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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
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AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
Stuttgart, Germany
May 14, 1939

Dear Dad:

It really was a long time between letters this time. Your letter of May 2nd arrived the 12th, making very good time. That was the first since yours of April 9th which arrived April 20th. Are there any which were not delivered? I recently subscribed to Time magazine, and one issue arrived over two weeks ago. Since then I have not had any copies at all, and I am wondering if the delivery has been held up on this side. I really consider this very unlikely, as in the past they have never interfered with the mail addressed to the Consulate, even when the publications were banned for ordinary circulation here. Perhaps you have heard that the Saturday Evening Post is on the black list now. Up to a couple of weeks ago it was sold on several news stands which handled foreign publications, but for a rather high price in comparison ^{for} what it costs at home.

I am still in a quandry^a about Janie's prospective trip over here this summer. I have talked the matter over with several people, and their advice is quite conflicting. Louis Frachtling writes that he is not going to travel in Germany this summer, partly because of the international situation and partly because he does not want to give the Germans any devisen. L'Heureux does not think the time very propicious; others say, "You might as well take the chance. She would probably be able to get out all right even if war did start." Of course, the trouble is that from the geographical view point, Germany is a hard place to get out of. Assuming the Dutch are not in the war, that is the best way out, for even if one is in Switzerland, there would be belligerents on every side. I don't think there is any great personal risk, but when mobilization starts, there are not likely to be any trains running for ordinary traffic for several days or even weeks, and what might happen in the way of air raids in the mean-time is an unknown factor. All in all, I would say that, unless Janie really has her heart set on the trip, it might be better to postpone making a decision for a while longer yet. Some people think the fall will be the most dangerous time, but I am inclined to think that Hitler will move on Danzig very soon, before the "Allies" have an opportunity to perfect their plans and their armaments. According to the state-ment Chamberlain made the other day, this may start the ball rolling, although I noticed that his pronouncement was not entirely waterproof. He is reported as saying:

If any attempts were made to change the status of Danzig by force in such a way as to threaten Polish independence, .. that would inevitably start a general conflagration in which

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this country would be involved.

The qualifications in the second line are important. Does "by force" include the possibility that the Danzig assembly, which you know is controlled by the Nazis, may very probably pass a resolution declaring the city a part of the German Reich and peacefully turning the city over to the central authorities? In this case, the Poles would have to march in themselves, which would place them in a rather unfavorable light of having commenced hostilities. Is it, likewise, possible, to change the situation of Danzig without endangering Polish independence? This phrase, too, is capable of varying interpretations. In any case, I think Hitler will move on Danzig very soon, so as to force the other countries either to suffer a severe diplomatic reverse by acquiescing or to start a war over an issue where the Germans have a certain amount of moral right on their side. In my opinion, it would be wise to turn the city over to the Germans if they were willing to make arrangements for the free passage through the port of good en route to Poland. I am told, on one hand, that this would make to Polish Corridor untenable from a military point of view, and on the other that it is untenable anyway, and that consequently there is little to be lost. I would not give Hitler the satisfaction of another easy victory, or the moral advantage of fighting for German people. It is, I fear, already too late for this kind of a solution. By their rude and bellicose remarks the Germans make it impossible to concede anything to them without loss of prestige. This characterized German diplomacy before the war, and was largely responsible for creating the atmosphere which caused the outbreak of war almost inevitable. And I suppose at the end of the next war the same stupidities will be perpetrated again which will eventually lead to another. Men never learn -

I got in on a very pleasant party quite by accident last night. I arranged to meet Hart for dinner at the Marquardt Hotel, and when I arrived, he said the young clerks from the Consulate were giving a farewell party for two of their number who are leaving Stuttgart. They invited us to join them, which we did, and had a real old-fashioned American students party. After dinner they had a portable victrola and played records for dancing. After that we "harmonized" on all the old favorite songs in such a way as must have caused the hotel manager several worried moments, but fortunately we were in the cellar, far away from the rooms, and in a private room of our own. Hugh Teller and his wife came in about 11 o'clock. They said they had heard the singing and came in to see what it was all about. After they finally eased us out of the hotel, some of us went to a night club, which would have been very dull if the Tellers had not happened to meet some friends of theirs accompanied by a very lovely young lady. I am living in hope that they will be able to arrange a meeting for us, as they have promised to do. On the whole, it was an excellent evening.

I must get ready to go out now, so I will not write any more. I am very well, and hope you all are too. I don't know when or if I can get leave. Love to all, *William*

