

WILLIAM L. KRIEG
 FLETCHER SCHOOL OF LAW AND DIPLOMACY
 MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

September 11, 1938

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Dear Dad:-

I am sending this along with a letter to the Axton-Fisher Tobacco Co. of Louisville ordering some Spuds. I am also enclosing a withdrawal slip for \$6 to cover the costs. Isn't it fantastic to think that I can get the cigarettes delivered here in Stuttgart for considerably less than you can buy them from Fleeks? As I recall, we paid \$1.35 or \$1.40 for the cigarettes I took along with me, and I have recently received a letter from that company offering to deliver Spuds for 60¢ a carton here. Being in the Foreign Service does have some advantages!

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Last week-end (Labor Day) I made the trip down to Geneva that I mentioned in my last letter to Janie. After looking over the train schedules, I decided that the only practicable thing to do was to fly, as the cost was not much greater, especially as I probably would have had to have a sleeper, and it would save me a lot of time. The flight went off very smoothly, except for the fact that the weather was so bad that the flight from Zurich to Geneva was called off, and I had to go by train. Even that turned out to be a blessing in disguise, for I found that my friend Clark in Zurich, who was supposed to have gone on earlier, has just about given up the idea because of the weather plus a desire to be in on some parties which were going to be held in Zurich. However, I managed to persuade him, and we took a train from Zurich which whipped us across about 2/3 of Switzerland in 3 1/2 hours. Of course the air plane company paid my fare. Incidentally, you might be interested in the cost: it round trip cost RM. 81, which is \$2.40 at the official rate and \$20.25 at the low rate. As you can see, it was not exactly a cheap week-end, but I think it was worth it. Since I am in Europe, I would be very foolish to sit in Stuttgart all the time and not see the rest of the area. I can afford it, and Geneva certainly proved to be a place worth seeing.

Although we arrived rather late, we went out immediately to see the town's night life. I enjoyed it, although I don't care much about night life in general. On Sunday, the weather was very fine, and we went for a walk around the old city, and followed it by a boat trip on the famous Lac Lemman. We didn't go back on the boat, but stayed out in the suburbs and had a marvelous dinner at a little place Highley knew about, and then came in town to see another night spot. Monday afternoon I met a fellow I knew slightly in college. He was working on

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the American committee in connection with the League of Nations. Their job is to skow tourists around and get tickets in the galleries for them when the League is in session. He got rid of one of his tours and took Clark and me around on a personal tour. This was very nice, as you know how I hate to go around with tourists.

I was actually astounded by the beauty of the new League buildings. It is now a joke in Geneva that when the League collapses they will be taken over for a hospital for the city of Geneva. Although the construction work is just now being finished, it was planned long in advance, and several nations no longer in the League contributed to the structure. Many of the most beautiful rooms are made from Italian marbles, and in general, the finest stone in the world has been used throughout. I regret to say that the interior puts our government buildings in Washington to shame, even the newest. Besides the gorgeous large rooms for the meeting of the Assembly and the Council, the committee rooms are also very beautiful. They were given partly by governments and partly by private companies. As you can imagine, each vied with the other in the splendor of their constructions; rare woods were used as paneling and table tops; artistic murals decorate the walls; and all in all, it surpasses anything I have ever seen. It is sad to think that the League which occupies it retains hardly a shadow of its former prestige and power. However, it offers a possibility for international action in the future, and I hope that the League will be able to hold out until that time arrives. As a matter of fact, the League performs many non-political functions which are generally recognized as being of highest value.

In some ways, the flight back was much better. The weather was clear most of the way, and we flew down over the valley of Switzzlerland, over many beautiful little lakes and the picturesque countryside. On the other hand, I'll have to admit that I didn't prove much of a flyer. Every time the plane changed altitude I felt quite a wave of nausea, and for a while I didn't know whether I would be able to hold my dinner or not. Fortunately, they had tubes at every seat bringing in fresh cold air, so I just sat and sprayed air on my face. That tided over the situation, so I didn't actually lose anything. The entire flight from Geneva to Stuttgart took one hour and 20 minutes. It was direct, not through Zurich. The whole flight is from Lisbon, Salamanca, Marseilles and Geneva to Stuttgart, where it connects with a night train for Berlin. On board were a bunch of Spaniards who I think were the Franco delegation to the Nuremberg party convention.

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Speaking of the party convention, they certainly have succeeded in getting everybody worked up to a fine pitch. Friday and Saturday, before the successful conclusion of the incident over which negotiations between the Sudeten Germans and the Czechs were broken off, quite a number of people thought war might begin at any moment. One officer here has made arrangements to send his wife and children to Zurich tomorrow morning, just to be on the safe side. Speculations are rife as to whether the French would bomb the city here, as it is close to the border, an important railroad and military center, and contains several important war industries. Personally, I would be greatly surprised to see anything start this late in the year. Unless the Sudeten question is settled, and no one thinks it will be, next spring should be a very critical time, but of course there is always a possibility that one of the party leaders will say too much in a speech and start things right now. But I guess it doesn't pay for me to comment on the situation, as it is all old stuff by the time this letter reaches you.

Even if the European countries do fight, it is hardly likely that the U.S. would be in it at the start, although my colleagues all doubt whether we could stay out over a very long war. It is much harder here to look at things objectively than it is in America. It is hard to think that even if Germany should dominate the entire continent of Europe that that would not necessarily constitute a menace to the United States. And yet it is hard to see why it would. We are strong enough to defend our own shores, and we have no colonies which the German would be tempted to take away. It would not help our foreign trade, but while that is important, it would not mean the end of the country. My good sense tells me we should stay out at all costs, that we have everything to lose and nothing to gain from war. My prejudice makes me feel that we would hate to see the British, and, to a lesser extent, the French, badly defeated, stripped of their colonies and brought under German political and economic domination. It is hard to believe that this band of fanatics now in power here do not constitute a menace to the whole world, including the U.S. I would hate to see racial intolerance spread all over Europe, but it seems to be an inevitable accompaniment of Fascism everywhere, as witness the new Italian Laws against Jews. It means discarding the restraints of civilization which have been built up so painfully over so many centuries, and intellectual sterility by channeling all thought to fit certain preconceived ideas. If I write any more, this will never pass the censor, so I will close with love and best wishes to all.

William

