

Berlin, October 31, 1935.

Dear Mr. President:

There is no real change of policy here since I wrote you some months ago. While Hitler has not said a word publicly since last May on German foreign policy, Goebbels and Göring have frequently made statements as belligerent as ever. Göring's boast at Breslau October 26 about rapid re-armament and re-employment in arms factories was so challenging that parts of his speech were not published here. A vast army and annexations on the northern and eastern fronts are commonly accepted as quite as definite a program as Mussolini's Julius Caesar idea. I am informed today reliably, I believe, that 26 aircraft officers leave for Japan this week-end. There were already 70 Japanese officers at German military barracks. The Russian Ambassador says he is fairly certain of German-Japanese alliance. This tends to show there has been no change.

Your proclamation of October 5 and the Secretary's speech of October 10 produced a lot of sympathetic feeling here, the newspapers even printing the most significant passages. But during the last two weeks there has been a reversion of attitude, especially since the American influence seems to give the League actual power to stop Italy. Dr. Schacht a few days ago almost denounced the English-League demand that Italy be barred from taking colonial area. There have been as much exports to Italy as possible since September 1. The financial positions of both countries are such that exchange of goods, barter, is the chief method: economic nationalism, urged in the United States. One thing is certain here: the early defeat or forced withdrawal of Italy from Ethiopia would be considered

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The President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

a serious set-back for German autocratic-military procedure. If Italy succeeds, it is the common feeling that the two dictatorships would unite upon a policy of aggression.

This brings to my mind again the conviction that the Senate minority attitude last February was favorable to war. That is, we did as much to encourage German and Italian aggressions on weaker neighbors as either Germany or Italy had done up to October 1. I offered my resignation as a protest against minority dictation in our country. Judge Moore and the Secretary thought such a protest would be unwise, so the matter never came to your attention. I am not blaming the Department. Its leaders know domestic politics better than I; but I still think I made a mistake in not simply handing you my protest resignation. However, our country may still bring the "civilized" world to pursue peace policies, if it can stop all shipments of arms material as you and Secretary Hull intimated October 31. While the domestic situation must be your fundamental problem, world peace is not less important. If Italy, Germany and Japan at some critical moment move at the same time in their spheres, I cannot see any way to stop dictatorships. One of the Ministers here said to me today: "In that case I would commit suicide; your country alone can save civilization."

Sincerely yours,

*William E. Dodd*