance with the special map.

2) Fixing of the period within which the remaining territory is to be evacuated by Czech troops and occupied by German troops in accordance with the Godesberg map. The procedure for this is to be fixed by an international commission on which Germany, Britain, France, Italy, and Czechoslovakia are represented.

3) Fixing of the territory in which the plebiscite is to be held, alike within and without the demarcation line. These territories are to be fixed at a later date by an international commission. Occupation of the territories lying within the demarcation line at a date still to be agreed upon, and as soon as possible after the occupation by German troops, by members of the British Legion, Fascist organizations, and French ex-servicemen. In like manner occupation of the territories to be definitely fixed without the demarcation line also by these formations.

4) Assumption of a guarantee on the part of Britain, France, and Italy for carrying out the evacuation of the territory mentioned in paragraph 2) up to . . .<sup>9</sup>

5) Settlement in principle of the procedure for the plebiscite (question of time limit, right to vote, supervision by an international commission).

6) Assessment of the result of the plebiscite (total territory, communes, language enclaves).

7) Demarcation of the final frontier by an international commission, exchange of populations.

8) Fixing of the date by which the Government in Prague has to accept the Munich resolutions and the form of the transmission of the resolutions.

9) Adoption of a formula for dealing with the Polish and Hungarian questions.

## II

## MEETING OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE

Drafting of a protocol on the resolutions passed under 1) which is to be signed by the four Heads of Government. Drafting of the telegram to be transmitted to the Government in Prague.

<sup>9</sup> Omission indicated in the original.

## III

## FINAL MEETING OF THE FOUR HEADS OF GOVERNMENT

- 1) Signature of the documents drawn up by the drafting commission.
- 2) The setting up of the commission.
  - a) The commission for laying down the details of the evacuation.
  - b) The plebiscite commission.
  - c) The boundary commission.
- 3) The powers of the three commissions, the fixing of the time and place of their work. (Ambassadors in Berlin of the States concerned plus a special representative of the Czechoslovak Government.)

## No. 670

334/196773-81

*Memorandum on the First Meeting Between the British and French Prime Ministers, the Duce, and the Führer at Munich*

IMMEDIATE

MUNICH, September 29, 1938—7 p.m.

STRICTLY SECRET

(Pol. IV Abst. 349)

For the Under State Secretary, the Foreign Ministry, Berlin.

By special messenger.

Send Under State Secretary's certificate of receipt.

The Führer opened the discussion at 12:45 p.m. and expressed his thanks to the Heads of Government present for accepting his invitation to come to Munich. He added that he wished first of all to give a brief summary of the Czech question as it appeared at the present time. The existence of Czechoslovakia in her present form threatened the peace of Europe. The German, Hungarian, Slovak, Polish, and Carpatho-Russian minorities, which had been forced into this State against their will, revolted against its continued existence. He, the Führer, could only come forward as spokesman for the German minorities.

In the interest of European peace, the problem must be settled in the shortest possible time and, particularly, by the Czech Government's fulfillment of their promises of cession [of territory]. Germany could no longer contemplate the distress and misery of the Sudeten German population. Reports of the destruction of property were coming in in increasing numbers. The population was exposed to a barbaric persecution. Since he, the Führer, had last spoken with Mr. Chamberlain, the number of refugees had risen to 240,000, and there seemed to be no end to the flood. Moreover, it was necessary that the political, military, and economic tension,

which had become intolerable, should end. This tension made it necessary to settle the problem in a few days as it was no longer possible to wait weeks. At the wish of Mussolini, the Head of the Italian Government, he, the Führer, had declared himself ready to postpone mobilization in Germany for 24 hours. Further delay would be a crime. In order to settle the problem, the responsible statesmen of Europe had assembled here, and he observed that their differences were really very small, for, in the first place, it was agreed that the territory must be ceded to Germany and, secondly, that Germany claimed nothing more than this territory. However, in order to ascertain exactly what territory was involved, it could not be left to a commission to decide. It was much rather a plebiscite that was necessary, especially as for 20 years no free election had taken place in Czechoslovakia. He had now declared in his speech in the Sportpalast that he would in any case march in on October 1. He had received the answer that this action would have the character of an act of violence. Hence the task arose to absolve this action from such a character. Action must, however, be taken at once; in the first place, because the persecutions could no longer be tolerated, and, in addition, because, in face of the vacillating attitude of Prague, no further delay could be suffered. From the military aspect the occupation presented no problem, for the depths on all fronts were comparatively small. With a little good will it must consequently be possible to evacuate the territory in 10 days; indeed, he was convinced, in from 6 to 7 days. In order to conciliate public opinion in England and France he wished to leave open the question of whether Germany would also march into the territory in which the plebiscite was to be held. In this case, however, the Czechs would have to do the same, so that a situation of parity would be brought about. The conditions governing the transfer could be discussed, but action must soon be taken. The fact that armed powers were lined up against each other in Europe, as at this present time, would be unbearable over a prolonged period.

Mr. Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, thanked the Führer first of all for the invitation to the discussions, and extended these thanks to the Duce also, to whose initiative, if he had understood rightly, today's discussions were in part to be ascribed. Today's discussions gave Europe new breathing space, whereas yesterday catastrophe seemed to be immediately impending. He fully comprehended that action must be taken quickly, and he particularly welcomed the Führer's declaration that he did not wish to apply force, but to establish order. If the problem was approached in this spirit he was sure that results would be obtained.

The Head of the Italian Government observed at this point that theoretical agreement had already been reached and that it was now only a matter of translating this theoretical agreement into practice. The question of time was of particular importance in this connection. Every delay was a source of danger. He therefore particularly insisted on speedy action, because in this case speed fully coincided with justice. It was better to come to an agreement this very day, as an adjournment of only 24 hours would produce new unrest and new mistrust. In order to bring about a practical solution of the problem, he wished to make the following proposal: (see Annex 1)<sup>10</sup>

Daladier, the French Prime Minister, thanked the Führer also for his initiative. He was delighted to have the opportunity now of meeting him personally. The plan for such a meeting had, indeed, already existed before, but circumstances had unfortunately prevented its realization until the present. However, there was a French proverb: "Better late than never."

M. Daladier, the French Prime Minister, then also expressed to the Duce his personal admiration for the latter's step which would, it was to be hoped, lead to a solution of the question. He was of the opinion, even as was Mr. Chamberlain, that measures would have to be taken with the utmost promptitude. He particularly welcomed the Duce's proposal which had been made in an objective and realistic spirit, and which he accepted as a basis for discussion. This naturally did not signify that he agreed on all points, as for one thing, economic points of view would have to be considered, in order that the foundation of future war should not be laid. Finally, there still remained the question of the organization of the plebiscite and the demarcation of the zone. He mentioned these points

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<sup>10</sup> The Italian proposals, which formed the basis of the subsequent discussions, do not accompany the memorandum printed, and it has not been possible to trace a copy in the German files. They were, however, identical with the section of document No. 669 headed "German Demands." Erich Kordt has given the following account of the history of these demands:

"He [Weizsäcker] got hold of Neurath and Göring and elaborated with them a short paper with possible conditions of a compromise, for a plebiscite to be taken in the regions, for evacuation dates in the case that the plebiscite should be favorable to Germany. Then Göring submitted this draft to Hitler, who took a quick look at this paper and said, well, it might perhaps be acceptable to him. Now this paper has a special significance because the moment afterward I was asked to have Schmidt translate it into French. The State Secretary passed it on to Ambassador Attolico, Attolico rushed to meet Mussolini on his way to Munich. And when the meeting opened in Munich, to the great surprise of Ribbentrop and others present, Mussolini presented this suggestion as his own, and therefore the whole proceedings of the Munich Conference were conducted on the basis of this paper." (Official Transcript of Evidence Given at Nuremberg on June 4, 1948, Before U. S. Military Tribunal IV in the Matter of *U.S.A. v. Ernst Weizsäcker*.) Cf. also E. Kordt, *Wahn und Wirklichkeit* (Stuttgart, 1947), pp. 129-131.

A copy of the German demands in French is also in the files.

only because he had not yet carefully studied the proposal which had just been read through. He wished to accept it at once, however, as a basis for discussion.

Chamberlain, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, also welcomed the Duce's proposal and declared that he himself had conceived of a solution on the lines of this proposal. As regards the guarantee demanded of Great Britain he would welcome it if a representative of the Czech Government were available, for Great Britain could naturally undertake no guarantee that the territory would be evacuated by October 10, and that no demolition would be carried out, if no assurance of this was forthcoming from the Czech Government.

The Führer answered this by saying that he was not interested in an assurance from the Czech Government, as it was this very Government which was already carrying out demolition work. The real question was how to bring the Czech Government to accept the proposal. It was agreed that Germany should receive the territory ceded. The Czechs maintained, however, that they could not undertake an evacuation before new fortifications were established and economic decisions had been taken.

Daladier, the French Prime Minister, answered that the French Government would in no wise tolerate procrastination in this matter by the Czech Government. The Czech Government had given its word and must honor it. There could be no talk of postponing the evacuation of the territory until new fortifications were installed. He asked that these ideas should be completely excluded from the discussions, since the Czech Government were receiving a guarantee in return for their cession. In general, however, he was of the opinion, as was Mr. Chamberlain, that the presence of a Czech representative, who could be consulted if necessary [*eventuell*], would be of advantage. This seemed to him to be of advantage above all because it would obviate confusion which could so easily arise in a matter so delicate as a cession of territory. Everything must be done to avoid chaos.

The Führer replied that, if the Czech Government's consent had first to be sought on every detail, a solution could not be expected before a fortnight had passed. The Duce's proposal contemplated a commission on which a representative of the Czech Government would also sit. What interested him most was a guarantee by the Great Powers, who should exercise their authority to prevent the Czech Government from their continuing persecutions and demolitions.

Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, replied that he was not of the opinion, either, that there should be any further delay. However,



before he undertook a guarantee he must know whether he could honor it, and for this reason he would welcome the presence of a Prague representative in the next room, in order that assurances could be obtained from him.

The Führer replied that no Czech representative was available who could speak with authority for his Government. The interesting question for him was what would happen if the Czech Government did not accept the proposal of the Great Powers. Up to the present time 247 bridges and a still greater number of houses had been destroyed.

The Italian Prime Minister declared that he too thought that it was not possible to await a Czech representative. The Great Powers must undertake a moral guarantee as regards the evacuation and prevention of work of destruction. They must point out in Prague that the Czech Government must accept the demands, or would otherwise have to bear the military consequences. It was a question of a kind of request by the Great Powers, who were under a moral obligation to prevent this territory from being handed over as a desert.

Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, replied that he would like to have a Czechoslovak representative present. For the rest, the timetable proposed by the Duce seemed to him quite reasonable. He was ready to set his hand to it and to inform the Czech Government that they should accept it. He could, however, undertake no guarantee until he knew how far he could honor it. There were, besides, a few other details to clarify:—What powers would the international commission have and what authority would prevail in the territory when it was evacuated? He had no doubt but that the Führer would maintain order and would also take care that those inhabitants who were against the union should not be persecuted. A few points in the German memorandum were, however, misunderstood in Britain. Thus, the question had been asked as to what the regulation signified which stated that no cattle should be taken out of this territory. Did this mean that the farmers would be expelled but that their cattle would be retained?<sup>11</sup>

The Führer replied that, in the territory to be ceded to Germany, German laws would naturally be applied; moreover, the facts were completely the reverse. At present it was the Czechs who were driving the German farmers' cattle away and not the converse. What seemed decisive was whether the question should be regarded

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. the letter from the Czech Minister in London, M. Jan Masaryk, to the British Foreign Secretary on September 25, printed as document No. 7 in the British White Paper, Cmd. 5847.

as a German-Czech conflict which could be settled in a fortnight, or whether it should be regarded as a problem of European significance. If a European problem was in question, then the Great Powers would have to throw their authority into the scales and accept the responsibility for the correct completion of the transfer. If, that is to say, the Czech Government did not wish to accept these proposals, it was clear that the greatest moral authority which could possibly exist, that is to say the authority which was incorporated by the signatures of the four statesmen here assembled, would not suffice. In this case, application of force alone could solve the question.

Mr. Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, replied that he had no objections to raise against the proposed time limits. The Czech question was a European question, and the Great Powers had not only the right to settle it, but the duty also. They also had to ensure that the Czech Government did not repudiate the evacuation of the territory from unreasonableness and obstinacy. It was his wish to apply the authority of the Great Powers in the correct manner; and therefore he proposed first of all to distribute the Duce's plan, and to adjourn the meeting for a short while so that this plan could be studied. Such a procedure did not mean delay.

Daladier, the French Prime Minister, explained that he had already assumed responsibility in London when, without consulting the Czech Government, he had accepted the cession of the German territory in principle. He had adopted the point of view in spite of the fact that France had a treaty of alliance with Czechoslovakia. If the inclusion of a Prague representative would cause difficulties he was ready to forego this, for it was important that the question should be settled speedily.

The Führer replied that if a document bearing the signatures of the four statesmen was, notwithstanding, rejected by the Prague Government, then, in the final analysis, Prague only respected force.

## No. 671

140/75586

*Note of Telephone Message From the Under State Secretary  
(Woermann) to an Official of Political Division IV*

Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten, MUNICH.  
September 29, 1938.

Telephone message from Under State Secretary Woermann, taken by Attaché von Schröder in the absence of Counselor of Legation Altenburg.

(1) (Information from Budapest:) Minister Czaky, representative of Hungarian Government, is arriving in Munich this morning by special plane and requests an interview with the State Secretary.

(2) Chamberlain has invited Masaryk to come to Munich as an observer.

(3) Counselor of Legation, Huber Masaryk, is coming to Munich from Prague and has been appointed to help Masaryk, Ambassador in London.

(4) (Telegram from Prague:) Incorporation of German subsidiary demands in the program (release of prisoners and of Germans from the Army).

(5) (Telegram from Budapest:) The Hungarians received a rebuff to their *démarche* to Beneš (ditto telegram from Prague). Beneš saw no reason to open negotiations on this subject. Beneš has promised the Poles fulfillment of their demands.

(6) The Under State Secretary would like to be informed again regarding the conversation between the State Secretary and Ambassador Lipski about the demarcation line.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Cf. document No. 666, p. 997.

## No. 672.

28/17864

*Memorandum by an Official of the German Legation  
in Czechoslovakia (Hofmann)<sup>14</sup>*

## MEMORANDUM

1) The Hungarian Minister told me, as representing the Chargé d'Affaires, the following:—

In the name of his Government he today qualified the concept of the Danube Basin, as mentioned in the note handed over yesterday, by saying that it referred to Czechoslovak territory. Krofta merely took note of this and told M. de Wettstein that everything depended on the Munich talks.

2) According to what Krofta told M. de Wettstein, Minister Masaryk is not going to Munich from London for the purpose of keeping Chamberlain informed but this will be undertaken by Lesinsky,<sup>15</sup> or a similar name, the Counselor to the Czechoslovak Legation in London.

3) Krofta further told M. de Wettstein in a private conversation that the main thing to be established in Munich was that the territory which contained the third line of fortifications should remain within Czechoslovak territory. When Wettstein said that he could not understand why 800,000 Czechs should be included in the territory in accordance with the proposals contained in the German memorandum, Krofta hinted that in certain circumstances in the plebiscite to be organized many Czechs too might vote for annexation to Germany, owing to the feeling that Czechoslovakia was finished in any case.

H[OFMANN]

SEPTEMBER 29, 1 p.m.

<sup>14</sup> This document is taken from the files of the Prague Legation and bears the initial of one of the Secretaries. It was submitted to Hencke and substantially repeated as telegram No. 506 to Berlin.

<sup>15</sup> Karel Lisicky.

## No. 673

140/75588

*The German Chargé d'Affaires in France (Bräuer) to the German Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PARIS, September 29, 1938—8:25 p.m.

No. 512 of September 29 Received September 29, 1938—9:55 p.m.

Von Humann and Abetz<sup>16</sup> state that they have heard reports from various sources which agree that the following, among others, is the reason for the French desire to gain time in our occupation of the Sudeten German area; the Czech fortifications are said to be largely an exact copy of the Maginot Line. The French, therefore, fear that, if we march in and take possession of the fortifications, the hitherto secret plans and technical details of the Maginot fortifications would become known. This explains also the special consternation which prevailed over the demand in our memorandum that the territory to be evacuated should be handed over intact in its present condition, which was taken by the French to refer to fortifications.

BRÄUER

## No. 674

334/196782-86

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Staff (Erich Kordt) on the Second Meeting Between the British and French Prime Ministers, the Duce, and the Führer, at Munich*

(Pol. IV 349)

MEMORANDUM ON THE MUNICH CONVERSATION AT 4:30 ON  
SEPTEMBER 29, 1938

At the Duce's suggestion it was first decided to discuss point by point the Italian proposal submitted to the delegations in the morning.

Point 1) (beginning of evacuation on October 1) was at once agreed to unanimously.

On point 2) the Führer stated that, if agreement could be reached on this point too, the question of procedure would no longer present any great difficulties. His proposal was first to define on the map certain stages of the German occupation, the procedure of which

<sup>16</sup> Fritz von Humann was an official in the section of the Nazi Party organization concerned with foreign policy; Otto Abetz was at this time Paris representative of the *Dienststelle Ribbentrop*, and was asked to leave France by Daladier in July 1939.

could then be established by a commission, on which there would also be a Czech representative.

Prime Minister Chamberlain expressed his agreement with the date fixed in point 2) for the completion of the evacuation of the German area, October 10. However, he expressed doubts on the possibility of giving a guarantee to Germany as long as he did not know Czechoslovakia's attitude to the question of evacuation.

On the question whether Czechoslovakia's previous agreement had to be obtained for the granting of the guarantee provided for in the Italian proposal, as Mr. Chamberlain seemed to suggest, Daladier stated that such agreement did not seem necessary to him. At the time he had agreed with Great Britain to the principle of cession of territory by Czechoslovakia, in spite of the Franco-Czech pact, without first consulting the Czechoslovak Government, and now took the view that what had once been promised must be adhered to. With reference to the Anglo-French guarantee, Daladier likewise rejected the Czechoslovak objection previously mentioned in the discussion, that the evacuation could only take place when new defenses had been completed on Czech territory. An evacuation of the purely German area could thus take place quickly; difficulties would only arise where there were language enclaves. It seemed to him that in this district an international occupation by British, Italian, and French forces was appropriate. Moreover, in his opinion, geographical, economic, and political realities must be taken into consideration, as additions to Wilson's principle of self-determination. Furthermore, the principle of exchange of populations used in Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, and Poland could be applied with regard to the language enclaves.

The Führer agreed that districts with a doubtful German majority should not be occupied by German troops, but should at first be occupied by international units. If point 2) were accepted, he was prepared to act generously when determining the frontier as far as territory was concerned. The proposition put forward by Daladier, that economic, geographical, and political factors should also be taken into consideration in delimiting the frontier seemed to him dangerous, for it was to this very idea that the Czechoslovak State owed its creation in 1918. At that time a structure economically, but not nationally, viable had been created. Moreover, economic difficulties were more easily overcome than national difficulties, all the more so as Czechoslovakia, which was not an old cultural nation, could not assimilate German elements.

After a lengthy discussion on the different meaning of the word "guarantee" in Great Britain and on the Continent, the point was

referred to a drafting committee for rewording. This committee, after lengthy deliberation, agreed on the preamble appearing in the text of the agreement as well as a rewording of paragraph 2).

At this point the meeting broke up into individual discussions, the subject of which, with the aid of maps, was particularly the zones to be evacuated and the area in which a plebiscite was to be held. In the course of these discussions Daladier proposed the exchange of a comparatively large zone of predominantly German territory on the Silesian frontier in which Czech fortifications were situated for a corresponding strip of Czech territory in the Böhmerwald, remarking that the existence of the Czech fortifications was not the only reason for this proposal, but that he was making it on grounds of communication policy and for psychological reasons.

The Führer rejected this proposal because of the purely German character of the territory in question, but, after lengthy negotiations, expressed his willingness to accept a formula appearing in the text of the agreement (see paragraph 6 of the Munich Agreement) on frontier adjustments.

Daladier expressed his sincere thanks to the Führer for this and said that the acceptance of this formula would considerably ease the position in France. He would report in France that the Führer had made this personal gesture to him (Daladier).

The decisions reached as a result of the individual discussions between the statesmen were then finally formulated by a drafting committee of the Four Powers, in collaboration with the legal advisers of the delegations, and submitted for the first reading about 10 o'clock in the evening. The final text of the agreement was submitted at 11 o'clock and signed in four languages between 11 and 12 o'clock. At the same time were accepted: a supplementary statement originating in a suggestion by Mussolini on the solution of the problem of the Polish and Magyar minorities; also an additional agreement on a guarantee to be given for the new frontiers of the Czech State; a supplement, stating that all questions arising out of the transfer of territory were within the competence of the new international committee which was to be formed, as well as a further supplement on the composition of the international commission in Berlin.

In conclusion, the Führer thanked the foreign statesmen for their acceptance of his invitation to Munich for the Four-Power talks, and also for their efforts to achieve the happy result of the negotiations. The German people, as well as the other peoples concerned, would welcome this result with the greatest joy, and, in expressing his thanks, he did so at the same time in the name of the German people.

Chamberlain replied on behalf of the foreign statesmen and associated himself with the Führer's remarks on the satisfaction of the peoples concerned with the outcome of Munich. Furthermore he stressed the importance of the agreement for the future development of European politics.

ERICH KORDT

No. 675

2871/564775-81

*Agreement Signed at Munich Between Germany, the United Kingdom, France, and Italy*<sup>17</sup>

SEPTEMBER 29, 1938.

AGREEMENT REACHED ON SEPTEMBER 29, 1938, BETWEEN GERMANY,  
THE UNITED KINGDOM, FRANCE, AND ITALY

Germany, the United Kingdom, France, and Italy, taking into consideration the agreement, which has been already reached in principle for the cession to Germany of the Sudeten German territory, have agreed on the following terms and conditions governing the said cession and the measures consequent thereon, and by this agreement they each hold themselves responsible for the steps necessary to secure its fulfillment.

- 1) The evacuation will begin on October 1st.
- 2) The United Kingdom, France, and Italy agree that the evacuation of the territory shall be completed by October 10th, without any existing installations having been destroyed, and that the Czechoslovak Government will be held responsible for carrying out the evacuation without damage to the said installations.
- 3) The conditions governing the evacuation will be laid down in detail by an international commission composed of representatives of Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Czechoslovakia.
- 4) The occupation by stages of the predominantly German territory by German troops will begin on October 1st. The four territories marked on the attached map<sup>18</sup> will be occupied by German troops in the following order: the territory marked number I on the 1st and 2d of October, the territory marked number II on the 2d and 3d of October, the territory marked number III on the 3d, 4th, and 5th of October, the territory marked number IV on the 6th and 7th of October. The remaining territory of preponderantly German character will be ascertained by the aforesaid international commission forthwith and be occupied by German troops by the 10th of October.

<sup>17</sup> The text reproduced is in English in the original and is identical with document No. 4 in the British White Paper, Great Britain, Cmd. 5848: *Further Documents Respecting Czechoslovakia, Including the Agreement Concluded at Munich on September 29, 1938*. Both it and the German version were signed.

<sup>18</sup> Appendix VII.



5) The international commission referred to in paragraph 3) will determine the territories in which a plebiscite is to be held. These territories will be occupied by international bodies until the plebiscite has been completed. The same commission will fix the conditions in which the plebiscite is to be held, taking as a basis the conditions of the Saar plebiscite. The commission will also fix a date, not later than the end of November, on which the plebiscite will be held.

6) The final determination of the frontiers will be carried out by the international commission. This commission will also be entitled to recommend to the four Powers, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, and Italy, in certain exceptional cases, minor modifications in the strictly ethnographical determination of the zones which are to be transferred without plebiscite.

7) There will be a right of option into and out of the transferred territories, the option to be exercised within 6 months from the date of this agreement. A German-Czechoslovak commission shall determine the details of the option, consider ways of facilitating the transfer of population and settle questions of principle arising out of the said transfer.

8) The Czechoslovak Government will, within a period of 4 weeks from the date of this agreement, release from their military and police forces any Sudeten Germans who may wish to be released, and the Czechoslovak Government will within the same period release Sudeten German prisoners who are serving terms of imprisonment for political offenses.

ADOLF HITLER

ED. DALADIER

MUSSOLINI

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN

MUNICH, September 29, 1938.

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ANNEX TO THE AGREEMENT

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the French Government have entered into the above agreement on the basis that they stand by the offer, contained in paragraph 6 of the Anglo-French proposals of September 19th, relating to an international guarantee of the new boundaries of the Czechoslovak State against unprovoked aggression.

When the question of the Polish and Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia has been settled, Germany and Italy for their part will give a guarantee to Czechoslovakia.

ADOLF HITLER

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN

MUSSOLINI

ED. DALADIER

MUNICH, September 29, 1938.

The four Heads of Government here present agree that the international commission, provided for in the agreement signed by them today, shall consist of the State Secretary in the German Foreign Office, the British, French, and Italian Ambassadors accredited in Berlin, and a representative to be nominated by the Government of Czechoslovakia.

ADOLF HITLER  
NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN  
MUSSOLINI  
ED. DALADIER

MUNICH, September 29, 1938.

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#### ADDITIONAL DECLARATION

The Heads of the Governments of the four Powers declare that the problems of the Polish and Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia, if not settled within 3 months by agreement between the respective Governments, shall form the subject of another meeting of the Heads of the Governments of the four Powers here present.

ADOLF HITLER  
NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN  
MUSSOLINI  
ED. DALADIER

MUNICH, September 29, 1938.

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#### SUPPLEMENTARY DECLARATION

All questions which may arise out of the transfer of the territory shall be considered as coming within the terms of reference to the international commission.

ADOLF HITLER  
NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN  
MUSSOLINI  
ED. DALADIER

MUNICH, September 29, 1938.

## No. 676

2871/563533

*The Anglo-German Declaration*<sup>19</sup>

SEPTEMBER 30, 1938.

(Pol. I 1324 g. Rs.)

We, the German Führer and Chancellor, and the British Prime Minister, have had a further meeting today and are agreed in recognizing that the question of Anglo-German relations is of the first importance for the two countries and for Europe.

We regard the agreement signed last night and the Anglo-German Naval Agreement as symbolic of the desire of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again.

We are resolved that the method of consultation shall be the method adopted to deal with any other questions that may concern our two countries, and we are determined to continue our efforts to remove possible sources of difference, and thus to contribute to assure the peace of Europe.

ADOLF HITLER  
NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN

SEPTEMBER 30, 1938.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The original signed text reproduced is in English.

<sup>20</sup> The date is in Chamberlain's handwriting.

## APPENDICES

## Appendix I

### ANALYSIS OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ARCHIVES

The schedule attached to this note gives a rough picture of the captured Foreign Ministry archives. When captured, the documents were, for the most part, packed in bundles. On average, each bundle contains some six files or volumes, totalling perhaps a thousand to fifteen hundred pages. The schedule purports to show only whether there is much or little material. Qualitatively, the table tells nothing: one bundle may be more important than a hundred other bundles.

No thorough qualitative analysis has yet been attempted of the materials dating from 1867 to 1936. To 1920, the files seem intact. In the German destruction list of April 1945, the most important files from 1932 to 1936 were included, but only three bundles are known to have been destroyed. Unfortunately, these bundles comprised a large part of the material on armament questions; four bundles on this subject survive. While the Germans were moving the secret political files for 1920-1936 and those of the Cultural Department, an explosion destroyed some and damaged others; the surviving files suggest that the loss was not as serious as the classification of the documents suggests. With these exceptions, it can be tentatively stated that the evacuated archives of the Foreign Ministry are intact from 1867 to 1936.

As far as possible, the files of the years from 1936 have been examined. The Foreign Ministry filing system was reorganized in that year to conform to a radical change in the structure of the Political and Economic Departments of the Ministry. The filing system, therefore, can be most clearly studied in relation to the organization of the offices it served. The division of responsibility within the Foreign Ministry on June 1, 1938, is shown at Appendix II.

At the top was the Reich Foreign Minister (Neurath until February 1938, then Ribbentrop). The files of his personal secretariat bore the general title "Office of the Reich Foreign Minister" (*Büro RAM*). Part of these files were destroyed on Ribbentrop's orders, and only a fragment was captured. It is obvious that the collection contained material of great importance. Some of this material is recorded on the German microfilm mentioned in the General Introduction, but it has not been possible to establish the exact relation of the film to the files. However, interrogation of officials of Ribbentrop's staff has shown that most of the documents they considered important have been recorded on the film. In any case the film, whose authenticity has been fully established, is of the greatest value, since it contains many highly important documents of which no other copies have been found. The last documents recorded on the film date from 1943; after that we have a few records of important conferences and other documents of similar quality preserved in a box belonging to Paul Otto Schmidt, the senior interpreter at the Foreign Ministry. Unfortunately, the records of the personal staff which accompanied Ribbentrop on his various moves in the latter stages of the war (while the *Büro RAM* remained in Berlin) are not in our possession.

Next under the Foreign Minister came the State Secretary. Dieckhoff was Acting State Secretary August 1936–March 1937, when Mackensen was appointed and served until February 1938; his successors were Weizsäcker (1938–1943) and Steengracht von Moyland (from March 1943). The State Secretary's office (*Büro des Staatssekretärs*) kept extensive files which are almost complete. They include both the State Secretary's own memoranda and correspondence and also copies of telegrams and other documents handled by the different departments of the Foreign Ministry. The only known gap is the file on Anglo-German relations, probably from the spring of 1938 until April 1939. Some of this material, however, is preserved in other files. It is, moreover, important to note here that German Foreign Ministry practice, unlike that, for instance, of the British Foreign Office, involved the preparation of copies of documents for each interested department instead of the circulation of a single document which returned to a central registry of files. Thus, the same document may be found in the files of several different departments, a fact of great assistance when dealing with incomplete archives. On the whole, the State Secretary's files form the most important single collection for the period after 1936.

Of the other major departments of the Foreign Ministry, the most important was the Political Department (*Politische Abteilung*). Until February 1938, the Director of this Department was Weizsäcker, and he was succeeded by Woermann, for whom the title of Under State Secretary (*Unterstaatssekretär*) was revived. The Under State Secretary had his own files, but these do not in general compare with those of the State Secretary in range and value. By 1938 the Political Department was divided into ten sections, though this number was increased by a further seven during the war. The bulk of these sections (II to X) dealt with geographical regions, and their responsibility until September 1943 was divided as follows: II. Western Europe, including France and Great Britain; III. Southern Europe (except Italy); IV. Southeastern Europe (divided into two sections, (a) Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and (b) Austria and Czechoslovakia); V. Eastern Europe; VI. Scandinavia and the Baltic States; VII. Orient (excluding the Far East); VIII. Eastern Asia and Australia; IX. America; X. Africa. The only section of the Political Department which, before the war, was not concerned with a particular geographical area was Pol. I. In addition to dealing with general policy, Pol. I comprised subsections dealing with military (*M*) and air (*L*) questions. It had a section dealing with the League of Nations (*Vbd*) until 1939, and other *ad hoc* sections were added from time to time including one for National Defense (*Landesverteidigung*).

Secret documents of the Political Department kept at the departmental level were apparently kept together in the *Pol. Geheim Büro*. Most of its files are not in our possession as they were not passed to the Political Archives for evacuation with the remainder of the files.

The files of the remaining departments have less importance. The secret files of the Legal Department (*Rechts Abteilung*), headed for many years by *Ministerialdirektor* Gaus, are missing, since all 23 bundles listed for destruction were actually destroyed. This is unfortunate, since distribution lists on other documents show that the Legal Department received many of the most important political papers.

The files of the Personnel Department (*Personal- und Haushalts-Abteilung*) were also partly destroyed, but this is probably a less serious loss.

**NOTE :** The gap in the files on Anglo-German relations from the spring of 1938 to the spring of 1939, mentioned on p. 1022, line 8 from top, has now been filled (cf. Note on p. ix).

(91503)

The files of the Press and Cultural Departments (*Presse- und Kulturpolitische Abteilungen*) are apparently complete, except for the secret files of the Press Department.

The secret files of the Economic Policy Department (*Wirtschaftspolitische Abteilung, Handelspolitische Abteilung*) were destroyed, but a large number of non-secret files survived. In addition, the *Handakten*, or special personal files compiled for the Director, Wiehl, and his deputy, Clodius, contain copies of secret and top secret documents of some importance. There are many such *Handakten* for officials of other departments, normally reflecting their own special interests, but sometimes containing copies of important documents not circulated elsewhere.

In January 1937 Ernst Wilhelm Bohle, the chief of the organization concerned with Reich-Germans living abroad (*Auslandsorganisation*), entered the Foreign Ministry, and in December 1937 was given the title of State Secretary. In spite of the fact that he ranked level with the State Secretary and reported directly to the Foreign Minister, Bohle's files have yielded little of value and, indeed, he sometimes complained himself that he was inadequately informed of current Foreign Ministry activities.

For many years there had existed a special internal office in the Foreign Ministry (*Sonderreferat Deutschland*) responsible for questions concerning the relations between foreign and domestic policy. In December 1938 Ribbentrop added another special office for Party questions (*Referat Partei*) responsible for liaison between the Foreign Ministry and all Party organizations. Its chief was Martin Luther, an old collaborator of Ribbentrop in the *Dienststelle Ribbentrop*. In May 1940 these two offices were amalgamated into one (*Abteilung Deutschland*), and during the war years Luther succeeded in increasing the scope of his activities, including, in 1942, control over a directorate of propaganda abroad (*Auslandspropagandaleitstelle*). However, in February 1943 Luther was arrested and sent to a concentration camp on charges of plotting against Ribbentrop. The place of the *Abteilung Deutschland* was taken by two "groups" (*Gruppe Inland I und II*) directly under the Minister. The files of these various offices, though numerous, are far from complete.

The files of the German diplomatic missions abroad are comparable in bulk with those of the Foreign Ministry and are very important for filling gaps in the Foreign Ministry records. The files of the Embassies in Rome and Moscow, and of the Legation in Prague, are particularly valuable. Most of the secret files of the Paris Embassy were destroyed by the German archivists in accordance with the order of April 10, 1945, but those that survive contain documents of the war years not available elsewhere. The files of the London Embassy were not mentioned in this order, but no secret files later than 1936 have been found; it is possible that, in this and similar cases, the files had already been destroyed at the Embassy.

Of the files from other sources in the collection, the largest are those of the Old and New Reich Chancellery (*Alte and Neue Reichskanzlei*). These are mainly concerned with internal affairs, but those of the Old (pre-Nazi) Reich Chancellery contain minutes of Cabinet meetings at which foreign policy was discussed.

It will be noted that few of the files continue to the last years of the war. Presumably the current files remained in Berlin or in the Mühlhausen area. If not destroyed, these files may be in the hands of the Soviet Government. The British and American Governments have in their possession certain papers dating from the last weeks of the war when Doenitz's Government was func-



tioning at Flensburg, and these will be used for the later volumes of this series. However, in the present collection the record for the last months of the Nazi regime must inevitably remain incomplete.

*Schedule of Documents in the Custody of the Foreign Office  
and the Department of State<sup>1</sup>*

No.	Division	Subdivision	Period <sup>2</sup>	Bundles
<b>A) DOCUMENTS OF THE FORMER GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTRY</b>				
<b>I. DOCUMENTS PRIOR TO 1920</b>				
1	I a	Pol.	1867-1920	4296
2		World War	1914-1918	547
3		General Headquarters	1915-1918	58
4		Welfenfonds	1870-1914	20
5	Treaties	Pol.	1867-1920	107
6	Friedensabteilung		1919-1920	7
7	II—Restakten		1853-1920	252
8	Missions	Bogotá	1913-1918	58
9		Petersburg	1816-1914	206
10		Tangier	1845-1914	88
11		Cetinje	1906-1914	1
12	Conferences		1890-1920	22
<b>II. DOCUMENTS 1920-1936</b>				
13	World War		1921	16
14	Office of the Reich Minister		1920-1936	175
15	Office of the State Secretary		1920-1936	100
16	Handakten of various Heads and Deputy Heads of De- partments	Ritter (Sonderreferat W)	1920-1936	63
17		Heads of Departments II-IV	1917-1935	50
18		Gaus (Department V— Legal)	1914-1930	64
19		Miscellaneous Hand- akten (so-called) Kleine Archive)	1914-1932	85
20	Special Departments and Sections	Friedensabteilung (later Department II F)	1920	140
21		Friedensvertrag	1920-1921	50

<sup>1</sup> For the period before 1936, the schedule of documents was compiled from fragmentary German lists, not from the documents themselves. Since the documents have not yet been examined, it is possible to speak with certainty only of the number of bundles; it is impossible to describe with precision the contents of each part of the schedule.

<sup>2</sup> The dates indicated in the fourth column are the extreme dates of the first and last document in each series. For instance, for practical purposes the *Pol.* files numbered 80-91 end with December 1940. Isolated documents only are found after this date. Similarly, the *Inland* series numbered 69-74 are of most value for the period after 1938, though a few documents go back to 1929.

No.	Division	Subdivision	Period	Bundles
22		Referat Deutschland	1920-1936	89
23		Sonderreferat W— (Transportation and Shipping Questions, pre- viously in Depart- ment IV)	1920-1936	840
24		W Rep. (Reparations)	1920-1936	230
25	Secret papers of Depart- ment F and the Geo- graphic Divisions		1920-1936	467
26	Department II	II. Pol.	1920-1936	634
27		II W	1920-1936	514
28		II be (occupied areas)	1920-1936	470
29		II F Air	1921-1936	104
30		II F Military, Navy	1921-1936	130
31		II F Secret	1932-1936	4
32		II F Disarmament	1921-1936	100
33		League of Nations (previously Sonder- referat)	1923-1936	400
34	Department III	III Pol.	1920-1936	449
35		III W	1920-1936	167
36	Department IV	IV Pol.	1920-1936	892
37		IV W	1920-1936	278
38	Treaties	Department II	1920-1936	150 <sup>a</sup>
39		Department III	1920-1936	42 <sup>a</sup>
40		Department IV	1920-1936	160 <sup>a</sup>
41		Shipping	1920-1936	24
42	Commissions <sup>a</sup>		1920-1924	300
43	Delegations <sup>a</sup>		1920-1932	130
44	Plenipotentiaries, Commissioners <sup>a</sup>		1921-1923	140
45	Representatives of the Foreign Ministry <sup>a</sup>		1920	17
46	Plebiscite Area in Upper Silesia <sup>a</sup>			
47	War Guilt Section		1920-1936	131
48	Committee of Inquiry into the War Guilt Question		1923-1925	12
49	Reichstag Investigating Committee		1914-1926	20
III. DOCUMENTS 1936-1945				
50	Reich Foreign Minister		1936-1943	9
51	Dienststelle Ribbentrop		1935-1944	36
52	State Secretary		1936-1944	127

<sup>a</sup> Reckoned in files; an estimated figure.<sup>a</sup> Mostly relating to peace negotiations and treaties.

No.	Division	Period	Bundles
53	Head of the Auslandsorganisation in the Foreign Ministry	1937-1943	40
<i>Miscellaneous Handakten</i>			
54	Ettel	1939-1944	3
55	Etzdorf (Representative of the Foreign Ministry to the OKH)	1939-1944	6
56	Hencke	1922-1944	9
57	Hewel	1937-1943	9
58	Keppler	1930-1944	5
59	Krümmer	1934-1943	2
60	Künsberg	1938-1943	29
61	Luther	1936-1943	18
62	Megerle	1934-1942	7
63	Rahn	1942-1943	2
64	Ritter	1938-1945	14
65	Schmidt (Press)	1938-1943	10
66	Schmidt (Interpreter)	1938-1944	12 <sup>a</sup>
67	Representative of the Foreign Ministry to the Reich Commissioner for the Ukraine	1941-1944	4
68	Liaison Office of the Commissioner for Information Services	1940-1943	16
<i>Groups Inland I and II</i>			
69	Inland I D	1938-1945	22
70	Inland I Partei	1929-1944	101
71	Inland II A and B	1935-1945	355
72	Inland II C	1933-1945	51
73	Inland II D	1929-1945	47
74	Inland II Geheim	1936-1945	117
75	Referat D VI (Bauten)	1938-1943	21
<i>Papers of the Political Department</i>			
76	Under State Secretary Pol.	1936-1943	27
77	Pol. I League of Nations	1936-1940	6
78	Pol. I M	1936-1944	56
79	Pol. I Air	1936-1940	56
80	Pol. II	1936-1944	43
81	Pol. III	1936-1942	79
82	Pol. IV	1936-1944	110
83	Pol. V	1936-1944	144
84	Pol. VI	1936-1944	26
85	Pol. VII	1936-1943	10
86	Pol. VIII	1936-1941	27
87	Pol. IX	1936-1944	15
88	Pol. X	1936-1944	5

<sup>a</sup> Reckoned in files.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Division</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Bundles</i>
89	Pol. XI (War Guilt Question)	1941-1943	3
90	Pol. XII (Preparations for Conclusion of Peace)	1941-1945	1
91	Pol. XIII (Russland Gremium)	1936-1942	11
92	Pol. Geheim	1936-1943	25
93	Directives Pol. II	1940-1943	18
94	Handakten Wiehl	1921-1943	62
95	Handakten Clodius	1921-1945	65
96	Handakten Collection (Ha. Pol.)	1914-1944	76
97	Papers of the Economic Policy Department	1936-1945	825
98	Papers of the Legal Department	1880-1945	3264
99	Papers of the Cultural Policy Department	1890-1945	1885
<i>Treaties</i>			
100	Political Department	1936-1944	80 <sup>a</sup>
101	Economic Policy Department	1936-1944	44
102	Legal Department	1920-1943	400
103	Cultural Policy Department	1920-1941	28
104	Press Department	1915-1944	520
105	Protocol Department	1920-1944	227
106	Personnel Department	1860-1945	5042
107	Accounts Division	1920-1944	1100
108	Politisches Archiv (Geschäftsakten)	1920-1944	185
109	Referat Pers. (Historisches Referat)	1937-1939	4
110	Asservate zum Politischen Archiv <sup>b</sup>	1920-1944	15
111	Politisches Archiv (Geschäftsakten Meisdorf, Friedland, Degnershausen)	1936-1944	6
112	Asservate <sup>c</sup>	1860-1945	122
113	Nachlässe <sup>a</sup>	1860-1945	300
<i>Missions</i>			
114	Ankara	1875-1943	213
115	Athens	1927-1940	28
116	Belgrade	1876-1944	71
117	Bern	1854-1943	860
118	Brussels	1845-1940	89

<sup>a</sup> Reckoned in files.

<sup>b</sup> Small miscellaneous accessions to the archives from various sources.

<sup>c</sup> Documents of defunct sections or former officials.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Division</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Bundles</i>
119	Budapest	1910-1944	209
120	Bucharest	1867-1940	177
121	Hague	1858-1944	172
122	Helsinki	1889-1944	27
123	Copenhagen	1862-1944	139
124	Kovno	1895-1941	246
125	Lisbon	1869-1943	277
126	London	1861-1937	433
127	Luxembourg	1879-1940	61
128	Madrid	1865-1942	580
129	Moscow	1921-1941	216
130	Oslo	1890-1940	610
131	Paris	1871-1944	1438
132	Prague	1918-1939	333
133	Pressburg	1922-1944	390
134	Reval	1919-1941	207
135	Riga	1868-1941	273
136	Rome (Quirinal)	1818-1943	1517
137	Rome (Vatican)	1849-1943	179
138	Sofia	1879-1944	113
139	Stockholm	1825-1941	368
140	Warsaw	1920-1939	193
141	Washington	1870-1938	504
142	Vienna	1867-1939	758
143	Zagreb	1921-1944	773
<i>Missions—Secret Papers</i>			
144	Antwerp	1931-1939	1
145	Athens	1937-1938	1
146	Bern	1939-1942	5
147	Bucharest	1936-1942	3
148	Ciudad Trujillo	1941	1
149	Lisbon	1928-1943	8
150	Madrid	1936-1943	9
151	Moscow	1937-1941	18
152	Paris	1938-1944	26
153	Prague	1938-1939	1
154	Rome (Quirinal)	1920-1943	66
155	Rome (Vatican)	1903-1942	7
156	Sofia	1931-1938	1
157	Tirana	1924-1943	6
158	Zagreb	1940-1944	28
159	Special Commissioner Southeast	1944	1
160	Consulates	1845-1944	4270*
161	Miscellaneous Documents		800*
<b>B) DOCUMENTS NOT ORIGINATING IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY</b>			
162	Handakten Epp	1900-1945	36
163	Handakten Frank	1918-1945	86
164	Handakten Speer	1936-1945	18

\* Estimated figure.

## APPENDIX I

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<i>No.</i>	<i>Division</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Bundles</i>
165	Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut	1933-1945	69
166	Alte Reichskanzlei	1920-1933	3665 <sup>10</sup>
167	Neue Reichskanzlei	1933-1945	1630 <sup>10</sup>
168	Präsidialkanzlei	1919-1940	125
169	Chancellery of the Deputy of the Führer	1933-1942	168 <sup>10</sup>
170	Office of the Führer's Adjutants	1935-1940	328 <sup>10</sup>
171	Party Offices	1930	15
172	Various documents of foreign origin	1912-1945	95

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<sup>10</sup> Reckoned in files.

## Appendix II

### ORGANIZATION OF THE GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTRY ON JUNE 1, 1938<sup>1</sup>

#### THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER

von Ribbentrop

*Attached:* L. R. Dr. Kordt (Erich)

Att. Spitzzy

*Office:* A. R. Klee

#### THE STATE SECRETARY OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY

Baron von Weizsäcker

*Office:* L. R. Dr. Siegfried

A. R. Reifegerste

#### THE HEAD OF THE AUSLANDSORGANISATION IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY

State Secretary Bohle (Ernst Wilhelm)

*Attached:* L. R. Fischer (Rob.)

A. R. Rust

#### STATE SECRETARY FOR SPECIAL DUTIES

Keppler (Wilhelm)

Ministerialbürodirektor (Acting): A. R. Kniestedt (Erich)

#### *Protocol Department*

Diplomatic Corps in Berlin, foreign consuls in German Reich, audiences with the Führer and Reich Chancellor, ceremonial, decorations:

Gesandter I. Kl. von Bülow-Schwante; V. L. R. Dr. Boltze; G. K. z. D. Schuberth; L. R. Dr. Baron von Dörnberg; L. S. von Nostiz (Gottfried); L. S. von Rantzau; Ref. Pappritz; Ref. Wagner; H. R. Pingel; A. R. Propp; A. R. Splettstösser; A. R. Vogel; O. I. Wilcke.

Head Clerk:

Kzler. Gaerte.

Internal German Affairs (German Section):

Gesandter I. Kl. von Bülow-Schwante; V. L. R. Dr. Hinrichs; L. R. Dr. Schumburg; L. S. Walluscheck von Wallfeld; H. R. Jüngling; A. R. Heinrich.

<sup>1</sup> The initials and terms preceding the names in this list indicate the title or grade of each official, and are explained in the Glossary, Appendix V.

## PERSONNEL AND BUDGET DEPARTMENT (PERS.)

Personal data on members of foreign service. Matters relating to pay and welfare. General administration of Foreign Ministry and of diplomatic missions abroad. Questions relating to budget, finance, and accounts. Political archives. Library. Cipher service. Language service. General questions concerning the organization of the foreign service.

Head of Department:	Ministerialdirektor Dr. Prüfer.
Deputy Head of Department:	V. L. R. Dr. Dienstmann.
Attached:	A. R. Stempel.
Head of budget and financial affairs:	V. L. R. Schellert.
Special duties:	V. L. R. z. D. Schroetter.
Pers. H Organization of foreign service abroad, training of candidates for the higher service, personal data of higher officials, of honorary consuls, experts, etc., information center:	V. L. R. Dr. Rohde; L. R. Dr. Resenberg; H. R. Dr. Schwarz (Richard); A. R. Eich; A. R. Diederich; A. R. Garbe.
Pers. M Personal data on other officials and employees, organization and simplification of working of the Ministry:	V. L. R. Schroeder; L. R. Rock; A. R. Kownatzki (Walter); R. O. I. Voigt; R. O. I. Erlewein.
Pers. G Decorations for faithful service:	M. B. Dir. H. R. Schönhertz.
Pers. R Preparation and general administration of the budget, and general questions relating thereto; charges and income revenues, general cash and accounts, preliminary examination of accounts. Administration of funds for official requirements, newspapers and books, postal, telegraph and telephone charges, household expenses, etc., for missions abroad:	L. R. Rieger; H. R. Pfeiffer; H. R. Edert; Rech. R. Lachnitt; H. R. Engel; A. R. Stadelmann; A. R. Guenther; A. R. Schulz (Erich); A. R. Klauenberg; A. R. Nachtigal; A. R. Bartsch; A. R. Niemandt; A. R. Frensch; A. R. Blenk; A. R. Krüger; R. O. I. Dittmann; R. O. I. Ressler; R. I. Jasiak; K. S. Eisenhart.
Pers. B Salaries and wages, welfare and maintenance, travel and removal expenses of officials and employees of the foreign service and other persons; official expenditure of honorary consulates:	K. Engelmann; A. R. Brose; Kzler. Lehmann; A. R. Entrodacher; A. R. Reinicke (Georg); A. R. Wegener; A. R. Roethig; A. R. Drewski; Kzler. Bucholz; R. Amtm. Bunze; R. Amtm. Belling; R. Amtm. Royle; O. I. Göring (Max); O. I. Wacker; O. I. Scholz (Otto); R. O. I. Blaack; Landesinsp. Langner (Conrad).
Pers. D Administration of funds for official requirements, newspapers and books, postal, telegraph and telephone charges, household administration and sundry expenses of	L. R. Balsler; K. (G. K.) Fhr. von Ungetter; K. z. D. Dr. Bergfeld; A. R. Winzer; H. R. Steinicke; A. R. Bähre; A. R. Ullrich (Bruno); A. R.



Foreign Ministry; unforeseen extras; upkeep of Government (Reich) buildings:	Herold; A. R. Panten; A. R. Viertel; A. R. Seyser; A. R. Schütz; A. R. Thiele; R. Amtm. Blessing; R. I. Hoffmann; M. Kzl. S. Riese Weber; M. Kzl. S. Hammes.
Purchasing Section:	
Directly subordinate to Deputy Head of Department:	
Pers. S Courier matters, security matters at home and abroad:	K. z. D. (G. K.) Hermans; M. Kzl. O. S. Oberjürgen.
Pers. K	transferred July 11, 1938, to Cultural Department (Min. Kzl. S. Hammes)
Pers. (Censorship section)	
Inspector of Accounts:	L. R. Rieger.
Legation accounts:	Accountant: A. R. Eger. Head bookkeeper: H. R. Kiem. Cashier: A. R. Hintze. A. R. Krüger-Kühn; H. R. Kniestedt (Max); A. R. Kirmis; A. R. Beuse; A. R. Rhinow; A. R. Reinike (Albert); R. Amtm. Benick; R. O. I. Müller; R. O. I. Brandt; R. O. I. Schwarz (Paul); R. O. I. Hahlweg; R. I. Kluck; R. I. Kupke; R. I. Colell; R. I. Wustrow.
Pers. Bibl. Library; acquisition of books of reference for departments and sections; supply of literature to posts abroad:	O. R. R. Dr. Holleck-Weithmann; Bibl. Dr. Wender; Bibl. Insp. Lubig; Bibl. Insp. Hanfland.
Pol. Arch. Political Archives, historical section:	L. S. Dr. Frauendienst; Dr. Ullrich (Joh); H. R. Glasow; A. R. Langner (Max).
Pers. hist.	
Pers. Z Cipher and communications, including necessary equipment:	V. L. R. Selchow; O. R. R. Schaufler; R. R. Dr. Kunze; R. R. Langlotz; R. R. Steinbrinck; R. R. Paschke; R. R. Scherschmidt; R. R. Hoffmann (Ernst); R. R. Dr. Kasper; R. R. Dr. Roy; R. R. Bailovic; R. R. Weingart. Tech. Insp. von Ahsen; R. I. Drews; R. I. Wittke; Verw. Assist. Bohuslaw.

Cipher Office:	H. R. Sergeois; H. R. Klambunde; H. R. Schultz (Willy); A. R. Oehlandt; A. R. Hübscher; A. R. Pellmann; A. R. Mieschel; A. R. Raddünz; R. Amtm. Zorn; R. I. Niepel; R. I. Popiersch.
Telegram registry:	H. R. Lührs; H. R. Pifrément; A. R. Ziem.
Pers. L Language services:	O. R. R. Gautier; L. R. Dr. Schmidt (Paul); R. R. Dr. Schultheiss.
Head Clerk:	A. R. Schmidt (Alwin).
Main Office (Reception):	H. R. Schimpke; H. R. Heyer; A. R. Schmidt (Wilh.); A. R. Dux; A. R. Hoppe; A. R. Reiner.
Central Chancery:	Head of Chancery: M. Kzl. O. S. a. D. Baumbach.
Messenger Service:	Head of Messenger Service: Günther (Friedrich).
Housekeeper's department:	Verwalt. Assistent Pasewalk.

## POLITICAL DEPARTMENT (POL.)

Head of Department:	Ministerialdirektor Under State Secretary Dr. Woermann.
Deputy to Head of Department:.	Ges. I. Kl. Prince Bismarck.
Pol. I League of Nations, military questions, armaments, aviation, defense:	V. L. R. von Kamphoener; L. R. Schultz-Sponholz; L. R. Dr. Baron von der Heyden-Rynsch; L. S. von Kessel; Assess. (Att.) Dr. Kessler; A. R. Eckardt; A. R. Steinmayer; A. R. Grimm.
Pol. II Western Europe (Gt. Britain, Ireland, British possessions—unless dealt with elsewhere—France—North Africa, Morocco, Tunis—Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Luxembourg):	V. L. R. von Rintelen; L. R. Baron Marschall von Bieberstein (Adolf); L. S. Dr. von Holleben; L. S. Dr. Count Calice; A. R. Gudohr; A. R. Rose.
Pol. III Southern Europe—except Italy— a) Spain, Portugal:	L. R. Dr. Schwendemann; L. R. Count du Moulin-Eckart; A. R. Haack.
b) Vatican:	L. R. Dr. Haidlen.

- Pol. IV Southeast Europe—including Italy—  
 a) Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy (Abyssinia, Libya), Yugo-  
 slavica, Rumania, Hungary: V. L. R. Dr. Heinburg; L. R. Dr. Busse; L. R. Mohr-  
 mann; A. R. Gläser; R. Amtm. Jahn (Willy).  
 b) Austria (liquidation), Czech-  
 oslovakia: L. R. Dr. Altenburg.
- Pol. V Eastern Europe (Poland, Danzig, Soviet Union): V. L. R. Dr. Schliep; L. R. Bergmann; K. Meyer-Heyden-  
 hagen; K. z. D. Ehrst; L. S. von Filz; Assess. (Att.) Dr. von Thadden; H. R. Brembach; O. I. Windhausen; K. S. Hage-  
 meier; L. R. Mackeben.
- Pol. VI Scandinavia and Baltic States (Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Finland, Estonia, Lat-  
 via, Lithuania—Memel Terri-  
 tory): V. L. R. Dr. von Grundherr; L. R. Count Hohenthal; L. S. Dr. Doertenbach; R. Amtm. Bornstedt.
- Pol. VII Middle East (Egypt, Afghanis-  
 tan, Arabia, Ceylon, Cyprus, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, India, Iraq, Iran, Sudan): V. L. R. Dr. von Hentig; Dr. Schlobies.
- Pol. VIII Far East and Australia (Japan, Japanese mandated territories, China, Manchukuo, Mongolia, French Indo-China, Siam, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Netherlands East Indies, Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, South Sea terri-  
 tories): V. L. R. Dr. von Schmieden; L. R. Dr. Count Strach-  
 witz; L. R. Dr. Voskamp.
- Pol. IX America: North America (U.S.A. with possessions—except Phil-  
 ippines—Canada), Central and South America, Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic: V. L. R. Freytag; V. L. R. Pistor; L. S. Dr. Anderson; R. O. I. Wildegans.
- Pol. MC Questions concerning confiscated German property in U.S.A. Ger-  
 man-American Mixed Claims Commission: Ges. z. D. Rohland.
- Pol. X Africa (except Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, Italian possessions, Egypt, Sudan); mandate and colonial questions: L. R. Dr. Strohm; L. R. Dr. Zeitschel; L. S. von Ste-  
 chow; Kzler. Larssen; A. R. Manneschmidt; R. O. I. Metz.

**Pol. Grenz** Frontier treaties and other technical questions concerning Reich frontiers which are the subject of negotiations with foreign governments:

V. L. R. Dr. Roediger (Conrad).

**Head Clerk:**

H. R. Kownatzki (Erich).

**ECONOMIC POLICY DEPARTMENT (W)**

**Head of Department:**

Ministerialdirektor Wiehl.

**Attached:**

Assess. (Att.) Dr. Allardt.

**Deputy to Head of Department:**

V. L. R. Dr. Clodius.

**Directly subordinate to Head of Department:**

**Leader of delegations for commercial treaties:**

V. L. R. (Ges.) Dr. Hemmen;  
L. S. Dr. Baron von Maltzan.

**W I** General section for questions concerning economics and finance:

L. R. Dr. Wingen; L. S. Dr. Pawelke; A. R. Granass.

**W II** Western and Southern Europe—except Great Britain and Italy—(Belgium including colonies and mandated territories, France including colonies, protectorates, and mandated territories, Luxembourg, Netherlands including colonies, Portugal including colonies, Spain including colonies):  
Switzerland:

V. L. R. Sabath; Ges. R. Dr. Kreuzwald; L. S. Dr. Ripken.

L. R. Dr. Wingen.

**W III** Southeast Europe with Italy and Near East (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy with colonies, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Austrian Reunion, Afghanistan, Egypt, Arabia, Cyprus, Iraq, Iran, Palestine, Sudan, Turkey, Yemen):

V. L. R. Moraht; K. z. D. Dr. Kalisch; L. R. Adamovic von Waagstätten; L. S. Dr. Junker; L. S. Dr. Riegner; L. S. Dr. Stille (Wilh.); A. R. Schwenn.

**W IV** Eastern Europe (Danzig, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Memel, Poland, Soviet Russia):

V. L. R. Dr. Schnurre; L. R. Baron von Behr; Assess. (Att.) Dr. Bruns; H. R. Bienotsch.

**W V** Northern Europe (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden); monopolies and whaling:

L. R. Dr. van Scherpenberg; H. R. Bienotsch.

**W VI** Great Britain, Dominions and British possessions except Canada (Australia, Ceylon, Great Britain, British India, Ireland, Malay States, New Zealand, Straits Settlements, South Africa):

V. L. R. Ruter; L. S. Dr. See-los.

**W VII** Far East (China, Hong Kong, Japan, Manchukuo, Philippines, Siam, South Sea territories):

L. R. Dr. Voss; A. R. Grunwald.

- W VIII America
- a) North America including Canada and Mexico (Canada, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Liberia, Mexico, U.S.A.): V. L. R. Dr. Davidsen; V. K. Krienen.
- b) South America including Central America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Salvador, Uruguay, Venezuela): L. R. Dr. Becker; L. S. Dr. Pamperrien; A. R. Schwab.
- W IX Shipping: V. L. R. Bleyert; H. R. Zornow; R. Amtm. Dietzler (Alfred).
- W X Reich Office for Foreign Trade (economic news and information service; chambers of commerce abroad): V. L. R. Dr. Bozenick; H. R. Grunow.
- W XI Raw materials: V. L. R. Bisse; L. S. Dr. Nöhring.
- W XII General transport questions: V. L. R. (Ges.) Dr. Martius.  
Head Clerk: A. R. Voss.

## LEGAL DEPARTMENT (R)

- Head of Department: Ministerialdirektor Dr. Gaus.
- Deputy to Head of Department: V. L. R. Dr. Albrecht.
- R I International Law, cooperation in conclusion of treaties. Trade treaties and concessions. International traffic law except international motor vehicle traffic: L. R. Lohmann; L. S. Dr. Stahlberg; A. R. Steinseifer.
- Index of foreign treaties: A. R. Kayser.
- R II Law concerning diplomatic missions. Extraterritorial rights. Customs matters affecting German and foreign diplomats. Taxation laws: L. R. Günther; A. R. Breitfeld; H. R. Schaub; A. R. Hosp.
- R III a) Nationality. Constitutional and administrative law. Ecclesiastical law: W. L. R. Dr. Siedler; R. O. I. Dahms; O. I. Lang.
- b) Penal law. Legal aid in criminal cases, especially extradition cases. Criminal proceedings against Germans in Germany for offenses committed abroad and against foreigners for offenses committed in Germany: L. R. Dr. Kastner; H. R. Hanck.
- R IV a) Law concerning compulsory registration with the police abroad. Compulsory military service. V. L. R. Dr. Sethe; Min. R. Dr. Schiffner; Ger. Ass. (Attaché) Dr. Hecker; A. R.

- Compulsory labor service. Registration abroad of those liable for military service. German war graves abroad. Persons accused of war crimes. Law covering prisoners of war.
- b) Consular law. Consular agreements. German Consular law (unless dealt with under R VI). Consular jurisdiction. International finance:
- R V Labor laws. International aspects of German Labor Front and the Strength through Joy organization. International Labor Office: Passport Office of Foreign Ministry: V. L. R. Rödiger (Gustav); Gauamtsleiter Dr. Grossmann; A. R. Schaarwächter; A. R. Zarbock. H. R. Reimke.
- R VI Consular jurisdiction in matters of civil law and lawsuits. International legal protection and legal aid in civil matters. International private law: L. R. von Haefthen; L. S. von Nostiz (Siegf.); A. R. Hasenei.
- R VI Na. Matters of inheritance. Procuring of documents abroad relating to civil status and proof of descent: L. S. von Nostiz (Siegf.); A. R. Dietzler (Egon).
- R VII Matters appertaining to Austrian law, transfer of affairs of Department 15 of the former Federal Chancellery to the Foreign Ministry. Treatment of Austrian Governmen. treaties: Gen. Ksl. Dr. Schwagula. Kanzl-Offizial Festl.
- R VIII Passports, welfare, refugees, entry permit, permits of residence: V. L. R. Dr. Kraneck; L. R. Dr. Andersen; R. I. Markeffsky.
- Special Reform of consular legislation. duties: Preparation of manual for consular service: Ges. z. D. Dr. Kraske.
- Official arbitrator in questions of nationality: G. K. z. D. Dr. Vassel.
- Head Clerk: H. R. Schuhmacher.

## DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL POLICY (KULT.)

- Head of Department: Ges. I. Kl. Dr. Stieve.
- Deputy to Head of Department: V. L. R. Dr. Twardowski.
- Kult. General questions of cultural policy. Cultural conventions: L. R. Dr. Pfeiderer; A. R. Gen. Stichler.
- Kult. Art, cultural propaganda, art exhibitions, films (promotion and distribution): Gen. C

- Kult. A Position of German racial groups abroad and of minorities in the Reich. Press and literature of German racial groups abroad: V. L. R. Dr. Lorenz; G. K. Hammer; L. R. Dr. Richter; Dr. Goeken; A. R. Fleissner; R. I. Dr. Schatz.
- Kult. B Economic questions relating to Germanization: L. R. Dr. Schwager; K. z. D. Buttman.
- Kult. E Emigration and repatriation. Settling abroad. Germanism in Russia: L. R. Dr. Kundt; Dr. Baron von Bodman; Meyer (Werner).
- (Kult. Nf.) Inquiries abroad about Reich-Germans and foreign nationals: G. K. Grosskopf; H. R. Krüger; Wirkl. A. R. Mitura; R. I. Aurich; R. I. Werlich.
- Kult. H Administration of funds of department. (School funds. Funds for cultural purposes.): K. Dopffel; R. O. I. Scholz (Hanns).
- Kult. J Youth movement at home and abroad. Cultural relations of Hitler Youth with foreign countries: L. S. Dr. Ehrich (komm); L. S. Dr. Wolf; K. Dopffel; L. S. Dr. Paul; H. R. Unruh; H. R. Blum; A. R. Barthol; A. R. Walden; A. R. Filke; R. O. I. Scholz (Hanns); R. O. I. Rev. Schmid; Hilfsarb. Lohmann.
- Kult. S German educational system abroad. Subsidies for schools abroad. Supplies to schools abroad of books, magazines, and school material: L. S. Dr. Klingenfuss; Kanzler Fischer.
- Kult. Spr. Drive for spreading German language. Subsidies for language teachers and courses: Kons. Dr. Schaefer-Rümelin; L. S. Rademacher; A. R. Hiemke; A. R. Schuricht.
- Kult. U University affairs (Congresses, festivities, exhibitions). Appointment of professors to foreign countries. Exchange and guest professorships, academic honors. Lecturers at universities. Scholarships for foreigners in Germany: L. R. Dr. Roth; L. S. von Heynitz; L. S. Dr. Schmidt (Werner); Dr. Stünzner; A. R. Zachowius; R. Amtm. Grabowsky.
- Kult. W General scientific relations with foreign countries and international scientific organizations. Scientific congresses and exhibitions. Research journeys and expeditions. Scientific institutes: A. R. Hemmerling.
- Head Clerk:

## INFORMATION AND PRESS DEPARTMENT (N.P.)

Head of Department:	Gesandter Aschmann.	
Deputy Head of Department:	Dr. Paul Schmidt (special assistant to Reich Minister).	
I	Southeast Europe (Albania, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary):	V. L. R. Wolf.
II	Italy, Vatican, <i>Deutsche diplomatisch-politische Korrespondenz</i> :	V. L. R. Braun von Stumm.
III	Great Britain with Dominions, protectorates, and colonies:	Leithe-Jasper.
IV	Eastern Europe	L. S. Dr. Staudacher.
	a) Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), Danzig, Poland:	
	b) Soviet Russia:	i.V. L. S. Dr. Schlemann.
V	Scandinavia (Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden). Finland, also the Netherlands and Netherlands colonies:	L. S. Dr. Schlemann.
VI	France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain, Portugal:	L. S. von Stempel.
	Central and South America:	L. S. Lurtz.
VII	United States of America:	i.V. L. S. Dr. Brücklmeier.
VIII	Bulgaria, Greece, the Middle East (Turkey, Egypt, Abyssinia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Palestine, Syria):	G. z. D. Dr. Schwörbel.
IX	The Far East (China, Japan, Siam, India, Netherlands Indies); Switzerland. Currency matters:	V. L. R. z. D. Dr. Katzenberger.
X	Economic and colonial questions; League of Nations; international treaties; periodicals dealing with foreign politics:	L. S. Dr. Brücklmeier; L. S. Dr. Platzer.
	Express service for R.M.:	K. Behrend.
XI	Verbal and written reporting on press:	Dr. Schacht.
Head Clerk:	H. R. Warnick.	



## Appendix III

### LIST OF GERMAN FILES USED

The following table gives a general description of the files included in each film. A reference is given on each document showing the serial number of the film, followed by the number of the photostat frame or frames from the film on which the document is recorded.

<i>Film Serial Numbers</i>	<i>German File</i>
28	German Legation in Czechoslovakia: Telegrams to and from the Foreign Ministry and other Authorities.
120	State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
139	State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
140	State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
147	Reich Foreign Minister: Poland.
223	State Secretary: Austria.
269	Head of the <i>Auslandsorganisation</i> : Czechoslovakia.
289	Under State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
330	Under State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
334	Under State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
337	Under State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
340	Under State Secretary: Czechoslovakia (Special File).
397	German Embassy in the Soviet Union: Czechoslovakia.
428	State Secretary: Non-Intervention Committee (Spain).
436	State Secretary: Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, also Slovakia and the Carpatho-Ukraine.
440	State Secretary: Correspondence on Political Affairs.
442	State Secretary: Political Correspondence with Diplomatic Representatives Abroad.
523	<i>Pol. geheim</i> : Political Affairs—Russia.
621	<i>Pol. II</i> : France, Political Relations between France and Germany.
625	<i>Pol. II</i> : France, Efforts to bring about Franco-German Understanding.
631	<i>Pol. II</i> : France, Political Relations between France and Poland.
635	<i>Pol. II</i> : France, Political Relations between France and Russia.
664	<i>Pol. II</i> : France, Political Relations between France and Czechoslovakia.
1220	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Yugoslavia, Political Relations between Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia.
1234	<i>Pol. II</i> : Great Britain, Political Relations between Britain and Czechoslovakia.
1256	<i>Pol. V</i> : Poland, Political Relations between Poland and Russia.
1339	<i>Pol. V</i> : Poland, Political Relations between Poland and Czechoslovakia.

<i>Film Serial Numbers</i>	<i>German File</i>
1532	Reich Chancellery: Czechoslovakia.
1579	<i>Pol. II</i> : Great Britain, Political Relations between Britain and France.
1585	<i>Pol. II</i> : Great Britain, Political Relations between Britain and Germany.
1613	<i>Pol. geheim</i> : Political Affairs—Czechoslovakia.
1632	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Rumania, Political Relations between Rumania and Russia.
1648	State Secretary: International Commission for the Cession of Sudeten German Territory.
1649	<i>Pol. geheim</i> : Political Affairs—Austria.
1650	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Rumania, Political Relations between Rumania and Russia.
1798	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Austria, Political Relations between Germany and Austria.
1863	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia, Political Relations between Czechoslovakia and Hungary.
1895	<i>Pol. IV</i> : International Political Problems—The Little Entente.
1916	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia, Heads of States and their Families.
1938	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia, General Foreign Policy.
1939	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia, Question of a possible German Entry into Czechoslovakia following the Incorporation of Austria in Greater Germany.
1940	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia, Effects of the Czech National Defense Law on German—Czech Relations.
1941	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia, Political Relations between Czechoslovakia and Germany.
1942	Hewel Papers: Anglo-German Society (1938—40).
1977	Press Department: Czechoslovak Republic—General Affairs.
2004	German Legation in Hungary: (1) Czechoslovakia (Little Entente), (2) Czechoslovak Conflict 1938—Telegrams received.
2129	German Embassy in Italy: Secret Document Files.
2134	State Secretary: Memoranda on Diplomatic Visits.
2185	State Secretary: Memoranda on Internal Directives, Views on Specific Questions, Telephone Conversations, etc.
2369	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia, Racial Questions, Nationality Questions, and Foreign Peoples.
2370	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia, Question of a possible German Entry into Czechoslovakia following the Incorporation of Austria in Greater Germany.
2379	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Czechoslovakia, (1) Domestic Policy—Parliamentary and Party Matters, (2) Press Matters.
2410	<i>Pol. IV</i> : Italy, Racial Questions, Nationality Questions, and Foreign Peoples (South Tyrol Question).
—2871	Political Department: Treaties (1936—44): (1) Declaration by the Führer and the British Prime Minister, (2) Munich Agreement.
C 34	Schmundt File: Nuremberg Document 388—PS (Exhibit U.S.A. 26). (Not a Foreign Ministry file; see introduction to this volume.)
F 2, 6, 12, 13, 17, 18, 20.	German Foreign Ministry film of files of the Reich Foreign Minister's Secretariat.

## Appendix IV

### BIOGRAPHICAL LIST OF PRINCIPAL PERSONS

- ALFIERI, Dino**, President of Fascist Cultural Institute, Milan; Under Secretary of State of the Italian Press and Propaganda Ministry, 1935-36; Minister for Popular Enlightenment, 1936-39; Ambassador to the Holy See, 1939-40; Ambassador to Germany, 1940; fled to Switzerland October 1943; tried *in absentia* by Republican-Fascist Tribunal at Verona and condemned to death January 10, 1944.
- ALLEN OF HURTWOOD, Baron**, Reginald Clifford Allen, Labor politician and journalist; member of Executive of League of Nations Union; Treasurer and Chairman of Independent Labor Party, 1922-26; Director of the *Daily Herald*, 1925-30; created Baron, 1932; died 1939.
- ALTENBURG, Dr. Günther**, Head of Political Department, Section IV (b), of the German Foreign Ministry, dealing with Austria and Czechoslovakia, 1938; afterward in charge of Ribbentrop's personal Secretariat; promoted Counselor 1st Class and Minister, 1939; Head of the Information Department in the Foreign Ministry, 1939; Plenipotentiary in Athens, 1941-43; afterward Head of *Dienststelle Altenburg* in Vienna (dealing with Balkan questions), 1944-45.
- ASCHMANN, Dr. Gottfried**, Head of the Information and Press Department of the German Foreign Ministry, March 1933-1939; on half-pay with rank of *Gesandter 1 Kl.* April 20, 1939; reemployed on special duties (political warfare) in the Hague and Brussels, November 1939-May 1940; Legal Assessor in the *Wehrmacht*, 1940.
- ASHTON-GWATKIN, Frank**, Counselor, British Diplomatic Service, 1934; member of the Runciman Mission, 1938; Assistant Under Secretary, Foreign Office, 1940; Under Secretary, 1947; retired 1948.
- ATTLEE, Clement Richard**, Labor M.P. since November 1922; Leader of the Labor Party since 1935; Leader of the Opposition, 1935-39; Deputy Prime Minister, 1940-45; Prime Minister since 1945.
- ATTOLICO, Dr. Bernardo**, Italian Ambassador in Brazil, 1927-30, in the Soviet Union, 1930-35, in Germany, September 8, 1935-May 18, 1940; Ambassador to the Holy See, 1940-February 1942, when he died.
- BARTHOU, Louis**, veteran French politician of the Third Republic; Foreign Minister in the Doumergue Cabinet, February 1934; assassinated with King Alexander of Yugoslavia at Marseille, October 9, 1934.
- BECHYNE, Rudolf**, member of Czech Social Democratic Party; Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Supplies in Hodza Cabinet, 1932-38; later member of Czechoslovak State Council in London.
- BECK, Colonel Jozef**, Polish Military Attaché in Paris, 1922-25; Chef de Cabinet to Pilsudski as War Minister, 1926-30; Deputy Prime Minister in Pilsudski Cabinet, 1930; Under State Secretary in Foreign Ministry, 1930-32; Foreign Minister in successive Cabinets, 1932-39; fled to Rumania September 1939; died at Snagov near Bucharest, June 5, 1944.

- BECK**, General of Artillery Ludwig, Chief of the General Staff of the German Army, 1935; resigned October 31, 1938; a leader of the abortive *putsch* of July 20, 1944, on which day he was shot.
- BENEŠ**, Dr. Eduard, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, 1918–35; also Prime Minister, 1921–22; President of the Czechoslovak Republic, December 18, 1935–October 5, 1938; President of Czechoslovak National Committee in London, 1939–45; recognized as President of Republic by Allied Powers, July 1940; returned to Czechoslovakia, May 1945; confirmed as President by Provisional National Assembly, October 1945; reelected June 1946; resigned June 7, 1948; died September 3, 1948.
- BERAN**, Rudolf, Secretary General of the Czechoslovak Agrarian Party, November 1935; Prime Minister November 1938–March 1939; interned in various concentration camps in Germany during the Second World War; tried by a Prague court for his activities between 1938 and 1941 and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment, April 21, 1947.
- BEST**, Dr. Werner, former judge, dismissed 1932; Nazi Party member from 1930; official at Gestapo Office in Berlin; Head of Civil Administration in France, 1942; later attached to Foreign Ministry; German Plenipotentiary in Denmark, November 1942–May 1945; taken into custody by British forces May 21, 1945; trial opened in Copenhagen, June 15, 1948.
- BETHLEN**, Count István, Hungarian Prime Minister, April 1921–August 1931; life member of the Hungarian Upper House; unofficial adviser to the Regent, Admiral Horthy; retired from politics, 1939; died in Russia, 1947.
- BISMARCK**, Otto Christian, Prince von, German Counselor of Embassy in Great Britain, May 1928–1936; Deputy Head of the Political Department of the Foreign Ministry, 1937–39; Minister in Rome, April 1940–September 1943; subsequently employed in the foreign information service of the Foreign Ministry.
- BLOMBERG**, Field Marshal, Werner von, Reich Defense Minister, January 1933; Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the *Wehrmacht*, April 21, 1935, until dismissed by Hitler February 4, 1938; afterward in retirement; died March 14, 1946.
- BLUM**, Léon, French Prime Minister, June 1936–1937; Vice President of the Cabinet, June 1937–January 1938; Prime Minister and Minister for the Treasury, March–April 1938; President of the French Socialist Party; arrested by Vichy Government, 1940; tried at Riom, 1941; deported to Germany, 1944, and liberated by Allies, May 1945; Ambassador Extraordinary to undertake economic and financial missions abroad, January 1946; Prime Minister, December 1946–January 1947.
- BOHLE**, Ernst Wilhelm, *Gauleiter* and Head of the *Auslandsorganisation* of the Nazi Party, May 1933–1945; also State Secretary in the Foreign Ministry, November 1937–November 1941; arrested by American forces, May 23, 1945; indicted with other high Nazi officials at Nuremberg, November 5, 1947.
- BONNET**, Georges, French Minister of Finance in the Chautemps Cabinet, June 1937–January 1938; Minister of State, January–March 1938; Foreign Minister in the Daladier Cabinet, April 1938–September 1939; Minister of Justice, September 1939–March 1940; retired to Switzerland.
- BRAUCHITSCH**, Colonel General Walter von, Commander in Chief of the German Army from 1938 to December 19, 1941, when dismissed by Hitler; promoted Field Marshal, July 1940; captured 1945; died suddenly while awaiting trial, October 1948.

- BRINON**, Count Fernand de, French journalist; President of "France-Allemagne"; Representative of Vichy Government to German occupation authorities in Paris, 1941-45; tried and condemned for high treason March 6, 1947, and shot April 15, 1947.
- BRUNET**, André, former professor of law; international lawyer; French Socialist Party Deputy; Under Secretary of State for Finance in the first Chautemps Cabinet, June 1937-January 1938.
- BÜLOW-SCHWANTE**, Vicco von, Head of the Protocol Department in the German Foreign Ministry, 1933-38; German Minister, later Ambassador, in Belgium, October 14, 1938-1940.
- BURCKHARDT**, Karl J., former Professor of Modern History at the University of Zürich; League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig, February 18, 1937-September 1, 1939; President of International Committee of Red Cross, 1939-45; Swiss Minister in France 1945-49.
- BURGIN**, Edward Leslie, Liberal and Liberal National M.P., 1929-45; Minister of Transport, 1937-39; Minister of Supply, 1939-40; died August 16, 1945.
- BUTLER**, Richard Austen, Conservative M.P. since 1929; Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, February 1938-1941; Minister of Education, 1941-45; Minister of Labor, 1945.
- CADOGAN**, Sir Alexander, Deputy Under Secretary of State in the Foreign Office, October 1936; Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, January 1, 1938-1946; British Representative on Security Council of United Nations Organization, February 1, 1946; title changed to Permanent Representative to United Nations Organization, September 1946.
- CANARIS**, Admiral Wilhelm, joined the German Navy in 1905; transferred to the Secret Intelligence Branch of the Reichswehr in 1934, and eventually became head of the *Abwehr* Service of the *OKW*; promoted Admiral in 1940; had many clandestine contacts abroad, particularly in Spain; suspected of complicity in the abortive *putsch*, July 20, 1944; arrested by the Gestapo and hanged in March 1945.
- CARR**, Wilbur J., American Minister in Czechoslovakia, September 15, 1937-1939.
- CECIL OF CHELWOOD**, Viscount, Robert Gascoyne-Cecil (Formerly Lord Robert Cecil), Conservative M.P., 1906-23; member of several British Cabinets, 1915-27; created Viscount, 1923; British delegate to various League of Nations Assemblies; Joint President of League of Nations Union; awarded Nobel Peace Prize, 1937.
- ČERNÝ**, Dr. Josef, member of the Czech Agrarian Party; Minister of the Interior, 1934-35, and again during Hodza Cabinet, 1935-38; tried by a Prague court and found "not guilty," April 21, 1947.
- CHAMBERLAIN**, Neville, Conservative M.P., 1918-40; Leader of the Conservative Party; Prime Minister, May 28, 1937-May 10, 1940; died November 9, 1940.
- CHAUTEMPS**, Camille, President of Radical Socialist Group of French Chamber, 1934; Minister of State in Blum Cabinet, June 1936-June 1937; Prime Minister, June 22, 1937-January 15, 1938, and January 18-March 10, 1938; Vice President of Council of Ministers and Minister of Coordination in Daladier Cabinet, April 11, 1938-1939; Minister of State, 1939-40; Vice President of the Council and Minister for Alsace-Lorraine, March-July 1940; went to United States on special mission, July 1940; tried *in absentia* and sentenced to five years' imprisonment, March 1947.

- CHURCHILL**, Winston Spencer, Liberal and Conservative M.P. since 1900; First Lord of the Admiralty, September 5, 1939–May 10, 1940. Prime Minister, 1940–45.
- CIANO DI CORTELLAZZO**, Count Galeazzo, son-in-law of Mussolini; Italian Foreign Minister, 1936–43; Ambassador to the Holy See, 1943; tried and condemned to death by Republican-Fascist Tribunal at Verona and shot, January 11, 1944.
- COLSON**, Général Louis Antoine, Chief of the French Army Staff and Member of the Conseil Supérieur de la Guerre, January 1935–1939.
- COMNEN**. See PETRESCU-COMNEN.
- CORBIN**, Charles, French Ambassador in Spain, 1929–31, in Belgium, 1931–33, and in Great Britain, May 24, 1933–July 4, 1940.
- COT**, Pierre, French Radical Socialist Deputy from 1928; Minister for Air in Daladier, Sarraut, and Chautemps Cabinets, 1933–34; in Blum Cabinet, June 1936–June 1937, and in Chautemps Cabinet, June 1937–January 1938; Minister of Commerce, January–April 1938; member of Provisional Consultative Assemblies, 1943, and Constituent Assemblies, 1944 and 1945; Deputy to National Assembly.
- COULONDRE**, Robert, French Ambassador in the Soviet Union, November 1936–November 1938, in Germany, November 22, 1938–September 3, 1939, in Switzerland May–October 1940; subsequently *en disponibilité*.
- CRUTESCU**, Radu, Rumanian Minister in Czechoslovakia, May 24, 1938–March 16, 1939, in Germany, March 31, 1939–March 19, 1941.
- CSÁKY**, Count István, Chef de Cabinet to Kanya, Hungarian Foreign Minister; Hungarian Foreign Minister on latter's resignation, December 10, 1938; in Imrédy and Teleki Cabinets until his death in February 1941.
- CZECH**, Dr. Ludwig, Leader of the German Social Democrat Party in Czechoslovakia; Minister of Health in Hodza's Cabinet from 1935 until his resignation early in 1938.
- DALADIER**, Édouard, French Radical Socialist Deputy since 1919; Minister of National Defense, 1936–38; Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense, 1938–40; Minister of War and Foreign Affairs, 1939–40; arrested June 1940; detained at Fort du Portalet after findings of Court for Political Justice, October 1941; reported imprisoned in Stuttgart, October 1944; liberated by Allies, 1945; member of Constituent Assembly, 1946.
- DARANYI**, Dr. Kálmán, Hungarian Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture, October 12, 1936–May 13, 1938.
- DARRÉ**, Walther, German Minister for Food and Agriculture, 1933–45; Reich Peasant Leader, 1933–45; Head of Reich Food Estate, 1934–45; Prussian Minister of Agriculture, 1933–42; indicted with other high Nazi officials at Nuremberg, November 5, 1947.
- DELBOS**, Yvon, French Radical Socialist Deputy since 1924; Foreign Minister in Blum Cabinet, June 1936–1937, and in two Chautemps Cabinets, June 22, 1937–January 15, 1938, and January 18–March 10, 1938; Minister of National Education, 1939–40; reported arrested and sent to Germany, May 1943; liberated 1945; Minister of State, January–November 1947; Minister of Education since July 1948.
- DÉRER**, Dr. Ivan, Czechoslovak Minister of Justice in the Hodza Cabinet, 1935–38; member of Social Democrat Party; a Slovak and a lawyer by profession.

- DIECKHOFF**, Dr. Hans Heinrich, German Counselor of Embassy in Washington, 1922-26, in London, 1926-30; Head of "Anglo-Saxon" Section of the Foreign Ministry, 1930-36; Head of the Political Department of the Foreign Ministry, April-August 1936; Acting State Secretary, August 1936-April 1937; Ambassador in the United States, May 18, 1937, recalled to Berlin for consultation November 14, 1938, and did not return to his post; Head of *Amerika-Komitee* in the Foreign Ministry, 1940-43; Ambassador in Spain, April 30, 1943, until recalled August 1944, when he resigned, and has since lived in retirement at Lenzkirch.
- DIETRICH**, Dr. Otto, Reich Press Chief of the N.S.D.A.P., 1932-45; Hitler's press consultant and member of his personal staff, 1933-45; Vice President of the Reich Press Chamber and Head of the Reich Press Office of the N.S.D.A.P., 1934-45; State Secretary in the Reich Ministry of Propaganda, 1937-45; indicted with other high Nazi officials at Nuremberg, November 5, 1947.
- DIMITROV**, Georgi, Bulgarian Communist, one of the accused in the Reichstag Fire Trial but acquitted, 1933; Secretary General of the Comintern, 1935-43; renounced Soviet citizenship and returned to Bulgaria, 1945; Prime Minister of People's Republic of Bulgaria, November 1946.
- DIRKSEN**, Dr. Herbert von, German Ambassador in the Soviet Union, 1928-33, in Japan, 1933-38, and in Great Britain, May 3, 1938; in Berlin for consultation, March-May 1939; recalled to Berlin for consultation August 13, 1939, and placed on the retired list at his own request shortly afterward.
- DRUFFEL**, Dr. Ernst von, German Consul at Pressburg from 1932; became Consul General and Chargé d'Affaires at Pressburg, March 1939; Consul General at Trieste, July 1939.
- EDEN**, Anthony, Conservative M.P. since 1923; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, December 1935 until his resignation in February 1938; Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 1939-40; Secretary of State for War, January-December 1940; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1940-45.
- EISENLOHR**, Ernst, German Minister in Greece, 1931-35; Minister in Czechoslovakia, February 5, 1936; ordered to Berlin for consultation c. September 16, 1938; Head of Economic Commission dealing with problems arising from the dissolution of the Czechoslovak State, 1939-40; retired after 1943.
- EPP**, General of Infantry Franz Xaver, Ritter von, prominent early member of the N.S.D.A.P.; *Reichsstatthalter* (but not *Gauleiter*) of Bavaria, April 10, 1933-1945; Head of the Colonial Policy Office of the N.S.D.A.P.; appointed first Nazi Minister of Colonies, 1941; captured by U.S. forces, May 1945; died c. 1947.
- ERDMANNSDORFF**, Otto von, German Counselor of Embassy in China and Japan, 1928-33; Head of Far Eastern Department in the Foreign Ministry, 1934-36; German Minister in Hungary, May 11, 1937-July 31, 1941; *Ministerialdirigent* and Deputy to Head of Political Department in the Foreign Ministry, 1941-1943; indicted with other high Nazi officials at Nuremberg, November 5, 1947.
- ESTERHÁZY**, Count János, Leader of the Hungarian Minority in Czechoslovakia; Under Secretary of State for Hungarian Minorities in the Slovak Government, 1938; deported to Russia early in 1945.
- FAUCHER**, Général Eugène, member of the French Military Mission in Prague from 1919, becoming its Head in 1926; resigned September 1938.

- FAURE, Paul**, Secretary General of the French Socialist Party; resigned 1938; Minister of State in the Blum Cabinet, March–April 1938; member of the National Council, 1941–44.
- FIERLINGER, Zdeněk**, Czechoslovak Minister in the Soviet Union, October 7, 1937–March 16, 1939, and 1941–42; Ambassador in the Soviet Union, 1942–45; Prime Minister of Czechoslovak Republic, 1945–46; Deputy Prime Minister since 1946; Chairman of Social Democratic Party, 1945.
- FLANDIN, Pierre Étienne**, Leader of the French Left Republican Party; Deputy from 1914; Prime Minister, November 1934–May 1935; Minister for Foreign Affairs, January–June 1936; Minister for Foreign Affairs in Pétain Cabinet, December 1940–February 1941; sentenced to five years' "national indignity" for collaboration with Vichy regime, 1946.
- FORSTER, Albert**, *Gauleiter* of Danzig, October 1930, although still a Reich subject; reorganized Nazi Party there; editor of *Danziger Vorposten*; *Gauleiter*, *Reichsstatthalter*, and *Reichsverteidigungskommissar* of Danzig-Westpreussen, 1939–45; sentenced to death by a Warsaw Court, April 29, 1948.
- FRANÇOIS-PONCET, André**, French Ambassador in Germany, September 21, 1931; Ambassador in Italy, November 18, 1938–June 10, 1940; member of National Council, 1941; Controller General of the Press, 1942; arrested by Gestapo, 1943; liberated by Allies, May 1945; Special Envoy at General Koenig's headquarters, November 15, 1948, also adviser on German affairs to the French Foreign Minister.
- FRANK, Karl Hermann**, elected Deputy of the Sudeten German Party to the Czech Parliament, May 1935; Deputy Leader of the Party, 1937; State Secretary with the Reich Protector, 1939–43; Chief of the SS and Police in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, 1939–45; Minister of State with the rank of Reich Minister, August 1943–1945; captured by U.S. forces and handed over to Czechoslovak Government, August 1945; tried by a People's Court in Prague, sentenced to death May 21, 1946, and publicly hanged May 22, 1946.
- FRANKE, Dr. Emil**, Czech Minister of Education in the Hodza Cabinet; Member of National Socialist (Beneš) Party.
- FRICK, Dr. Wilhelm**, member of the Nazi Party from 1925; Nazi Minister of the Interior and of Education in Thuringia, January 1930–April 1931; Reich Minister of the Interior, January 30, 1933–August 20, 1943; Protector of Bohemia and Moravia, August 20, 1943–1945; tried by International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg and condemned to death October 1, 1946; hanged October 16, 1946.
- FUNK, Dr. Walter**, State Secretary in the Reich Ministry of Propaganda, 1933; Reich Minister of Economics, November 1937–45; President of the Reichsbank, 1939–45; tried by International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg and sentenced to life imprisonment, October 1, 1946.
- GAMELIN, Général Maurice Gustave**, Chief of the French Army General Staff, 1931–35; Vice President of the Conseil Supérieur de la Guerre, January 1935–1940; Allied Commander in Chief, September 1939–May 1940; arrested after French defeat and tried at Riom, 1942; transported to Germany, April 1943; liberated by the Allies, 1945.
- GEORGES, Général Alphonse Jacques**, Deputy Chief of the French General Staff, 1935–39; Commander in Chief of the French Armies in the Northeast, 1939–40; joined General Giraud, 1943; former member of French Committee for National Liberation.



- GOEBBELS, Dr. Josef, Reich Minister of Propaganda from March 14, 1933; *Gauleiter* and *Reichsverteidigungskommissar* for Berlin; Head of Berlin Municipal Administration from May 1944; Reich Plenipotentiary for Total War Effort from July 1944; committed suicide May 1945.
- GÖRING, Field Marshal Hermann Wilhelm, Nazi Party member of the Reichstag from 1928; President of the Reichstag from 1932; Prime Minister of Prussia and Reich Minister for Air from April 1933; appointed Commander in Chief of the *Luftwaffe* from May 1935; Commissioner for the Four-Year Plan, October 1936; Chairman of the War Cabinet and nominated successor-designate to Hitler, September 1, 1939; tried by International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg and condemned to death October 1, 1946; committed suicide October 15, 1946.
- GRANDI, Count Dino, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1929-32; Ambassador in Great Britain, August 3, 1933-October 18, 1939; Minister of Justice and President of the Chamber of the Fasci and Corporations, 1939-43; involved in overthrow of Mussolini, 1943; tried *in absentia* and sentenced to death by Republican-Fascist Tribunal at Verona, January 10, 1944, having meanwhile fled to Portugal.
- GREISER, Arthur Karl, Nazi Vice President of the Danzig Senate and Senator for Home Affairs, June 1933; President of the Danzig Senate in succession to Rauschning, November 28, 1934-September 1, 1939; Senator for Foreign Affairs, 1934, for Social Affairs, 1936-39; *Reichsstatthalter* and *Gauleiter* of Wartheland, 1939-45; tried as a war criminal by the Polish Supreme National Tribunal, sentenced to death July 10, 1946, and publicly hanged at Poznan, July 21, 1946.
- GRITZBACH, Dr. Erich, Personal Assistant to Göring, 1933; Chief of Staff, Office of the Prime Minister of Prussia, and head of the Press Department for the Four-Year Plan, 1936-45; appointed *Ministerialdirektor*, March 1938.
- HAJEK, Colonel, Czechoslovak Military Attaché in Yugoslavia in the early thirties; apparently associated subsequently with the Stribrny League (a semi-Fascist Czechoslovak organization) and dismissed from the Czechoslovak General Staff in 1937.
- HALDER, General of Artillery Franz, Chief of the German Army General Staff, December 1938-October 1942; arrested after attempt on Hitler's life July 20, 1944, although not a participant in it; found "not guilty" by a denazification court and acquitted, September 22, 1948.
- HALIFAX, Viscount, Edward Wood, Conservative M.P., 1910-25; Viceroy of India, 1926-31; President of the Board of Education, 1932-35; Secretary of State for War, 1935; Lord Privy Seal, November 1935-May 1937; Lord President of the Council, 1937-38; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, February 1938-December 1940; Ambassador in the United States, 1941-46; created Earl of Halifax, 1944.
- HAUSHOFER, Dr. Georg Albrecht, son of the authority on geopolitics; former lecturer at the Hochschule für Politik, Berlin; had connections with *Dienststelle Ribbentrop*, though not a member of it; hanged after the abortive *putsch* of July 20, 1944.
- HAUSHOFER, Dr. Karl, Professor of Geography at Munich University, retired Major General; President of Society for Geopolitics; Publisher of the periodical *Die Geopolitik*; President of the German Academy in Munich; committed suicide March 1946.

- HEEREN, Viktor von, German Minister in Yugoslavia October 28, 1933–April 17, 1941, then retired in disgrace.
- HENCKE, Andor, *Legationssekretär* in German Foreign Ministry, 1929–33; Consul at Kiev, 1933–35; Counselor of Legation in Czechoslovakia, November 12, 1936–March 16, 1939; Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia after departure of Eisenlohr, the Minister, c. September 16, 1938; Foreign Ministry's representative in Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, 1939; attached to Foreign Minister's Staff for special duties at outbreak of war; in control of Danish Foreign Ministry, April–November, 1940; represented Foreign Ministry on Franco-German Armistic Commission, 1940–41; attached to Embassy in Spain with the rank of *Gesandter 1 Kl.*, July 12, 1943; appointed *Ministerialdirektor* and Head of Political Department in the Foreign Ministry with the title of Under State Secretary, July 31, 1943.
- HENDERSON, Sir Nevile, British Minister in Yugoslavia, 1933–35; British Ambassador in Argentina and Minister to Paraguay, 1935–37; Ambassador in Germany, April 30, 1937–September 3, 1939; died February 30, 1942.
- HENLEIN, Konrad, founded the *Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront*, September 30, 1933, to replace banned Nazi Party in Czechoslovakia, renamed Sudeten German Party in 1935; formed Sudeten German Freikorps, September 1938; appointed Reich Commissioner for Sudeten German territories, October 1, 1938; *Gauleiter* of the Sudetengau and *Reichsstatthalter*, May 1, 1939; captured by the U.S. 7th Army, May 9, and committed suicide May 10, 1945.
- HERRIOT, ÉDOUARD, Deputy of the French Radical Socialist Party since 1919; Mayor of Lyons, 1905–41; Prime Minister and member of various Cabinets, 1916–36; President of the Chamber of Deputies, 1936–42; interned by the Germans, 1942; elected political President of Radical Socialist Party, 1945; elected President of National Assembly, January 21, 1947.
- HESS, Rudolf, member of the Nazi Party from 1920; Chairman of Central Committee of Party from 1932; Hitler's Deputy, 1933–41; member of the Reichstag; Minister without Portfolio, 1933–41; member of the Secret Cabinet Council, 1933–41; flew to Britain and interned, 1941; tried by International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg and sentenced to life imprisonment, October 1, 1946.
- HEWEL, Walter, took part in the Munich *putsch* of November 8, 1923, and shared Hitler's imprisonment in Landsberg Fortress; later in Dutch East Indies, returning to Germany 1936 or 1937, where he first worked in *Auslandsorganisation* and then in *Dienststelle Ribbentrop*; *Legationsrat*, Chief of the Personal Staff of the Reich Foreign Minister and plenipotentiary of the Foreign Ministry with the Führer from 1938; appointed Ambassador for special duties, 1943.
- HIMMLER, Heinrich, *Reichsführer-SS* and Chief of the German Police from June 1936 with the rank of State Secretary in the Ministry of the Interior; appointed Reich Commissar for the Consolidation of German *Volkstum*, 1939; Reich and Prussian Minister of the Interior, August 1943; member of the Reichstag from 1930; appointed Commander in Chief of the Home Army, June 1944; committed suicide May 23, 1945.
- HITLER, Adolf, served in 1914–18 war; joined *Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, September 16, 1919; assumed leadership of *NS Arbeiterpartei*, July 1921; staged unsuccessful Munich *putsch*, November 8, 1923; imprisoned in

- Landsberg fortress, January–December 1924; published *Mein Kampf*, 1925; unsuccessful candidate for German Presidency, 1932; Führer and Chancellor of the German Reich from January 30, 1933; became Chief of State on death of Hindenburg, August 2, 1934; assumed command of *Wehrmacht*, February 4, 1938, and of the Army, December 1941; committed suicide April 30, 1945.
- HLINKA, Monsignor Andrej, Leader of the Slovak People's Party; opposed the centralizing tendencies of the Czech Government and advocated Slovak autonomy on the basis of the Pittsburgh Agreement; entered Czech-German Coalition Government of Švehla, 1927, but resigned 1929; died August 1938.
- HOARE, Sir Samuel, Bart. Conservative M.P., 1910–44; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1935–36; First Lord of the Admiralty, 1936–37; Home Secretary, May 1937–September 1939; Secretary of State for Air, 1940; British Ambassador in Spain, May 24, 1940–1944; created Viscount Templewood, 1944.
- HODZA, Dr. Milan, Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia from November 6, 1935, to September 22, 1938; member of the Agrarian Party; came to England at outbreak of Second World War; Vice Chairman of Czechoslovak State Council in London, 1940; died in Florida, June 1944.
- HORE-BELISHA, Leslie, Liberal and Liberal National M.P., 1923–45; Secretary of State for War, May 1937–January 1940.
- HORTHY DE NAGYBÁNIA, Miklós, Admiral in the Austro-Hungarian Navy, 1914–18; elected Regent of Hungary, March 7, 1920; forced by Germans to resign October 16, 1944, and taken by them to Waldbichel near Munich; taken into custody by U.S. Forces, May 1945; released January 3, 1946.
- IMRÉDY, Dr. Béla, Hungarian Prime Minister, May 14, 1938–February 15, 1939; in Cabinet, 1944; tried by special High Court in Budapest, found guilty of high treason, etc., and hanged February 28, 1946.
- INSKIP, Sir Thomas, Conservative M.P., 1931–39; Attorney General, 1928–29 and 1932–36; Minister for Coordination of Defense, March 1936–January 1939; Lord Chancellor, 1939–40; Dominions Secretary, 1940; created Viscount Caldecote, 1939; Lord Chief Justice, 1940–46; died October 11, 1947.
- JAKSCH, Wenzel, Deputy of German Social Democrat Party in Czechoslovak Parliament, 1929; became leader of Party on resignation of Ludwig Czech in 1938; in England during 1939–45 war.
- JEHLIČKA, Professor Dr. Frantisek, a Slovak autonomist leader living in Vienna and subsidized by the Hungarian Government.
- JODL, Colonel General Alfred, Major and Lieutenant Colonel in the Operations Department of the German Army, 1932–35; Chief of the National Defense Section of the OKW, 1935–October 1938; promoted Colonel, 1936; Artillery Commander of the 44th Division, Vienna and Brno, October 1938–August 27, 1939; Chief of the Operations Staff of the OKW, August 1939–1945; promoted Major General 1939, General of Artillery 1940, Colonel General 1944; tried by International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg and condemned to death October 1, 1946; hanged October 16, 1946.
- KÁNIA, Kálmán, Hungarian Foreign Minister, 1933–November 16, 1938; life member of the Hungarian Upper House, 1938; President of the Committee for Foreign Affairs of the Upper House; political friend of Count Bethlen; died at Sopron, 1946.

- KEITEL**, General Wilhelm, Major General 1934; Chief of the *Wehrmachtsamt* in the Reich War Ministry, October 1, 1935–February 4, 1938; Chief of the *OKW* and member of the Secret Cabinet Council, February 4, 1938–1945; promoted General of Artillery, February 4, 1938; member of Ministerial Council for the Defense of the Reich, August 30, 1939–1945; member of the Reich Defense Council, September 4, 1938–1945; promoted Field Marshal, July 19, 1940; tried by International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg and sentenced to death, October 1, 1946; hanged October 16, 1946.
- KENNARD**, Sir Howard, British Ambassador in Warsaw, January 14, 1935, until 1939; accredited to the Polish Government in exile until he retired in 1941.
- KEPPLER**, Wilhelm, economic adviser to Hitler and the Party from 1932; Commissioner for economic questions in the Reich Chancellery, July 1933; personal adviser to Göring as Commissioner for Four-Year Plan, 1936; by means of contacts with Seyss-Inquart prepared the way for the *Anschluss*; State Secretary for special duties in the Foreign Ministry, March 20, 1938–1945; Reich Commissar in Vienna, March–June 1938; after his recall entrusted with tasks connected with German economic interests in Russia; special representative in Slovak affairs, 1939; Head of Reich Office for Geological Research from May 1, 1938; indicted with other high Nazi officials at Nuremberg, November 5, 1947.
- KÉRILLIS**, Henri de, French politician and journalist; former editor of *Epoque*; Deputy; Director of the Centre de Propagande des Républicains Nationaux; representative of General de Gaulle in Ottawa, July 1940; deprived of French citizenship and arrest ordered in his absence, 1940; later in New York.
- KOERNER**, Paul, State Secretary and Permanent Deputy to Göring as Commissioner for the Four-Year Plan, 1936–45; indicted with other high Nazi officials at Nuremberg, November 5, 1947.
- KORDT**, Dr. Erich, Permanent Secretary of German Delegation to the League of Nations, 1933; Acting Consul General at Geneva, 1934; seconded to *Dienststelle Ribbentrop*, 1934–36; Counselor in the Embassy in Great Britain, November 1936–February 1938; Head of Ribbentrop's Secretariat (*Büro RAM*), 1938–41; Minister in the Embassy in Japan, 1941–42; Minister in the Embassy in China, 1942–45.
- KORDT**, Theodor, elder brother of Erich Kordt; German Counselor of Embassy in Great Britain, 1938–September 3, 1939, where he acted as Chargé d'Affaires during the absence of Dirksen; Counselor of Legation in Switzerland, 1939–45; later appointed Lecturer at Bonn University.
- KRAMAŘ**, Dr. Karel, joint leader with Masaryk of the Czechoslovaks prior to 1918; represented the new Republic at the Paris Peace Conference, 1919; First Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia; leader of the National Democrat Party; died in 1937.
- KREJČI**, General Ludvík, served in the Austrian Army; captured by the Russians, 1917, and joined Czechoslovak Legion in Russia; promoted General, 1923; appointed Chief of Czechoslovak General Staff in 1934, a position he still retained after the Munich Agreement.
- KROFTA**, Dr. Kamil, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister in the Hodza Cabinet, 1936–38; died in 1946 as the result of rigors endured in a concentration camp during the 1939–45 war.

- KUNDT, Dr. Ernst, in May 1935 elected Deputy of the Sudeten German Party and became chairman of the Party's Parliamentary Club; stood close to Henlein; after Munich, spokesman of those Germans remaining in the Czech State; sentenced to death by a People's Court in Prague, December 1946; executed February 1947.
- KÜNZL-JIZERSKÝ, Rudolf, member of the Czechoslovak Agrarian Party; Czechoslovak Minister in Switzerland, 1932-37, in Austria, 1937-38.
- LAMMERS, Dr. Hans, State Secretary in the Reich Chancellery in January 1933; State Secretary and Chief of the Reich Chancellery, 1934-37; Reich Minister and Chief of the Reich Chancellery, November 1937-1945; member and Executive Secretary of the Secret Cabinet Council, February 1938-1945, also of the Ministerial Council for the Defense of the Reich; indicted with other high Nazi officials at Nuremberg, November 5, 1947.
- LAVAL, Pierre, member of numerous French Cabinets from 1925; Independent Senator, 1927-40; Prime Minister, 1931-32; Foreign Minister in Doumergue and Flandin Cabinets, October 1934-May 1935; Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, June 1935-January 1936; Minister of State in Pétain Cabinet, June 1940; Deputy Prime Minister, July 1940; Press, Propaganda, and Radio Censor, July-October 1940; Foreign Minister, October-December 1940; Head of Government, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Interior, Information, and Propaganda, April 1942-August 1944; taken to Germany September 1944; later fled to Spain, from which he was expelled; handed over to French authorities August 1, 1945, and shot October 15, 1945, having previously been condemned to death *in absentia* by Marseille Court.
- LEEPER, Reginald (Rex), Head of the News Department of the British Foreign Office in 1938; Acting Assistant Under Secretary of State, August 15, 1940; Ambassador to Greek Government in Cairo, March 11, 1943; returned to Athens, October 1944; Ambassador in Argentina, May 3, 1946-1948.
- LEITH-ROSS, Sir Frederick, Chief Economic Adviser to the British Government from 1932; Chairman, Economic Committee of the League of Nations, 1936-37; Director General of Ministry of Economic Warfare, 1939-42; Chairman of Inter-Allied Post-War Requirements Committee, 1941-43; Deputy Director General of United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, 1944-45.
- LE ROND, Général Henri, President of the Inter-Allied Plebiscite Commission in Upper Silesia from 1919 to 1923; prior to that, he had acted as military adviser to the French Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference; retired in 1926.
- LITVINOV, Maxim Maximovich, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs in the Soviet Union, 1930-39; Ambassador in the United States and Minister to Cuba, 1941-43; Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs, 1943-46.
- LLOYD GEORGE, David, Liberal and Independent Liberal M.P., 1890-1945; Prime Minister, 1916-22; created Earl Lloyd George of Dwyfor, January 1, 1945; died March 26, 1945.
- LORENZ, SS-Obergruppenführer Werner, Head of the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*, January 1937-1945; Head of the Foreign Relations Department of the Nazi Party on the Staff of the Führer's Deputy; tried by International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment, March 10, 1948.

- MACDONALD**, Malcolm, son of James Ramsay MacDonald; Labor and National Labor M.P., 1929-45; Parliamentary Under Secretary, Dominions Office, 1931-35; Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 1935-38 and 1938-39; Secretary of State for Colonies, 1935 and 1939-40; Minister of Health, 1940-41; U.K. High Commissioner in Canada, 1941-46; Governor General of Malayan Union and Singapore since 1946.
- MACHNIK**, Frantisek, Czechoslovak Minister of Defense in Malypetr's third Cabinet, 1935, and in Hodza Cabinet, 1935-38; member of the Agrarian Party; responsible for the "Machnik Decree." (See Document No. 23.)
- MACKENSEN**, Hans Georg von, son of Field Marshal von Mackensen; German Minister in Hungary, September 30, 1933; State Secretary in the Foreign Ministry, Berlin, April 15, 1937; Ambassador in Italy, April 1, 1938-September 8, 1943; died in hospital in Germany, 1947.
- MASARYK**, Jan, son of President Masaryk; Czechoslovak Minister in Great Britain, July 23, 1925; resigned at the time of the Munich Agreement; Foreign Minister in Czechoslovak Government in exile, 1940-45, and Deputy Prime Minister; returned to Prague as Foreign Minister, 1945, a post he retained in the Fierlinger and Gottwald Cabinets until his death by suicide, March 10, 1948.
- MASARYK**, Thomas, elected first President of the Czechoslovak Republic, November 1918; reelected 1920, 1928, and 1934; resigned December 1935; died September 14, 1937.
- MASTNY**, Dr. Vojtech, Czechoslovak Minister in Germany, 1932-39; after the establishment of the Protectorate he returned home, remained free during the 1939-45 war, and later lived in seclusion in Bohemia; now in protective custody.
- MAURICE**, Major General Sir Frederick, retired from the British Army, 1918; President of the British Legion, 1932-47.
- MAYER-HARTING**, Dr. R., member of the German Clerical Party in Czechoslovakia who changed to activism in 1925; Minister of Justice in Švehla Cabinet of October 13, 1926-December 8, 1929.
- MEISSNER**, Dr. Alfred, Czechoslovak Social Democratic Minister of Justice in Urdzal's second Cabinet, 1929-32, and in Malypetr's first Cabinet; Minister of Social Welfare in Malypetr's second Cabinet, 1934-35.
- MILCH**, General Erhard, German Secretary of State for Air from February 1933 as Honorary Colonel; in April 1936 appointed to the *Luftwaffe* with rank of General; Inspector General of the *Luftwaffe*, February 1939; promoted Field Marshal, July 1940; prisoner of war, May 1945, and sentenced to life imprisonment by U.S. Military Tribunal, April 17, 1947.
- MOLTKE**, Hans Adolf von, German Minister in Poland, March 5, 1931; Ambassador, October 19, 1934-September 1, 1939 (absent from his post from August 9, 1939); appointed Ambassador in Spain, January 1, 1943; died there March 22, 1943.
- MORRISON**, William Shepherd, Conservative M.P. since 1929; Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, November 1936-January 1939.
- MOSCICKI**, Ignacy, President of Poland, June 1, 1926-September 30, 1939; left Warsaw September 18, 1939, and then fled to Rumania; later allowed to proceed to Switzerland; died at Versoix near Geneva, October 2, 1946.
- MUSSOLINI**, Benito, founder of the Italian Fascist Party; became Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, and Minister of the Interior, October 30, 1922; Prime Minister, Commander of the Armed Forces, 1938; resigned June 25,

- 1943, and imprisoned; rescued from captivity by Germans, September 12, 1943; formed a Republican Fascist Government in Northern Italy, September 15, 1943; captured and executed by Italian partisans, April 28, 1945.
- NEURATH**, Constantin, Baron von, German Ambassador in Italy, 1921-30, in Great Britain, 1930-32; Reich Foreign Minister, June 2, 1932-February 4, 1938; Reich Minister and President of the Secret Cabinet Council, February 4, 1938-May 1945; Reich Protector for Bohemia and Moravia, March 18, 1939-August 20, 1943, though actually on long leave from September 1941; member of the Reich Defense Council; tried by International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment, October 1, 1946.
- NEWTON**, Basil, British Counselor of Embassy in Germany, 1929-35; Minister in Germany, 1935-37; Minister in Czechoslovakia, March 5, 1937-May 25, 1939; Ambassador in Iraq, 1939-41; employed in Foreign Office as Ambassador *en disponibilité* from February 19, 1942, until he retired May 31, 1946.
- NICOLSON**, Hon. Harold, British author and critic; member of the Diplomatic Service, 1909-29; National Labor M.P., 1935-45; Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Information, 1940.
- NOEL-BUXTON**, Baron, Noel Edward Noel-Buxton, Liberal M.P., 1910-18; Labor M.P., 1922-30; Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, January-November 1924, and 1929-30; created Baron, 1930.
- OGILVIE-FORBES**, Sir George, Acting Counselor of British Embassy in Iraq, 1932-35; Counselor of Embassy in Spain, 1935-37, in Germany, 1937-39; Chargé d'Affaires in Germany, 1937, 1938, 1939; Counselor of Embassy in Norway, 1939-40; Minister in Cuba, 1940-44; Ambassador in Venezuela, 1944-48.
- ORMESSON**, Count Wladimir d', French political essayist, journalist, and diplomat; foreign political editor of *Le Temps* and *Le Figaro*; Ambassador to the Holy See, May-October 1940, in Argentina May 1945, and again to the Holy See since August 26, 1948.
- OSUSKÝ**, Dr. Štefan, Czechoslovak Minister in France, January 6, 1920-March 16, 1939; member of Czechoslovak National Committee, 1939; Minister of State in Czechoslovak Government in exile and member of National Council, 1940-42.
- PAPEN**, Franz von, Chancellor of the Reich, June-December 1932; Vice Chancellor of the Reich in the Hitler Cabinet, January 1933-July 1934; Plenipotentiary for the Saar, November 1933-June 1934; German Ambassador on Special Mission in Vienna, August 16, 1934-March 13, 1938; German Ambassador in Turkey, 1939-44; tried by International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg and acquitted, October 1, 1946.
- PAUL**, Prince of Yugoslavia, Senior Regent of Yugoslavia during the minority of King Peter II from October 9, 1934 to March 27, 1941, when the King assumed full sovereign powers; then fled to Greece and was handed over to the British and interned by them in Kenya for the remainder of the 1939-45 war.
- PAUL-BONCOUR**, Joseph, French Deputy from 1909; member of numerous Cabinets from 1911 onward; Foreign Minister in the Blum Cabinet, March 13, 1938-April 10, 1938.
- PERTH**, Earl of, Sir Eric Drummond, Secretary General of the League of Nations, 1919-33; British Ambassador in Italy, October 26, 1933-May 1, 1939; Director of Foreign Publicity Department in the Foreign Office, 1939; Chief Adviser on Foreign Publicity in Ministry of Information, 1939-40.

- PETO, Geoffrey**, Conservative M.P., 1924-29 and 1931-35; Parliamentary Private Secretary to Lord Runciman as President of the Board of Trade, 1931-35; a member of the Runciman Mission to Czechoslovakia, 1938.
- PETRESCU-COMNEN, Nicolae**, Rumanian Minister in Germany, 1932-38; Foreign Minister, March-December 1938; Delegate to the League of Nations, 1938; Ambassador to the Holy See, 1939-40.
- PHIPPS, Sir Eric**, British Minister in Austria, 1928-33; Ambassador in Germany, 1933-37, in France, April 28, 1937-October 16, 1939; died August 13, 1945.
- PILSUDSKI, Jozef**, Polish Minister of War and Marshal of Poland from his *coup d'état*, May 12-14, 1926, until his death, May 12, 1935; Prime Minister, October 1926-June 1928, and August-December 1930.
- POTEMKIN, Vladimir**, Soviet Minister in Greece, 1929-32; Ambassador in Italy, 1932-34, in France, 1934-37; Vice Commissar for Foreign Affairs, 1937-40; Commissar for Education, R.S.F.S.R., 1940-46; died February 23, 1946.
- RÁTZ, General Jenő**, Hungarian Chief of the General Staff, 1936; Minister of Defense in the Imrédy Cabinet, 1938, and resigned 1939; sentenced to death as a war criminal, c. end of 1945.
- REYNAUD, Paul**, French Left Republican Alliance Deputy, 1928-40; Minister of Finance, March-August 1930; Minister for Colonies, January 1931-February 1932; Vice President of the Council and Minister of Justice, February-May 1932; Minister of Justice in Daladier Cabinet, April-November 1938; Minister of Finance, November 1938-March 1940; Prime Minister, March-June 1940; Foreign Minister, March-May 1940, and June 1940; Minister of National Defense, May 1940; imprisoned by Vichy Government, 1940; tried before the Court of Political Justice at Riom, 1941; transported to Germany, 1943; liberated by U.S. 7th Army, 1945; member of Constituent Assembly, 1946; Minister of Finance and Economics in Marie Cabinet, July-September 1948.
- RIEBENTROP, Joachim von**, joined Nazi movement in 1930; instrumental in bringing Papen and Hitler together in 1933; on Hitler's accession to power became his chief adviser on foreign affairs and set up the *Dienststelle Ribbentrop*; appointed Commissioner for Disarmament questions, April 1934; Ambassador-at-large, June 1935-February 1938; Head of German Delegation to League of Nations in March 1936; Ambassador in Great Britain, October 1936, but spent most of the time in Berlin; Reich Foreign Minister, February 4, 1938-May 1945; tried by International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg and condemned to death, October 1, 1946; hanged October 16, 1946.
- RICHTHOFEN, Herbert, Baron von**, German Minister in Denmark, 1930-35, in Belgium, 1936-38, in Bulgaria, 1939-41.
- ROOSEVELT, Franklin Delano**, President of the United States, March 1933, re-elected November 1936, November 1940, and November 1944; died April 12, 1945.
- RUNCIMAN, Viscount, Walter Runciman**, Liberal and Liberal National M.P., 1899-1937; President of the Board of Trade, 1931-37; created Viscount, 1937; Head of Mission to Czechoslovakia, 1938; Lord President of the Council, 1938-39.



- RUTHA, Heinrich, one of the founders of the *Kameradschaftsbund* in 1926; Henlein's special envoy to many conferences, sometimes called "Henlein's Foreign Minister"; arrested October 1937 and committed suicide shortly afterward while awaiting trial.
- SANDER, Professor Fritz, Professor of Law at the German University in Prague.
- SARGENT, Sir Orme, Assistant Under Secretary of State in the Foreign Office, 1933; Deputy Under Secretary of State, 1939; Permanent Under Secretary of State, 1946-49.
- SCHMIDT, Guido, Austrian State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, July 1936; Minister for Foreign Affairs, February 15-March 12, 1938; tried for high treason and acquitted, June 12, 1947.
- SCHMIDT, Dr. Paul Otto, interpreter in the German Foreign Ministry from 1923; *Legationsrat* 1st Class and official interpreter to the Foreign Minister and personal interpreter to Hitler from 1935; appointed Minister 2d Class, 1938; Minister 1st Class, 1940.
- SCHMUNDT, Major, Hitler's Military Adjutant; as *Chefadjutant der Wehrmacht* belonged to Hitler's closest entourage; promoted Lieutenant Colonel 1938, Colonel 1939, Major General 1941; Head of the Army Personnel Department; General of Infantry, 1944; died October 1, 1944, as a result of wounds received in the abortive *putsch* of July 20, 1944.
- SCHULENBURG, Friedrich Werner, Count von der, German Ambassador in Moscow, October 3, 1934-June 22, 1941; afterward on the staff of Ribbentrop; executed after the abortive *putsch* of July 20, 1944.
- SCHUSCHNIGG, Kurt von, Austrian Deputy, 1927; Minister of Justice in Buresch Cabinet, January-May 1932, and in Dollfuss Cabinet, May 1932-July 1934; also Minister of Education, September 1933-July 1934; Federal Chancellor, Minister of Defense, and Foreign Affairs, July 27, 1934-March 11, 1938, also Minister for Public Security from 1937; Leader of the Patriotic Front, May 1936-March 1938; arrested and imprisoned at the *Anschluss*; liberated by Allies, May 1945; now living in the United States.
- SCHWERIN VON KROSIGK, Lutz, Count, Reich Minister of Finance, 1932-45; Foreign Minister under Dönitz, May 1945; indicted with other high Nazi officials at Nuremberg, November 5, 1947.
- SIDOR, Karel, one of the leading Deputies of Hlinka's autonomist Slovak People's Party; Slovak Prime Minister, March 1939; Slovak Minister to the Holy See, July 1939-1945.
- SIMON, Sir John, Liberal and Liberal National M.P., 1906-40; member of the Cabinet, 1913-16; Leader of the Liberal National Party, 1931-40; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1931-35; Home Secretary, 1935-37; Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1937-40; created Viscount Simon, 1940; Lord Chancellor, 1940-45.
- SINCLAIR, Sir Archibald, Bart., Liberal M.P., 1922-45; Leader of Liberal Parliamentary Party, 1935-1945; Secretary of State for Air, 1940-45.
- SIROVY, General Jan, Commander in Chief of Czech Legion during retreat from Siberia; former Chief of the Czech General Staff; Inspector General of the Czech Armed Forces in 1938; Prime Minister and Minister of Defense in Cabinet of National Unity, September 22-December 1, 1938, and *ad interim* President to November 30, 1938; Minister of Defense in Beran Cabinet, December 1938-March 1939; tried by a Prague court and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment, April 21, 1947.

- SLAVIK**, Dr. Juraj, Czechoslovak Minister in Warsaw, November 29, 1935–March 16, 1939; former member of Agrarian Party.
- SPEARS**, Major General Sir Edward, Conservative M.P., 1931–45; Chairman of Anglo-French Parliamentary Committee; Personal Liaison Officer between the British and the French Prime Ministers, 1940; Head of British Mission to General de Gaulle, July 1940; Head of Spears Mission in Syria and the Lebanon, July 1941; first Minister to the Republics of Syria and the Lebanon, 1942–44.
- SPINA**, Dr. F., Leader of the German Agrarian Party in Czechoslovakia; changed to “activism” in 1925; Minister of Public Health in the Malypetr Cabinet, 1932–35.
- ŠRÁMEK**, Monsignor Jan, Deputy and Leader of the Catholic People's Party since the formation of the Czechoslovak Republic; Deputy Prime Minister, 1926–29; in Cabinet uninterruptedly, 1921–38; Minister for Unification of Laws and Organization of Public Administration from 1932; escaped to England, 1939; Prime Minister of the Czechoslovak Government in exile, 1940–45; Deputy Premier in Gottwald's first Cabinet, 1946; resigned from National Front, February 21, 1948; arrested March 21, 1948, while attempting to flee the country; released June 19, 1948.
- STALIN**, Josif Vissarianovich, Marshal of the Soviet Union; Generalissimo, 1945; General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, member of the Politburo and Orgburo since 1922; Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, since 1941; Commissar of Defense, 1941–46; Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, 1943–46; Minister of the Armed Forces, 1946–47.
- STEED**, Henry Wickham, British journalist and historian; foreign editor of *The Times*, 1914–18, and editor, 1919–22; Lecturer in Central European History at King's College, London, 1925–38.
- STOHRER**, Dr. Eberhard von, German Minister in Egypt, 1927–35, in Rumania, 1935–37; Ambassador in Spain, September 19, 1937–January 1, 1943; died shortly after recall to Germany.
- STOYADINOVICH**, Dr. Milan, Yugoslav Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, June 24, 1935–June 1939; interned at Rudnik, 1940; by agreement with British and Greek Governments sent to Athens, March 1941, and thence to internment in Mauritius.
- STRANG**, William, Acting Counselor of Embassy in the Soviet Union, 1930, Counselor 1932–33; Counselor in the Foreign Office, 1933–39; accompanied Mr. Chamberlain to Berchtesgaden, Godesberg, and Munich, September 1938; Acting Assistant Under Secretary of State, 1939–43; U.K. representative with rank of Ambassador on European Advisory Commission, 1943–45; Political Adviser to the Commander in Chief of the British zone of Germany, 1945–47; Joint Permanent Under Secretary of State (German Section of Foreign Office), 1947–49; Permanent Under Secretary of State since February 1949.
- STRASSER**, Dr. Otto, brother of Gregor Strasser; joined the Nazi Party, 1925; broke away in 1930 and founded a revolutionary wing of the Party; then became leader of the anti-Hitler Black Front; *émigré* editor of *Die Deutsche Revolution* in Prague from 1934; fled to Zürich, 1938; later to Paris, Lisbon, and South America; in Canada since April 1941.

- SUCHY, Dr. Josef, member of the Directing Council (*Führungsrat*) of the Sudeten German Party; a leader of the Sudeten German *Wandervögel*, who reorganized the movement in 1930.
- SWINTON, Viscount, Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, Conservative M.P., 1918-35; President of the Board of Trade, 1922-23, 1924-29, and 1931; Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1931-35; created Viscount, 1935; Secretary of State for Air, 1935-38; Minister Resident in West Africa, 1942-44; Minister for Civil Aviation, 1944-45.
- SZTÓJAY, Major General Döme, Hungarian Military Attaché in Germany, 1928-32; of Croat origin; about 1933 changed his name from Stoyakovič and entered the Hungarian Diplomatic Service; Hungarian Minister in Germany, December 19, 1935-1944; Prime Minister of Hungary, March 9 to end of August 1944; tried and sentenced to death by Special High Court in Budapest, March 22, 1946; executed by firing squad, August 24, 1946.
- TĂTĂRESCU, Dr. Gheorghe, Rumanian Prime Minister, January 1934-December 1937; Minister of the Interior *ad interim*, February-December 1937; Deputy Prime Minister, February-March 1938; Ambassador in France, December 20, 1938-September 7, 1939; Prime Minister, November 1939; Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, 1945-47.
- TISO, Monsignor Josef, Deputy of the Slovak People's Party and its leader after Hlinka's death in August 1938; Minister of Health in the Czechoslovak Government, 1927-29; Prime Minister of the autonomous Slovak Government, October 1938; with German aid proclaimed the independence of Slovakia March 14, 1939, and elected its president, October 26, 1939; captured in Austria, May 22, 1945; tried and condemned to death for collaboration with the Germans, April 15, 1947, and hanged April 18, 1947.
- TSCHUPPIK, Walter, Czechoslovak left-wing journalist; editor of *Prager Tagblatt*, 1914; editor of *Süddeutsche Sonntagspost*, Munich, 1926-33; imprisoned March-November 1933, and after release went to Paris, then to Prague; founded own newspaper, *Der Montag*, in Prague, 1935; fled to Poland after German seizure of Prague, later to England; managing director of European Correspondents Ltd., 1939-44; free lance journalist since 1944.
- VANSITTART, Sir Robert, Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1930-38; Chief Diplomatic Adviser to the Foreign Secretary, 1938-41; created Baron, 1941.
- VIERERBL, Dr. Karl, in 1933 chief editor of the Nazi newspaper *Tag*, in Dux, and founder of a Nazi news agency in Czechoslovakia; later chief editor of *Egerer Zeitung* and *Die Zeit*; subsequently an *émigré* in Germany and on the staff of the *Völkischer Beobachter* as expert on Sudeten German Affairs.
- VOROSHILOV, Klement Efremovich, Marshal of the Soviet Union; People's Commissar for Defense, 1934-40; member of the Politburo; Chairman of the Allied Control Commission in Hungary, 1945-46; Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, since March 1946.
- VUILLEMIN, Général Joseph, Chief of the French Air Staff, February 22, 1938; G.O.C. French Air Force, 1939-40; escaped to England, 1943, and joined Fighting French under de Gaulle,

- WEIZSÄCKER**, Ernst, Baron von, German Minister in Norway, 1931-33, in Switzerland, 1933-36; Head of the Political Department of the German Foreign Ministry, August 1936-March 1938; State Secretary, April 1, 1938-April 1943; Ambassador to the Holy See, 1943-45; indicted with other high Nazi officials at Nuremberg, November 5, 1947.
- WELCZECK**, Johannes, Count von, German Ambassador in Spain, 1926-36, in France, April 30, 1936-September 3, 1939; *en disponibilité* from January 30, 1940; retired 1944.
- WIEDEMANN**, Captain Fritz, Hitler's company commander in the 1914-18 war; an early member of the Nazi Party; aide-de-camp to Hitler, 1935-39; worked with Papen against Schuschnigg, 1936-37; on unofficial diplomatic missions in the United States, late 1937 to early 1938; in London, July 1938; Consul General at San Francisco from July 1940 until expelled June 1941; Consul General at Tientsin, October 1941-May 1945; tried by German denazification court at Passau and fined 2,000 Deutsche Marks, November 17, 1948.
- WILSON**, Sir Horace, Chief Industrial Adviser to His Majesty's Government, 1930-39; seconded to the Treasury for service with the Prime Minister, 1935-39; Official Head of His Majesty's Civil Service, 1939-42.
- WINTERTON**, Earl, Edward Turnour, Conservative M.P. since 1904; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1937-39; Deputy to Secretary of State for Air, March-May 1938; member of Cabinet, March 1938-January 1939.
- WOERMANN**, Dr. Ernst, *Gesandtschaftsrat* in German Foreign Ministry, 1928-30; attached to Legation in Austria, 1930-33; in Foreign Ministry, 1933-36; Counselor of Embassy in Great Britain, August 1936; Minister 1st Class there, May 1937-February 1938; *Ministerialdirektor* and Head of the Political Department of the Foreign Ministry with the title of Under State Secretary, March 1938-1943; Ambassador in China, 1943-45; indicted with other high Nazi officials at Nuremberg, November 5, 1947.
- WOHLTHAT**, Helmut, joined Reich Ministry for Economic Affairs, 1934; *Ministerialdirektor* in charge of foreign exchange questions, 1936; appointed by Göring to collaborate in Four-Year Plan, 1938; later on economic mission in Spain and in charge of negotiations for German-Rumanian commercial treaty, March 1939; Commissioner for Netherlands Bank, 1940-41; headed German Economic Mission to Japan, 1943-44.
- YOSHIDA**, Shigeru, Japanese Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1928-30; Ambassador in Italy, 1930-33, in Great Britain, June 26, 1936-November 4, 1938; Foreign Minister in Shidehara Cabinet, 1945-46; Prime Minister, May 1946-May 1947, and since October 1948.
- ZAY**, Jean, French Radical Socialist Minister of Education in the Blum Cabinet, June 1936-1937, in the Chautemps Cabinets, June 1937-March 1938, Blum Cabinet, March-April 1938, Daladier Cabinet, April 1938-September 1939; left for Casablanca, June 1940; deprived of French citizenship, 1941; later murdered by Vichy Militia.
- ZEITZLER**, Lieutenant Colonel Kurt, Staff Officer of the OKW in 1938; Chief of Staff of Von Kleist's Panzer Army, 1940-41; promoted General and appointed Chief of the Army General Staff, October 1942; retired on grounds of ill health after the abortive *putsch* of July 20, 1944.
- ZERNATTO**, Guido, General Secretary of the Austrian Fatherland Front and State Secretary for special duties in the Federal Chancellery, May 14, 1936; Minister without Portfolio, February 15, 1938; escaped to America at the *Anschluss*.

## Appendix V

### GLOSSARY

#### OF GERMAN TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

- A.A.**, Auswärtiges Amt, *q.v.*
- Abgeordneter**, deputy, e.g., of the Czechoslovak Parliament
- Abt.**, Abteilung, *q.v.*, e.g., Abt. Pers., Abt. Recht, etc.
- Abteilung**, department, section
- Abteilung Ausland**, Foreign Section of the OKW; *see* **Amtsgruppe Auslandsnachrichten und Abwehr**
- Abwehr**, Counter-intelligence; *see* **Amtsgruppe Auslandsnachrichten und Abwehr**
- a.D.**, ausser Dienst, *q.v.*
- Adjutantur d. [es] Führers**, Office of the Führer's Adjutants
- Akten**, documents, files
- Alte Reichskanzlei**, Old Reich Chancellery; refers in general to documents of this office of the pre-Nazi period
- Altreich**, the Reich as it was, i.e., prior to the annexation of Austria and the Sudetenland; lit., Old Reich
- Amerika-deutscher Volksbund**, German-American Bund
- Amt**, office
- Amtsgruppe**, section of an OKH, OKW, RKM office (Amt)
- Amtsgruppe Auslandsnachrichten und Abwehr**, the Intelligence Directorate of the OKW
- Amtsrat**, grade in the gehobener Dienst, *q.v.*
- Annullität**, annual class, i.e., of men called up for military service
- Anschluss**, the annexation of Austria by Germany
- A.O.**, Auslandsorganisation, *q.v.*
- A.R.**, Amtsrat, *q.v.*
- Arbeitsdienst**, labor service
- Archiv**, archives
- Asservate**, miscellaneous accessions
- Assess.**, Assessor, *q.v.*
- Assessor**, candidate for the höherer Dienst (*q.v.*), who, having passed the Great State Examination (grosse Staatsprüfung), is serving for a probationary period of not less than 2 years in an administrative department prior to permanent appointment. *See also* **Gerichtsassessor and Regierungsassessor**
- Att.**, Attaché
- Att. Gr.**, Attaché Gruppe, *q.v.*
- Attaché Gruppe**, subsection of 3d Section of Army General Staff dealing with foreign military attachés
- Aufkl. Gruppe**, Aufklärungsgruppe, *q.v.*
- Aufklärungsgruppe**, Reconnaissance Gruppe in the Luftwaffe
- Auslandsnachrichten**, foreign intelligence
- Auslandsorganisation**, Foreign Organization of the Nazi Party concerned with German nationals living abroad
- Auslandspropagandaleitstelle**, Directorate for Propaganda Abroad
- ausser Dienst**, retired
- Ausw. Amt**, Auswärtiges Amt, *q.v.*
- Auswärtiges Amt**, German Foreign Ministry
- b.**, bei, *q.v.*
- Beauftragte**, commissioners
- bei**, in, with; e.g., bei Abt. IV
- Berufskonsulat**, Career Consulate
- Bevollmächtigter** (pl. Bevollmächtigte), plenipotentiary, commissioner, special delegate

- Bezirkshauptmann (pl.—hauptleute), District Prefect
- Bezirkskommandant (Grenze), District Commander (Frontier)
- Bibl., Bibliothekar, *q.v.*
- Bibl. Insp., Bibliothekinspektor, *q.v.*
- Bibliothekar, librarian, grade in the gehobener Dienst, *q.v.*
- Bibliothekinspektor, grade in the gehobener Dienst, *q.v.*; lit., library inspector
- Botschaftsrat, Counselor of Embassy; see höherer Dienst
- Brigadeführer, SA, SS, NSFK, NSKK rank equivalent to Major General
- Bund der Landwirte, lit., Farmers' League, the German Agrarian Party in Czechoslovakia; cf. Landbund
- Bürgermeister, mayor
- Büro, office, bureau
- Büro RAM, Office of the German Foreign Minister
- B.Z. am Mittag, "Berliner Zeitung am Mittag," a Berlin newspaper
- Bz. Komm. (G), Bezirkskommandant (Grenze), *q.v.*
- Chef Auslandsorganisation im Ausw. Amt, Head of the Auslandsorganisation in the Foreign Ministry
- Chef Sache, top secret, military
- DAZ, "Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung," a leading Berlin daily newspaper
- "Der Stürmer," anti-Semitic weekly newspaper edited by Julius Streicher
- "Deutsche diplomatisch-politische Korrespondenz," the official organ of the German Foreign Ministry
- Deutsche Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei, lit., German National Socialist Workers' Party, the original Nazi Party in Czechoslovakia which dissolved itself to avoid being suppressed by the Government; it reappeared as the Sudendeutsche Heimatfront (*q.v.*) in 1933 and was renamed Sudendeutsche Partei in 1935
- Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro, German News Agency, owned by the Ministry of Propaganda
- Deutsches Volkstum, Deutschtum, a vague word embracing various meanings according to context, e.g., Germanism, German racial feeling, German racial element, etc.
- Dg. Pol., Dirigent der Politischen Abteilung, *q.v.*
- Dienststelle Ribbentrop, office of Ribbentrop in his capacity as foreign affairs adviser to Hitler; of decreasing importance after his appointment as Foreign Minister
- Diktat, dictated settlement; used with reference to Treaty of Versailles
- Dipl. Ing., Diplom.-Ingenieur, *q.v.*
- Diplom.-Ingenieur, engineer who has passed his final examinations at a Technical College (Technische Hochschule)
- Dirigent der Politischen Abteilung, Deputy Head of the Political Department, i.e., in the German Foreign Ministry
- DNB, Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro, *q.v.*
- DNSAP, Deutsche Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei, *q.v.*
- Dolmetscher, interpreter
- Durchführungsgesetze, implementing laws
- Ehrengericht, court of honor
- "Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer," "One Nation, one Reich, one Leader"
- e.o., ex officio; where this precedes the file number, it indicates a draft for which there are no preceding papers. Cf. zu
- (F), Fernaufklärung, *q.v.*
- FA, Forschungsamt, *q.v.*
- Fahrbereitschaft, Transport Section
- Fall "Grün," Operation "Green"
- Fall "Rot," Operation "Red"
- Fernaufklärung, long-distance reconnaissance
- Fhr., Freiherr, *q.v.*
- Forschungsamt, Research Department

- Freiheit der Weltanschauung**, freedom to profess any ideology
- Freiherr**, Baron, but not really equivalent to that title in the British peerage
- Freikorps**, illegal or terrorist military formations which first appeared in Germany after the 1914-18 war
- Fhr.**, **Freiherr**, *q.v.*
- Frl.**, **Fräulein**, **Miss**.
- Frontkämpferbund**, League of Ex-servicemen
- FS**, **Führungsstab**, *q.v.*
- Führer**, leader
- Führerbesprechung**, conference, i.e., between leaders
- Führungsstab**, (1) Operations Staff; (2) Executive Committee
- Fürst**, Prince
- g**, **geheim**, *q.v.*
- Gau** (pl. **Gaue**), (1) natural geographical region or district; (2) largest territorial administrative unit of the Nazi Party, 43 in number, including the Auslandsorganisation, which was the 43d.
- Gauamtsleiter**, head of the Gau Office of a Nazi Party organization
- Gauhauptmann**, head of the "self-administration" in a Reichsgau, below a Reichsstatthalter, *q.v.*
- Gauleiter**, highest Nazi Party official in a Gau
- Gauverfassung**, District constitution; i.e., on the basis of Gaue
- Gebietsführer**, Hitler-Jugend rank equivalent to Major General
- geheim**, secret
- Geheimakten**, secret documents
- Geheimbüro**, Office for secret documents, e.g., **Pol. Geheim-Büro**
- geheime Kommandosache**, top secret (military)
- geheime Reichssache**, top secret
- Geheimer Kabinettsrat**, Secret Cabinet Council
- gehobener Dienst**, the "Upper Service" in the German Civil Service which comes between the **mittlerer Dienst** and the **höherer Dienst**. This corresponds roughly to the Higher Clerical and Executive Classes in the British Civil Service. It contains the following four grades: (1) **Inspektor**, e.g., **Technischer Inspektor**, **Bibliothekinspektor**, **Regierungsinspektor**, **Verwaltungsinspektor**, **Konsultssekretär (A.A.)**; (2) **Oberinspektor**, e.g., **Regierungsoberinspektor**, **Verwaltungsoberinspektor**, **Regierungsoberrevisor**, **Konsultssekretär I Kl. (A.A.)**; (3) **Amtmann**, e.g., **Regierungsamtman**, **Verwaltungsamtman**, **Kanzler (A.A.)**; **Ministerialkanzleivorsteher**; (4) **Amts-rat (Hofrat until 1918)**
- Generalkonsul**, **Consul General**
- Generalstab des Heeres**, **Army General Staff**
- Gen. Kons.**, **Generalkonsul**, *q.v.*
- Gen. Ksl.**, **Generalkonsul**, *q.v.*
- Gen. St. d.H.**, **Generalstab des Heeres**, *q.v.*
- Ger. Ass.**, **Gerichtsassessor**, *q.v.*
- Gerichtsassessor**, **Assessor (q.v.)** who has specialized for the judiciary in his examinations, in contrast to a **Regierungsassessor**, *q.v.*
- Ges.**, **Gesandter**, *q.v.*
- Gesandter**, **Minister**; *see höherer Dienst*
- Gesandter I. Klasse**, **Minister 1st Class**; *see höherer Dienst*
- Gesandtschaftsrat**, **Counselor of Legation**; *see höherer Dienst*
- Gesch. Akten**, **Geschäftsakten**, *q.v.*
- Geschäftsakten**, documents of a general nature, as distinct from those kept in a private or personal file
- Geschwader**, unit of the **Luftwaffe** consisting of 3 **Gruppen** and 1 **reserve Gruppe**; approximately equal to an **R.A.F. Wing**
- Gewerbepartei**, **Traders' Party**
- G.K.**, **Generalkonsul**, *q.v.*
- g. Kdos.**, **geheime Kommandosache**, *q.v.*
- Gliederungen**, branches, affiliated organizations
- Graf**, **Count**
- Grenzler**, **Frontiersmen**

**Grosses Hauptquartier**, General Headquarters

**g. Rs.**, geheime Reichssache, *q.v.*

**Grünland**, "Green" territory; referring to "Fall Grün," *q.v.*

**Gruppe**, (1) unit of the Luftwaffe consisting of 3-4 Staffeln, about 30 aircraft; approximately equal to an R.A.F. Squadron; (2) group, department; (3) SS formation equivalent to Army Corps; (4) political group

**Gruppenführer**, SS, NSFK, NSKK rank equivalent to Lieutenant General

**Handakten**, special personal files

**Handakten von versch. Direktoren u. Dirigenten der Abteilungen**, special personal files belonging to various directors and deputy heads of departments

**Handelspolitik**, commercial policy

**Handelspolitische Abteilung**, Economic Policy Department of the Foreign Ministry; renamed Wirtschaftspolitische Abteilung (*q.v.*) between March and June 1938

**Ha. Pol.**, Handelspolitik, Handelspolitische Abteilung, *q.v.*

**Hilfsarb.**, Hilfsarbeiter, *q.v.*

**Hilfsarbeiter**, temporary assistant

**Historisches Referat**, historical section

**Hitler-Jugend**, Hitler Youth, the Nazi Youth Organization

**H.J.**, Hitler-Jugend, *q.v.*

**Hochschule für Politik**, College of Political Science

**Hofrat**, (1) high grade in the Austrian Imperial Civil Service. No new Hofräte were appointed after 1918; (2) pre-1918 grade in the gehobener Dienst of the German Civil Service superseded by Amtsrat, *q.v.*

**höherer Dienst**, the "Higher Service" in the German Civil Service which corresponds to the Administrative Class in the British Civil Service, though the functions of certain lower grades may be more execu-

tive than administrative. It contains the following six grades in ascending order of rank: (1) Regierungsrat, Bibliothekar, Gesandtschaftsrat (A.A.), Konsul (A.A.), Legationsrat (A.A.), Vizekonsul (A.A.); (2) Oberregierungsrat, Oberregierungsrat as Ministerialbürodirektor, Gesandtschaftsrat I. Kl. (A.A.), Konsul I. Kl. (A.A.), Legationsrat I. Kl. (A.A.); (3) Ministerialrat, Botschaftsrat (A.A.), Generalkonsul (A.A.) gesandter (A.A.); (4) Ministerialdirigent, Generalkonsul I. Kl. (A.A.), Gesandter I. Kl. (A.A.); (5) Ministerialdirektor, Gesandter I. Kl. as Head of a Mission (A.A.); (6) Staatssekretär, Botschafter (A.A.)

**H.R.**, Hofrat, *q.v.*

**i.A.**, im Auftrag, *q.v.*

**Ibero-Amerikan[isches] Institut**, Latin-American Institute, founded in Berlin in 1929 to further relations with Latin America and interest in its languages, culture, etc. During the Nazi period the institute extended its activities to Spain and Portugal

**im Auftrag**, when preceding a signature it signifies that the document is signed by an official on behalf of another of higher rank

**Infanterie-Regiment**, Infantry Regiment

**Ing.**, Ingenieur, *q.v.*

**Ingenieur**, engineer

**Insp.**, Inspektor, *q.v.*

**Inspektor**, grade in the gehobener Dienst, *q.v.*

**Institut für öffentliches Recht und Völkerrecht**, Institute for Public and International Law

**I.R.**, Infanterie-Regiment, *q.v.*

**i.V.**, in Vertretung, *q.v.*

**in Vertretung**, signifies (1) that a person is deputizing for another, or (2) that a person is signing a document on behalf of another; often corresponds to the English term "acting"



- K.**, *Konsul, q.v.*
- Kameradschaftsbund**, lit., League of Comrades, used of the semi-clandestine Youth Organization of Sudeten German Nationalists founded in 1926
- Kampfgeschwader**, Bomber Geschwader
- Kanzlei**, department dealing with correspondence, typing, verification of documents, etc., corresponding to the Archives Department in the British Foreign Office and the Chancery in a diplomatic mission abroad
- Kanzlei-Offizial**, grade in the Austrian Civil Service
- Kanzl. Offizial**, *Kanzlei-Offizial, q.v.*
- Kanzler**, archivist, head of a *Kanzlei (q.v.)* in a mission abroad; grade in the *gehobener Dienst*
- Kapitänleutnant**, rank in the German Navy equivalent to Lieutenant in the Royal Navy
- Kataster**, National Register (of land for purposes of taxation)
- K. Geschwader**, *Kampfgeschwader, q.v.*
- Kommissionen**, commissions
- Konferenzen**, conferences
- Kons.**, *Konsul, q.v.*
- Konsul**, *Consul; see also höherer Dienst*
- Konsultssekretär**, grade in *gehobener Dienst, q.v.*
- Kraft durch Freude**, Strength through Joy; recreational organization of the Labor Front
- Kreis**, (1) urban or rural government district forming part of a province; (2) territorial administrative unit of the Nazi Party forming part of a Gau; this may or may not coincide with (1)
- Kriegsmarine**, German Navy
- K.S.**, *Konsultssekretär, q.v.*
- Kult**, *Kulturpolitische Abteilung, q.v.*
- Kulturpolitische Abteilung**, Cultural Policy Department of the Foreign Ministry
- Kzler.**, *Kanzler, q.v.*
- Land**, one of the Federal States of Germany, e.g., Bavaria, Baden
- Landbund**, Agrarian League, alternative name for *Bund der Landwirte, q.v.*
- Länderabteilungen**, departments dealing with particular countries
- Landesinsp.**, *Landesinspektor, q.v.*
- Landesinspektor**, grade in the *gehobener Dienst* serving in provincial administration
- Landtag**, Provincial Diet
- Legationskasse**, accounts division of the Foreign Ministry
- Legationsrat**, Counselor of Legation; *see höherer Dienst*
- Legationsrat I. Kl.**, Counselor of Legation 1st Class; *see höherer Dienst*
- Legationssekretär**, Secretary of Legation; *see höherer Dienst*
- Leg. Rat.**, *Legationsrat, q.v.*
- Leibstandarte**, special bodyguard for the Führer
- L.R.**, *Legationsrat, q.v.*
- L.R. I. Kl.**, *Legationsrat I. Kl., q.v.*
- L.S.**, *Legationssekretär, q.v.*
- Luftgau**, *Luftwaffe* administrative district corresponding to Army Wehrkreis
- Luftkreis**, pre-1939 *Luftwaffe* district. *Cf. Wehrkreis*
- Luftwaffe**, German Air Force
- Maschinengewehr-Batterie**, machine-gun battery
- M.B. Dir.**, *Ministerialbürodirektor, q.v.*
- M.G. Batt.**, *Maschinengewehr-Batterie, q.v.*
- Min. Dgt.**, *Ministerialdirigent, q.v.*
- Min. Dir.**, *Ministerialdirektor, q.v.*
- Ministerialbürodirektor**, grade in the *höherer Dienst (q.v.)*, equivalent to head clerk
- Ministerialdirektor**, grade in the *höherer Dienst (q.v.)*; usually head of a department in a Ministry, roughly equivalent to Assistant Secretary in the British Civil Service
- Ministerialdirigent**, grade in the *höherer Dienst (q.v.)*; usually head of a sub-department

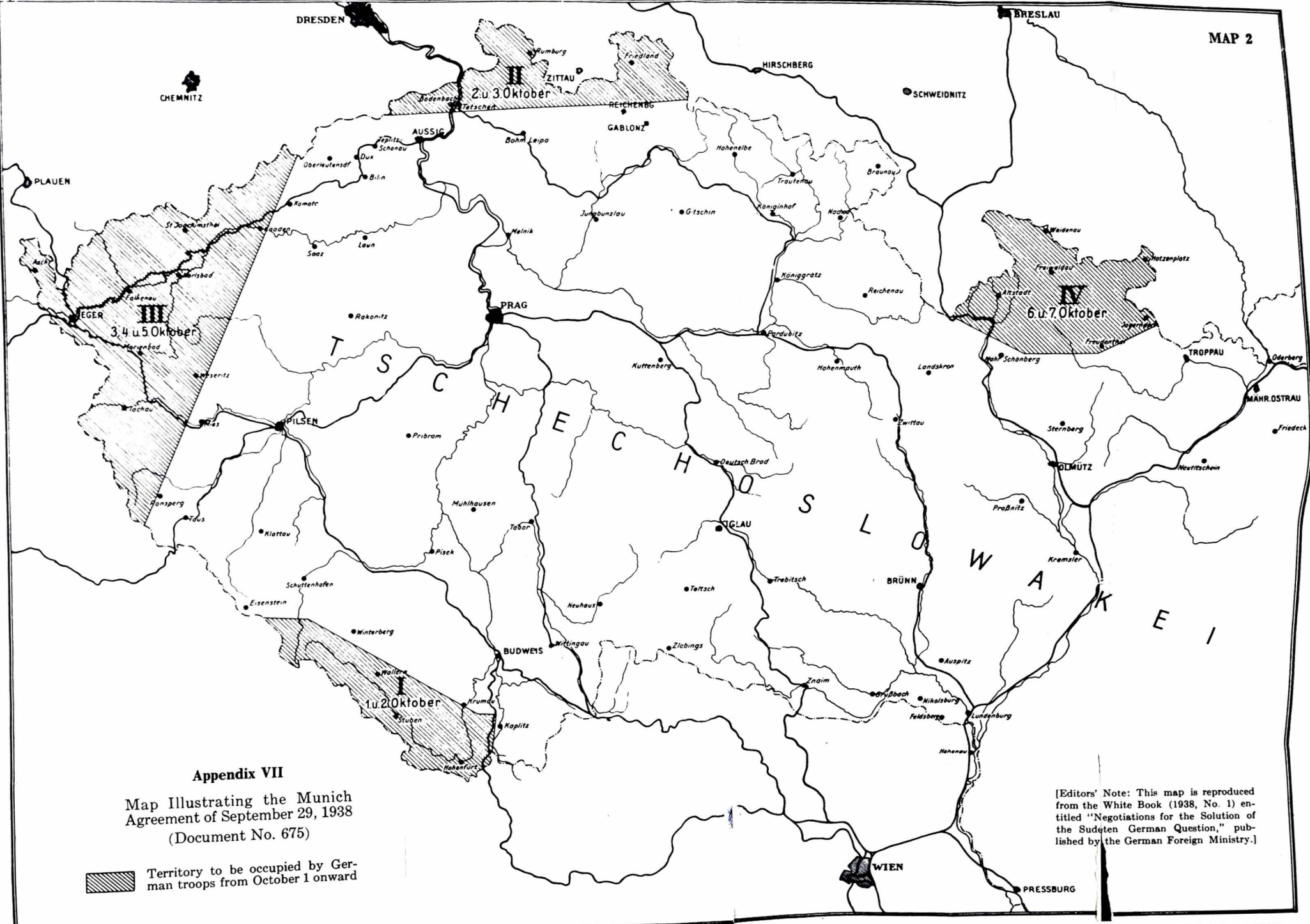
- Ministerialkanzleiobersekretär**, grade in the mittlerer Dienst (*q.v.*), serving in the Kanzlei of a Ministry
- Ministerialkanzleisekretär**, grade in the mittlerer Dienst (*q.v.*), serving in the Kanzlei of a Ministry
- Ministerialkanzleivorsteher**, grade in the gehobener Dienst (*q.v.*); head of the Kanzlei in a Ministry
- Ministerialrat**, grade in the höherer Dienst (*q.v.*); usually head of a section (Referent), roughly equivalent to Principal in the British Civil Service
- Min. Rat**, Ministerialrat, *q.v.*
- Missionen**, missions, i.e., diplomatic missions abroad
- mittlerer Dienst**, the "Intermediate Service" of the German Civil Service, which corresponds to the Clerical Class in the British Civil Service. It contains the following three grades: (1) Assistent, e.g., Regierungsassistent, Verwaltungsassistent; (2) Sekretär, e.g., Regierungsssekretär, Verwaltungsssekretär, Kanzleivorsteher, Ministerialkanzleisekretär; (3) Obersekretär, e.g., Regierungsobersekretär, Verwaltungsobersekretär, Ministerialkanzleiobersekretär
- M.Kzl.O.S.**, Ministerialkanzleiobersekretär, *q.v.*
- M.Kzl.S.**, Ministerialkanzleisekretär, *q.v.*
- Nachlass** (pl. Nachlässe), documents or files taken over from defunct sections or former officials
- Nachrichten- und Presse-Abteilung**, Information and Press Department of the German Foreign Ministry
- Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei**, National Socialist German Workers' Party, the full title of the Nazi Party
- Nationalsozialistischer Dozentenbund**, National Socialist University Lecturers' League
- Nationalsozialistische Fliegerkorps**, National Socialist Flying Corps
- Nationalsozialistische Frauenschaft**, National Socialist Women's League
- Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrerkorps**, National Socialist Motor Transport Corps
- Nationalsozialistischer Studentebund**, National Socialist Students' League
- Neue Reichskanzlei**, New Reich Chancellery; refers in general to documents from this office after Hitler's accession to power
- Nichtberufskonsulat** (pl. -e), Non-career Consulate
- N.P.**, Nachrichten- und Presse-Abteilung, *q.v.*
- N. S. D. A. P.**, Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, *q.v.*
- NSFK**, Nationalsozialistisches Fliegerkorps, *q.v.*
- NSKK**, Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrerkorps, *q.v.*
- Oberbotenmeister**, grade in the mittlerer Dienst (*q.v.*) between Sekretär and Obersekretär; head of the office-keepers in a Ministry
- Oberführer**, SA, SS, NSFK, NSKK rank approximately equivalent to Colonel
- Obergruppenführer**, SA, SS, NSFK, NSKK rank approximately equivalent to General
- Oberinspektor**, grade in the gehobener Dienst, *q.v.*
- Oberkommando des Heeres**, Supreme Command of the Army; Supreme Headquarters of the Army
- Oberkommando der Wehrmacht**, Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht; Supreme Headquarters of the Wehrmacht
- Oberregierungsrat**, grade in the höherer Dienst, *q.v.*
- O.I.**, Oberinspektor, *q.v.*
- Oesterreichische Bundesjugend**, Austrian Federal Youth Movement
- OKH**, Oberkommando des Heeres, *q.v.*
- OKW**, Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, *q.v.*
- O.R.R.**, Oberregierungsrat, *q.v.*

- P, Presse-Abteilung, q.v.**  
**Partei, Party, in particular the Nazi Party**  
**Parteidienststellen, Party agencies, Party offices**  
**Pers., Personal- und Haushalts-Abteilung, q.v.**  
**Personal- und Haushalts-Abteilung, Personnel and Budget Department of the Foreign Ministry**  
**Pol., Politische Abteilung, q.v.**  
**Politische Abteilung, Political Department of the Foreign Ministry; subdivided according to geographical areas, each designated by a Roman numeral, e.g., Pol. IV (see Appendix II)**  
**Pol. Archiv, Politisches Archiv, q.v.**  
**Polit. Archiv, Politisches Archiv, q.v.**  
**Politisches Archiv, Political Archives of the Foreign Ministry**  
**Präsidialkanzlei, Chancellery of the President of the Reich, attached to Hitler as Head of the State in 1934**  
**Presse, Press**  
**Presse-Abteilung, News or Press Department**  
**Pressebeirat, Press Attaché/Adviser**  
**Promi, Propagandaministerium, q.v.**  
**Propagandaministerium, Ministry of Propaganda**  
**Protokoll, Protocol Department, in the Foreign Ministry**
- Qu, Quirinal; thus "Rom (Qu)" in addresses to distinguish the German Embassy to the Kingdom of Italy from that to the Holy See**
- R, Rechtsabteilung, q.v.**  
**RAD, Reichsarbeitsdienst, q.v.**  
**RAM, Reichsaussenminister, q.v.**  
**R. Amtm., Regierungsamtman, q.v.**  
**Rb. Dir., Reichsbankdirektor, q.v.**  
**Rechn. R., Rechnungsrat, q.v.**  
**Rechnungsrat, pre-1918 Civil Service grade equivalent to Amtsrat**  
**Recht, as in Abt. Recht, Rechtsabteilung, q.v.**  
**Rechtsabteilung, Legal Department, in the German Foreign Ministry**
- Ref., Referat, Referent, q.v.**  
**Referat, section or office; this may deal with a country or group of countries or else with some specific subject or subjects**  
**Referat Pers., see Personal- und Haushalts-Abteilung**  
**Referent, according to context: (1) head of a section (Referat); (2) personal assistant (persönlicher Referent) to the head of a department (Abteilungsleiter); (3) specialist or expert for a particular country or subject; lit., reporter; (4) responsible official**  
**Regierungsamtman, grade in the gehobener Dienst, q.v.**  
**Regierungsassessor, Assessor (q.v.) who has specialized in general administrative duties, as distinct from Gerichtsassessor, q.v.**  
**Regierungsinspektor, grade in the gehobener Dienst, q.v.**  
**Regierungsoberinspektor, grade in the gehobener Dienst, q.v.**  
**Regierungsoberrevisor, grade in the gehobener Dienst (q.v.); auditor, accountant**  
**Regierungsrat, grade in the höherer Dienst, q.v.**  
**Reich, the German Reich, Germany**  
**Reichsangehöriger, Reich subject**  
**Reichsarbeitsdienst, Reich Labor Service**  
**Reichsaussenminister, Reich Foreign Minister**  
**Reichsbank, German National Bank, (founded 1875, reorganized 1924, came under direct control of the Führer June 15, 1939)**  
**Reichsbankdirektor, Director of the Reichsbank**  
**Reichsdeutsche, lit., Reich-Germans, i.e., those Germans who are Reich subjects but are living outside the frontiers of the Reich; cf. Volksdeutsche**  
**Reichsernährungsministerium, Reich Food Ministry**  
**Reichsfinanzministerium, Reich Ministry of Finance**

- Reichsführer-SS**, Commander in Chief of the SS (i.e., Himmler); equivalent in rank to Field Marshal
- Reichsgau**, administrative area (mainly in annexed territories) directly under the Central Reich Authorities, e.g., Sudetenland, Danzig-Westpreussen
- Reichsgesetzblatt**, "Reich Law Gazette"; official publication of the Reich Ministry of the Interior giving the text of new laws, decrees, and regulations
- Reichsgruppe Banken**, one of the Nazi economic organizations, successor to the pre-1933 Central Association of the Banking Trade
- Reichskanzlei**, Reich Chancellery; *see also* Alte Reichskanzlei and Neue Reichskanzlei
- Reichskanzler**, Reich Chancellor
- Reichskom.**, Reichskommissar, *q.v.*
- Reichskommissar**, Reich Commissioner, e.g., for Ukraine
- Reichskreditgesellschaft**, bank founded by the Reich Government in 1919 with public ownership of its shares
- Reichskriegsministerium**, Reich War Ministry
- Reichsminister**, Reich Minister; any member of the Reich Cabinet, but in Foreign Ministry documents usually denotes the Reich Foreign Minister
- Reichspräsidentialrat**, Councillor in the Präsidentskanzlei, *q.v.*
- Reichsstatthalter**, lit., Reich Governor; representative of the Reich Government in a Land (*q.v.*) or Reichsgau (*q.v.*) controlling its entire administration (with one exception all are also Nazi Party Gauleiter)
- Reichsverteidigungskommissar**, Reich Commissioner for Defense
- Reitersturm**, Mounted Sturm, *q.v.*
- REM**, Reichsernährungsministerium, *q.v.*
- Rep.**, Reparationen, *q.v.*
- Reparationen**, reparations
- Restakten**, remainder of documents
- RFM**, Reichsfinanzministerium, *q.v.*
- R.I.**, Regierungsinspektor, *q.v.*
- Richtlinien**, guiding principles, directions for
- Ritter von**, imperial title of nobility equivalent to knight
- RKM**, Reichskriegsministerium, *q.v.*
- RM**, Reichsminister, *q.v.*
- R.O.I.**, Regierungsoberinspektor, *q.v.*
- R.O.Rev.**, Regierungsoberrevisor, *q.v.*
- Rote Wehr**, Red Defense Force, Red Guard, Red Militia
- Rotspanien**, Red Spain, i.e., Republican Spain
- R.R.**, Regierungsrat, *q.v.*
- Russland Gremium**, Special Committee on Russia
- SA**, Sturmabteilung, *q.v.*
- Scharführer**, SS rank equivalent to Lance-sergeant; SA, NSFK, NSKK rank equivalent to Sergeant
- Schiffahrt**, navigation
- Schiffahrtswesen**, shipping
- Schutzstaffel**, Nazi Black Guards, or Body Guards
- Schwarze Front**, Black Front, anti-Nazi organization founded by Otto Strasser
- SdP.**, Sudetendeutsche Partei, *q.v.*
- SHF**, Sudetendeutsche Heimat Front, *q.v.*
- sogen.**, sogenannt, *q.v.*
- sogenannt**, so-called
- Sonder**, as a prefix means "special" e.g., Sonderabteilung, Sonderreferat
- Sopade**, Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, *q.v.*
- Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands**, Social Democratic Party of Germany
- Sprecher**, speaker, e.g., in a Parliament
- SS**, Schutzstaffel, *q.v.*
- Staatssekretär**, State Secretary; the Permanent Head of a Reich Ministry; equivalent to Permanent Under Secretary of State in the British Civil Service; *see* höherer Dienst


- Stabsführer, see Stabsleiter**  
**Stabsleiter, personal assistant to the Head of one of the Central Departments of the Nazi Party**  
**Staffel, (1) echelon; (2) part of a Luftwaffe Gruppe, usually 9-12 aircraft**  
**Standarte, SS formation approximately equivalent to a regiment**  
**Standartenführer, SA, SS, NSFK rank approximately equivalent to Colonel**  
**St.S., Staatssekretär, q.v.**  
**Sturm, SA, SS, NSFK, NSKK formation equivalent to an army company**  
**Sturmabteilung, assault detachment, i.e., Nazi Storm Troops (Brown Shirts)**  
**Sturzkampfgruppe, Dive-bomber gruppe**  
**StzK. Gruppe, Sturzkampfgruppe, q.v.**  
**StzKpf. Gruppe, Sturzkampfgruppe, q.v.**  
**Sudetendeutscher Heimatbund, Sudeten German Homeland League**  
**Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront, Sudeten German Homeland Front**  
**Sudetendeutsche Partei, Sudeten German Party**  
**Sudetenliga, Sudeten League**  
**Tagebuch, daily register of correspondence**  
**Technischer Inspektor, grade in the gehobener Dienst (q.v.); official supervising heating, lighting, etc., in a government office**  
**Techn. Insp., Technischer Inspektor, q.v.**  
**Tgb., Tagebuch, q.v.**  
**Turnverbände, gymnastic or athletic associations**  
**u., und, q.v.**  
**und, and**  
**Unterstaatssekretär, Under State Secretary; the Acting Permanent Head of a Reich Ministry, slightly lower in rank than a Permanent Under Secretary of State in the British Civil Service**  
**Untersturmführer, SS rank equivalent to lieutenant**  
**U.St.S., Unterstaatssekretär, q.v.**  
**v., von**  
**V.B., "Völkischer Beobachter," the principal daily newspaper of the Nazi Party**  
**Vbd., Völkerbund, q.v.**  
**V.D.A., Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland, q.v. Before 1933: Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland**  
**V.D.M.St., Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle, q.v.**  
**Verfassungsgericht, Special Court of Appeal**  
**Verkehrsangelegenheiten, matters connected with transport**  
**Verrechnungskasse, Clearing Office**  
**Versch., Verschiedene, q.v.**  
**Verschiedene, various**  
**Verschluss (Sache), to be kept in the safe**  
**Vertrag (pl. Verträge), treaty**  
**Vertrauensmann, confidential agent**  
**Verwaltungsassistent, grade in the mittlerer Dienst, q.v.**  
**Verw. Assist., Verwaltungsassistent, q.v.**  
**Verw. Assistent, Verwaltungsassistent, q.v.**  
**Vizekonsul, Vice Consul**  
**V.L.R., Vortragender Legationsrat, q.v.**  
**V-Mann, Vertrauensmann, q.v.**  
**Völkerbund, League of Nations**  
**Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland, National League for Germanism Abroad**  
**Volksdeutsche, lit., Racial Germans, i.e., persons of German race living outside the frontiers of the Reich and who are not Reich subjects; cf. Reichsdeutsche**  
**Volksdeutsche Kameradschaft, Society of Non-German Subjects of German Origin**  
**Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle, Central Agency for the Resettlement and Repatriation of Racial Germans (Volksdeutsche). Entrusted by Hit-**

- ler with centralized direction of and unified control over all Racial German and frontier questions, German minorities outside and foreign minorities within the German frontier. Formed as the "Büro von Kursell" in 1936, it was renamed and placed under the direction of SS-Obergruppenführer Lorenz in 1937, and in 1940 came under the direction of Himmler as Reich Commissioner for the Consolidation of the German Race (Reichskommissar für die Festigung Deutschen Volkstums)
- Volksgruppe**, racial group
- Volksschutzgesetz**, laws for the protection of racial minorities
- Volkvertretung**, Popular Assembly
- Vomi**, Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle, *q.v.* von, of
- Vorarbeiten f[ür] d[ie] Friedensschlüsse**, preliminary work for the peace treaties
- Vortragender Legationsrat**, grade in the höherer Dienst, (*q.v.*); Foreign Ministry equivalent to Ministerialrat; usually head of a section in the Foreign Ministry
- W**, Wirtschaftspolitische Abteilung, *q.v.*
- Wehrkreis**, Military district which is the basis for recruiting and drafting for the Wehrmacht
- Wehrmacht**, Armed Forces
- Wehrmacht - Nachrichtenverbindung**, Armed Forces Signals (Communication)
- Wehrmachtsamt**, Armed Forces Office in the War Ministry
- Welfenfonds**, Guelph Fund; fortune belonging to King George V of Hanover, seized by Prussia when he was dethroned in 1866
- Weltkrieg**, World War I
- "Westdeutscher Beobachter"**, Nazi daily newspaper published in Cologne
- Wirkl. A.R.**, Wirklicher Amtsrat, *q.v.*
- Wirklicher Amtsrat**, pre-1918 designation to distinguish "actual" from titular Amtsrat
- Wirtschaftsakten**, documents relating to economic matters
- Wirtschaftspolitische Abteilung**, Economic Policy Department; *cf.* Handelspolitische Abteilung
- wissensch. Hilfsarbeiter**, wissenschaftlicher Hilfsarbeiter, *q.v.*
- wissenschaftlicher Hilfsarbeiter**, research assistant
- z.D.**, zur Dienstverwendung, zur Disposition, *q.v.*
- zu**, to, in connection with; where this precedes the file number it indicates that the previous papers on the subject have this file number
- zur Dienstverwendung**, in temporary unemployment, en disponibilité
- zur Disposition**, in temporary unemployment, en disponibilité



Appendix VII

Map Illustrating the Munich Agreement of September 29, 1938 (Document No. 675)

 Territory to be occupied by German troops from October 1 onward

[Editors' Note: This map is reproduced from the White Book (1938, No. 1) entitled "Negotiations for the Solution of the Sudeten German Question," published by the German Foreign Ministry.]

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