

Vienna, September 23, 1936.

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Dear Mrs. Lewis:

I have your letter of August 14th, acknowledging my cable and letter, and I am glad that you found them of use. I also have your letter of August 15th as to whether I have any idea why Hitler did not receive Lindbergh.

I have delayed writing you in order to get the story, in which I was interested, as you say you are, just from a pure sense of personal curiosity. The facts, as nearly as I can get them, are as follows:

Lindbergh and his wife came to Berlin as the guests of Goering. I do not know whether this implied that they were actually his guests in his town house, but I am inclined to believe that they came merely at his invitation to the Olympic Games. It is quite understandable why Goering, with his primary interest in the air, could invite Lindbergh, who he knew to be in England, to come to the Games. While Lindbergh was in Berlin he was invited to lunch at the house of Mayer, the Counselor of our Embassy, where he met Prince Louis Ferdinand. Louis Ferdinand remarked that he was sure his father would be very glad to meet the Lindberghs, and a mutual friends of ours in Berlin, who is a newspaper man and who has very intimate contacts in all quarters, evidently arranged for a meeting. The Lindberghs were asked for tea to the home of the Crown Prince, and went. The fact that they were there seems to have upset Goering, and I think this put the Lindberghs in bad with the whole Party leadership, and is probably the reason why Hitler did not receive Lindbergh. In the ordinary course of events, Hitler

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would undoubtedly have received him, and the fact that he did not, has its significance, which I think must be sought in some personal reason, such as the incident of this visit to the Crown Prince. 7

I do not have any facts concerning the speech Lindbergh made in Berlin, and, of course, it is possible that it had something to do with Hitler not receiving him and practically ignoring him when they were both present at the Games and seated so close to each other. I am going to take my mother-in-law and a little niece that have been spending the summer with us to Hamburg in the car at the end of this month, and shall be stopping over in Berlin for one night. I will try to get some definite orientation on what actually happened, and I think the foregoing comment on the Lindbergh incident must be considered just as preliminary.

The situation over here has, in my opinion, in no sense changed for the better fundamentally, but if the postponement of the real probability of war in the near future is an improvement, then there has been an improvement. Two months ago anyone who knew the situation over here had to fear the outbreak of war almost at any time. Now, the whole face of things has changed through a variety of factors, and I believe that there is little probability of war breaking out in the near future, although all the dynamite is still stored in every conceivable corner and the fundamental danger of eventual explosion just as great.

It would be impossible for me to endeavor to give you even a résumé of all the factors which have brought about this change, but the principal one is that most of the major leaders of the National Socialist Party have become convinced that the balance of power is still too strongly against them and that war would be a disastrous adventure for them now. Up until two months ago, in spite of the advice of the Army and of financial and industrial leaders, Hitler and the Party leaders were convinced that Europe was prostrate before them and that the German Army and military equipment had already reached the point where they could fight a short and successful war. Beginning about two months ago, the conviction began to permeate from Hitler on down that the balance of power was to overwhelmingly against them and that war was an adventure which they could not yet risk. The English

rearmament program was the deciding factor in this, and we can forgive our English friends a good deal for the real measure of rearmament which they have undertaken and are carrying through so vigorously. We are in some ways living in the middle ages and civilized countries are under the necessity of undertaking for the time being at least some of the measures employed by the dictators. The only hope of peace lies, not in an Eastern or a Western Locarno or in collective security pacts, helpful as these would be, but in keeping a balance of power against the dictators which will be so overwhelming as to keep them from attempting any adventure. And perhaps in the meantime internal developments will bring about conditions that will make the dictators less dangerous to others and to peace. This realization in Germany that she is not ready herself, that the balance of power is still against her, and that it may remain against her, has brought about a much more moderate situation in Europe and has certainly lessened the danger of war for some time.

The more clearly emerging British policy, the general stiffening of her attitude, and the definite rearmament program have had an extraordinary influence in Europe. The Little Entente meeting at Bratislava which has just closed has definitely stopped, for the present at least, the disintegration in the Little Entente which had gone so far. Once again the German program went too fast, and the Little Entente states were appalled by the degree to which German economic penetration had already been effected. They saw that they were becoming entirely dependent, not only for their trade, but almost equally so for arms, on Germany. They are now going to make arrangements among each other which will to a degree at least cut down the trade barriers between them and make them less dependent on Germany. And the increased and reawakened fear of German political objectives has certainly strengthened their mutual coöperation.

You know that Leon Blum said in private conversation sometime ago that it was as difficult for the dictators to agree as it was dangerous for them to disagree, and this is what we must keep in mind when we consider Berlin-Rome relations, which play so important a part on the Continent today. Berlin and Rome wanted the way opened for coöperation, and for this reason reached the accord of July 11th over Austria in order to give them a freer

hand vis-a-vis France and England, but their interests in Southeastern Europe remain just as much opposed as ever, and we must remember that prestige matters in dictatorships are of primary importance. Germany wishes to push her economic penetration in Southeastern Europe as the precursor of political domination, and Italy cannot permit this, for it only means more surely that she will have Germany eventually on the Brenner. In pushing her economic interests in Southeastern Europe, Italy realizes that she is weaker than Germany, for she has less to offer and has less capacity to receive, but the economic interests of Berlin and Rome are fundamentally just as opposed in Southeastern Europe as the political.

In this opposition of interests we must see the explanation of the jockeying which is now going on. The good effect of the visit of King Edward to Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey, and the strengthening of the Little Entente (which was, of course, also influenced by the recent tightening of the Franco-Soviet agreement) have given concern in both Berlin and Rome. As a consequence, the Foreign Minister here goes to Rome, and Kanya, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, is following him from Budapest to Rome these days. A meeting of the Rome Protocol Foreign Ministers is announced for Vienna, and will probably take place in the latter part of October. Rome wants to explore the ways by which the Rome Protocol states can get into closer touch with the Little Entente states and eventually with those of the Balkan Union. She wants to do it by getting a freer play of trade between these states, which one must admit is very wise and sound. Incidentally, of course, Rome sees in the development of such a program under auspices a strengthening of her own prestige and position, although she herself has little directly to offer. Germany, on the other hand, cannot view this without concern, for, while she may wish to see eventually certain coöperation between the Southeastern European states, she wants it under her direction and domination. Of all these states, Hungary, which has been wobbling between Berlin and Rome, is the best one for Berlin to work on. For this reason von Neurath has gone to Budapest, ostensibly to visit his son-in-law, von Mackensen, who is German Minister there, but in reality to try to sabotage the Italian plan for the Vienna conference. Hungary is the best country through which Berlin can work to prevent rapid progress on such a program of economic coöperation, which does not fit in with her plans at all. What Germany is interested in in Southeastern Europe today is the keeping

alive of animosities and traditional difficulties, as this gives her freer play for her own policy. The visit of Neurath to Budapest is, therefore, pure sabotage and is merely a repetition of what the Germans did to the Austro-Czech trade agreement earlier this year, which had been arrived at under such great difficulties and which, even in its emasculated form as a result of the German pressure, is still giving unexpectedly good results.

The German offensive against Communism, which had started four weeks before Nuremberg, reached its high point there, and, as is so often the case, overreached the mark. What Germany was after was not so much Communism as Russia and the breakup of her alliances with France and Czechoslovakia and the friendship with Rumania. The German policy was to isolate Russia and by weakening her to weaken France and England, thus giving her a free hand and destroying this still overwhelming balance of power against her. In this Feldzug against Communism she sought the coöperation of the Vatican, which was in a real state of panic over the situation in Spain. There are those who believe that Berlin offered the Vatican a bargain, agreeing to give a new concordate in exchange for general Vatican support against Communism. So far as I can learn, the Vatican was inclined to look on this bargain with favor and had evidently gone pretty far. More lately, however, it seems that the Vatican has been enabled to get back at least a degree of calm, but the indications are still that it will lend its support to this anti-Communist, anti-Russian movement. Happily, however, it would seem that the punch has already been taken out of it, and the French and Czechs are sticking to their agreements with Russia, and even Rumania is holding to her French, and therefore Russian, orientation.

God knows I hold no brief for Communism, just as I have none for Fascism. I consider both of them equally dangerous. I am convinced, however, that there is no country in Europe today for which peace is more a life or death matter than for Russia. She is faced by two strong countries, one in the East and the other in the West, both wanting territory, and her internal situation is not such as to warrant her to wish for anything except peace. I believe that Russia, no matter what her ultimate objectives may be, is interested in peace for some years to come, and I think many otherwise well thinking people are making a

great mistake in preaching the rejection of Russia's coöperation for the maintenance of peace in Europe. If that coöperation is used now, the chances are that peace in Europe can be maintained, and if and when Russia is so strong as to carry out what objectives she may have, she will at least be faced by a United and fairly strong Western Europe, instead of one prostrate before her. A lot of really good people are doing some very loose and dangerous thinking these days.

On the whole, I think we have reason to be encouraged by developments. Germany, with the coöperation of Italy, is trying to put off the Locarno conversations, for she is still as unable to sit down in a conference as she has been to answer the British memorandum. In the meantime, her attack on the Soviet friendships has not made the progress which was expected. If the French position can be clarified internally, of which there is some prospect, the whole situation in Western Europe will improve and the Berlin-Rome coöperation, which is such a disturbing factor - negative as it may be for the most part - will be further weakened.

I thought you might be interested in these observations for your personal and confidential background. I do hope that you will be able to take a trip after the elections, and you must be sure to come to Vienna, where, I need not tell you, you will have a hearty welcome. I cannot begin to tell you about the Austrian position, but can only say that those who expected disintegration after the accord of July 11th have been disappointed. The position in many respects here is stronger, and, while still subject to outside developments, which will determine the eventual fate of the country, the Austrian Government has maintained its position and is certainly not under the complete domination of either Berlin or Rome. In fact, the position has been held even better than I felt it would be possible to do so. It is at the least very encouraging and Chancellor Schuschnigg is developing stature constantly.

With all good wishes to you and your husband and hoping very much to have the pleasure of seeing you here during the winter,

Cordially and faithfully yours,