



IE DCUA C1/8

Seán Lester Diary - PDF

May - December 1940

1940
August 1940 8

p1/8



"Diary" notes 1940

1/2 dozen visits to Doctor March + April - cause - "the back of neck" + rheumatism

28 March S.G.s mtg

12 April "

Friday 3 May big luncheon at Vaux Bois - Elsie having arrived

? 8 " meeting

Sat 18 " same mtg

Sat 25 " S.G.s mtg

Mon. 27 meeting

Wed. 19 June Burchhardt calls

25 June - interview with Arenal - talk of "conspiracy" - stated my policy + appealed to his honour.

Wed. 26 June - saw S.G. re finances central; saw Arenal. "European block; anti-English talk; getting rid of British staff".

Sat. 29 June - Received British staff on request. Reassurances. Saw Arenal who again attacked me for recy. British

3 July - aghinder reports A. asked him if he were in touch with Kerr Krauel

visits for Stracaz (Poland) + Holitz (Kulow)

Friday 5 July Pardo says A. asked him also if he were in relations with Krauel. interview with Noble - "honour of France + of himself at stake"

Monday 15/7 mtg S.G.s office. 30/7 Pardo's visit. Vajarano. Everett.

Friday 9/8 miss here ? - tea 1/2 at the

" 30/8 S.G.s lunch to Arenal Berquos

3/9 - Titman - Kelly. - Pardo - Dr Carrer - Sonlle Davis

4/9 - de Haller re visit to home. Jaldunov. Sacerrero. de Magalhães. malacian Davis. Kofacki. Chagov. Costa. Argentine Communist

12/10. de Haller's visit. Potter Stoppani

Henry
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the rising up

29 May 1940

What a month. Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Northern France - occupied by the Beast, which came out of its lair.

When the invasion of Norway began Elsie postponed a visit she had planned. I didn't want to forbid it. She came about the end of April & we had "a pleasant reunion", rendered uneasy by impending movements of armies. We kept advancing the date of her return. I had just got her return visas and she was to go home Sunday or Monday, 12th or 13th. Friday 10th we said we wd take the afternoon off & go fishing & picnicing

on the Versoix. On reaching
the office I learned Holland
& Belgium had been invaded
that morning & telephoned
E. to pack. The 9th was - was
the "total war" come with bombing
of towns? Would travel be
possible or w^d she be separated
from the children for, perhaps,
months. I had warned them
all that if she was trapped
in Geneva I w^d make her
story. News came of attacks
on French aerodromes, including
Dijon & others en route to London.

I held her back that
night. Next day in great
uncertainty we together
decided she would risk an

immediate start & she went off
gaily & carelessly on Saty. night.

No news of her on Sunday.
I was at the radio every hour.
Have a Sunday till the evening.
She was at Dreffel - Badegre &
Calais were of course closed.

Then on the 24 hours - at London
^{we had a relief!}
Sean Murphy had helped her
thru Paris. I'll never forget
the anguish of that waiting.

At the meantime we were
in the thick of a Swiss crisis
& a Secretariat one. I'd begged
Arend ~~on~~ 6 weeks earlier to
let me examine plans for a
possible crisis, an evacuation.
Between the two crises we had

still 600 officers, many of the
women; & their families.

(The provision we had
made for my family made
a man - more or less - of me
in those days).

General freshpotted it: suggested
vague funk or nervousness,
was contradictory, said all
was ready & when I said nothing
was ready, said we'd share the
fate of the Swiss people. I welcomed
that & said it was easy as it
meant we did nothing &
that I had no responsibility.

Over a month later
on Tuesday 14th he called a
meeting of high officials
& ordered prompt plans

for evacuation.

The tension in Switzerland
had been almost agonising
& it increased. General
mobilisation. On two nights
the attack was expected. German

transports were manœuvring
in Lake Constance, barriers
had been removed from roads,
large ^{German} forces were concentrated.

A third of the population
of Ball Left. The Bourse was
closed, a run on banks.

The "free" rate of French-Swiss
currency changed from 8.50 to
16 in 36 hours. The new
method of attack, "Fifth Column"
& parachutists added to the
fears. Hydroplanes came

land in the harbor &
taxi up to the Geneva bridges.

What a time! In several
hours we produced a rough
plan covering all the staff,
refusing any responsibility for
safety or transport for
themselves or families (latter by instruction
from Arnold)

In the middle of it
Waller, Hare, Wilson &
others went off to leave
their families somewhere
safer. ^{It was angry-nervous. Said somewhere we be}
^{disciplined, families ignored.}
Arnold was unreliable.

He changed orders daily
in opposite directions. I had
a bad week with him but was
"up" & it with my family in comparative
safety.

He mixed up the plan
based on an actual last
evacuation & put some of the
measures into immediate
effect. We got 110 respirators
mostly junior stuff.

The JLO was in the
same position.

I described it as a quasi-
liquidation. But the winds
were unnoticed in the situation.

I, too, wanted out of the way
as many as possible. A
moral responsibility for them
could not be removed from our
shoulders by any kind of
circular.

Then there was A's plan
to sleep in Mantua to prevent
kidnapping by 5th Column! His
stuff sent off with off'l stuff (secret papers etc.)
In the morning an emissary
said he was back in his chair
rather magisterial & tried to
put me on carpet for
letting little Wilson go off
with his family of 2 young
children. I refused to
go on any carpet & thumped
the table in "the presence".

So high had he got he
ordered a courier to
bring back his stuff
& countermanded the order
that night when the Lorry
was well into France

Well, we went up & down
with him.

The tension slackened off
- almost mysteriously - after
ten days. The great break-
through into France had occurred
& German forces withdrew
partly from the Swiss side.

Perhaps all a bluff. But
Holland had had two
& the third was not a bluff.

A letter from L C Tombs, Canadian,
formerly in Sec^t, reminds me of
Frank's stay. Tombs' wife
an American divorced him to marry
a Dutchman, & the bereaved Tombs
received a letter subsequently from
his US mother-in-law in
which she thanked God for
two such good sons-in-law!!





The attack on France; 3 weeks &
a demand for an armistice; another 10 days
& the German troops were on the frontier of
Geneva

Geneva, June 19th 1940.

Dear Arthur,

I wrote you a letter a few days ago, but I have not posted it; events were going too fast and I have held it up. I have now read it over and it seems as though it comes out of another world, and that is apparently our situation. The German troops are marching ~~along the Swiss~~ ^{along the Swiss} - absolutely no military or political reason now for them to come into Switzerland and we may well be kept as an island - so much so that this letter may never reach you.

The world is crashing round our ears but Melle. Nonin and I are keeping our heads up if our hearts are broken.

There have been some terrible disillusionments, and anger at times has helped me through difficult days; one may put up with pomposity when it is backed by a quick intelligence, but when one has to put up with pompous futility coupled with demoralization, the last shred of respect goes.

All the stuff about plans and policies has temporarily ceased to be of any importance and our future is for the moment very far from being in our own hands; how far that will remain so one cannot foresee. As you may have guessed from my personal telegram to you, you were reconsigned to the dog house, but honestly things are in such a way as I don't think it matters a curse. Winant is suddenly and hurriedly investigating the possibilities of an evacuation or transfer, accompanied by a very big degree of liquidation (they tried to hold on to more than we did and are now facing a more difficult problem); I don't think it will come to anything at present; three weeks earlier or three weeks later might have or may tell a different story and our financial outlook is extremely black. We too will probably have to face further cuts pretty soon. At the moment I have only two principles, or at any rate two immediate objectives: the first is that we should endeavour to keep a little bit of personal dignity whatever comes (an ideal, as I have little confidence in my own physical courage); and the other is that we should try to look after our staff who have been standing by us here, and especially those who are isolated, either from an invaded country or otherwise.

You will guess the impossibility of talking about more practical things, or of the future, which does not open beyond a very limited horizon.

Well, I have written you something, as you asked; I hope it reaches you and your imagination can fill in details.

Sincerely yours,

20/5/40 sent to WEA. Dublin

Until two or three weeks ago IRELAND seemed to me as to all of us the safest country in Europe and the most protected from the possibilities of being involuntarily involved in the war. I have heard no recent remarks at all on the subject, but it must have impressed many people that events in Holland and Belgium have changed that degree of possibility. I believe that we must now regard ourselves as definitely in the danger zone. That danger may be reduced by the battles now being fought, but in one month or several months from now, an attack on England in one form or another may be envisaged. This will be the moment of ~~the~~ danger to Ireland. When in the past one thought of the use of the air weapon for bombing military or productive centres, it may have seemed that objectives much nearer to the German aerodromes were infinitely more worthy objectives. The type of war developed in Holland and Belgium should lead one to reconsider this. In a militarized and highly populated country like England, the results of ~~parade~~ warfare and attempts to form internal fortresses could only be temporary in their effect. Some months ago, before the new methods were brought into operation, a German ex-officer (now holding an important post in the German Service) ^{was sure} remarked in the hearing of an Irishman in Geneva that in certain events "the fields of Ireland would be very useful to us."

I believe the situation and prospects are such as to render it now necessary to take as rapidly as possible such precautions as can be made. I am sure this possibility has come under consideration, but if not I venture to draw attention to it. It is clear that if the Germans were in a position to and decided to launch attacks on England, as they must eventually do before they could hope to win the war, they could obtain considerable advantages at little cost if they could establish air bases and centres of disorganization in Ireland. Even if they did no more than make transport of food difficult, British essential supplies would be more surely affected now than even during the last war. Furthermore, the British might be exposed to attacks on their practically uncovered Western flank, especially of the industrial area of the North. The main difficulty about establishing permanent

Handwritten at top of page:
J.R. 2/10 1940
A.S. 7-10-40

air bases would of course be supplies of petrol, etc. Perhaps this may be regarded as representing insurmountable obstacles, but, even if they did not succeed in using the country in this way, the diversion would be important. If bases were seized by aerial action their submarines would also be in evidence. They might also have the idea that political elements in Ireland would add to the Government's troubles. The least result of such actions would be a considerable shock and alarm created among the English population and perhaps diversion of efforts, because it seems extremely likely that any such situation created in Ireland with which we could not ourselves promptly deal, would move the British military authorities to counter-action. As against the advantages which any such attack might give to the Germans, I do not know of any disadvantage. It could only be another neutral violated in a continent already littered with their carcasses. At any rate the possibilities now opened up merit careful study and considerable precautions.

1940

The attack on France; 3 weeks
and for an armistice; in the 10 days
German troops were on the frontier of

P.L. 18 (1)

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1940

The attack on France; 3 weeks
and for an armistice; in the 10 days
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P2/8(2)

On Thurs 13th June there was the French broadcast
interpreted ^{by Howard} as meaning capitulation. The same night
he sent a League courier for his 20 cases of
personal effects from Vichy. Told me one
- not even Stancile - although 50 opponents had sent
their heavy luggage there also. On Sat. 1st
myself proposed ^{that} ~~we should~~ try to get back our
secret papers for destruction, & he raised no
objection.

He talked with Charron (who told Viger)
(14/6) that the plan was to put Britain in
as P.M. to make an armistice; that
present terms we are got & that we had ^{shown}
with their return for reconstruction work.

They sounded almost complacent. A. also

conducted anti-B. campaign in the days
that followed. de Keller, aghinides & others.

17 This morning he told Grand (legal) that A.H. the
was not involved towards the L/N & thought it
had done a good job in the East. What is he
working up to? What does he expect? So it seems
comedy or -

at 12-30 today the French decision was
announced. Also heard that Germans were at
Bellegarde. At 1pm G. called me for the

Reserves On Frontier

ERNE, Sunday.
D seemed in
ger to-night than
time since war
German reserve
in to the Black
Associated Press.
trations in the
e now estimated
(400,000 men).

0 Swiss troops
the Winkleried
Alpine passes
Another 100,000
have their rifles

-To-day's German
munique states:-
ittle in the Somme
e German infantry
ons, in close colla-
air force, have de-
ces and com-
ces

P1/8 (2-3)

10
6
1940

first time for 4 days & solemnly told me
 he had now definitely decided remain
 in Geneva. I saw the comic side as every
 individual scapes out of the question.
 I said but I had not ^{then} heard the final
 decision. I said we had no alternative
 & nothing left but ^{to keep} a little personal
 dignity & the care of the staff who were
 trapped with us. But the air of authority
 & sagacity with which he spoke came
 back to me later. & left touch in
 a day of worse disaster.

Later, when I had before me
 a card which I had written to
 ask him to send me 200 Swiss
 francs to help the staff. I was
 I carry on my hands. I was
 was, most to go, not a good one
 not to fall into a trap.
 said of the staff.
 The personal effects

1 June 25

P1/8 (2-3)

und

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P1/8 (2-3)

und

German Reserves On Swiss Frontier

BERNE, Sunday.

SWITZERLAND seemed in greater danger to-night than at any other time since war began, as fresh German reserve divisions moved in to the Black Forest, says the Associated Press. German concentrations in the Black Forest are now estimated at 20 divisions (400,000 men).

About 400,000 Swiss troops stood ready on the Winkelried line and in the Alpine passes leading to Italy. Another 100,000 are on leave, but have their rifles with them.—A.P.

BERLIN, Sunday.—To-day's German Command communique states.—four-day battle in the Somme district, the German infantry divisions, in close collaboration with the air force, have destroyed German forces and com-

10
6
1940

SOCIÉTÉ DES NATIONS

Rwani

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

1/6/40

Dear Lester

The cost of the organization proposed in your report must be carefully worked out for each official and it will take time moreover the budget for 1941 must be framed at once for a meeting of the Supp Comm. at Geneva on 17th June and therefore we must have an organization for the future.

In my view we must shed illusions of the possibility of work on the grand scale set out in this report and

limit our total personnel internal & external to 130 or 150: indeed I think attempts will be made to reduce it below this figure by the S.C. But we must not be vague about our requirements for that would mean a definite reduction below what we may think necessary

The present report purports to provide for a month only but what we shall want for the Sup Comm is a definite plan for the 1941 Budget.

The alternative will be to fix the sum of the income and limit the staff to that figure

SOCIÉTÉ DES NATIONS



LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The Assembly has ordered us
to limit our expenditure to our
income: that is a definite
decision which in my view
must be obeyed.

As regards Reserves I believe
that the whole of the Reserve
is now needed for the pensions
or all but a few million

Yrs sincerely
Seymour Sacklin

Emile
Churchill
194-

P1/8 (3)

- 6 -

For while the tired waves vainly breaking
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back through creeks and inlets making
Comes, silentflooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light.
In front the sun climbs slow - how slowly -
but westward look! the land is bright.

er that it is the Battle of the Atlantic which holds the first
e in the thoughts of those upon whom rests the responsibility for
uring victory?

It was therefore with indescribable relief that I learned of the
andous decision lately taken by the President and people of the
d States. The American fleet and flying-boats have been ordered
trol the wide waters of the Western Hemisphere and warn peaceful
ing of all nations outside the combat zone of the presence of
g U-boats or raiding cruisers belonging to the two aggressor
s. We British will therefore be able to concentrate our pro-
g forces far more upon routes nearer home and take a far heavier
f the U-boats there. I felt for some time that something like
s bound to happen. The President and Congress of the United
having newly fortified themselves by talking with their electors,
lemnly pledged their aid to Britain in this war because they
cause just, and because their own interests
ty would be endangered if they did not. They are taxing
es heavily. They have
large part of the mun-

13/6/40. Letter from MacDougall to Harvay.

2c v fin apr. 9. "fit. Plots Conspiracies
As resignation; anti. Brit. spleen. "Bitch" ^{think}

as the ^{reality} of the work. "So says."
I threw a hand in heavy
his resignation. withheld.

14/6 Fall of Paris. Talk of capitulation.
appeal to U.S. Complete defeatist =
attitude Charbon, evened. In crisis.

Secretary internal crisis embroiled. A. told Harvay
if capitulation came he wd resign.

query: a belligerent or the 89. but not
a belligerent? Fed up with

the B. — Wd leave me the dirtiest
mess in impossible & worsening situation

Prime donna Temperamental storms;
feminine spite & distortion. Funk of failure.

mixed with hidden god's dignity &
self-complacent "infallibility": calls

& ignorant concern for families and
children ^{as a} "US story: "what I like about
these ^{continually} ^{pieces} boats is there is no fuss
about women & children first!!"

The facade cracked that week in May. Panic
plans. His furniture. Lined chamber. ^{long} sleep

at Montrea. ^(continued) etc. And later his idea of going
to U.S.A; slightly pathetic thanks when I offered
to hold the fort.

18/6/40

A. made me feel like vomiting yesterday. He talked to Grand and aphrudes & as G. said "He is discovering the virtues of Hitler, before even the surrender is accepted".

I now think when he called me he had the intention of sending me out on his new role, his new mission. But I had spoiled it by talking of keeping a little personal dignity. He will stay now at any rate until France is a safer place to go to. a burning anger belted me thro' the day of France's defeat.

P1/8(4)

press its approval and the League could accept. In any event, when I raised this possibility with Grady and asked if he thought I should see Rieffler he was keenly for it.

Again good-fortune smiled, for Rieffler was in town for the first time in three weeks. We dined and spent the evening together and I found him most enthusiastic. For the past year, he told me, he had been groping around for a way to help the economic and financial work and prevent its dispersal or crippling in the present crisis. He had talked with the Foundation people and found a ready support there, but this idea appealed to him as the best possible answer, if it were possible on the other side. He agreed most warmly with the Princeton end, as he naturally would, and urged me to come down there at once to see the facilities, as I shall in a couple of days. He thought we could get a double invitation, from the University and his Institute, and felt sure the Foundation would do anything necessary on the material side. He thought it would be a crime if such a magnificent staff as you had built up with such labor were dispersed and he would certainly go to the limit to assure that it were not. Incidentally, he, too, while fully appreciating the reasons, regretted that his committee had not come together this Spring.

It was on the basis of these interviews that I cabled you as I did. I had no knowledge, naturally, as to how the situation stood on your side, since my departure and the incredible events which have followed, but I had the feeling that, if you continued to be interested in the idea of coming to this side, everything was very well in place for it. I am convinced that you would get the warmest welcome and most complete cooperation from government, university, institute, and foundation. The matter of invitation could be arranged, as outlined; the passport and other facilities could, I judge, from Grady and even Thompson, be facilitated; the physical facilities at Princeton would be both good and central; the expenditure side could undoubtedly be facilitated by our other friends. In other words, the door seems to me to be open on the best of terms, if it be deemed wise to enter it....

By facilities and other good results, I had in mind that, with communication as difficult as it is in Europe, there is an immense amount of material coming in here from all sides, both official and private, which I feel sure could be made available. I am inclined to think you would get at least as much data on Europe and infinitely more on extra-Europe than at present. The contacts which could be established here would be invaluable.

So also the other and larger results. It is my belief that, if this country gave asylum now in this moment of emergency, it would be integrated for ever. Our people are sentimental, as you know; the fact of coming to aid now would create a bond which would be permanent. The country would, in a sense, become identified with, and a part of, this work; you would have it for good, if this rather dramatic step were taken. I need not stress, of course, that, however the war comes out, the extra-European end will have an importance it has never had before. To my mind, our future is more intercontinental than European.

Nor need we fear the SLIGHTEST criticism or opposition. The time for that is long past. I am amazed at the change in opinion here; things that one would be hung for saying a month ago are now common-place. God knows where we will be a month hence, and, while this letter does not pretend to cover the general situation, I enclose a couple of things which are symptomatic. I wish we could have a talk; there is a lot here for encouragement if there is only time.... I need not say that my thoughts are constantly with you all on the other side and that I am doing what little I can to be of help.

With all best wishes

June 4, 1940

Dear Alec:

I am doing this to get tonight's Clipper, as your cable requested, and on my own machine to avoid curious...and expensive...strange stenographers.

About the only bit of good-fortune which I seem to know of in these grim days has been that which permitted me within my first 72 hours here to make all the principal contacts I desired to make in connection with the question you put to me at your house just before I left.

Happily enough, the boat got in in the early morning so that I had time to disentangle myself from Customs and get up to Rockefeller Center for lunch with Raymond Fosdick. I found him most cordial and friendly, and, while in the uncertain circumstances, I did not press the matter between us, I am sure his view is unchanged. That feeling was strengthened at lunch the next day with young John Rockefeller and today in a telephone conversation with Will-
etts, whom I am seeing tomorrow.

That same evening, by coincidence, there was a meeting of the National Board of the L of N Association, ~~was~~ to which I was invited as usual. A full report was made, inter alia, on Dr Woolley's Committee on the technical and non-political work which is apparently developing most happily. The warm and cordial letter of the President had become definitive and a couple of days later was released to the press and given good display, as you will see from the enclosed. Miss Woolley arrives here tomorrow; we can use her committee in any way that seems desirable.

Though May 30 was a holiday, I again had the good luck, in going down to Washington, to catch Herbert Feis for lunch, and Thompson, whom you remember, and who is now in charge of such matters, for dinner. I did not proceed in detail with either, for the moment, but felt around sufficiently to be sure that the situation is favorable and that any help we wish will be available.

The following day I caught Grady for lunch, in between two trips around the country. To him, I told the whole story and was gratified indeed at his instantaneous and warm response. He offered to do anything he could to help and thought the transfer would be a very auspicious one, if it were decided to make it. He rather surprised me by expressing regret that the Committee had not met this Spring, as planned, though of course he understood the reasons; he said he would have liked to have gone over and thought the President would have wanted him to.

As I had thought the question out on the steamer coming over, it had taken quite a bit more definite form than when we discussed it in Geneva. First it seemed to me that, if such a transfer were made, it ought not to be to Washington, for obvious political reasons, and it better not be to New York, where the work, though facilitated in some ways, would be overshadowed and lost. ~~Then~~ I then groped around in my own mind for a cultural or university center, and the thought of Princeton came to me. This, as you know, is the seat both of a University and the Advanced Institute of which Rissler is a member and is about one hour from New York and three from Washington. It thus has advanced work going on there, is centrally located amongst friends, is also the seat of a Rockefeller Institute branch, and by coincidence, the University of Woodrow Wilson.

If something of this sort were desired, it would, as I explained to Grady, have another advantage in that it would turn the embarrassing question of an initiative or an invitation. I imagine the League might not like to ask for an invitation to non-Member territory; in the same way, it might be difficult for a non-Member government to volunteer such an invitation in the blue. If, however, a great university set the ball rolling, the government could ex-

from author
Switzerland, USA

12/6/47 P1/8 (4)
received
clerk

Dear Sean:

"Go slow" cable

Thanks for your cable just come; I hope you will let me know whenever anything develops that I can do on this side. My one great desire is to be of some small utility in this grim moment.

I've just written a long letter to Loveday on a question he and I discussed before I left and want to send you a copy both because you are deeply interested and because there is always a chance of a letter getting lost. Undoubtedly you have discussed the matter between you already; there are one or two further things I would like to add.

First, what is said for Loveday's work goes also for the other technical and non-political. If we could work out something like this for the economic and financial, I am sure we could also do so for the health, particularly as there is a branch of the Rockefeller Institute at Princeton, and for the opium... possibly others. There is not, however, much use in going into that unless and until the underlying question of principle is established. From inquiries so far, however, I feel convinced that, if worse comes to worst, the possibility you and I once discussed of a split of the political to one country and the technical here can be worked out so far as this end is concerned.

I need not stress again in this letter to you the importance such a transfer would have for the future. It would open the most interesting possibilities and personalize this work to a degree otherwise impossible. Even apart from all other considerations, if we see the future in a large and long view, this alone would justify a bold and, after all, a temporary step. Certainly we will need more than ever to widen out and seek new support and friends... and this gives an exceptional opportunity. I feel most strongly that, entirely apart from any technical reasons, there are other and more compelling reasons which would make the gamble very much worth while. Everything is now fluid; all of us need movement and fresh air; I'm sure this would be invaluable in opening a new chapter both for us and for our friends who only ask to help. We'll always come back to our moorings..

I'd like to write you a book about general tendencies here. Perhaps the quickest way of saying it, however, is to say that I am both astonished and deeply gratified at the swing of opinion. I always told you our people were emotional and highstrung, that they could be swept by a prairie-fire, but that is happening even more rapidly than I anticipated. The clippings enclosed are typical; the country is both roused and alarmed. It is very different from the last war in the sense that the reactions then were general and impersonal; today they are specific and extremely national. It is not only a question of theory or idealism; it is a very direct national interest. We are infinitely more a part of the world now than then; we feel ourselves touched in a hundred different ways and in a score of different places. If things continue abroad on the present line, I would not want to try to predict where American policy will go...

I can't tell you how many times a day my thoughts turn to old friends in Geneva... and you would be gratified to know how many questions are put to me by friends here. Gerig gave a very nice reception for us at the League pavilion, which, incidentally, is functioning finely, with 8000 visitors last Sunday alone... and all sorts of old associates turned up. There is a royalty here which will some day come into its own... All best luck to you, Sean, and if you get a chance, do drop me a line as to things in Geneva; I feel at the other end of the world, with reams of misinformation:

June 4, 1940

h. s. s.

A. S.

GENEVA,

June 12th, 1940.

My dear Arthur,

Your letter of the 4th has arrived this moment. I had the intention a few days ago of writing to you and now take your letter as a spur.

First our own friend Frank, has gone. On Saturday morning the 25th of May at 7.45 a.m. he called on me while I was having my coffee in bed to tell me that he had decided to go and at once. The matter had been discussed a fortnight before that, by him and Avenol and Avenol had written an agreed letter to Halifax saying that Frank was needed here. When he came to see me it was clear the matter had gone beyond discussion, but I felt it sufficiently to say I had spent the early part of my life working for what then seemed a lost cause and perhaps I was fated to spend my later years following another, but, for the present at any rate, I was convinced my place lay here and I would stay while that conviction remained, if our Old Man did not make it impossible. Three days later Frank had left and his furniture had been removed to the League. The family had already gone a fortnight before to Hendaye.

You had left before our most hectic days which were the 14th to the 18th of May when suddenly Switzerland felt under a very immediate threat of invasion. The invasion was expected literally from moment to moment during the nights of the 15th and 16th. You can guess there was furor and rapid measures taken all over Switzerland and in these we had our part. Unfortunately, as you may remember, it had not been allowed that preliminary arrangements should be made while there was a certain amount of tranquillity. The result was that a plan had to be drawn up within literally a few hours. I had no time to feel any personal concern but I shall never forget that week. If you remind me some time, I shall give you a few thumb-nail sketches.

To go back to Frank, he reached Bordeaux probably a week ago to try to get a ship for England leaving the family at Hendaye, but I have no news since: he hopes to get work in the F.O., but a letter written from the F.O. several days after his departure from Geneva to Avenol said that they believed his place for the time being was here. Avenol is of course wild about it and hardly prepared to make sufficient allowance for the emotional call for work at home. You will probably have a letter from Frank as soon as this reaches you, telling you what he thought.

Arthur SWEETSER, Esq.
85 West 40th Street.
NEW YORK (U.S.A.)

Your second telegram to Loveday came while he was absent in Vichy where he had gone to bring his family back to Geneva. It went from his Department to Avenol and the reply (which I saw) was approved by Avenol. I thought it well to send you a personal go slow telegram.

i.e. the
S.G.'s
admission

dissolution

Very much more than ever before I am unable to forecast policy here and in some respects I may confide it has changed with extreme rapidity. As one sees opinion at the moment, division of the Secretariat is regarded as impossible and perhaps more particularly the transfer of any elements over the Ocean. We stand by here in Geneva until it becomes impossible; we may desire for urgent practical reasons to let an element of the Treasury and the Personnel side establish themselves in Vichy; but Vichy has rapidly declined in value; the center of France is being thronged with millions of refugees; the entry of Italy will lead to evacuations on the South Coast; if we go to Vichy in emergency, I have a horrible vision of us going as another bunch of refugees. Policy may change with events, but you will guess that salvage becomes more and more difficult. My own mind seems to be reconciling itself to what is at any rate a possibility: ~~defeat~~ with dignity. The dignity might be slightly upset by a final scuttles. There are of course other alternatives and you must not take me too seriously and please do not show this to anyone. There may, for example, be pressure on Switzerland; our really gallant hosts have been promised that they will not be invaded. if they do not directly or indirectly help Mr. Mussolini's ~~enemies~~. I doubt very much if he considers us at the present time as of sufficient importance to merit a few shells, although it is true that last night, between two and three, some unknown aeroplanes did drop by accident a few bombs on Champel and Carouge.

At any rate, although I cannot offer you a clear and permanent picture of the future beyond a day or two (my sense of humour), I am sure I was right in asking you to slow down ~~up~~ your investigation into possibilities on your side; Alec Loveday has just telephoned to me and I am sure he comes with your letter to discuss it, ~~and I am sure also he will agree with me.~~

Later: you will probably hear from Alec personally.

Had another talk with S.G. who sees the picture simply as Geneva being our post and our job to stand at it. I am sure, as you know, that the principle is right; I have held even more consistently than some others that H.Q. at least must not look for too much shelter. But I hope S.G. is not simplifying our case too much.

I'll try to write you occasionally. Regards to all my American friends and especially to Ruth,

Yours
Sam L.

June 13th

I have looked over this note and found it of course completely inadequate; it is almost impossible to inform you of events, to say nothing of emotions; we are all suffering under the pressure of war developments in spite of the fact that temporarily in Switzerland there is a lull. I try to keep people from reaching to the wireless every half hour and from talking too much about affairs. I feel that if we let one's imagination dwell on what is going on, one would simply become a wreck and that we need to keep a grip on ourselves, not only for what remains of our work and responsibilities, but also to be able to face our own share of trouble. There is a tendency, probably inevitable, for even the best to sit round talking and speculating and it is amazing how quickly emotion arises in a spiral form until all are swinging busily round at the peak of tension or else in a hell of depression. This is a bit extreme perhaps; there is plenty of level headed self-control and our hearts are all with the men who are really carrying the burden of the day. It is literally impossible for me to envisage a Europe dominated by the nazis and I quite firmly and sincerely believe it will never come. It looks however as though your people may have to decide which they want to see and the signs are hopeful and encouraging.

The plan drawn up for the Secretariat in such a hurry was I think remarkably good in the circumstances. Its application was somewhat different from what was envisaged; you will probably have received a copy of the first circular containing its substance. The position was complicated by another element introduced in the interest of those Members of the staff who would require substantial treasury settlements in one way or another. Another complication has been on the money side. Reductions have since been made for various reasons to reduce the responsibility which, in spite of all disclaimers, exist as to evacuation. Elaborate plans have been drawn up for that, but I am very doubtful if they will work. The Labour Office has been in an identical position. Winant got back last night from a visit to Paris and London and I don't know what he has brought, but I doubt if it is more than encouragement to do what he thinks best.

With regard to the League there is probably some little divergency in British and French policy. Halifax telegraphed (probably inspired) sympathizing and encouraging Avenol in endeavouring to keep a working Secretariat; but in France they look for nothing more than a moral ~~naïveté~~ ^{naïveté}. In fact the matter is that in such times nobody can spare a thought for us. Ten days ago with a small Committee, I put up a new scheme for a working Secretariat at Geneva based on possible activities and what remained of the staff AFTER A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF UNCONTROLLED resignations. It seemed to Avenol and Jacklin to be much too expensive and a meeting of the Supervisory Committee was called for the 17th of June; whether this can take place is problematical. I heard by the way that Hambro has reached London and that Colijn has escaped from

Holland and was in Paris a day or two ago. It would be very helpful to Avenol if we could share responsibilities in that way, but although he has now laid down that we stay here undivided (that reminds me of a grizzly scripture quotation), things are still in a certain flux and will not take final form probably for some time.

the ... ja ha ...

Holland and was in Paris a day or two ago. It would be very helpful to Avenol if we could share responsibilities in that way, but although he has now laid down that we stay here undivided (that reminds me of a grizzly scripture quotation), things are still in a certain flux and will not take final form probably for some time.

Ja has just shown me the Princeton University invitation that is another probably final holiday - Avenol & I have given me a "delightful" hour. But thumbs up. we'll see later about "Toes Up".

political

THE DANGER

25 June 40

With a Europe consisting of allied or conquered States, or States without real liberty, could Germany and Italy make of the League of Nations a political, economic and quasi-moral weapon?

For a time there would be a necessity probably to govern either directly, or through subject Governments, on purely military lines; but there would however be a certain amount of political indigestion for which a partial remedy might be to give a semblance of order, legality and a voice in affairs to certain representatives of the peoples. This would gain additional force if a continental anti-blockade plan could be developed and strong economic measures had to be enforced in the most palatable form, with an air of justice, common cause, and even of freedom. In such circumstances propaganda throughout the world would have a lever of obvious value; and Herr Hitler has raised already some speculation in talking of "a new order in Europe". This may be no more than a phrase, but there may be a definite and long-view plan behind it.

Even without the League of Nations, of course, a European Conference could be called which would produce a certain amount of the same economic results, but if the legal frame-work of the League could be used, the setting would have a different air.

While a vestige of the League machinery remains here, it could be set in motion legally and constitutionally by request of any League Government to summon a Conference of European Members of the League. Such a meeting could of course invite any non-member State in Europe to participate in its deliberations!!

Such action could be carried out if nothing remained of the Secretariat but the Secretary-General.

If the Secretary-General were not available, illegal use could of course be made of the League buildings, but it would be an empty shell and poor camouflage.

Shown to K.

David P. Kelly, U.S. Minister -

The British Minister then passed to another point on which he had received instructions from his Government to make enquiries, i.e., the question of the transfer to the International Labour Office of the technical services. His Government were less keen on this transfer and had a distinct preference for the Princeton University invitation.

The Secretary-General fully explained to him how the matter stood, and why he had started unofficial conversations with Mr. Winant on this point. The advantages of a transfer to the I.L.O. were exactly those which the Secretary-General had been endeavouring to secure when he had first received the Princeton University invitation. In other words, this transfer would not affect the international status of our officials; in the second place, economies would be made on overhead charges; last but not least: ~~the U.S.A. were members of the I.L.O.~~ and Mr. Winant had such contacts with the U.S.A. administration that he was the ~~most~~ likely person to obtain an invitation to go to America, in which case the transferred services would also go to the U.S.A. It was, of course, understood that this transfer would not entail a constitutional severance with the Secretariat, our technical services only temporarily having to be housed in the Labour Office, and the Director of the I.L.O. acting, so to speak, by delegation of the Secretary-General. The constitutional ties between the Secretary-General and these services would not be severed, and the Secretary-General's authority would be exercised provisionally by delegation to the Director of the I.L.O.

Mr. Kelly said that his Government were anxious to be assured that the Secretary-General would, before taking such a step, consult Member States.

The Secretary-General assured him that such were his own intentions. Incidentally, the Secretary-General would also, in the case of the Princeton University invitation, have to consult Member States before accepting such invitation, even if the United States expressed the view that they had no objection to such transfer.

Mr. Kelly said that he understood the Secretary-General's preoccupations and he would inform the Foreign Office accordingly.

The Secretary-General said he did not think he had the right to spend money for which one could not expect any returns.

Mr. Kelly said that in view of the importance of this technical work, it might be possible for his Government to envisage a supplementary credit.

The Secretary-General said he could not contemplate asking any Government for fresh funds for so uncertain a purpose.

GENEVA, June 28th, 1940.

Aghinides was present at above meeting. He said to me immediately afterwards that he had never seen the official representative of a country treated by a Secfer in such a manner as shown by General

from
aghnides

omitted = "But, Sir, you told me you
would not in any case accept
an invitation" - Tittman.

RECORD OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. TITTMAN

At the Secretary-General's request, Mr. Tittman paid him a visit at 12 o'clock on June 27th. Mr. Aghnides was present at the interview.

The Secretary-General at once informed him of the visit of the British Minister at Bern and of the proposal which the latter had made in regard to the invitation of the Princeton University. The United Kingdom Government were thus taking an initiative in urging that the Secretary-General should accept that invitation.

The Secretary-General explained at length what had taken place in the interview between the British Minister and himself (see relevant record of conversation).

After an exchange of views, Mr. Tittman said - if he rightly understood the Secretary-General, he, Mr. Tittman, would have to inform his Government of the British proposal, and report to the Secretary-General the views of the State Department thereon. He further understood that the Secretary-General did not really expect an invitation from the U.S. Government. All that was needed, and that would be a minimum, said Mr. Tittman, was that the U.S. Government should authorise the functioning of the services in Princeton, with the recognition of the international status of our officials.

On a question put to him by Mr. Tittman, the Secretary-General reassured him that it was not so much the question of diplomatic privileges as of the maintenance for these officials of their international status which alone enabled them to communicate with States officially.

The Secretary-General also informed Mr. Tittman of the telegram he had received from Mr. Hambro, who was on his way to the United States, where he would no doubt join his efforts to those of Mr. Arthur Sweetser!

Mr. Tittman promised to inform the Secretary-General as soon as he had received a reply from the State Department.

The Secretary-General said that in the event of the reply being a positive one, he would, of course, have to consult Member States before giving effect to any scheme of transfer.

Notes subsequently dictated, dates not quite certain

Thursday June 20th

Disquieting announcement from Bordeaux on the French wireless.

Same evening J.A. sent, for all his personal belongings at Vichy without informing any one and leaving League secret papers and the luggage of the staff at Vichy.

Friday June 21st

At a Directors' meeting J.A. said he proposed transfer of technical Sections to ILO administratively and retention of only about 8 people in Secretariat. I said I would approve of transfer on the understanding it was merely a method to facilitate the exit from Switzerland of our technical sections as Winant was more likely to succeed in making arrangements than we were.

Saturday June 22nd

I sent to Vichy for League papers.

I received large deputation from British Commonwealth staff here concerned as to possibility of return in case separate armistice made in France and in view of threatened attack on England. Questions raised dealt with administrative points and also point as for example, their moral position vis-à-vis the League if an opportunity of repatriation occurred and they took it.

Armed - J.A. called me immediately afterwards in a violent temper, asked me what was going on. I explained; he denounced the British staff as cowards; a somewhat violent altercation followed.

(On June 20th I had talk with J.A. in which he was completely uncontrolled; on 21st, a few of us met ILO representatives when J.A. was calm, balanced, well-behaved; on 22nd I had another meeting when again J. gave many signs of being unbalanced. These sudden changes caused me to reflect on possible causes, so much had I lost confidence and respect).

Undated

Discussions regarding Princeton University offer. J.A. sees Tittman and informs him that he will not in any case accept any invitation and attributing Princeton offer only to Sweetser.

J.A. consulted Directors re form of reply to Princeton. I asked if we were discussing the substance or only the drafting and was told the latter.

Later, messages from British and Norwegian Governments and Hambro, favouring Princeton offer.

Later still, visit from Kelly requesting that offer be accepted, that if already refused, refusal should be withdrawn and that no further diminution of staff should be made without consultation of States.

Even before the French official request for an armistice, J.A. had made up his mind as to future; had suddenly decided definitely that he would not resign; said several times he wished to get rid of British staff and said he would endeavour to facilitate their departure.

Tuesday June 25th

J. called me and virtually charged me with conspiring with Sweetser to produce the Princeton offer. ~~Very~~ Vigorous reaction on my part. Subsequent conversation calmed down to reasonable level. I again insisted on my view of the situation. I had for months urged the removal of technical sections, insisting that H.Q.s must stay here to face physical dangers or discomforts of the expected invasion. The position was now changed. The physical danger had passed. Now thought that not only should the technical sections move but also the Headquarters. There would be less and less possibility to live, independence would disappear; little enough work elsewhere, but none could be done here; little money could be collected from the States elsewhere, but none would be got here; the S.G. should move also; there were Latin cities abroad where a French S.G. would not be uncomfortable.

J. ~~then~~ told me he had finally decided to remain S.G. (after very many threats to resign) and added that he did not forget he had been appointed Secretary-General by 50 States "including Germany and Italy".

I ended the conversation - which had reached a comparatively friendly character - by saying that I had been going through all secret files and recalled that for seven years our collaboration had been intimate, though often difficult, that I had given personal loyalty together with honest, open advice and it was the wish that he

no destruction

should finish here in whatever way he finished, honourably and with a clean sheet.

He listened to this somewhat sentimental appeal, said he would try and then gave me a message for the British staff that he would try to get them out of Geneva with every possible facility!

On this same day: ^{his} circular sent to staff.

There had been a consultation with Directors on the necessity to reduce expenditure and it had been proposed that an effort should be made to find out who generally wished to resign in order to facilitate Administration. Circular however was quite different to what had been agreed upon. It ended with what was virtually an order to all Members of the Secretariat to sign a formula of resignation; not only was it virtually an order, but it was made known that the conditions of resignation laid down by Assembly would probably not be applicable to any one who did not take advantage of this request.

↓
*There had been no consultation
on any of these conditions or proposals
- certainly no agreement -*

Ag - agnidos

McKW. to Kinnaman

Wednesday June 26th *atmosphere*

J.A. saw Jacklin; apologized to him for harsh words recently exchanged and said he had determined to finish with a clean sheet."

Soon after him J.A. saw Ag. Again violent outbursting against G.P.; said she would now expiate her crimes, that H. and Mussolini were great men, that H. was not necessarily opposed to a League and had admired our Saar work, etc. Said that British staff would shortly have gone. Ag. said J.A. would not send away every British Member of staff, certainly he would keep McKW. - J.A. replied: No I won't keep him either. But you could not send them all away, said Ag. Ah! said J.A. "I won't have sent them away, they will have gone.. run like rabbits!"

About this time J.A. sent a message to A. Lovell offering him a six months mission in America alone with full pay and before he gets a reply boasted a number of times that L. was going and C.R. takes charge of the technical services. In fact L. did not consider the proposal for a moment. *a "junk."*

Channon

P1/8(S)

Monday July 8th

On receiving my note regarding international character of the staff J.A. sent for me and argued as to the usefulness of looking for any future outside Europe. He did not mention the British but said that Germany would militarily dominate Europe; he was not sure if H. wanted a League but fairly sure M. would to form a certain balance. I said that the balance was rather an illusion and that in any case it was not the duty of the Secretariat to participate in decisions of that character. A trust had been reposed in us and if great changes were to come about, they should come about without our active intervention in that direction. He spoke of the demoralization amongst officials who would not have work to do; I replied that there was another moral issue at stake. He said he was not sure if France would remain in the League and what would then be the situation? He anticipated an increasing pressure on Switzerland from Germany and what would then be the position?

In this connection he also spoke about the budget and said he had no intention of preparing one; He also said something rather vaguely about that the more people stayed at present in the Secretariat, the less resources would remain for a smaller number. - I replied that that aspect of it did not enter into my own consideration, except on the question of the mission

7 18th - 23rd

On June ---- Made a note on the possibility of the League machinery in Europe being used in an unneutral way in the interest of certain Powers, envisaging also a possible league of European States using our name and acting under the dictation of certain non-members for the further conduct of the war.

Sent to Kelly, Borne.

Since my first exposé of policy in the new situation and two "warm" interviews, J.A. ceased to call me and Ag. (for months cast aside) was much to his discomfort, made court favourite. Told me early that an effort was being made to manoeuvre him into something he would consider personally "dishonourable" and he added that J.A. was now endeavouring to belittle me and holding out to Ag. vague but tempting suggestions. I had for some months been counting my tenure of office for different reasons from month to month, and later from week to week, but at this period I daily expected an intimation as to my future: I ^{could} not be "used". Nevertheless, despite personal inclination, did not sign the requested resignation.

Wednesday July 3rd

On that day heard that Jack² who had been considered by J.A. completely indispensable had been informed that he would be allowed to go when he wished. Jack² said he would not go until his job was finished. Simultaneously came rumour via Miss L. that C. was the Treasurer designated.

On this day too got first word of expected attempt to approach G. - J.A. asked Ag. if he could be in touch with Dr. K. - No result.

Germany

Krauel, German Consul

Thursday July 4th

new Circular issued, saying not enough resignations received and promising action before the 8th of July.

Same day J.A. had consultations with Ag. and Sk. regarding their groups. No consultation with Loe. Heavy cuts proposed, including virtually last of famous Health Section. I had interviews with both also. S. and Ag. both proposed nothing should be done without a meeting of Directors. He then agreed.

Sk. Skylstad (monday)

Friday, July 5th

J.A. saw Vi¹ and pictured to him a new France, which was to be given a new soul to work in collaboration with G. and I¹ and keep the British out of Europe; was also again violently anti-British and asked Vi. would he go and see Laval who is his cousin. Vi. suggested he should go himself. J.A. said it was impossible. Vi. said he would not for a moment consider any such proposal; he said that the anti-English attitude of J.A. came strangely from him, that nobody would listen to this in France in any case as he had long been known as "le domestique des Anglais", that the Vichy Government could not last, except with German military support, that anybody who had anything to do with French affairs would be well advised to keep out of France for a considerable time and finally said quite brutally that J.A. should not soil the honour both of France and himself in view of his position. - Conversation lasted well over an hour, very much on these lines. It was subsequently however that J.A. asked Pardo if he were in touch with Dr. Krauel.

Vi. is a strange creature, personally unattractive, who has his ear to the ground in French politics, better than any one in Geneva and he has a habit of quite brutal criticism; has the ear of many important people, e.g.: seven hours in the middle of the crisis a few weeks ago with Prime Minister of Yugoslavia, etc. His virtue of candid untempered criticism was even used, I am told, with his old Chief A. Thoma, whose Chef de Cabinet he was; with Laval, his cousin, during the sanctions period and it may be assumed he did not spare H.H.

Subsequently he saw C., who has been J.A.'s chief adviser during the last three weeks and whom Vi. regards as of little more account than an office-boy.

Same day, after this visit, J.A. saw Pardo and asked him also if he were in touch with Dr. K.

Pardo, Argentine, member of Prof. Com.

For some time J.A has been discussing with individuals in Secretariat and outside, possibility of forming a Directoire. The idea seemed to be that this committee consisting of a few outsiders and a few insiders (including J.) would be responsible with him for conduct of affairs - virtually hand-picked substitute for Council, Assembly and Supervisory Committee. I know he approached HAT and BAN. *Burchardt & Burgin*
Sunn *Belgian*

Saturday July 6th

Yielding to request J.A called Directors meeting and examined staff list in view to reductions. Certain number were agreed to, but additions were also proposed to those lists for retention; surprisingly it was a very substantial list and not the 6 to 12 people he had mentioned. Reflecting ~~however~~ *continue* I saw the list was almost exclusively European, or near European and sent him a note urging that international character of staff be maintained (the 8th of July).

At the same meeting I asked if and when our budget would be drawn up for 1941. J.A said he could not do it without Supervisory Committee. I suggested telegraph communication with the Chairman (Hambro). He said that telegraphic communication was not a substitute for a meeting. Also that the political position of certain people would be changed by events (there is some talk of a puppet Government being set up in Oslo).

meeting quite good, reasonable in tone. All as expected friends. Ag. didn't sleep much night before. Now did J.

entrusted to us all: seeing that something of the League of Nations ^{might} survive; events might go all in the direction in which he anticipated, but our own duty remained in my eyes quite clear.

During an interview the same day with Ag. he added to his violent abuse of the British an attack on the U.S. and even contemplated that the French army in Syria would attack the British in the rear and was somewhat astonished when it was pointed out to him that this might lead to Turkish intervention; the Turks, who would not want the Italians in Syria, were on very good relations with the Soviets.

write
about
the
League

End of dictated notes

The Stockholm SOCIALDEMOKRATEN of 5.7.40 published the following DNE despatch from Geneva, distributed by the Swedish Press Agency TT:

"Almost all English officials of the League of Nations left Geneva on Wednesday and Thursday. There were about 90 persons, and it is understood that one of them was the former English Under-Secretary General Lester. It is supposed that the party passed through non-occupied France to the Spanish frontier. ^{Probably} It is also stated that the International Labour Office will move to South America."

St
9/7/40

The facts: about 15 British officials from SdN + B.I.T. left for England by bus. Mr. Lester ~~still~~ has not left.

Only emotional release!

JOSEPH Avenel

He was plotting for the enemies of his country before an offer to lay down arms was accepted; he had plans to please them before the blood of his ~~countrymen~~ massacred countrymen was on his hands, he spoke with complacency of a new state when the glory of the old was being mangled under the tanks of the invader; he conspired to betray his ~~own~~^{the} trust placed on him and to corrupt the honour of his associates in a debased self-interest. A pompous self-obstinated creature when relieved of fears for his person & his belongings

8/7/40

Have just found a propagandist note
published by the Henlein party early in
1938 showing German plans for year
to year 1938-45. What is striking

is that the line drawn in force appears
to be identical with the present
armistice line. What about story of
concessions in territory to save the fleet?

10/9/40

Henri Vigier being dismissed while
one such as Veillet-Lavallée being
kept. Brilliant political mind
& first rate official. But not
Lavalist!!

Wrote letter to Arenal re. his
plans but decided to withhold
it for present.

Heard at a late date (10/7) that
there were no discussions in the
rallying car at Compiègne. Some
presidential forms of armistice to be
signed without a comma changed.
Haldin, according to my informers
lost, seemed somewhat affronted;
after signature of Rome, party became
more of not friends!!

8/7/40

I have just found a propagandist's note
published by the Hanlin party early in
1938 showing German plans for year
to year 1938-45. What is striking
is that the line drawn in force appears
to be identical with the present
situation. What about story of
M. Fleet?

Heard at a late date (15/7) that
there were no discussions in the
railway car at Compiègne. Germans
presented terms of armistice to be
signed without a comma changed.

Nations, according to eye-witness
of both, seemed somewhat shamefaced;
+ after signature at home, party became
informal if not friendly!!

10/7/40

Italian & German press today
sing are ~~for~~ brutally candid to the
^{CAVALIST}
~~Revolist~~ avowed. No indulgence
"soldat-à-soldat", or for Fascist
reforms. "On voudrait présenter aux
yeux de l'Allemagne une France nouvelle
La nation française est responsable
dans son ensemble". Les nouvelles

Europe sera réalisée par les Puissances
de l'axe "etc etc" "la plume ne compromettra
pas ce qui a été obtenu par l'épée."

The French army has been
broken up. The colonies demilitarised.
? The fleet manuf in British hands. The
Vichy people may turn French anger
& emotion against the British for a
time - to safeguard public order, to
carry favours with voters, to enable
Fascist system to be more easily applied.
But they have achieved ~~nothing~~ one thing
to be of no use today ^{either} to their former
enemies or their ^{former} friends. And they
merely ensure that France will
pay. Oh, great statesmen!

10/7/40.

Stoffani, ex Director, Italian,
non-fascist, residing in France came Geneva
2 months ago. J.A. said he was a spy; anti-
League; represented also the Rajchman-Hodan-Comert group!
Chuckled when S. was refused visa to return to
family & home in France. I tried to make him
see affair from less prejudiced angle.

S. now trying to go to Rome. J.A. hears of
it & asked him to come to see him
to day another mission!

A. made pro-fascist speech to Stoffani

8/7/40

Pindar, the poor Pole, leaving came
to say an revoir. No money & thought
of teaching languages. German is like
his mother tongue, he said, but Switzerland
is not a fruitful field for that language
d France & in all
It make a living
- sed

x the other one in French Tank Corps wants to desert to join British.

8/7/40

Linder, the poor Pole, leaving came to say an error. No money & thought of teaching languages. Jansen is like his mother tongue, he said, but Switzerland is not a fruitful field for that language. He thought of France & in all innocence said he could make a living there as Frenchmen would now need to know German. He trouble was to get into France and he thought of approaching Dr Krauel, Jansen's Consul !!!

Return of some Uigies & family for Kendaoye. One boy (19) tried to get aboard British ship carrying Polish aviators to G.B. failed. X-S & Y-Z in + is. J. & D. H. V. says both are ^{galeated}. He thinks Churchill's attack on French fleet was a great mistake, playing into hands of Vichy govt which is developing anti-B. passions as counter to revolutionary emotions.

x the other one in French Tank Corps wants to desert to join British.

Memo.

9/7/40

[Kell]

Last week Avenol approached two persons inquiring if they were in touch with Dr. Krauel.

This week he is sending a mission to try to get in touch with Laval.

The present plan (8th July) is to use the League machinery for a new European League. Says he is not quite sure if Hitler will want it but believes Mussolini will as a counter-balance to German military power. Assumes early defeat of Britain and expulsion from European affairs. United States gets share of his splenetic hatred of Britain. Retaining virtually no non-European on staff.

This policy may be affected by reception his agent gets at Vichy. Should it not be favourable (he will probably propose as beginning Secretariat working for stricken France) believe he will again rapidly reduce staff and liquidate, probably remaining in office himself.

One thing he will not do, that is to remain loyal to international trust placed in his hands.

Asked if he would as emergency prepare budget for 1941 said he would not and also refused suggestion to communicate by telegraph with Chairman Supervisory Committee.

See also note re Stephani

Answer

Friday, July 12th

I heard, in the most round-about fashion, that Tittman, the U.S. Consul, saw J. yesterday and informed him of the receipt from the State Department of two telegrams: one was asking his intentions as to the maintenance of the technical work of the League and the other more specifically as to keeping adequate staff for carrying out the Drug Control work.

J. is reported to have informed the American Government that he intended to keep the technical work going, particularly the Economic Intelligence and Drug Control work. More details as to his declarations are not yet available, but as he is refusing completely to consider the budget for 1941 and as he is insisting on dismissing Steinig, the best technical man in the drug Section, it looks rather strange.

x Austrian: Jewish:

Also heard to-day in an indirect fashion, that he received a telegram two days ago from Oliven, the Registrar of the International Court, that he was coming to Geneva bringing with him the President of the Court, the Chinese Judge and nine or ten officials; that he would arrive via Bâle Monday or Tuesday.

Wrote to him re Steinig & Vigier.
Rumburg threatening to resign
over former Steinig dismissal.

14/7

Winant went to London 2 weeks ago via Lisbon. Think he is now trying to get I.L.O. to Canada

J.A. told Goodrich (USA del. to ILO) that he was not hurry about 1941 budget; that Oct. would be time enough; that A.H. likes the L/N better than I.L.O.; that I.L.O. might survive but not in Europe

15/7. Rumburg came again to me. Wanted to go ^{unofficially} out. Said he could get invitation from USA to reorganise opium work there. Here they would be snuffed out or handed over to A.H., & that would please some of them including himself. Begged him to be patient. Crisis might come soon & clear up situation.

Tuesday, July 16th

S.G. called a meeting yesterday morning. We first dealt with a fresh invitation from Princeton University. Answering the arguments which have been put up, Avenol agreed to a proposal from Loveday that he (L) should communicate the text to the British Government as they have shown a strong interest in the proposal. In the meantime he would inform Mr. Tittman and no further action would be taken at the moment.

(This morning there was an additional telegram from Hambro in New York, asking for a copy of the U.S. Government observations).

At the meeting we then proceeded with the real object. Avenol opened by references to the great difficulties of the Swiss Government in having the League here, suggested that they might well be under pressure from the Germans on the subject and that we should help, first by going into the Library (and thus looking more insignificant); secondly, a number of officials, including the High Direction who had nothing to do directly with practical technical work, should be sent on leave. He himself proposed to appoint one person to act for him and retire to La Pelouse. He could not resign as that would, he inferred, finish the Secretariat. There was no body in existence at the moment which could authorize his retiring and mentioned as an example that the power of attorney given to the Treasurer would lapse and the banks could refuse to hand over our money.

De Haller, called for, said that there had been no démarche of any kind from the Swiss Government, but left it to be inferred that the statement of the S.G. would be in accordance with the wishes.

At the meeting it became known that there were now only 65 international officials and about 35 Swiss, out of the 600 which were here twelve months ago. It was also mentioned that the salary list was at the moment about 30% lower than that envisaged in the Vichy plan.

Skylstad raised questions of principle as to consulting Governments and mentioned two of his technical men (Health and Opium) who were necessary, but who were being dismissed.

In a subsequent talk with some of my colleagues, we came to the conclusion that Avenol ~~might~~ send away Agnides, Skylstad and myself and probably wish to appoint de Haller who has lately been on mission for him to Bern. *I pointed out that Agn. wd be a more likely instrument.*

Last night I got pretty reliable news from Vichy that the Government there had first decided simply to leave the League at once; this was changed later (confirming Ganem's story) to maintaining the decision to leave the League, but postponing the date of giving notice sine die. Events apparently (according to my informant) ~~led to~~ a change and on Sunday the

14th, there was said to be a new decision, that the French Government would not leave the League, but that in view of its political implications, they could not continue to have a French Head of the Secretariat!

The events causing the change are not altogether clear; ~~there was~~ said to be less confidence that the Germans will treat France with a certain amount of consideration. Troubles have arisen in minor ways with the occupying forces, the central authorities being ignored. One suggestion is that the decision to hold on to the League may be in a very minor way a sign of less subservience. - Another suggestion is that, under pressure from the Axis, Roumania having just announced her departure and to follow hurriedly in the foot-steps of Hungary, Albania, Roumania, would be politically undignified. Whatever the reason, the story if true, may very much affect our position here. It may for one thing decide Avenol to hasten up his preparations to clean the Secretariat of "recalcitrant" members of the High Direction. On the other hand it might lead him to give up some of his political schemes and retire with what dignity he may. It may also affect political events. The League is a very slender thread, still representing some link between Europe and the outside world and its maintenance here might begin to have a little promise of contacts other than that of a continent united by conquest bound into subservient economic unity. Personally I had ~~been~~ ^{been} thinking of possible political implications, being concerned more with what I called a reasonably clean finish. We shall see.

To-day, saw de Haller and after some general talk remarked that the S.G. had based his plan very largely upon the wishes and interests of the Swiss Government and that I knew he had been sent to Bern a few days before to consult and inform the Swiss Government. De Haller again assured that there was no démarche, although it might well have been the impression given by Avenol's statement.

As to Avenol's proposal, it is not in itself a bad one and it is a great pity that we have all completely lost confidence and trust in him.

17-7-40

As I have been guessing, It came out
openly to Ag. yesterday with his plan.
He (Ag.) was to be put in charge of the
remnants of the ^{up Secretary's} library. I & Skylstad
were to be given paid holidays, unlimited.
Ag. was to have only certain powers
delegated to him - not acting S.G. Ar.
we hold other powers while pretending
to be in semi-retirement. Less power
for the delegate than for the U.S.G., said Ag.
A mandate that c^d be revoked at
a month's notice. No financial control.
"Why put a gamin like de Koller in
charge of a group & send away a man
like Skylstad?" Ar. pleaded for a
how. "Here I am giving you my
confidence & trust & you are all
help me", says Ar. He became

P1/8(6-7)

rather desperate as Ag. resisted &
finally offered him Skylstad if he
w^d take the job. Ag. said the proper
method w^d be to leave the debut S.G.
Ar. w^d hear of it. Ag. ^{reports Ag. said} ~~and~~ could
say nothing against me personally
but ^{involving} the proposed exclusion of G.B.
from Europe & Ireland also w^d be
excluded. (And I suppose I have a
stubborn core; & I did appeal to
his personal honor a month ago!)

Ar. also included the Americas
in his exclusion from Europe; "the Anglo-
Saxon world". G.B. must be put out
of the Mediterranean also: It was
his own idea - this new Europe - he
had mooted it at an Economic Conference
a few years ago but was killed by the
British & Americans. Now the Germans had
taken it up.

from
Arthur Sweetser

P1/8 (6)



CONNECTICUT AVENUE & WOODLEY ROAD
1800 ROOMS



WARDMAN PARK HOTEL

Washington, D.C.

July 15, 1940

Mr. Sean Lester
League of Nations
Geneva, Switzerland

Dear Sean:

June

I have read with the utmost avidity and interest your notes of the twelfth, thirteenth and nineteenth, which all came together and which so strikingly illustrated the days and hours you have been living through. I need not tell you, I am sure, that my heart is very much with you all the time and that my thoughts are constantly going back to Geneva.

It is terribly hard, of course, to picture all this at a distance but between what we get from the press, what you wrote in your letter and what my own not inactive imagination can picture, it is possible to get a somewhat general idea. You can imagine ~~then~~ how grateful I am for the fullness of your letter.

P1/8 (6)

Washington
15/7

The situation here is really extraordinary. The War, which only a little time ago seemed "phoney", has now become to the ordinary American grim and desperate and personal; Events have had a trip-hammer action one after the other, Norway and Denmark being utterly startling, Holland and Belgium being perhaps the sharpest moral shock, the collapse of France the most unbelievable event, but the danger to the British Fleet being far and away the most personal to us.

I would not have dreamed, a few months ago, that isolationism would vanish as it has. Our people are no less anxious, indeed in some ways they are more anxious, to keep out of war than they used to be, but they have suddenly gotten the feeling that perhaps the choice does not rest with them any more than it did with the Danes, the Norwegians, the Dutch etc. Now at long last they appreciate the value to them of the British Fleet and the fact that we have grown up to an easy life behind its shelter. You can hardly imagine the armaments ~~and~~ efforts that are being made here. The present appropriations have reached the utterly astronomical figure of ten billion dollars. This would give us a two-ocean Navy for the first time in our history, ~~and~~ equipment for two million men, and a force of thirty-six thousand airplanes. At the same-time we are very seriously debating conscription and are considering all sorts of measures for our protection in this hemisphere and for the mobilization of friends.

It is unfortunate that this situation, which is infinitely the most vital before the country, has been out across by a presidential election. Despite all the ballyhoo, however, the underlying forces will remain the same whoever is elected, though the surface will naturally be considerably confused. Willkie will make an excellent and dignified candidate ~~for the~~ good foreign policy; even today as the Democratic Convention opens no one knows what will happen there.

As for myself, I have been constantly busy, as you can imagine. I have seen all sorts and kinds of people in Washington, New York and Boston, made a few speeches, and written a few articles. Last week I was invited to Chicago for the annual meeting of the Harris Institute where I was given the rather heavy job of making the closing speech to a final plenary session comprising over one hundred professors of International Relations from all over the country. The next day, which was a Sunday, I had to give up to attempting to edify the Board of Directors of Rotary International, who were holding a special session, to attempt to work out a policy for their organizations all over the world.

Last week, after several days here and a day in New York, I was just off for a ten days vacation with the family before accepting an invitation to go across the country, when I had a telephone call from Mr. Hambro who had just arrived in New York from London. It seems that he had had a great deal of discussions over there with Halifax and Butler, Bruce and the other Dominion people, the Dutch and others regarding the possibility of all or part of the League coming over here. He was ~~keenly~~ keen on the subject, thinking that it would be the best way of preserving both the actual work of the League and the contributions of a number of its members. He saw no objection to having only part of the work come here, though he desired as much as possible. At the same time, the actual place seemed to him wholly immaterial in the face of the principle.

He was planning to go to Washington straight away to look into the matter and made it quite clear that he would like to have me go along with him. I was just leaving, as I have said, for a short vacation before a hard trip, but felt I had no choice in view of his wishes. Consequently, I have had a day and a half with the family, who incidentally are all at the seashore except for Adelaide, who is still in California, and came down here last night to meet Hambro within the next hour or so.

Our Princeton friends, despite the first refusal, have still not given up hope that, now that the situation is even worse, it may still be possible to work something out. Quite by accident last week I ran into Riefler in Grady's office, learning from him of the second cable that they had decided to send last week. I also came down on the train last night with Riefler.

The situation here will develop a great deal, I imagine, with Hambro feeling as he does. At the same time, however, it is fair to say that it is not as good as it was at the outset, in view of all the delay, the first refusal, and the general wide disintegration abroad. Also there is a little complication in connection with the I. L. O., for, while I would have thought at first sight that the I. L. O. would be in a better position with ~~us~~ because of American membership and the presence of both Winant and Goodrich, it seems that those facts confuse it just a bit in the sense

- 3 -

that if the League came it would come frankly as a foreign agency on its own without American ~~the League~~ whereas the I. L. O. would be an agency for which our Government would have a responsibility not only in giving an asylum but also as the most active official member. All of this however, may be out-dated by the time you get this letter. Still, knowing all the various angles involved, I thought you would be interested to have these details.

I was very interested also, as you can imagine, in what you said about Frank. I had a long letter from him as well, from London and understand his situation fully. It is too bad that he had to go at this time but I think it was inevitable. I have just sent him a cable saying we would be very happy to take his two girls in case he wants to send them over.

You will be interested to know also that I bumped into Richman in the State Department last week and found him very busy with Polish refugees. I also had a letter from Voukitchevitch who is in New York, a telephone call from Rasminski, and meetings with loads of other old friends from Geneva. Never I think have there been more different angles here than now.

Do please write again as fully as possible. You cannot imagine how good it is to get news, even if it is negative news. There seemed to be all sorts of little points of contact, yet at the same time, an enormous barrier.

With again my thanks, constant thoughts and all best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

A.S.

PS Just back from a busy day with Hambro. I fixed up a lunch with him with Henry Grady, who, as you know, is both Assistant Secretary of State and Chairman of our Economic Committee, an hour's conversation with James Dunn, Political Adviser to the Secretary of State, another talk with Thompson, who is in charge of League affairs, and meetings tomorrow with Berle, Assistant Secretary of State, and Fuller, in charge of anti-drug work. He will probably also see the President, and, if it can be arranged before Mr Hull goes to Havana day after tomorrow, the Sec of State. He has asked me also to arrange for him to go up to Princeton, as I am now trying to do by telephone... and thence to New York, for a reception to him at the League Pavilion.

The situation is now quite clearer. He is in favor of accepting the Princeton invitation unequivocally, without going into details or anticipating difficulties, but with the thought that, if once under way, means will be found to get around all problems. He thinks the set-up is really excellent, the only practicable one in the circumstances, and he fully understands and shares in the government's difficulties in going further than it has gone. He does not think the League ought to stand on formality but to act temporarily, in an emergency, in a way both to continue its work and assure its contributions from many overseas countries. I was very surprised, I confess, at his viewpoint, but he evidently had it when he came over here and what he has seen so far has only confirmed it. I imagine he will be cabling shortly, so won't try to go into further details in this air-letter.

July 18, 1940

Mr. Elliott Felkin
League of Nations
Geneva, Switzerland

Dear Elliott:

This is just a line, without being sure it will reach you to tell you, in the midst of far graver events, that there is, despite all, considerable solicitude in Washington regarding the future of the Anti Drug Work.

The other day I happened by accident to be luncheon at the same place with Fuller, who took the occasion to ask me to drop in to see him the next day. I found him very anxious to know what was happening at Geneva, how much staff was being retained and what the possibilities were of continuing the present arrangements. Almost nothing has come to this country beyond the most sweeping press statements that all resignations had been requested and that probably everything was closing up. Even the Consulate, it seems, has sent on very little but a query has been directed to them on this particular matter.

Fuller hopes, of course, that the work can go on as it is but at the same time if it cannot the question will naturally arise as to what should be done. I cannot see any desire here to make any move at this time, rather the contrary indeed, but obviously the future has to be foreseen. If worse comes to worst there has been some thought of calling a conference of signatory states to establish a special administration perhaps somewhat on the lines of the Office International d'Hygiene Publique at Paris.

This contingency is far, as yet, from having arisen; nevertheless I think I ought to tell you of the preoccupation here so that you can let us have any possible information, particularly as regards staff and plans. Fuller pointed out to me a considerable collection of data that he had ready to send to Geneva but had held up on account of the present uncertainty. Similarly, the day after I saw him he had lunch with Anslinger and May, obviously to discuss this general situation. You probably also know the Princeton Institution in inviting the League's Technical Agencies to come to this country, especially included the opium work amongst them.

Mr. Elliott Pelkin

July 15, 1940

As for other and more vital matters, you can imagine, without my writing, how very full my heart is at the present moment. Let me only say that we read every line from Geneva with the utmost avidity and with our emotions still very largely there. The general situation in this country is excellent, far better I imagine than it looks from your side, but there is a lack of means which is definitely startling. It is utterly amazing to think however, now that this country has been shaken into reality, that we are voting ten billion dollars for a two ocean Navy and Army equipment for two million men and thirty-six thousand airplanes and are also seriously considering conscription.

Do write me as soon and as fully as possible.

With best wishes, I am

Yours very truly,

PS Since writing this, a new development has occurred in connection with the larger matter of transferring part of the non-political work to this country.

Mr. Thompson, who is in charge of League questions, brought up the opium matter especially, in a discussion with Mr. Hambro and myself. He said that, if the larger matter were arranged, the opium would fit in, but in a more formal and official way, in the sense that this is an activity in which the US participates by act of Congress. Thus formal and official invitations could be issued for members of the Central Board or Supervisory Commission to come here for meetings or other work and the fullest privileges given them. In other words, because of the Congressional authority, the government's action here could be more official and complete than in other work undertaken under a treaty to which the US is not a party.



Telegramm — Télégramme — Telegramma

P1/8(8)

59

von — de — da

No

Wörter
MotsAufgeheben den
Consigne leStunde
Heure
Ora

5859 DE BOENSURLIGNON 348 24 17 1345

Erhalten — Reçu — Ricevuto

Belördert — Transmis — Trasmesso

von — de — da

LYON

Stunde — Heure — Ora

1828

Name — Nom — Nome

Lester

nach — à — a

Stunde — Heure — Ora

Name — Nom — Nome

Jan 1940

téléphone

à porter

No 3311

= LESTER NATIONS GENEVE

9 Contamined

absent to put family
in "safety"

= COULD GET FAMILY VICHY TOMORROW STOP PLEASE
WIRE HOTEL NORD BOEN AND BUEENS HOTEL VICHY
WHETHER I SHOULD RETURN GENEVA = LOVEDAY =

g

3/17/1940

TRANSMISSIBLE-4

Hotel Central. Centra.
Porto 26. VII. 40

P1/8(9)

My Dear Mr. Lester:

I have written to Mrs.
Lester from here telling her
about her valiant husband;
and I have arranged with the
managers of this hotel a
very capable woman who has
a perfect command of English
acquired in ten years' service
in the Montserrat family here,
that letters coming addressed to
her Sean Lester are to be
forwarded to the High Commissioner
for Fire in London. They will
have to pay another air post
and I will leave her something

1918/19

for the day I spent the day
in the morning to morning
in the afternoon to afternoon
in the evening to evening
in the night to night
in the morning to morning
in the afternoon to afternoon
in the evening to evening
in the night to night

The local papers this evening
carry the news of the resignation
and I am proud to have my
chief. I know that a
it leaves for you: but it
will surely be easier to
- small compass now
I hope and trust that you
will find it so. If I have
she also in the very
and I talked about it this
evening facing the
the ancient women
the king of the
Shakespeare will not do

some shabbily, and with that
rather negative expression of shot
is a great positive quality of
character, I heartily concur.

Will this mean that the
Princeton plan may move forward
now. And if so will this involve
only the strictly technical people
or may one or two of a more
general ilk come back?

Yesterday Hugh & I lunched
with Mr. da Matta, who we discover
is the Governor of the Bank of
Portugal and Salazar's best friend
and counsellor. He has been angelic
to me and has helped me suggest
ways whereby various people have
been able to bring their money out.
I wish someone could write him a
beautiful letter signed with seven
seals thanking him for his assistance

(19) 8/19

Let this one. I think it is
 Let to me as a writer in
 to give a good idea of
 character I think I should
 at that time with that
 group of men who were
 interested in the art of
 doing technical things and
 who were not so much
 interested in the science
 of it.

I think it is
 necessary to have a
 group of men who are
 interested in the art of
 doing technical things and
 who are not so much
 interested in the science
 of it. I think it is
 necessary to have a
 group of men who are
 interested in the art of
 doing technical things and
 who are not so much
 interested in the science
 of it.

21/8/9

and kindness to members of the Sec. -
 Editorial.

He is very much interested in
 the League and it seems to me
 just the sort of person who might
 be used in the future in a more
 general way than in the past - re
 legal questions and also matters
 of relations with university organisations.
 He is rector of the university here
 and has launched a scheme for
 building a city universitaire in Lisbon
 where the different faculties are
 scattered about.

He told me that when the
 Duke of Kent was here for the
 Exposition he asked to meet him
 (21.11) and the first question he
 put was: What do you think of
 the League of Nations? La Motta
 thinks that both Hugh & I thought
 very sound things - that technical
 work in all fields should be developed

and kindness to members of the Soc. -
Invent.

He is very much interested in the
the league and it seems to me
just the sort of person the right
he was in the future - a more
general way than in the past - in
legal questions and also matters
of relations with university authorities
He is leader of the university here
and has launched a scheme for
building a city university - London
there the different faculties are
scattered about.
He told me that there is
lack of heat was bad for the
opposition is asked to meet tonight
(11.11) and the first question is
but now: what do you think of
the league of Nations? He talks
thinks that it is that I thought
very common thing - that technical
work - all fields, wants to be

and that there should be more
reality in political thinking. This
was Kent's view too, apparently. He
said: Why should the U.K. have the
same voting power as Ecuador!

Please write a nice & note
to M. da Matta for me, and
then when you come to Lisbon
send your card to the Banque de
Portugal where his offices are. You
would be most interested in
him and he in you.

They are very cheered in this
country about the British - Port.
Spanish accord. At the same
time Portugal has lately received
assurances from Spain and Germany
and the Bank of England is next
week going to open an unlimited
credit for the Banque de Portugal.
The British Ambassador confers stars
and orders on Portuguese professors

[illegible]

Geneva, July 20th, 1940.

Dear McKinnon Wood,

I have received your letter and I think I may catch you before you go on the boat.

The news which was broadcast throughout Europe by two or three news Agencies that I had left Geneva was of course quite untrue. We have been living in the midst of drama or melodrama here with all sorts of unhappy plotting and planning, but the wariest schemes can be rendered difficult by a little quiet passive stubbornness. Two plans were mooted since you left which affected myself: one was paid holidays of undefined length with the prospect of being able to get home and the other was a mission to the United States; both have been turned down. Then came the somewhat startling news that the Big, Big Chief was being requested by his own ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ quietly to abdicate, this being the only change they required as far as they were concerned. There have been various other plans under consideration but the Imperial Mind, at the moment slightly disorientated, is I am afraid likely to be moved by less grandiose and more spiteful motives. It is all very unpleasant sticking this sort of thing.

I wish you all the best and certainly hope we shall meet somehow somewhere. You were a tremendous pillar of strength to the Administration and the League owes you a debt.

Give my best regards to Craig McGeachy and bon voyage to all,

Yours sincerely,

Mr. McKinnon Wood,
Hotel Central,
Sintra, Lisbon
Portugal.

SL

letter to Mr. McKinnon Wood, sent to him in
Lisbon before he left for the United States.

Geneva, July 20th, 1940.

.....

The news which was broadcast throughout Europe by two or three news Agencies that I had left Geneva was of course quite untrue. We have been living in the midst of drama or melodrama here with all sorts of unhappy plotting and planning, but the wariest schemes can be rendered difficult by a little quiet passive stubbornness. Two plans were mooted since you left which affected myself: one was paid holidays of undefined length with the prospect of being able to get home and the other was a mission to the United States; both have been turned down. Then came the somewhat startling news that the Big, Big Chief was being requested by his own government quietly to abdicate, this being the only change they required as far as they were concerned. There have been various other plans under consideration but the Imperial Mind, at the moment slightly disorientated, is I am afraid likely to be moved by less grandiose and more spiteful motives. It is all very unpleasant sticking this sort of thing.

.....

That is why the Econ. & Fin. Org.
must not be allowed to go to ~~América~~ ^{América}.

Agh. begged him to accept his
resignation. vainly. ^{like} A bird in a trap - or nearly.
I told ^{eg.} he must decide for himself. But I was half-hopeful of his
reached clear decision. He replied Av. is a crook!!

I saw de Haller yesterday & said the
whole plan was just forward on
the ground of Swiss interests; & he
de Haller had been sent to Berne
last week by Avenol. In spite
of denial, it was a peculiar
situation.

Or de H. said
Switzerland w^d not mind the entire
disappearance of the h/w. Later,
~~that~~ that the possibility, if not resisted,
of removing the tech. sections, w^d be
interesting: but w^d S.G. also go. I replied
that in my opinion he sh^d not go also.

Avenol tried by a trick (the circular) to get
my resignation in his hands. Failed.

Now holds out like a jingy carrah
before a dancer's nose - unlimited holiday
with full pay & the chance of getting
to Ireland before it is too late.

What a temptation! And how easy
to judge others by oneself. I must,
naturally, hang on. I am, I think,
the core of the resistance, & a breach
in the line would be of 1940 hamur.

Written 17th : Sent 19th.

SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have been reflecting on your suggestion that a number of officials should, in order to meet the unexpressed ~~needs~~ ^{needs} of the Swiss authorities, proceed on indefinite paid leave. One minor element may be my own position as Deputy Secretary-General. Your plan would in my case be extremely agreeable to me and it is a great temptation. But I feel I still must remain at my post of duty, even against my natural inclinations and personal interests. I wish therefore to assure you that you may count on my full determination not to desert my post as long as I feel convinced there is a duty to be done.

Sent to relieve pressure on Aghnides by request

On 17th ^{July} Mr. Told Jackson that if the plan were not voluntarily accepted he would put it into operation by orders.

So I assumed the crisis was approaching. Randall asked to be allowed to line up with those who were trying to save something of the heap. He said he could easily get an invitation to USA to restart the open work. I counseled patience.

Tilmon has been getting more sideglances on A. (1) attacks on Anglo-Saxonism; (2) "cooking" of the Sheter Defter note when sent to Kelly to ~~take~~ eliminate evidence of A's arguments & throw all odium on US Govt.

On 18th July Channon came back
from Vichy with confirmation of E.J.'s
story. F. will remain in league
but they want a no French head of
Sec^{etary}.

Will the brimptons
bubble be burst (his morale is not
really good); or (more likely) will
he try - even for spite - to put
his plan into force before he goes.

On assuming he will have to
go despite all his high-paluted
& legal arguments of four days ago!
According to that theory of his if he
goes no one will have the
authority to give him his pension
money!!!

Still he continues to avoid
consulting me.

U. D. & C. G. = ^{information of} impending crisis sent
to ~~them~~

Friday, July 19th

Tyler saw Loveday this morning and said he believed Avenol might be weakening on the Prince offer and had the idea of proposing to him that Lester, Loveday and Skylstad should go on mission to the United States to negotiate the matter. Loveday was interested but asked was it really necessary for Lester to go, or even for Skylstad? Tyler thought I would be useful for discussions with the State Department, etc., and insisted it was unnecessary for Loveday to discuss the matter with me in the meantime and merely wanted Loveday's backing before going to see Avenol. - It turned out that half-an-hour before this, Avenol was informing Agnides that he was going to send Lester, Loveday and Skylstad on mission to the United States: a peculiar coincidence, commonly called a "plant". *Tyler probably innocent.*

Avenol was very interesting in his talk with Agnides. He did not give him the slightest hint he had received instructions from Vichy to leave, but nevertheless talked much about going and what would happen when he went; we would all see what a great person he had been in the world; ~~half an~~ the day after he left, Switzerland would give notice of resignation, etc. etc. - Agnides says he repeated his refusal to take the newly-invented post and again asked Avenol to discuss with his Deputy the situation. - Avenol merely said what was the use? (I have not had more than five minutes alone with him since the day I begged him to finish his job cleanly). He also mentioned the question of my nationality saying that Ireland would soon be invaded.

The whole tenor of this conversation was to suggest that he was thinking of leaving because his recalcitrant Headquarters Staff were non-cooperating. I think myself the mission plan of getting rid of the undesired will not be developed much further. He will think much for the next few days but if he cannot produce a more acceptable plan, he will do as much damage as he can out of petty spite. *Ag says his attitude was realistic.*

Incidentally, he also assured Agnides that Jacklin is in fullest agreement with him and cooperating with him in everyway with regard to his plans; this I think is near enough to a non truth; Jacklin is not interested - fortunately or unfortunately - in things other than those of a pure financial character and has only one idea: that his machine should not finish bankrupt and that while he is responsible, there should be no dishonest or crooked affairs.

Denmark announced this morning that her Delegate would be withdrawn and she would cease to subscribe to the League. This is probably in accordance with the desires of the controlling Power.

The Permanent Court Staff ~~at~~ Holland appear to have been treated as ordinary Diplomats more or less and evacuated irrespective of their nationality, by special train to Switzerland: this is an interesting parallel should we need it. Switzerland is giving hospitality to the staff but will not welcome the Court here as an institution.

See diary note re Jacklin's proposed promotion

From letter dated 19/2. Not sent

Well, the Secretary-General has received a further long telegram-letter from the Princeton University and other Authorities repeating their invitation, discussing the legal objections and pressing for some method to be found for accepting it. So far no reply has been sent direct. The American Government has been informed. Furthermore another telegram has been received from Hambro in New York asking for some information about this proposal and requesting that no refusal be given until various possibilities are discussed with him by telegraph if necessary.

Some days ago the S.G. put forward a scheme under which perhaps half of the present officials, including some of the senior men, should go on indefinite paid leave; he, himself, he explained, could not possibly resign, otherwise the legal constitutional position would fall into chaos and he was determined to stand by his post; he would however go into a kind of quasi-retirement at La Pelouse while remaining Secretary-General. He would select one person of the High Direction and delegate to him certain of his powers in a very limited field. All this plan was proposed on the basis of the Swiss susceptibilities and involved no further economies and we were assured - and I believe it - that there had been no *démarche* from the Swiss Government. I had learned however, that Mr. de Haller had been sent to Bern a few days before, but I gather it was merely to explain the Secretary-General's ideas and I am assured that there was no "proposal" from them.

It later appeared, although not publicly, that Avenol had the idea that I should go on indefinite holidays together with Skylstad and some others; he had hoped that Agnides would take the position of this newly-invented type of post. Agnides declined it and in order to help him, I, with some reluctance, sent a note to Avenol assuring him that he could count upon my remaining at my post as long as I had the feeling I had any duty to do. I am afraid he has not liked this, but he had not of course informed me of his intentions.

Subsequently a new plan developed for getting rid of embarrassing creatures: this was a suggestion which came indirectly that the S.G. was weakening on the question of the Princeton offer and proposed to send Lester, Loveday and Skylstad on a prolonged mission to the United States to negotiate the matter(!). However, a new situation is now developing. Charron came back from Vichy yesterday with

two items of news: that France is reacting a little bit from the first signs of extreme policy and the Government seem convinced now that it is in their interest to remain in the League, but they would like to reduce the appearances and therefore have said to have expressed the wish there should not be a French Secretary-General. I am afraid this news has come as a little bit of a shock, although I myself had heard it some days ago. We may expect in some ways a complete reversal of policy, but the situation still holds possibilities of trouble.

There are many other scraps of news regarding the situation, which are difficult to transmit by letter, but this will give you some idea of the present position; it may develop in new directions within the next week or two.

Rumoured German Consul let it be known
Geneva hotel-keepers should not disperse
their organization as likely needed near
future and rumoured he said League technical
services would be required new Europe.

I don't credit this.

Summary: 17/2
8/7

Situation inside Secretariat is probably
approaching a crisis. Avenol proceeding with
his plans: to eliminate undesired elements
preparatory to playing role in new European
scheme.

At present in Secretariat are 65 interna-
tional officials and about 35 Swiss; those
threatened with dismissal include some of the
best officials, including two Jews from Opium
and Epidemiological services, both vital men.

At meeting Avenol based new steps on Swiss
interests, but said no Swiss démarche. Secre-
tariat must become less imposing; would congre-
gate technical workers (about 40) in Library,
remainder of present list to be sent home on
paid holidays including two Members High Direction.
He would ask one man to take certain delegated
powers from him to control Library group; this
man would not be acting Secretary-General, but
new function created for him. Later learned
Avenol planned Lester and Skylstad should leave
amongst others and Agnides asked to take charge.
Agnides refuses. Practically all principal
officers, including Lester, Agnides, Skylstad,
Loveday, Renborg, opposing plans destroy League
Secretariat. ~~_____~~ ing
Secretary-General plans. Lester proposes refuse
offer unlimited holidays. Avenol threatening put
plan into force by order, which will lead to open
probably public resistance. Officials isolated
here would appreciate inform Hambro others
interested. Prepared maintain resistance until
transfer or honourable ending.

22/7

Delighted hear some one (Telkin)
speak well of Charran: says he is
reliable, honourable, & has been playing
difficult but honest part - showing down
anecd.

Communicated to the
Council and Members
of the League.

C.121.M.111.1940.

Geneva, July 25th, 1940.

COMMUNICATION BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Confirmation of a telegram dispatched on July 25th, 1940.

Since impossible hold meeting of Council and Assembly,
I have honour make following communication, individually, to
States Members League Nations.

In 1932, Council League Nations, and, in its turn,
Assembly, unanimously elected me Secretary-General.

Unanimity of those who appointed me imposed on me
duties which I have never despaired of fulfilling. Until
September 1936, I believed that certain inevitable reforms
would enable League Nations, in order that its task might be
successful, regroup forces which were moving away from it.
Since that time amendment of Covenant has formed part of agenda
of League Nations; but situation has constantly deteriorated.

Nevertheless, there still seemed to be some hope in
attempting, with view to future, to establish on as wide basis
of collaboration as possible great economic, social and humani-
tarian work, started and developed by League, which was not
necessarily bound up with organisation contemplated in
Covenant of 1919.

On my proposal, draft scheme for creation of "Central
Committee for Economic and Social Questions" was adopted.

Its constitution, at once simple and elastic, was intended
enable this body, whilst leaving it large measure of
initiative, re-establish collaboration between States Members
and non-Member States on questions of concern to all alike,
and place this collaboration outside discussions of Covenant
of 1919. Important States, although not League Members, had
already shown their interest. But when Assembly ratified scheme
in entirety war had broken out.

Since then has been my painful duty reduce step by step
expenses of League Nations to constantly declining level
suitable to its financial resources. When Assembly laid down
rules to be followed to this end, I was given special powers

to carry them out. It has been my constant care keep finances of League in such condition that risk complete interruption should never deprive States Members of their freedom of decision.

As it has been impossible for a majority of its members to meet, I have not had benefit support of Supervisory Commission, which would have been the more valuable to me as difficulties increased.

Commission will be summoned meet August.

I have felt deeply departure many loyal fellow-workers. I have made it a rule maintain, notably in technical Sections, an experienced staff which can keep alive tradition of competence and devotion of Secretariat.

Since Assembly, Council and Committees cannot meet at present time, constitutional powers of Secretary-General are in fact in suspense.

Duties which remain - principally administration of small body of officials and management of finances of League Nations - no longer justify maintenance of political High Direction, which is no longer consistent with realities of situation.

Work of technical Sections could well be continued for present in form of organisation which would be better adapted to needs of hour whilst effecting substantial economies.

Therefore, while expressing my deep gratitude to all Members League Nations who have been good enough give me support of their goodwill and confidence, I ask them relieve me of task with which they have entrusted me.

I propose notify date on which my resignation would take effect after coming meeting of Supervisory Commission.

I am anxiously considering appropriate measures to ensure that administration and work of Secretariat shall continue; I shall make proposals on this subject in due course.

AVENOL.

Thursday, July 25th

Two days ago Jacklin said he had seen Avenol's draft letter of resignation. This morning Avenol called Felkin and asked him to go to Bern to show the copy to Kelly, the British Minister. Felkin asked if Loveday and I had seen the letter and when Avenol said "no", he said he did not like to go on the mission without that having been done. Avenol therefore agreed. The letter, two fool's-cap pages, closed with several points of interest: 1) that he offered his resignation, without fixing a date; 2) that he proposed to call a meeting of the Supervisory Commission in August; 3) that there was no longer any need for a political High Direction of the Secretariat; 4) that he would propose at or after the meeting of the Supervisory Committee various plans for the future.

As Felkin asked me for my remarks on these questions for Kelly's information, I said, first the date should be fixed; secondly that the Supervisory Committee should meet in Lisbon where Hambro, Kisch (the English member) and others could attend while they could not risk coming to Geneva; that the question of the High Direction I thought, was aimed principally at myself, but that I had no objection to going; the facts were however that I was the only political of all the Members of the High Direction, as the others had represented Great Powers; that the High Direction had been reduced in the last six months by the resignation of one Deputy Secretary-General and two Under-Secretary Generals; that I doubted if Avenol, in the present circumstances of his going, was entitled to make the plans for the future and that I kept myself completely free in all circumstances.

received in the Office about this.

De Haller resigned three days ago. His resignation had been refused previously, but was now accepted by Avenol.

11.1940.

July 25th, 1940

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CONS.

July 25th, 1940

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Initiative, re-establish collaboration between St
and non-Member States on questions of concern to
and place this collaboration outside discussions
of 1919. Important States, although not League M

I thought of sending Avenol a note saying I had
learned of his proposed resignation and regretted that
he had not thought it worth while to consult his Senior
Colleagues as to any proposals affecting a period when
he would no longer have responsibilities. I have however
decided to do nothing at all for the moment. Will you
please inform Fardio, I expect the telegram to go off to-
night. The situation it seems will be given more una-
tisfactory than ever and if it does not improve soon,
we are in for more and more trouble.

In haste, for your information,
Extract later to
in defining nerves

23/7

Aghinides telephoned from Lyons
that Luedy this group sh^d not
leave at present - new idea being
that they represented (1) Anglo-Saxonism
& (2) professional antagonism to new
plans for a closed European economy.

Says Lobo (Brazil Del. to I.L.O.)
had passages booked for this week-end
has received a telegram from Rio
to stay & report on plans for
"the new League". Something is
getting round outside, some how.

A telegram to Loveday announces an imminent
démarche from the British Government to Avenol
to send as many people of the technical Sections
to America as possible; no news has yet been
received in the Office about this.

De Haller resigned three days ago. His
resignation had been refused previously, but
was now accepted by Avenol.

Saturday July 27th

Avenol - according to Charron - is extremely indignant that the town is full of reports that he was "preparing to sell the League: that he had sent Burckhardt to Berlin and Stoppani to Rome". I remarked that I had not heard the Burckhardt report, but how could Avenol be much surprised in view of his sudden change of opinion so widely expressed and having made many pro-German and Italian declarations and such violently anti-British ones.

Charron tells me very confidentially that the telegram of resignation sent by Avenol was much improved by the elimination of a good deal of bitter reproaches, etc., personal stuff - on his suggestion. The Final report however, to write which Avenol has retired to La Pelouse leaving me in charge in the interim, promises to be an interesting document. One hopes it will also be a useful one.

Avenol I heard has given way on the question of my taking charge when he goes; there was a long tussle between him and Jacklin who completely refused to work under or with Agnides, but for the concessions he gave, Avenol persists in claiming the Chairmanship of a special Trustee Committee for League finances, consisting of three persons; one would be Jacklin and the other ~~an~~ Avenol's nominee (so that Jacklin could be outvoted any moment.) For this post Avenol would take a nominal 24,000 Francs a year (in addition to his pension), have the right to live at La Pelouse with all the facilities of upkeep and of course have all his diplomatic immunities. I am definitely against this arrangement. If one could reasonably

He at first contemplated leaving Vichy; even spoke of Swiss naturalization.

P1/8(11-12)

As to the Supervisory Committee Avenol told Pardo he thought of trying to call a meeting for Monday next. Pardo remarked that that was very short notice; he did not inform Pardo of Hambro's telegram suggesting the meeting should take place in Princeton.

This morning I learned that the following telegram drafted by Jacklin, had been approved by Avenol and sent off yesterday:

"Meeting Supervisory Commission in Princeton impractical as return to Switzerland thereafter would be forbidden. Stop Am trying arrange meeting here with Holma Boisanger Pardo and hope you and they will agree coopt Kelly British Minister Berne Stop Am not yet able get touch with Wiart."

The statement regarding Switzerland is obviously of some political importance; I know nothing about the basis on which it has been made; it seems to me somewhat unlikely. In the meantime the Treasury have asked a Secretariat official at Vichy to enquire what date would suit them for the Supervisory Committee; these include the French Member, Holma Finnish Minister and an effort is also being made to look up Carton de Wiart who is said to be somewhere in France.

2/8/40 J.A. at farewell luncheon in Berne.
"Poison land here"

depend upon him, it would be pleasant enough to be able to give him all these comforts together with the authority he would hold over League finances, but I am afraid. The arguments for this Committee, according to a report of what Jacklin says (not directly) is to constitute the main proposal of his report to the Supervisory Committee next month. It is said on the very best authority, that he continues to try to get Jacklin to leave.

Telegram from Hambro to Avenol this morning: expressed his great admiration and implored him not to resign as it would mean the destruction of the League, etc. It would seem peculiar to Avenol, but my first reaction was of some pleasure knowing the gratification with which Avenol would receive it; this in spite of the fact that Avenol has been violently anti-Hambro since the 10th of June and has done everything possible to avoid consulting him, although President of the Assembly and of the Supervisory Committee. My second reflection was: what a pity Hambro did

not know what was going on and that ^{the} people in ~~the~~ the F.O. had been very lax in not informing him. The third reflection: if this means Hambro's real opinion, I shall feel completely exonerated from the duty of staying, no matter what the British or others might think, as although I may doubt Hambro's discretion and impulsiveness, he has represented to me one of the most honest and courageous elements associated with the League.-This hope did not last long. Between sending the telegram on Friday and some time on Saturday morning, Winant saw Hambro in the United States. Winant telephoned to Phelan giving him instructions to move at once with his Group A people, no delay, and that it was an imperative decision, that he knew all the situation and arguments, etc. This

was followed by a telegram in which the words "closing in" were used. He said he had seen Hambro and that Hambro also wanted Pardo, Jacklin and myself to go at once to the United States. It seems to me as though Hambro regretted his hasty and generous telegram to Avenol and one gets the impression he thinks of trying to hold a meeting in America where decisions would be taken. It is of course quite impossible for me to go in present circumstances. It looks as though Winant was afraid of the Spanish-Portuguese coast being closed.

(Special)

Avenol saw Vejarano on Wednesday morning (24th). Amongst the things he said to him were that the world was now divided into four divisions: Europe (under German control), Russia, Japan and America. For Europe one must not any longer think about frontiers: that countries (presumably France) must devote themselves to their language, tradition and culture; that "il faut donner un coup de balai dans le Secrétariat"; new men were needed; that the League of Nations would be set up in Europe under German auspices: that Germany and Italy would dictate the peace at Geneva; he was going because he did not wish to be here to receive the orders from Germany and Italy.

Hotel Central, S. Maria
Near Hellas in S. Maria
the 1st
S. Maria
Lisbon

27. VII. 40

Dear Lester,

Very many thanks for your letter of the 20th and for the very kind things you say about me.

The news of the S. J.'s resignation was in the Lisbon paper of yesterday evening; this also contained a long column with a very fair account of his career.

Events seem to be moving apace. This morning Craig McGlacky has a telegram from David and is coming arrival of self & others for about the 12th. By that time

was fol
"closing"
Hambro
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for about the 15th of
the month of April
and arrived at the
station of the
telegraph from the
first. This morning
I was to have
been to the
cave.

I hope to be off, as my boat, the
'Nea Hellas' is supposed to sail on
the 1st

Yours ever
Hugh McKinnon Dorr

P.S. If the transfer to U.S. does
occur + I can be of any help
I shall be delighted. My address
till autumn is: WAYZATA,

July 31st, Wednesday

Avenol to-day told Pardo that he would cut all his connections with the League on the 31st of August. Pardo said he had heard something vaguely from Jacklin of a Committee to look after League finances. Avenol said that of course the question of the Reserve Funds had been one of his special interests and he had thought of such a Committee, but he assured Pardo that he himself had no intention to form part of that Committee (this in spite of the fact that he had even gone so far as to propose a salary for himself as President two days ago). He indicated that he would like however to continue to live in the official residence: a matter of minor importance. He also said that he had thought of leaving Jacklin as a General Administrator, but had been informed that the usual thing for a retiring Head of an Organization was to leave responsibilities to his next in command!

*Ernest, French, legal adviser,
told me he had taken this
line with Avenol*

Mr. Lester

P1/8(12)

Enclosed herewith
cash for the
Petit Drapeau
for today.

R. Keene

31.7.40

L'Etat Français va-t-il quitter la S. D. N. ?

Stockholm, 30 juillet. — D'après un journal suédois, le « Daily Mail », apprend que M. Avenol, secrétaire général de la S.D.N., a démissionné sur la demande du ministre des Affaires Etrangères français, M. Baudoin.

Celui-ci lui avait fait savoir que la France ne se considérait plus pour longtemps membre de la S. D.N., à la suite de quoi, M. Avenol se rendit à Vichy.

Le compte en banque de la S.D. N. s'élève à 5 millions de couronnes suédois. Mais aucun Etat ne paraît disposer à lui verser de nouveaux fonds.

Monday August 5

It is about six weeks since I went to Jacklin and warned him to be careful of any major financial changes proposed with regard to the control of funds, etc., as I had reason to distrust the intentions of the S.G. Throughout the battle of this intervening period, Jacklin has been detached and even sceptical at times. This morning he got his eyes opened. I heard some time ago that the vital point in Avenol's future plans was the control of the capital funds: the proposed finance Committee was to meet that idea, but the funds are to a vast percentage in America and England. Avenol has now given orders for them to be brought to Switzerland; Jacklin said that only ~~over~~ his dead body this would be done; within half-an-hour he had taken certain measures to limit the possibilities of mischief (e.g. redivision of the money into certain earmarked funds); but there is still a substantial balance; Avenol demands a decision by to-morrow. He won't get an affirmative decision. I believe that, although the legal power resides in his hands, he can still be beaten. Jacklin once he is convinced will be a good tiger-hunting, or rather rather-hunting companion.

I have given Jacklin a promise that at the earliest I would not contemplate leaving before the end of the year. If then, ~~and have in order to~~ extract a similar undertaking from him. Government relations, etc. make it easier for him to promise ~~anything~~ ~~than~~ ~~for me.~~

Friday August 2nd

Costa du Rels, President of the Council, and now I believe Ambassador in Spain, arrived in Geneva this morning, taking twelve days from a journey from Biarritz. He had been sent by special instructions from his Government and said that several other Latin-American Governments had communicated with Bolivia asking him to keep in touch with the situation here and pointing out that the election as President of the Council involved some responsibilities towards Latin America.

During his stay at Vichy en route, he saw Baudoin (the Foreign Minister) and Arnal. The French position was explained to him: that owing to the military situation, they did not want to claim or pretend to play any big role in political matters, that therefore Avenol should go. Furthermore that in the meantime he should cease taking any kind of initiative whatever, that he should leave at an early date and that if he did not do so, they would bring pressure on him by means of publicity. All of this may explain some of the change which has been evident in the last few days.

Asked as to the French attitude on the question of a successor, Arnal replied that it was quite clear and normal and that I was the person to succeed and that Avenol's various other projects on this point should be dropped.

Costa du Rels said this represented the Latin American point of view and that they hoped I would agree to carry on. I explained my personal views, pointing out that the job was not an enviable one and that I had been rather discouraged and sickened by recent experiences. If a workable alternative could be found now that Avenol's political intrigues seemed to be more or less stopped, I would be pleased and grateful. Costa du Rels talked about the League of Nations and all that it meant and said that whatever would happen - and anything might - a certain amount of all this would centre on my person. I said I would think it over and I had never yet refused moral responsibilities and asked whether there would be complete support. He said that was certainly the case as far as his group of States were concerned and he was going to see the British Minister at Berne.

6/8/40

Elsie's support ~~means~~ means all to me. I came across the following today from R.L.S.:

"If we find but one to whom
"we can speak out of our heart
"freely, with whom we can walk
"in love and simplicity without
"dissimulation, we have no ground
"of quarrel with the world or God".

To My Wife. S.

I have her always in my mind
& heart. It's been so hard to be separated.
She, too, will feel it just as hard, I know.

I couldn't face all this, & the future,
if I did not have her beside me in
spirit. It's hard. And will be worse.

And my other girls, I feel pangs when I
look forward to the dead months to come.

Geneva, August 6th 1940.

Hambo

Dear Arthur,

Your letter of the 27th of July arrived to-day.
Incidentally, I have been able to get no letter from Ireland dated later than May 20th.

It is clear that you have no inkling at all of what has been going on here. Your estimate of the position which led to a certain recent event is only a pale shadow of the truth. When our Northern friend sent a certain message about the time you wrote, I had three emotions: the first one, rather pleased ~~for~~ that the recipient should get such a telegram, in spite of everything; secondly that, knowing the sender, he had clearly been left without information (although I had endeavoured in a round-about way to see that it should not be so; thirdly that if by any chance he were informed, I would feel morally released from continuing the efforts I had been making.

It has been a touch of hell here in the creation of which external events played ^{out} a small part; you may have heard something since writing; if not, you soon will when some visitors reach your country.

I have been hoping that I might see a situation reached when the ~~problem~~ which has been our chief problem ~~recently~~ disappeared. My family's interest and my own inclinations coincided in that ideal, but now it seems to be impossible. We poor humans do get gripped in circumstances when we imagine we control them. At any rate, I cannot yet see my way to release and the "out-of-date" ideas which held me before are still operating. At any ~~rate~~ I would have a liking to be able to look ~~at~~ myself afterwards - if you will excuse the americanism. I suppose - he added cynically - I'll pay for it.

Two or three days ago I thought the unpleasant phase of the trouble was nearly ended, but we, it appears, are launching out on another attempt. What a nasty mixture - megalomania, moral and mental disintegration together with the wiliness of an old dog-fox.

Thanks for all your news and give my regards to Ruth. Would it be too much to ask you to write a note to Elsie when you have been informed of events here? I would give anything to be at home with them, especially as they may be having days of trial and I have not been able to explain. I see the air service from Canada to Ireland has been restarted. Elsie's address is at present: Ardagh Lodge Connemara. - If you see the Chairman, tell him I am doing my best. Cherio!

Zsq.

extract from a telegram from London

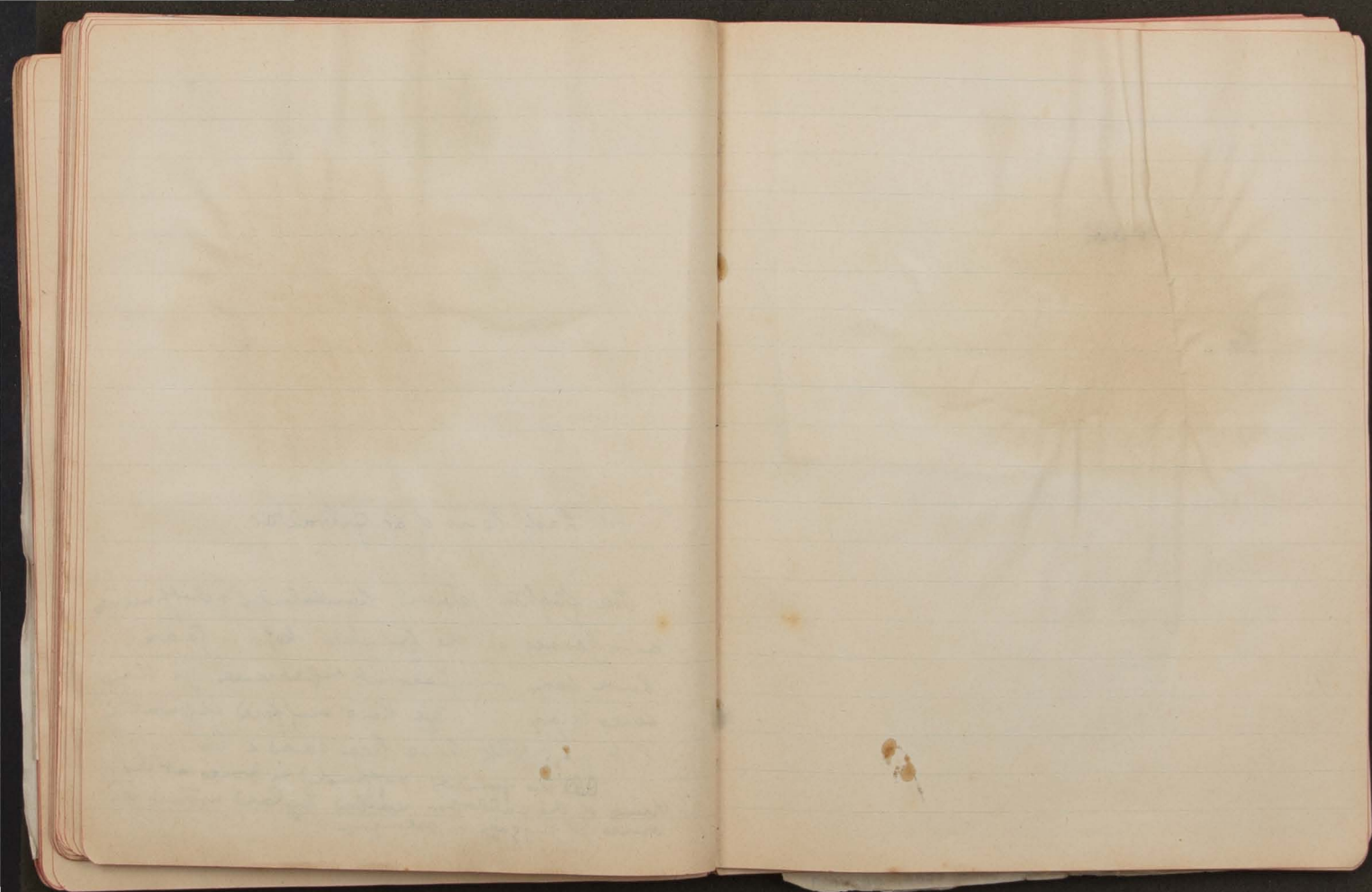
dated August 5th

McGeachy arrived London yesterday *by air*
Three Ghoses, McDonald, Atkins, Forde
Bosquet, Wilson arrived Swansea. *by sea*
Left over a month ago

Last heard of at Gibraltar.

The flights, returns, hardships & difficulties
and losses of the families kept in Geneva
have been unpleasant references for their
lives may. We have suffered separation
but my folk have been saved a lot.

All the families (I suppose) - Jones at the
time of the collapse reached England without an
ounce of luggage or belongings -



Tuesday, Aug 6th

Loveday and seven of his principal collaborators, with wives and children bringing the company up to forty, left to-day for Princeton University. In the ~~Amal~~ Section there remains Charron and several others including Hill who badly wanted to go.

I noted a few days ago Avenol's attempts to get Stencek, Vigier, Dr. Biraud to resign. Dr. Biraud seeing me to-day recalled his conversation; ~~Av~~ said, amongst other things: "il y a des transfuges dans cette maison" (there are turncoats in this house). Dr. Gautier, the Swiss, was with him and when I looked astonished, we all burst out laughing, I making the trite remark that he was the one who should know.

PRES DE GRENOBLE

40 fonctionnaires de la S.D.N. sont victimes d'un accident

GRENOBLE, 7 (S. P.). — Répondant à une invitation de l'Université de Princeton (New-Jersey), plusieurs fonctionnaires de la Section économique du Secrétariat de la S.d.N. ont pris place dans un car, mardi matin, à Genève, avec leurs familles. Ces 40 personnes se dirigeaient sur Lisbonne, par la France et l'Espagne. La première étape du voyage devait être Avignon.

Mardi après-midi, le car roulait entre Noyaz et Sassenage (région de Grenoble). A un carrefour, un tramway surgit, surprenant le chauffeur. Ce dernier voulut éviter le choc, tenta de passer entre le tram et le fossé. Malheureusement, un pylône en béton armé rendit la manœuvre inutile. Le lourd véhicule s'écrasa contre le pylône qu'il abîma, et se coucha dans le fossé, huit mètres plus loin.

Les témoins se précipitèrent sur les lieux de l'accident. Ils s'attendaient à trouver plusieurs cadavres pris sous les banquettes renversées ou sous les bagages. Par bonheur, il n'en était rien. Plusieurs occupants du car perdaient du sang. Mais, aucun n'était trop gravement atteint. Transportés à Grenoble, les blessés reçurent des soins dévoués. Dix-sept d'entre eux n'ont que des blessures superficielles. Trois autres sont plus cruellement atteints. Ce sont : M. Loveday fils, Mme la baronne van Heterism et Mrs. Chapman.

Après avoir passé la nuit dans un hôtel, l'ensemble du groupe a poursuivi son voyage mercredi matin.

L'agence télégraphique suisse précise que M. Avenol avait chargé ces fonctionnaires d'une mission d'étude, aux Etats-Unis. Elle rappelle, d'autre part, que M. Winant, directeur du Bureau international du travail, actuellement aux Etats-Unis, avait demandé à un certain nombre de fonctionnaires de cette institution internationale de le rejoindre en Amérique pour poursuivre là-bas l'examen de certaines questions. Ces personnes ont également quitté Genève, mercredi.

Wednesday, Aug. 7th

At 9 a.m. got a telephone message from Garcia Palacios that the autocar in which the Loveday party had left for Lisbon had had a bad accident, that three were gravely injured including one of Loveday's sons and twenty less seriously but in hospital. Spent a bad hour-and-a-half with preliminary arrangements for some kind of relief or assistance plans when the news which had been broadcast and published was found to be less serious, the car had over-turned and all were badly shaken with some cuts, but they were able to proceed this morning at 11 o'clock in the new car. I spoke to Loveday himself on the telephone at Grenoble just before they left.

The remains of the I.L.O., about 30 officials left to-day for America at Winant's request; I think their first home will probably be Canada. Ten days ago Winant telephoned urgent instructions to Phelan to get out immediately and then sent a "closing in" telegram. It has been hard work for Phelan to get cleaned up in the time, but they had been preparing for it in a way that we have not. Personally it is also difficult as he has bought his pleasant villa on the lake side and that adds complications. He esteems the situation however rather as two to one in favour of going. If they leave, they have always a possibility to come back; in that case it might be said perhaps that Winant panicked a bit, but if the ring is closed round Switzerland, they can neither go out nor continue their work; in which case the decision would be a brilliant piece of prophecy.

To-day Jacklin gave a little luncheon to Phelan, Fernande, the Andrews and myself. In a talk subsequently Jacklin said he was now convinced Avenol did not want a budget of any kind for next year, which would entirely cripple the expenditure as nothing could be spent even from reserves for

maintenance. He discussed all the budgetary difficulties and problems and said that certainly a very big proportion of States could or would pay nothing, that others were willing to pay at least the same as this year and that others would, not be prepared to pay as much, ^{thereby} wishing the League Secretariat to survive. The problem of a meeting of the Supervisory Committee naturally came into it. Hambro had wanted the meeting first in America, alternatively in Lisbon; Avenol flatly refuses to move from Geneva and says it cannot be held without him. Says also while he will finish drawing salary and will realize his pension rights at the end of August, he will continue as Secretary-General (!) until Supervisory Committee meets. Continues extremely busy with his financial plans and the preparation of his report. Jacklin is now as thoroughly convinced of his evil intentions as I have been all along. ^{But} One of the results of our conversation at luncheon is that Phelan who is going by private car with Mortished, has postponed his journey for a few days and we have secured the co-optation of Costa du Rels, President of the Council, on the Supervisory Committee. Fortunately his country is in good financial standing with the Treasury, but of course two Latin-American Members on the Supervisory Committee may later cause difficulties.

Avenol 8/8/40

A. now trying out idea of transfer of I/N funds from U.S. to the Bank of International Settlements at Basle, having been met by Jacklin with financial difficulties about the Swiss Central bank.

Sending Charra to Berne on mission in connection with it. although Jacklin's job & that Charra's.

Proposal to Hambro co-opting also Costa du Rels, Pres. of Council on Super. Cttee.

10/8

Jacklin saw A. and came away again convinced all we now go quietly. A. said to fix up his pension for 51/8. He will accept 60 p. a day afterwards for a "technical" work. Must mind the money if he gives no trouble.

Tea with Miss ~~Lea~~

9/8/40

Miss Lever phoned early - asking news Elsie - mere excuse. She Rang later asked me tea Perle du Lac. Foolishly thought she might be prepared listen advice, frankly. But she talked as though I were from the moon. Denounced the "Shores" about A. "that he was trying sell the League" "that he had been ordered by Vichy to resign" etc. "But" said I, "you & I know the facts". "The facts were stated in A's letter" she replied. It was untrue he had resigned because of Vichy's order. I said the last time I saw A. (6/7) he announced to a directors meeting that he was not & could not resign; the next I knew was his resignation, 3 days after the Vichy decision. But it didn't matter. What mattered was the future. Explained my position & said if A. succeeded in getting me out he would be doing me a favour - so I had nothing to lose. But I didn't be easily persuaded. Let him go out quietly. The future was not his. She would best serve her man by so advising him. She dropped some anti-British stuff, not so crude as to others. Saw I should be prudent, that I was misinformed etc. Waste of time & perhaps harmful to see her.

10/8

Jaklin saw A. and came away again convinced all we now go quietly. A. said to fix up his pension for 31/8. He w^d accept 60 p. a day afterwards for a "technical" work. That meant the money if he gives no trouble.

Tea with Miss Lever

9/8/40

Miss Lever 'phoned early - asking news Elsie - mere excuse. She Rang later asked me tea Pile du Lac. Foolishly thought she might be prepared listen advice, freely. But she talked as though I were from the moon. Denounced the "Stones" about A. "that he was trying sell the League" "that he had been ordered by Vichy to resign" etc. "But" said I, "you & I know the facts". "The facts were stated in Arnold's letter" she replied. It was untrue he had resigned because of Vichy's order. I said the last time I saw A. (6/7) he announced to a Directors meeting that he w^d not & could not resign; the next I knew was his resignation, 3 days after the Vichy decision. But it didn't matter. What mattered was the future. Explained my position & said if A. succeeded in getting me out he w^d be doing me a favour - so I had nothing to lose. But I w^d not be easily persuaded. Let him go out quietly. The future was not his. She w^d best serve her man by so advising him. She dropped some anti-British stuff, not so crude as to others. Said I sh^d be prudent, that I was misinformed etc. Waste of time to see her.

10/8/40

Stenack was advised by A. to make his
peace with G. by taking Protectorate citizenship
today ago. The Prussian C-S. Govt. had just
been recognised by London. Perhaps the second
fact led to certain re-examinations in Prague
because S. rec'd letter from Prague ordering
him to surrender his old C-S. diplomatic
passport. Went to Kramel & has been
promised a Protectorate passport. Put himself
'in my hands'. I said I made no
difference. K. seems well informed about
Secretary's affairs. He said it was a bit
hard day's section had left Europe; 2 months
ago in Berlin Weigacker had talked of saving
certain L/N services; they were less interest
if more services were to go. (K. had seemed
personally well-disposed - he is humane.)

DÉLÉGATION IRLANDAISE
GENÈVE

1/8/40.

Dear Sean,

I have been asked to "thank
you for offer which will be kept in
mind" & to "explain" to you that the
situation is not as serious as
foreign countries led to believe."

Don't forget the Amphylgion
at 7.30 tomorrow (Sat.) evng.

Ed.

[Signature]

P1/8 (13-14)

12/8/40

Phelan & Minter had left yet

Note to Jacklin
on
next page

RECORD OF CONVERSATION

*The official
Record*

P1/8 (13)

At the request of Mr. Kelly, British Minister in Berne, he and Mr. Livingston were received by the Secretary-General in the morning of June 27th at 11 o'clock. Mr. Agnides attended the meeting.

Mr. Kelly said that although on the instructions of his Government, he had prepared a note verbale which, at the end of the conversation, he would hand to the Secretary-General, he would nevertheless like to go over the points orally and explain them.

In the first place, he was asked by his Government to inform the Secretary-General that the démarche made by Mr. Livingston on the question of the invitation by the Princeton University should be considered as an official proposition by His Majesty's Government that that invitation should be accepted, and that the technical services should be given an opportunity of continuing in the U.S.A. their useful work.

In case the invitation had been turned down, ^{by the S.G.} his Government would request the Secretary-General to revoke the refusal.

The Secretary-General said that the proposal Mr. Kelly made on behalf of his Government was a new element in the situation and he would take note of it.

He then explained how the matter stood. He had already handed over to Mr. Livingston the entire dossier on this question, and as appeared from the reply he - the Secretary-General - had sent to the President of the Princeton University, it could certainly not be said that he had refused the invitation. The value of the work done by the technical services was chiefly due to the fact that their international status enabled them to obtain from Governments, through the Secretary-General, such data as no private institution had so far been able to procure. Had the Secretary-General immediately accepted to send his technical staff to the U.S.A., that staff, as from the time they disembarked in America, would be treated as private persons by the U.S. authorities. He, as Secretary-General, had no authority therefore to bring about such a fundamental change in the status of those international officials, a change inevitably bound to detract from the

21/8/37
their work so much that that work would be reduced to the
any other unofficial academic publications, produced all
the world by other eminent statisticians and experts.
Consequently, with a view to safeguarding the international status
of these officials, the Secretary-General had sent the reply, of
which a copy had been given to Mr. Livingston.

Evidently, the generous authors of the proposal would have to
see whether the American authorities would be willing to recognise
the international status of these officials.

Furthermore, constitutionally the transfer of all or part of
the Secretariat could only be contemplated if the initiative were
taken by one or more States. In other words, it was for the
American Government to decide whether it could, if not actually
invite all or part of the Secretariat, at least to authorize such
transfer as is implied by the invitation of the Princeton University
such authorisation involving the safeguard of the international
status of our officials.

Mr. Kelly said that he appreciated the ^{purport} ~~importance~~ of the point
raised by the Secretary-General, which no doubt was an important
one, and which he would convey to his Government.

The Secretary-General then said that he had explained the
particulars of this question to Mr. Tittman, the U.S. observer
accredited to the League of Nations, with a request that he inform
the State Department.

Mr. Tittman had, by the way, conveyed to the Secretary-General
his personal feelings with regard to the Princeton proposal, adding
that he did so entirely on his own account and without committing
the State Department. His view was that it was highly improbable
that the United States Government would take any initiative in the
matter. He had also agreed to the point concerning the importance
of safeguarding the international status of our technical experts,
since if ^{this was} ~~these~~ were not secured, they would be considered in
America as private individuals.

Mr. Tittman was going to see the Secretary-General at 12 o'
clock when he, M. Avenol, would acquaint him of the proposal made
by Mr. Kelly on behalf of the U.K. Government.

Before doing, he said he would raise a last question, and that was the further suppressions which were contemplated in the staff of the Secretariat. His Government were most anxious that the services of the Secretariat should, as far as possible, be maintained even if in a reduced form, and that, in general, the United Kingdom Government did not feel very happy about the more heavy reductions taking place. He asked the Secretary-General how many persons he intended to dismiss.

The Secretary-General said about one hundred. If one adds to that figure those whose transfer to the I.L.O. is envisaged, that would leave him with a very reduced staff to attend to the remaining non-technical activities which were still going on.

Mr. Kelly referred to the British staff still on the Secretariat, stating that he was much concerned as to their fate.

The Secretary-General said that he did not think it impossible for them to regain their country since in a few days certain means of communication would be available.

Mr. Kelly said that if the British staff lost their international status before their safe departure becomes possible, it would be impossible for them to avoid hardship as the only protection, i.e., the status of international officials and the immunities resulting therefrom, would disappear, and they would thus run all sorts of risks.

The Secretary-General said that the Swiss authorities and he himself would, of course, do all in their power to help in the circumstances, and in view of the particular position in which the British were placed, the best thing would be for them to be in their own country as soon as possible, especially as they seemed to be in a state of marked alarm.

Mr. Kelly wondered whether the British were more scared than any others.

Mr. Livingston said that he knew that Mr. Loveday had been feeling "uneasy" for some time past.

Towards the end of the conversation, Mr. Kelly asked the Secretary-General if, in case of a transfer of the technical services to Princeton, the League's budget would contribute.



Telegramm – Télégramme – Telegramma

P1/8(14)

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Eingehen – reçu – ricevuto

Beantwortet – Transmis – trasmesso

von – de – da

Stunde-Heure-Ora

Name – Nom – Nome

nach – à – a

Stunde-Heure-Ora

Name – Nom – Nome

№

LESTER LEAGUE OF NATIONS GENEVA

= GOOD WISHES AND THANKS FOR ALL HELP IF ~~NAY~~ VICTIMS ACCIDENT
RETURN GENEVA GRATEFUL EXPRESS MY SYMPATHY = WILSON +

CT ELT +

Postanweisungstelegramme ermöglichen einen raschen und sicheren Geldverkehr. Auskunft am Post- oder am Telegraphenschalter.

Le mandat télégraphique est un moyen rapide et sûr d'envoyer de l'argent. Renseignements aux guichets des postes et des télégraphes.

Il vaglia telegrafico è un mezzo rapido e sicuro per l'invio di danaro. Informatevi agli sportelli della posta o del telegrafo.

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I have been thinking over the problem of the Supervisory Committee: it is all important and I agree with you that we should get a meeting at the very earliest moment. In his report and his proposed plans Avenol is I am afraid cooking a lot of trouble for us, quite apart from the vital question of the funds.

every - draft to Jackson

Now that ^{Holmes} Rodma cannot come here and we are still without the nomination of Kelly and Costa du Rels being confirmed, I should very much like you to give thought again to the question of a Lisbon meeting. First of all if you and I were in agreement with it I think we could get the majority of the Members to agree. Avenol says he will not go; there is less reason for his refusal than for that of anybody else; I fear he wants to avoid a meeting which would have a strong character. I am not sure if the Committee Members would not be prepared to hold the meeting even if he persisted in declining to attend. Would it really be an irregular meeting if the President and Members in the peculiar circumstances insisted on it being held at a point where they could attend? (meetings have been held at the Hague and Paris on the grounds of mere personal convenience). If the meeting were held in such circumstances, Avenol would perhaps refuse to submit his report to them but it would be qualified to deal with the first and urgent thing: the approval of financial arrangements for his departure; and with the President of the Assembly and of the Council in the Committee, as well

qualified as any other Body fix the date definitively.

no

The question which you have raised about our absence from Geneva is important, but for me more on the grounds of what he could do in our absence. We would be away at least a fortnight, even with a special aeroplane from Barcelona to Lisbon; if there were any danger of being out off, it would be awkward, but as I am more and more inclined to think we shall have to face the problem of transfer, provided we get the time, your presence outside rather than inside might even be an advantage provided the possibility were foreseen before you left Geneva. I myself would have to make the most strenuous efforts in any circumstances to get back.

I have been typing this out on my own machine this morning to throw up a few points which I should like you to think about. I know I am very far from completing the picture and there is much to be said on both sides, but I am very more and more anxious on the question of getting a reasonably good meeting very soon. I am in one of my impatient moments and resenting having to sit still while M. ^{Avenol} "Renard" is so busy. He may produce something or take some action quite beyond my power of toleration, although I am convinced we must do our very best to prevent an open scandal. I am also worried because Hambro is not properly informed and our telegrams may not have helped him very much.

August 9

RADIO-SCHWEIZ A.G.

RADIOGRAMM RADIOGRAMME

RADIO-SUISSE S.A.

NYB378

6238 NORWEGIAN GOVT WASHINGTON DC 21 9/8 1228 VIA WUN RS

Erhalten - Reçu

- 9. Août 1940

"VIA RADIOSUISSE"

Befördert - Transmis

von - de

Stunde - Heure

NAME - NOM

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TRANSMISSIBLE-1

No.

3871

LESTER NATIONS GENEVE, =

contamine 9

CONSIDER THE WHOLE PROCEDURE UNCONSTITUTIONAL STOP
 CANNOT ACCEPT KELLY MEMBER COMMITTEE STOP HOPING YOU COME
 OVER HERE = HAMBRO

August 13th, 1940.

My dear Hambro,

I got your telegram and I quite understand the position you have taken. I had been outside all the previous communications with you but had reason to think that the second proposal regarding the Bolivian might be helpful. It is quite impossible I know for any one who has not been here to form any idea of what we have been through and indeed the situation has changed once or twice a week so that even if, as I hope, you will soon be meeting one or two people fresh from Geneva, there may have been substantial changes in the situation between their departure and the time you see them.

Some doubt
At the moment there seems to be ~~little likelihood~~ of any kind of meeting being held on the 20th. H. cannot or will not come and it is doubtful if B. will be really available, although the date was I believe fixed to suit him. That leaves P. the only member available and I had thought that a situation might have been reached where some kind of a meeting would enable A. to make his bow and get through formalities of laying his reported plans before some authority. Otherwise he had said he would continue ~~until he could do so~~; this at the moment seems a bit doubtful but you must take my word for it we are completely hamstrung until that question is cleared up.

Holmes
Borsanyi
Pardo
That brings me to my own position. For nearly two months I needed no outside guidance as to what I had to do, but I had hoped that the particular problem of ~~unwarping and misusing rights~~ could be cleared up; a situation would arise in which I would be released. Your telegram to the old man made me wonder if I had been merely suffering from a nightmare, especially as I had endeavoured to arrange that the Scot living not far from you would be able to keep you informed. I did not like to endeavour to get into direct touch with you. If we can have some kind of a meeting, which I believe is essential, where you can attend, we may be able to discuss what is possible for the future. The history of the past two or three months here would read like a bad melodrama, but I have tried so far as I had a duty to reduce it to certain very simple concepts. It has all been extremely unpleasant and tragic too, and I cannot yet count upon the end of the unpleasantness; when there will still remain all the other difficulties. You will understand that I cannot be at all explicit.

Lothian
The general lines of your policy so far as I have heard them, seem to me to be completely sound, but as

1st. Proposed
intention
no one has up to the present had the faintest ~~idea~~ of applying them, the carrying out of that policy would be slow, if circumstances still make it possible.

I cannot myself go to see you as you suggest; with travelling conditions as they are, it would mean an absence of several weeks and at this moment I am afraid it is out of the question, but I would give a lot to be able to spend an evening with you and it is essential that something like ^{that} should be arranged before very long.

Dear Alec,

I have just received a telegram which read something like the following:

"Arrived bloody dut unbowell except Rosadoros Polaks tomorrow."

I think I was clever in interpreting this "bloody but unbowed" and that Rosadoros is Portuguese for Rosenberg

I certainly had a bad two hours the morning I heard of the accident; we were organizing a relief expedition when better news came. We are still in a period of waiting, but the Sup Committee is becoming very uncertain as the northerner does not like coopting. The Finn cannot or will not come and it seems to me doubtful if the French can or will. I cannot yet foresee the consequences of this on the proposals of the 20th. Some doubts are beginning to be felt about the Latin position in this whole affair. By the way P has been appointed Counsellor to the Embassy at Vichy with the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary; he is very nearly the last of the P.D.s and the change of post may possibly have repercussions on which you could speculate.

The old man says he will finish ^{his} promised but I am far from easy about the whole situation. I have no news myself from Mr. Grabb. Phelan left on Sunday and should be with you before the end of this week; will you ask him for a few extra names I gave him

I do wish the northerner would have the of a talk with somebody who has been here. He has that I could go to see him, but I asks you?

I hope you will take time to rest in Lisbon before starting off and if not perhaps you will have arranged for letters to follow you.

Give my love to Nathalie and say that I have been very anxious about the shock of that accident on her and that I do hope the

Kindest regards,

Mr. A. LOVEDAY,
Avenida Palace,
LISBON (Portugal)

P1/8(15)

Dear Sean:

I have thought of you constantly since the news of Avenol's resignation came last night and wished terribly that we might have a chance to gossip together.

I know, of course, what this means to you. I remember clearly a talk we had on one of those now so distant days before I left, and I can see that all the issues we then mentioned have now precipitated themselves. It is a tough situation which to my mind has two aspects: first, I know you deeply you hoped against it and that it is not, therefore, of your seeking; second, I have absolute confidence you will find the way to meet it.

One cannot, of course, know all the details from this distance. Nevertheless, from what I can imagine and what Hambro guesses, I can appreciate what a difficult situation Avenol found himself in and how almost inevitable, given all the circumstances, was his action. I appreciate from my conversations with him on the Weffler letter early in the war that he was not anxious to stay but would have been glad to find an honorable way out... that he stayed on, in part, from a sense of duty... but that now, from his viewpoint, the situation was very different....

However that may be, it leaves the problem with you. It's a tough one, indeed, in these days, for the League is so much bigger than any of us that our own personal feelings must, in large measure, be subordinated. It would be very presumptuous, I feel, for me to attempt to express an opinion, far less, give a counsel, at this distance, but I do want to say, first, that I have the fullest confidence that you will come out to whatever the right decision may on the spot prove to be, and second, that you have my fullest loyalty and support, for whatever little they may be worth. My deepest regret is that I cannot be with you, and perhaps help you, in this difficult moment. But you can be sure I'm immensely with you in spirit...

I've just written an enormous letter to Loveday on this beautiful, but hot, Sunday, when the family is all down swimming. Would you let me enclose a carbon, first, because it would break my back to do it again, and, second, because I'm never sure if these letters actually arrive? It gives all the news fully and will, I hope, be cheering to you, as it surely is to Hambro, myself, and a multitude of friends here.

I also enclose a series of clippings about this matter and Avenol's resignation. These are the only copies I have, here in the country at the moment, so that perhaps you might show them to Loveday? I hesitated about sending them directly to Avenol, but, first, I do not know if he will be in Geneva when this arrives, or perhaps left for the Supervisory, and, second, it might be better for you to decide if you felt it best for them to go on to him, with or without mention of my having sent them over. It's an odd thing; many of our people have been calling the League "dead" but it always seems to be breaking into the news.

The bigger situation is developing ever more sharply: two-ocean navy, 36,000 planes, strong possibility of conscription, Pan-American trusteeship, embargo on petroleum and iron, deeper and deeper alarm, greater and greater realization of the impossibility of isolation. Sluggish Presidential campaign, absorption in foreign news, undercurrent shift of psychology. What children at Shashore, Adelaide in California still here for Sunday off tomorrow for Boston, then New York and Washington. BEST LUCK

AIR MAIL

JULY 27, 1940

P1/8 (15)

Dear Alec:

July 27, 1940.

I cannot tell you how glad I was to receive your cable that you are actually coming over to this country with your Section; it is grand news indeed; and we are all enthusiastically looking forward to it.

Lots of water has gone over the dam since our talk at dinner just before I left. The first steps here worked out with a rapidity, a completeness, and a cordiality which I had not dared hope. Everything that could be done from here seemed to have been done, though, as you can imagine, I would have liked a more formal official attitude than proved possible in the circumstances. The sincerity of the welcome left no doubt, however, and the form seemed to me less important than the substance.

I do not know whether this was quite clear on the other side. Our people are perhaps a bit formalistic; they feel that they can do a great deal privately, but that, with our form of government, they could hardly go to the extent of formally inviting an official international agency based on a treaty to which the government is not a party to come here without at least consulting Congress. That would have taken time and caused complications at this moment of delicacy both at home and abroad and seemed unnecessary in the circumstances. People felt they could do all that was necessary without this, and, curiously enough, more easily for the League than for the ILO, because the League would be a completely foreign agency simply seeking asylum here while the ILO would in addition number the US amongst its most active members and thus have a double relationship... an odd outcome indeed...

After the first quick start, however, we seemed to become bogged in difficulties at the other end which all of us, and particularly myself, thoroughly understood. This was a big step indeed; it was natural that it should be taken with great care and with every possible safeguard. The great regret, of course, was the delay and the increasing difficulty.

It was just at this moment, when I had almost given up hope, that Hambro almost fell out of the blue from London. It seems that he had been working on exactly the same lines in London and he accordingly entered into the plans with the utmost warmth and energy. He had already secured widespread approval in London, as you probably know, and felt that, if we could work this out, much of the work could be saved for the day when the world will so sadly need it. He even had assurances that, in this case, contributions would be continued....

I was just going off at this time for a constantly delayed vacation with my family, but offered, of course, to put myself entirely at Hambro's disposition. He was going to Washington at once and made it clear he wanted me to be with him if possible. Consequently, I had a Sunday with the family and joined him on Monday at the Capital.

We did a pretty thorough job in the time available. Our first contact was at lunch, alone, with Henry Grady, who was most cordial and helpful. I then arranged a long interview with Dunn, Political Adviser of the Secretary, who is handling the details of this question and who went into it most fully, to the mutual satisfaction of both. Then a meeting with Thompson, whom you knew in Geneva and who is also intimately associated with the execution of the project... and the next day with Stewart Fuller, who does the opium business. Mr Hull was just leaving for Havana, as was Berle, but we left messages for both and received cordial replies for an interview on their return. We saw a number of outside people, Lothian and Butler, Officer, The ILO office, Moulton, Felix Morley, etc., etc., and

AIR MAIL

P1/8(15)

Hambro on another occasion had opportunity to mention the matter to No. 1. Thus everything seemed in line on the official end, Hambro taking the position throughout that the essential thing for him to know was as to the spirit prevailing, if that were favorable, there was no necessity to go into all the details or seek guarantees to cover every possible contingency. With goodwill, he felt, everything would work itself out... and he felt thoroughly reassured on that point, as he cabled thro Butler..

I then had a message asking if we could not go to Princeton to study the facilities on the spot. Hambro was delighted to do so and we accordingly went up for the day. Aydelotte of the Institute and Brakelley of the University had us for lunch, then took us for a long examination of facilities at the University, the Institute of Advanced Study and the Rockefeller Institute. Hambro was again delighted, as he cabled through the courtesy of the Institute, and felt this end would work out finely.

My thought would be that headquarters would be at the Institute, which has a brand-new and very modern building a little out of the town. On the ground floor is a large and very comfortable assembly and tea-room, where tea is actually served in the afternoon and where people congregate to feel at home. On the next floor are 15-20 individual rooms which we could largely have, plus several larger rooms for typists, etc. On the floor above is a huge room which will serve as restaurant and rest-room, which will be very convenient indeed, and downstairs is an excellent roneo equipment quite beyond their present needs. These quarters would be contributed free, with light, heat, telephone, roneo and such other facilities as exist; should they be inadequate or a larger staff brought over, much more would be available in the University. One small difficulty which we will have to meet will be that of living quarters, as Princeton is getting pretty filled up, but the Secretary of the University promised me last night that he would make an inquiry on this point so that when I return next week, I can get an idea of what is available. This may require some adjustment but is not at all insurmountable, especially as the welcome is so cordial.

We then met a few days later in New York to see certain people there. First, I took him around to see Fosdick, for more or less of a courtesy visit, and we both later talked with Kittredge, he for a few minutes and I for lunch. The attitude there is that the original offer still stands, that the Foundation is immensely interested in the Princeton idea that it will do whatever it can to help, and, while Fosdick was inclined to be cautious as to detail, when talking with me personally, Kittredge told Hambro, and later myself, that he had authority to say that part of this money might be used for travelling, if necessary, as he was to cable.

Next the L of N Association group. At first Eichelberger and Boudreau had opposed the Princeton idea on the ground that there ought to be a formal invitation to the whole League to come to Washington itself, and they did quite a bit of work to this end. Eventually, however, they became convinced that this was impossible and have separately assured Hambro, Aydelotte, and myself that they are behind the project 100%.

Everyone I have talked with feels the same. Last night, Chester Rowell, biggest journalist on the Pacific Coast, this noon, young John Rockefeller, a few days ago Mitchell Carroll, today again, Morgenstern, etc., etc. The New York Times had a good leader, which I have sent over; Felix Morley a long article in the Washington Post; and all the papers good announcements as issued from Princeton. I've also had a full talk with Hilgerdt by long-distance and a frequent exchange by letter with Rasminsky. AIR
Hambro and I are both on Cape Cod this week-end; we return to NY and Washington next week. All in all, everything seems to be going finely MAIL
do cable me anything further I can do... A BIENTOT, let's hope

(copy)

Avenida Palace Hotel

Lisbon 12/VIII/40

My dear Jack,

I rushed off a letter between an hour's sleep in a chair and the next stage of our journey at Madrid yesterday. This gives you the main facts about the accident. I don't know yet what new facts may emerge about damage done. Suspects are Mrs. Chapman, Mrs. McGuire, seeing doctor now, Nurske strained heart, less probably Mrs. Loveday (jaw) and myself (ribs). We won't see doctor unless there is a failure to improve to-morrow.

Our itinerary was of course completely upset. The following was our horaire - Tuesday night slept Grenoble. Wednesday started at 11 a.m. and with greatest difficulty found small pub at Pespenas where we got 7 beds and a few couches. Tom and Dominic slept on brick floor. In bed by 1.30 a.m. Thursday started 7.30, reached frontier about 12. Did French formalities and had lunch and reached Spanish frontier about 3. We should not have been allowed into Spain that day if we had not ordered a 'bus as only 60 persons a day may enter by train. Spanish sympathetic at sight of us but inconceivably slow. It was arranged we should dine there and go on by bus at 9 p.m., actually started at about 10 p.m. and reached Barcelona at 4.30 a.m. Rooms in Hotel available. Next day went to Wagons-Lits. They had no sleepers but we told our tale and they produced 14. We found them competent and helpful. ~~Wexfenn~~ But if the whole business had been done thro' Wagons-lits and not B & F it would have been easier. I thought Mrs. Chapman should have stayed behind as she was unable to walk and suffered a good deal of pain but she insisted on coming on. The 'bus drive incidentally from the Spanish frontier to Barcelona seemed to most of the party after the shock they had had very unpleasantly hazardous as the road and several of the bridges have been partially blown up and the descent is very rapid. A wagon-lit therefore proved pleasantly restful to tired nerves. Friday I booked two rooms with baths in the Madrid Palace and the damaged ladies lay up while we went for wagons-lits again. We got 9 thanks to rather heavy tips and the valuable publicity the radio had given us.

+ not yet received

McGuire, Tom and Dominic and the Chapman boy sat up. Reached Spanish frontier at 7 a.m. and had to cope with the characteristic Spanish controlled incompetence. In consequence we missed our Portuguese connection by hours and only started on from the Portuguese frontier after a long wait for the afternoon train at 5 p.m. reaching Lisbon at 1.30. You will gather from all this that a number of the party have a good deal of sleep to make good. The Portuguese officials were charming and most helpful. I went to get the big luggage cleared this morning, was invited into the Chief douanier's office and given a chair while he phoned HG. HG replied let them all thro' after looking at 2 or 3 cases for formality's sake. This in great contrast to the Spaniards whom everyone

I expect the Rosenbergs and Pollaks to-night. Someone is likely later to murder the latter's baby.

We shall shortly send in 3 financial statements:

- (a) Subsistence claims - The journey has of course exceeded the allotted span and we have had to get results by substantial tips.
- (b) Luggage claims - very difficult to do quickly as it is not possible to know till everything is unpacked what the water damage was.
- (c) Medical claims. There I think we had better make a preliminary claim subject to reserves.

I have had a short talk with Selby and will see him again to-morrow. Had Barcenas to lunch at Madrid. This may prove useful for others later. Some B.I.T. people arriving to-night. Phelan on Friday.

Yours ever,

Alec.

- P.S. (1) I forgot to say that a camion ran into our train between Madrid and Portugal. It did us no harm tho' and the shock was not much greater than those caused by the permanent way!
- (2) Special letters are most useful and better than diplomatic passports - so are long lists of people with some sort of stamps on them. Future travellers must get these for all countries, including France.

A.L.

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A.L.

Thursday, August 15th

Garcia Labrousse

During a visit to an official of the Secretariat about a week ago, M. Guillaume Fatio began to speak of the League buildings saying he had discussed the matter with M. Lachenal (presumably Adrian). M. Fatio held that the League had only a "droit de superficie" on the land where the buildings had been erected. If the League closed its ~~doors~~ and in virtue of this "droit de superficie", the buildings of the League would, according to his opinion, fall into the hands of the State of Geneva which would then have every authority and especially every facility to put these buildings at the disposal of any new organization that would be created or would be better adapted to the new times and to the evolution which was being manifested in Europe. (Fatio has at various times in the past been used as an intermediary between the State of Geneva and the Secretariat Authorities). The official in question pointed out to M. Fatio that he was not in a position to discuss such a question.

Fatio is a busy body for excellence.

I have no confirmation and for the present do not intend to seek any as to the views enunciated by M. Fatio. For various reasons certain tendencies have been showing themselves on the Swiss Governmental side regarding the League. They let it be known not very long ago that Permanent Delegates at Geneva were rather an embarrassment. It is perhaps a coincidence and perhaps due to the general circumstances that this month alone almost the last four Permanent Delegates have been instructed by their Governments to leave Geneva. *Ireland, Argentina, South Africa, China;*

De Haller (whose brother-in-law is the Head of the Political Department in Bern) remarked lately to a Secretariat official that if Switzerland left the League she might well insist upon the departure of all foreign officials of the Secretariat.

I now learn that the Département Politique Fédéral on hearing of the proposal of holding a meeting of the Supervisory Commission in Geneva had the intention of requesting that it should not be held here. This reported decision it is said was not insisted upon following an hour's secret discussion between Avenol and Pilet-Golaz.

(2. for his own kind of S.C. meeting!)

I am taking no action whatever about Fatio's declarations; for one thing, his interpretation of the legal position is not correct: the League of Nations owns the buildings and the grounds for 100 metres around them and the "droit d'usage" for the rest of the park. The rest of the park land could in certain circumstances perhaps come in question, but as against that the League owns three villas on the lake side of which it has given the "droit d'usage" to the Cantonal Authorities; so we have a quid pro quo there.

16/8

Giraud (legal: H.) says he was asked a number of q^{ns} by several including:-

(1) Is it necessary to nominate another S.G. in case I leave? (2) W^d the Council have to be consulted on such an appointment?

G. replied that the legal + normal procedure w^d be for the 2nd in command to take over: he w^d have all the attributes of the S.G. Also: "If one one is

appointed to carry on after I leave - is there any possibility for me to "arrange to wind-up the Sect. affairs on 31/12?"

16/8. I ~~opened~~ ^{went to} my desk drawers to look for a paper and found all my papers neatly placed together. Some one was more tidy than I have ever been.

P.S. I never leave this note book!!

17/8/40

My dear Hambro,

A. has not received me since before his letter of 27/7 - about 6 !! (16. July)

This morning I get from his private sec. a copy of a letter he has addressed to du Rels. As I am very doubtful if he will even send you a copy I am at once doing so.

You may form an opinion of his intentions as to the future by the points made and the way in which they are presented. He has not consulted anyone except Charu

arilo
P. is said to be shifting his position and influencing his neighbour.

Will discuss the letter with Jacklin but wanted to try to catch the air mail.

Yrs. sincerely

I am certain that he wants complete closing before 31/12

The problem divides in two: (1) S.G.'s resignation on 31/8; (2) his proposals and pronouncements. The meeting of 31/8 if held, shd. confine itself to taking note of (1). If there is to be an acting S.G. the rest (2) should be left for his observations at a later meeting. There is no comparison with E.D.'s departure. All replies received from States members already accept A's demission. ~~He is~~ asking for an invitation? (1) to wind up; (2) to be in charge of technical work; (3) to be adviser to Pres. of Council. And if ~~he~~ doesn't come off in one way, to lay all sorts of obstacles for successor.

What about a telegram from you accepting the date now fixed by A. & supporting the rest?

I am doubtful if there will be a meeting on 31/8. Perhaps it will be better so. There is now a hint of a proposal that J.A. should be coopted on Sup.Cttee. I hope no one will be so foolish as to give it any support. His latest effort was a proposal to bring back to Switzerland all our funds from U.S.A. etc.!!! I keep hoping for a little more dignity and decency and will do all I can to make it possible.

Yours

Cooption, I see, can be a two-edged weapon.

Saturday August 17th

This morning I received copy of a letter Avenol wrote yesterday to Costa du Rels as President of the Council. It is accompanied by certain annexes and as one might expect, they are full of snags. Some emphasis laid on the circumstances attending Drummond's resignation; this is said to be due to Avenol working up a case for a year's salary as indemnity and secondly for a continuation of a certain authority. For reasons of economy, he renounces his salary from the end of August: "je désirerais n'avoir plus à prendre aucune initiative à partir de cette date à laquelle cesseraient mes fonctions." There is a conditional element here which must be eliminated and later there seems to be a distinction between his responsibilities for the technical work of the League. Then follows a memorandum raising the problems about the budget (unanimity rule, approval of Assembly, etc.), the Pensions Fund, the impossibility of using any fund without an Assembly decision for other purposes, the provision of an independent life for the Library, the administration of the properties and buildings of the League with the suggestion that the administration should be confided to the City of Geneva. Then the question of transfer to America is obstructed by legal arguments and the creation of an impression that it is only Britain, one of the belligerents, who wants this.

Monday August 19th

Costa du Rels asked me to go and see him; he told me he had just received Avenol's letter. I fenced for a little bit to see where he stood but in reply to a direct question, said I thought the letter was again unnecessarily complicating the situation and that the best thing he could do would be to simplify it. There was one important point in it, the date fixed for the retirement, and that he should clinch it. He quite agreed and told me that he would reply in this sense making absolutely no engagement for the future. He said that he thought Avenol was trying to use him and that he would refuse to be put into a bad position. He would pay an official visit to me on the 1st of September and would be ready to address the staff if necessary. I gently deprecated the last suggestion but said I would be pleased to assemble the principal officers.

Note to Jackson
re his proposal to give Charron a year's indemnity
in case of resignation

" The proposal does credit to the Secretary-General's concern for the staff. No case seems however to be made and I presume it is just a personal favour or personal services. It is always unsatisfactory that an official should contribute to the Pensions Fund and then leave before he can withdraw even his own contributions, but that is also the case in all insurances, etc. The amount contributed by the official in question would seem to be roughly about 3.700 francs and I do not know if you think there could be any ground for recovering that against all the rules.

As for the precise proposal that if the official should leave he should receive a year's indemnity in one payment, it seems to me that it will be extremely difficult ~~to~~ to support such a proposal unless some new facts can be produced. I myself see no reason to treat one senior official differently to other senior officials. I would be willing to support any case of genuine hardship and believe we have dozens of applications in the same sense which have not been able to be accepted; and those concern small sums for minor officials.

Tuesday, August 20th

Avenol decided this morning suddenly to telegraph to the States Members an extract from his letter to Costa du Rels. He accused du Rels of discourtesy because he had not come immediately to see him and played on Jacklin's heart-strings with complaints that I did not see him, nor had Agnides on his return from his holidays paid a visit to him. I was enraged and outraged and told Jacklin what I thought, which included something about the toe of my boot. He had added to the telegram a sentence saying that since the 26th of July I had been Secretary-General p.i. I said to Jacklin that this was not in fact true as he had put restrictions on me and he had continued to handle all important matters himself direct with Jacklin. Jacklin mentioned to Avenol my protest about this statement, but Avenol insisted on it going; it probably does no harm.

Jacklin is still afraid that he may try to get the funds transferred before the end of August, but I have reassured him. I am very certain that if Jacklin stands firm, we can prevent it. I assured Jacklin that if the worst came to the worst, Avenol could not afford a public scandal in such a matter a few days before his resignation took effect, whereas it would be a matter of complete indifference to me.

The Pension form was signed to-day and Avenol asked Jacklin to cancel a debt of 35,000 Francs which he owes the Fund for arrears. He was the only person in the staff who had not paid up these arrears and had insisted on it being left as a debt to be settled when the Pension became due. He also asked to have two secretaries allotted to him after he left and is putting up some proposal for the future of Charron. *year's indemnity in one instalment.*

Charron came to see me last night and told me something about his visit to the Bank of International Settlements, where he had been sent by Avenol in pursuance of the plan about the funds. I thought this was a matter for the Treasurer and inquired if Avenol had now abandoned his proposal to turn it all in Swiss Francs; I asked him did he know why this was wanted. He answered no. I said I could guess, ~~but~~ Charron was anxious to have some assurance about his future. I said the question had not arisen and did not arise; I had not had any time to give thought to the future, being obsessed by the continual crises created by Avenol, that at the moment I saw absolutely no reason for a change, but in the present financial position, no one could have any guarantee as to the future, neither Aghnides, nor Skylstad, nor myself.

FROM (Portugal)
" I sent you a few days ago a copy of a letter Avenol wrote to the President of the Council. I now enclose copy of a telegram he has this morning sent to the States Members. Du Rels was out of town when the letter arrived and he received it yesterday. I am informed that he proposed to reply taking note of the date fixed by Avenol for the ending of his functions and making absolutely no engagement or suggestion of any kind for subsequent commitments. The letter and memorandum will not I hope be put into general circulation: they are problems for the Supervisory Commission but not as presented by Avenol, for general circulation.

" You will notice that to the telegram Avenol has added a reference to myself; this is not really correct; in passing duties he put various restrictions on me and in fact continued to deal with all major questions and as has been the case for two months, without the slightest words of consultation.

" At any rate the internal crisis which he has maintained from day to day for two months is now I think approaching an end and I hope we can then take stock and see what salvaging is possible. Consultation with you in some way or other will be imperative.

" I may say that du Rels was rather alarmed and suspicious by the character of the letter sent to him and in his interview with me showed every intention to be discreet and correct."

To Hambro Washington

20/8/40

August 20th, 1940.

To Helen, Lisbon

" Enclosed you will find copy of a letter Avenol sent to the President of the Council and copy of which I have sent to the President of the Supervisory Commission. You will form an opinion from the way in which things are presented. Du Rels proposes to reply taking note of the data fixed and making no commitments for the future. The Pension form has now been signed and Avenol leaves to-morrow for a week in Vichy accompanied by Charron and Tyler (who is trying to get in touch with his wife in occupied France). The crisis has continued from day to day since you left, but I think it is at last approaching something definitive. Apart from wishing to remain on a special allowance for a period, to keep his secretaries at his disposition, to arrange for the future of one or two friends and an effort to obtain something completely illegal regarding pension money, his situation is becoming clearer! He had the impudence actually to suggest that the debt he owes to the Pension Fund should be cancelled, although every typist in the place has already paid her share of it.

" It seems therefore that we may soon be in a position to take stock and see what is possible; by one means or another we must have consultation with the S.C. collectively or individually, but poor Jacklin, like all of us, has been living on his nerves this month (he is still fearful for his funds, although I tell him that if he stands fast nothing can be done - I being able and ready to face publicity but being certain the other man dare not). He will therefore want to take a few days complete rest from the 1st. I feel some need of it myself, but that will probably be impossible.

" You will have seen the announcement that Sweden will pay no more to the League. I heard quite definitely that the same applies to Switzerland and that the question of the end of legitimation for any Permanent Delegate who may remain at the end of the year is to be very seriously considered. I think there is actually a decision there; there are even rumours that the same will apply to high officials, but that I can hardly credit.

" I hope your journey was not too difficult though we heard that you only arrived last night Lisbon, which seems to be Gallois' impression; must have been held up.

" Tell Fernande that I went to the house twice everything seemed to be well.

" It has been announced in the press to-day that Pare to be located in the McGill University in Montreal.

" Would you send a p.c. to Elsie at Ardagh Lodge, Glen, Connemara, as I do not know if any of my letters got through; tell her I have received no letters and a few telegrams for months. "



Received
26/8

22/8

On the 20th of August I was informed directly that M. Avenol was sending a telegram to the States Members and that in the course of this telegram he would announce that I had been Secretary-General par interim since the 26th of July.

This pronouncement is not entirely correct. As will be seen from the attached note by the Secretary-General, the latter asked me to carry the burden only partially. In fact M. Avenol himself continued to conduct all major questions and without informing or consulting me.

I had therefore to object to the statement appearing at the end of his telegram of the 20th of August to the States Members. M. Avenol however, seems to have insisted that the telegram should include that phrase concerning myself in spite of my protest that it misrepresented the facts.

21st August 1940

My dear Sean,

Mortished kept some travel notes and will send them to you if he has not already done so. In brief the journey was most interesting and presented no difficulty except as regards getting petrol in Barcelona. Things have changed since Goodrich went through. If you should drive be sure you not only get the coupons from "Campsa" but also an indication of the pump or station where the said coupons can be exchanged for gas. Moreover the prices have quadrupled - 40\$ per 100 litres. At Madrid there was far less difficulty and with the coupons gas can (or could) be obtained from the street pumps. For the rest it was hot - we travelled through a real heat wave - but not impossibly so and we survived all right. We found good hotels and on the whole good food. Roads generally good - surprisingly so. Saw O'Brien in Madrid but missed Kerney. Mortished will send you the address of the Legation and the telephone number - Frank's information is out of date. Lisbon is a delightful city but overcrowded in the hotels. The Aviz is expensive but quiet and as cool as may be in the heat wave which continues. Food very good.

Loveday I understand left this morning in the clipper.

they are ~~rather~~ ^{rather} difficult to get. I hope without much loss of time and I somehow seem to have been very busy without getting much done. Telegrams keep arriving from U.S. and London and keep me occupied. I gather we are to go to Montreal but whether for the duration or for the time being I don't know.

Fernande is well and enjoying Lisbon.

I hope you flourish and that things are working out. You might send a copy of Mortished's travel notes to Pardo who intends to make the journey by car.

It is interesting to get the English papers here. Tone very confident - I hope not over so. They come in four times a week and so are almost à jour.

Excuse haste.

Yours ever,

Ed. Phelan.

Lisboa Portugal
Avenida Fontes
Aviz Hotel

RADIO - SCHWEIZ A. G.

RADIOGRAMM - RAGRAMME

RADIO - SUISSE S. A.

+ nyw504 Newyork 34 24/8 = via Mon rs =

Erhalten 0 Regu 2 55

"VIA RADIOSUISSE"

Befördert - Transmis

von - de

Stunde - Heure

NAME - NOM

nach - à Stunde - Heure

NAME - NOM

gla w +

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124

238

No.

Lester 9 ruecontamines geneve =

TRANSMISSIBLE-1

Yours august 17th received stop am making quite proposals
 through costadurels and kisch stop assurefullest understanding
 and support in present difficult circumst which sure will
 pass =

Hambro +

No. 6 1,500,000 IV. 40

Got this Sunday
 morning 25/8.

Saw afternoon Sweetie
 came thro' a phas
 from New York. Hambro
 was beside him. They
 had seen Lueda
 "Admiration (!!) Sympathy
 food withs Hamphat."
 thanked them in sympathy!

H. was ready to come
 Lisbon in meeting 3rd
 week in Sept. as then
 promised to write to Edie.

Sat 24/8
Costa den Belo asked for circulation
of telegram summoning his reply
to Arenal as A. had done.

The conditional tense used by
Arenal in his letter re send of
functions became the imperative
in the reply. Letter also

circulated to member States, omitting
the annexes which were to be referred
to Supervising Cttee. Both very
mischievous in intention. No 1 was
arguing really for liquidation, ending
with ^{emphasis} ~~request~~ that buildings be
left in hands of Geneva City!

No 2 was to show that any
transfer w^d be done w^o it
British dictation thus limiting freedom
of & when he left.

Arenal had gone to Uchly without
seeing or informing President or
myself.

A phrase message came thro'
from his private Sec. He was very
displeased, astonished, & made
all reserves. I send put it
in writing.

It was then "made all reserves
on a communication" faite sans
consultation préalable."

"Sa lettre au Président n'étant pas
destinée à la publicité. Il n'y voit
d'ailleurs aucune objection sauf que
cette communication ait été faite (a) sans
consultation (b) avec un texte incomplet
puisque'il ne comprend pas les annexes.
(3) M. Arenal se réserve de faire connaître
son point de vue d'une façon appropriée."

I replied, by my sec. to his sec.,
that I wd be at his disposal
any time he wishes to see me regarding
the message. Procedure followed, &c.,
I considered, quite constitutional
but nevertheless ~~had~~ had passed on
his message to Pres of Cncl.

Felkin: query.

Reports from France indicate that a
revulsion of feeling - this time favouring
the British - is moving.

27/8/40

A. is selected for Vichy temple.

Yesterday I heard that the Vichy
Govt, which had at first raised no
objection to certain French offrs of the
I. & O. (including Timier, Viple, & the ~~hon~~ de)
going to the American continent with
the Director had given orders to
recall them.

unofficial & is perhaps objected to. But -

I have been refusing to announce
any decision about transfer of Secretariat
elements as I fear trouble and want
to try to avoid it. La Seigne also in
a different way. Not very easy.

On 23rd of August, President Costa du Rels, who had been rather upset by the fact that part of the letter addressed to him had been distributed to States Members without having waited for his reply, or even informing him, asked 1) that a copy of his reply should be sent to M. Avenol, 2) that an extract of his reply should be cabled and 3) that the two letters be then distributed to League Members. This was done.

On learning of it, Avenol's private Secretary gave me the following telephone message: (August 24th)

"1) Le Secrétaire général exprime toutes ses réserves sur une communication faite sans consultation préalable, notamment sur les points qui le concerne.

2) Sa lettre au Président n'était pas destinée à la publicité. Il n'y voit d'ailleurs aucune objection sauf que cette communication ait été faite

- a) sans consultation,
- b) avec un texte incomplet puisqu'il ne comprend pas les annexes.

3) M. Avenol se réserve de faire connaître son point de vue d'une façon appropriée."

Costa du Rels' comment was 1) that Avenol had communicated part of the letter addressed him without consulting him, without waiting for a reply; 2) that he had thus himself published part of it; 3) that it was a letter of resignation and not a private letter.

On the 27th Avenol sent a further telephone message saying that he would be back from Vichy that night and would take up the duties of Secretary-General again from the 28th till the 31st.

At a little meeting in my office attended by the President of the Council; Pardo of the Supervisory Committee; the President of the

Court, Guerrero; the Registrar of the Court, Lopez Olivan and Agnides, all were unanimous in expecting Avenol to make trouble and equally unanimous in the opinion that he could not take up his functions again without informing the States Members. In his telegram to States Members on the 20th he had said that I was Acting Secretary-General and this made me responsible at least until a notification was sent to States Members that this arrangement no longer held.

I had made the following note on the 22nd of August:

"On the 20th of August I was informed indirectly that M. Avenol was sending a telegram to the States Members and that in the course of this telegram he would announce that I had been Secretary-General par interim since the 26th of July.

" This pronouncement is not entirely correct. Indeed as will be seen from the

attached note by the Secretary-General, the latter asked me to carry the interim only partially. In fact M. Avenol himself continued to conduct all major questions and without informing or consulting me.

"I had therefore to object to the statement appearing at the end of his telegram of the 20th of August to the States Members. M. Avenol however, seems to have insisted that the telegram should include that phrase concerning myself in spite of my protest that it misrepresented the facts."

On learning of his intention to take up duty again and as I had absolutely no confidence in his intention, I prepared the attached note for him. Against the advice of a number of my friends in the Secretariat, I did not send it however in the hope that perhaps after all he would refrain from any action which would call for protest.

Jacklin again became concerned about Avenol's intention regarding the funds. I did however send Avenol a note in reply to the message of the 24th saying that I did not understand his point of view but would be glad to discuss with him on his return if he would see me. To that no reply was ever received.

On the 28th Avenol came back to the office. He had been accompanied to Vichy by Charron, Tyler and Veillet-Lavallée and they informed us that Avenol had been received by Maréchal Pétain, that Baudouin had received him for a short time "very coldly" and that in spite of two formal requests, Laval did not receive him at all. I understand he also for some reason failed to see Général Weygand. Furthermore, all of them were unanimous in reporting that there was a great swing in French public opinion which was now said to be about 90% pro-British. One Préfet said to one of them that in all the history of the Franco-British alliance, there had never been such pro-British sentiment in his district; even Pétain was supposed to have said to Avenol that Baudouin's latest anti-British speech had gone too far and was not in accordance with his views.

On the morning of the 28th, Avenol saw Jacklin and Pardo. Jacklin said frankly to him that he could not take up his duties of Secretary-General again without informing States Members and that he, Jacklin, could not recognize him until he did. Avenol was astonished and protested but eventually said to both of them (separately) that he had no intention to make any further official communication to the States, but that he would write a letter to Costa du Rels.

Avenol had received an extremely friendly letter from Hambro which he distributed in the Secretariat and elsewhere.

I heard something of the letter he was writing to Costa du Rels and asked the latter when he received it to try to keep it and his reply a matter for record and not distribution. Costa du Rels agreed that it would probably not be in the interest of the League to publish what seemed to be very petty matter, but that he had grounds for a very complete reply to any letter that could be sent.

On the morning of Friday the 30th, ^{July} Jacklin announced that he was giving a luncheon to Avenol inviting a dozen Members of the Secretariat including myself and Agnides. I frankly deplored this in the circumstances, but decided that to keep up appearances - and although Avenol had not seen me for two months and had refused two written requests for an interview in the previous week - I would attend. Jacklin told me that Avenol had objected when informed that Agnides and I would be present, but that Jacklin replied that it was his luncheon. When I walked into the room and had shaken hands with Jacklin I suddenly heard Avenol's voice booming and he crossed the room to shake hands with me, gave a half-bow and in a sarcastic tone said: "Bonjour, Monsieur le Secrétaire général". His intention, his tone and his manner were so obvious that I felt as though he had slapped me on the face. I however stammered "Bonjour mon cher ancien collègue". Avenol turned away like a shot. Agnides he favoured only with a grimace; two of the ~~French~~ present afterwards expressed themselves as shocked by Avenol's behaviour. There were no speeches at the luncheon, but Jacklin proposed the toast in a dozen words; Avenol who I think had had the intention of making a speech, replied as briefly: he merely thanked Jacklin whom he said was the soul of loyalty: not a word about the Institution.

I had given instructions to a number of people in the Secretariat including the Central Section, that I was to be informed of anything being done of importance and at one o'clock as I was leaving for the luncheon I was shown a stencil cut for a circular letter to States Members containing the text of a letter from Avenol to the President of the Council. It had been prepared and translated secretly up to that point and when I had read it I found it was like the letter of a clever invoice-clerk making petty points. I gave instructions that it should be held up; the letter actually did not reach Costa du Rels until after 3 o'clock the same afternoon. The President came to my office at 5 o'clock and agreed with me that the circulation of the letter, even with his reply, would make the Secretariat look ridiculous. We both asked Avenol to receive us, or either of us, but this was not done. Costa du Rels then gave me the following note:

"Monsieur le Secrétaire général p.i., (30/8)

J'ai reçu une lettre de Monsieur Avenol en date d'aujourd'hui. Avant d'y répondre, je suis venu au Secrétariat afin d'avoir un entretien avec lui. Cet entretien à mon grand regret n'a pu avoir lieu. Dans ces conditions je suis disposé à revenir demain samedi, à l'heure qui lui conviendra, pour cet entretien et en attendant je vous prie de bien vouloir surseoir à la publication de sa lettre.

Si par extraordinaire le malentendu qui semble s'être créé ne serait pas dissipé, je me verrais obligé de vous demander de publier sa lettre simultanément avec ma réponse.

Veuillez agréer, etc.."

I sent a further communication to Avenol requesting him to receive me the following morning (31st). Pending this interview, I prepared the following for Avenol, but again held it up in the hope of seeing a settlement:

"I wrote the enclosed note on hearing that you intended, in spite of your notification to the States Members, to take up again the functions of Secretary-General.

"I postponed sending this to you hoping and trusting that you would not create any unnecessary difficulties for the administration you are leaving.

"The crisis which has been created within the Secretariat in the last two months now threatens to be continued. Having been charged with the unsought-for responsibility for the interests of the Secretariat, I must deplore your methods, and having vainly tried to discuss the situation with you, I now send you my note together with a copy of a letter I received from the President of the Council last evening.

"I beg of you in all sincerity to reconsider your proposals which cannot add to your personal dignity and prestige and can only damage the interests of the Institution which you have so long served."

M. AVENOL

" 1) - The last time you received me was at a Directors' meeting early in July when you announced that having seriously and long considered the situation you had decided that you would not resign and that in all circumstances you meant to stay at your post.

" 2) - About ten days later without informing your Senior colleagues of your intentions and decision, you sent a telegram to States Members announcing your intention to resign.

" 3) - On 26th of July you sent me a note asking me to act as Secretary-General par interim while you prepared your reports.

" 4) - Nevertheless, between that date and the 20th of August you took action and important initiatives as Secretary-General again without consulting or even informing me.

" 5) - On 20th of August you sent a further telegram to the States Members announcing that your resignation would take effect on 31st of August, quoting from your letter addressed to the President of the Council, and informing the Governments that I was Acting Secretary-General. This communication created a new situation and has engaged my responsibility vis-à-vis the Governments of the States Members.

" 6) - My secretary this morning received a verbal message from your secretary that you propose to take up again the functions of Secretary-General from 28th until 31st of August.

" In view of the situation in which, without even consulting or informing me you have placed me before the States Members, I must now make all reservations as to any action which may be attempted by you from the 28th until the 31st of August.

" You compel me also now to take this opportunity similarly to make reserves as to policy pursued and actions taken by you without consulting or informing me from the 26th July till 21st August during which period (you have informed the Governments) I was responsible.

" I regret very much that you have placed me in a situation which compels me to write this note. I do so with reluctance and sadness. I have already informed you that I am at your disposal if you wish to discuss this or any other matter." 27/8/40

Costa du Rels' interview with Avenol took place on the morning of the 31st and lasted an hour. It should be noted that Avenol, probably partly as a result of his visit to Vichy, proposed to circulate with his letter only an extract from one of the two annexes which had been referred to the Supervisory Commission. This extract was to show that a budget for 1941 was impossible and constituted really arguments for closing on the 31st of December. From it however, he omitted his final proposal which disclosed that the buildings should be placed in care of the Genevese Authorities. He also suppressed the partisan statement concerning the British and Princeton and the letters concerning the departure of Drummond.

When Costa du Rels came out (Pardo and Agnides were in my office) he told us that Avenol had insisted on his letter being circulated. Costa du Rels had equally insisted it should not be done without his reply also being circulated; they had therefore agreed that neither should be circulated (!!!). Avenol had however obtained from Costa du Rels an agreement that a note should be circulated to States Members declaring null and void the letters exchanged between the two concerning Avenol's resignation. There was a P.S. to this amazing agreement which was

signed by both of them that the two telegrams concerning the resignation (of the 20th and 24th) were to remain valid; both of these telegrams consisted mainly of extracts from the two letters now declared null and void (!!!!). I congratulated the President on having Avenol see reason on the rather silly letter he wanted to circulate and said I did not understand the purpose of the agreement and I was afraid States Members would not understand it, they would merely attribute it to a state of chaos in Geneva. The agreement was then sent out by Avenol for circulation to States Members, but he added that the P.S. was not to be included. I let it be circulated in this form but subsequently found that Costa du Rels was furious that part of the agreement - and a vital part - had been omitted and said that he had never agreed to that.

Avenol left the building having said good-bye only to a few people and still having refused to see me, even on written request.

Costa du Rels suggested and arranged to pay a formal visit to me the day I took up duties; he said that Avenol would be present and that we should have a number of the principal officials in the room. Although I was afraid Avenol might say something which would finally provoke me, I agreed. The little function was arranged for 5 p.m. on Monday the 2nd of September. Without any notification and although it was arranged to suit him, Avenol did not turn up; his empty chair was a reproach to his manners, but no one seemed to be particularly hurt, except Jackin who regarded it as a personal offence. The President of the Council was also naturally annoyed.

P1/8(17)

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1940.

background and represents the 258-year peace of Japan from the 17th century to the middle of the 19th century.

Lester Runs League

By the Associated Press.

GENEVA, Sept. 3.—Sean Lester, Deputy Secretary General of the League of Nations, today took charge of the League as temporary successor to resigned Secretary General Joseph Avenol.

Farewell to Monsieur Avenal

accepted P1/8 (18)
29/8

Mr. Seymour Jacklin

requests the pleasure of the company of
Mr. Dexter

at luncheon at Hôtel des Bergues
on Friday, August 30th
at 1.15 p.m.

R.S.V.P. to
Miss Steedman to-day, 20th

p2/8 (19)



M. Joseph Avenol, secrétaire général de la S. d. N. depuis plusieurs années, dépose son mandat car, constate-t-il, bien que la revision du pacte ait été inscrite naguère à l'ordre du jour, la situation de la Société n'a cessé d'empirer. Du reste, l'Assemblée, le Conseil et les commissions ne pouvant se réunir présentement, ajoute M. Avenol, les attributions du secrétaire général sont en fait suspendues. — M. Avenol, qui est Français, était le deuxième secrétaire général depuis la fondation de la S. d. N., le premier ayant été le Britannique sir Eric Drummond. (Photo Stella)

P 7/8 (20)



Peter Canale



PAUL CÉZANNE, A.S.C.A.
CANADIAN ARTISTS SERIES
PRODUCED IN CANADA
19318

21/8/20

Dear Mr. Zester,

I spent a week recently in Princeton with the Hills and admired my godson little Colin. Our good friends are working faithfully. Here in Canada a few of us do what we can to keep the Geneva flag flying. We remember the devoted band who remain at their posts.

With best wishes to Mrs. Zester and yourself, hoping that all are safe and well.

LBT

*Meilleurs Souhaits de Bonne
et Heureuse Année*

Laurence C. Tombs

1111 Beaver Hall Hill

Montreal

During the Swiss crisis in April-May, Avenol's plans were to save in the emergency a sort of core and reorganizing centre of the Secretariat if we were driven out by invasion. There were still (in Lester's opinion) the intention and will to carry on in the terms of the responsibilities placed on him. With the first hint of a possible French armistice his outlook and policy changed. His reaction for the first few days was simply, and not unnaturally, that all was lost. Long before the armistice was signed however, from his remarks to Lester and to others, it became evident he was thinking in terms of a future which fitted in with the military situation on the Continent. The first manifestation of this was the repeated expression, again to Lester as well as to others, of violent anti-British sentiments and of opinions such as "the British must be kept out of Europe and driven out of the Mediterranean"; and again "the British are going to expiate their crimes and mistakes". In close sequence came a policy to remove or ~~assist in~~ removing all British elements in the Secretariat. This was rendered less difficult by the natural desire of a number of British people to return to their own country either to help there or to escape being completely cut off. When the policy of excluding the British from the Secretariat was protested against and he was told he could not send them away, he replied "but they will go of their own free will and I shall only be facilitating them." It seemed to Lester that this desire was dictated by one or two objectives: the first and the strongest in his mind, so far as Lester could estimate, was to play a part and enable the machinery of the League to play a part in the new Europe, especially economically, as a consequence of the defeat of France, a Europe which would be identical with that desired by the conquering States. Justification in his mind came from 1) the facts of the military situation plus the anticipated overthrow of Britain and 2) hopes, definitely expressed, that France would receive decent and generous treatment and even be allowed to have a substantial share in the possibilities of a Latin block (France, Italy and Spain) to partly counter-balance German power. But a great deal of ~~the~~ motive power seemed to come from the violent feelings regarding Britain which had so suddenly replaced the equally violent feelings regarding Germany and Italy. Thus came into possibility the alternative; if the machine which he controlled (and during this period he often said: "I am now the League of Nations") could not be utilized under his guidance for the new European purposes, he would not allow it to exist for its original purposes. The main idea, however, continued to be the transformation of the League machinery. A note outlining this possibility was made about the 24th of June. It was remarked that while Avenol

*after
amnesty*

threatened to resign frequently during the first five months of the year, when the French military situation rapidly deteriorated, he definitely decided to stay on. It was on the 25th of June in view of his remarks that Lester, moved by the statements made by Avenol, felt called upon to make an appeal to his personal honour in view of the trust placed in him by fifty States, but a day or two later, he said to Lester that he would of course not resign as he had been appointed by 60 States "including Germany and Italy". Except for one short conversation, he then ceased to call Lester into personal consultation. As Loveday had refused to accept the ^{proposal} facilities to leave ~~the country~~ he sent a message to him offering him a six months mission in America with full pay and informed several people that "Loveday was going". The proposal was refused by Loveday.

Simultaneously, Aghnides, who had been pushed aside very much during recent months, was again cultivated and vague suggestions at first made that he would be needed in the new circumstances. This was accompanied by indefinite suggestions that Lester would not fill the bill. The pressure on Aghnides continued steadily, but he refused to accept Avenol's plan to cooperate with him in some thing he said he felt would be dishonourable. Aghnides pressed him instead to accept his resignation which had been in his hands for several weeks. - Skylstad was also to be dismissed at the same time as Lester. - From that moment there were three ~~facilities~~ ^{facilities} offered to Lester to get out: the circular of June 25th calling for resignations on favourable terms was, Avenol emphasized, to be equally applicable to Members of the High Direction. It seemed natural during ~~the~~ crisis that the Members of the High Direction should place their posts at the Chief's disposal, but neither Jacklin, Loveday, Lester nor Skylstad complied with the direction to offer their resignations. On July the 16th, this part of the plan was pushed a further stage and unlimited paid holidays offered to a number of persons not directly engaged in technical activities. There was to be no dismissing and of course no economies, but individuals, including Lester, were to be enabled to go away with dignity and again financial comfort. The following day Avenol outlined his plan that he would remain Secretary-General, but delegate certain of his powers to Aghnides, while retaining other powers. This was on the assumption that Lester would not be in the Secretariat; but Lester again refused this opportunity. A few days afterwards Avenol proposed a mission to the United States for Lester, Loveday and Skylstad.

*Burchland
Bourquin, etc*

Before the end of June Avenol was sounding individuals about the formation of a small Committee - European in character - of persons who had been connected in some way or other with League activities, which would form with him a kind of "Directoire".

About the same time Lester sent Avenol a note regarding the reductions of staff and pointing out that those proposed to be retained were mainly Europeans and that it was important to keep an international and inter-continental character in the staff if at all possible. He saw Lester on this question of the international character of the staff on the 8th of July, spoke vaguely of what the future might be and at one time used the words "that he did not yet know what Hitler and Mussolini would want as regards the League". He said he was not sure if Hitler wanted a League, but he said he was fairly sure Mussolini would, to help indirectly to create a balance of power. - Lester said that these speculations might be true, but they had nothing to do with the duty of the Secretariat and that for each of us there was a moral issue and the question of loyalty to our trust and self-respect. - Avenol then spoke of "the realities of the situation" and said he was not yet sure if France would remain in the League and that there would be pressure on Switzerland. If Avenol was seriously pushing his ideas it was anticipated that he had already made, or would try to make, contact with Germany and Italy.

aghrind

It was on the 3rd of July that Avenol asked a Secretariat official if he were in close touch with Dr. Krauel, the German Consul. The answer not being favourable, he put a similar inquiry to Pardo two days later.

Vahle

On the 5th of July Avenol had a conversation with a Frenchman in Geneva in close touch with the French political situation and asked him would he undertake a mission to Mr. Laval. He accompanied the request with an exposé of his views. The Frenchman in question denounced Avenol's proposals as both foolish and dishonourable, but it was subsequently (on the same day) that Avenol made the second inquiry of which we know, as to contact with Dr. Krauel.

It was on the 10th of July that Avenol saw Stoppani, whom he had been denouncing with extreme violence a few ~~weeks~~ before. He had learned that Stoppani was expecting to go to Rome to make contact again with governmental circles. Stoppani reported that the interview was a one-sided one, that Avenol made an enthusiastic totalitarian and anti-British speech to him and spoke with the ~~the~~ greatest praise of the greatness of Herr Hitler.

The situation took a slightly different turn when Charron came back, on the 18th of July, from a mission to Vichy. It appeared the policy of the French Government was not at all as violently anti-English as that of Avenol; that they had decided to stay in the League but also decided that it would be desirable for Mr. Avenol to quit the post of Secretary-General. Avenol who three days previously had declared to a Directors' meeting that it would be constitutionally and legally impossible to carry on if he resigned, that even the money might cease to be available to the Treasurer and that he would therefore hold his post at any cost, then changed and spoke of a voluntary desire to resign. But he accompanied this with a suggestion that he should be given still a position which would enable him to have a very big share of control on League finances and also enable him to remain at Geneva with his full immunities and possibilities of "political discussion". Thus it was on the 19th or 20th that he mentioned to Jacklin his plan for Agnides to take over from him and the formation of a finance Committee including Avenol (to which Jacklin would be responsible).

Simultaneously came a certain change with regard to the Princeton proposal; he had, through private conversations and a public attitude of legal difficulties, torpedoed the first invitation. Suddenly he weakened on this and proposed first the Lester-Loveday-Skylstad mission and when that did not come off, appeared to yield to a plan for the transfer of Loveday and most of his Experts. It had been pointed out that Loveday and his Specialists substantially represent the ideas of international economics unsympathetic with the ideas being put forward by Alfred Rosenberg and Karl Megerle, i.e. the economic unification of Europe subject to the dominating needs of Germany. Under this scheme there would remain at Geneva Loveday's principal assistant, M. Charron.

All these points are selected partly from the intensive conversations and planning that have been going on in the building of the Secretariat since the middle of June. It would need a volume to report in detail all of Mr. Avenol's statements and no doubt there are actions which have not come to our knowledge. The statements of which we know have been made either direct or reported at first hand. The history of these five weeks has convinced those who have been following it closely that Avenol

22nd July 1940

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P1/8 (21)

Part cut off L. 4
summarised Avenol's plans
as disquieting Treason to
his post.

22nd July 1940

Mr. PHELAN

Mr. LOVEDAY

In order to enable us to refer to individuals, countries and Governments in telegrams without too much disclosure, I suggest that we should have alternative words for use in telegrams between us. I enclose a list of suggestions. Will you please look that over and see if you have any changes or additions.

August 2nd 1940

Your telegram (or letter) dated	-	Yours
Leaving or Hope to leave	-	Joyful(ly)
Send as soon as possible-		Benefit
Come as soon as possible-		Spears

Embassy or Legation	-	Shop (or Magazine)
Secretariat	-	Suburb
League	-	Community (or Band)
ILO	-	Union
Germany or Italy	-	Hatchet (or Matchet)
Gt Britain	-	Grubb
France	-	Restaurant (or Hotelier)
Spain	-	Route
Portugal	-	Sea
Avenol	-	Joker
Jacklin	-	Keys
Lester	-	Pacard
Loveday	-	Johnson
Winant	-	Brown
Phelan	-	Winer
Hambro	-	Square
Pardo	-	Latin
Supervisory Cttee.	-	Coordinators
Switzerland	-	Mountains)
De Haller	-	Slender (or Thin Man)
Charron	-	Custom (er)
Kelly	-	Manxman
Höma	-	Mohal
Livingstone	-	Stein
Skylstad	-	Farmer
Aghnides	-	Sculptor
Stencek	-	Samuel
Tyler	-	Boots
Hill	-	Cork (Corkman)
My telegram (or letter) dated	-	Mine
Your telegram (or letter) dated	-	Yours
Leaving or Hope to leave	-	Joyful(ly)
Send as soon as possible-	-	Benefit
Come as soon as possible-	-	Spears

Embassy or Legation	-	Shop (or <u>Magazine</u>)
Secretariat	-	Suburb
League	-	Community (or <u>Band</u>)
ILO	-	Union
Germany or Italy	-	Matchet (<u>or</u> Matchet)
Gt Britain	-	Grubb
France	-	Restaurant (or <u>Hotelier</u>)
Spain	-	Route
Portugal	-	Sea
Avenol	-	Joker Uncle (Joker)
Jacklin	-	Keys
Lester	-	Pacard
Loveday	-	Johnson Dawn (Johnston)
Winant	-	Brown Abe (Brown)
Phelan	-	Winer Ned (o)
Hambro	-	Square
Pardo	-	Latin
Supervisory Cttee.	-	Coordinators
Switzerland	-	Mountains)
De Haller	-	Slender (or Thin Man)
Charron	-	Custom (er)
Kelly	-	Manxman
Hdma	-	Mohal
Livingstone	-	Stein Stanley
Skylstad	-	Farmer
Aghnides	-	Sculptor
Stencek	-	Samuel
Tyler	-	Boots
Hill	-	Cork (Corkman)
My telegram (or letter) dated	-	Mine
Your telegram (or letter) dated	-	Yours
Leaving or Hope to leave	-	Joyful(ly)
Send as soon as possible-	-	Benefit
Come as soon as possible-	-	Spears

Benbury
 Brand
 Felken
 Brennan
 Cremens

Snow
 Demuk
 Leter
 Wexford
 Tippler

P2/8 (23)



GOLF & SPORT-HOTEL CRANS / SIERRE

E. Bonvin, Propr.

G. VIII. 40

My dear Lester,

Many thanks for your letter. Pardo had more or less given me part of the news contained in yours, but some of it is entirely new to me. I was appalled to learn that Biraud has been asked to leave. Never witnessed such senseless & furious desire of destruction. What will be left for you to conduct? Your simile of Samson is quite correct. I fear there won't be any meeting of the supervisory ~~Chm~~ as if it were held

it might wish to put a stop to
the work of wilful disintegration
which has been so methodically applied
of late.

Wart Juckling helps us save the
last remnants of our pure League?
I fear he is so preoccupied with
the purely financial aspect of the
matter that he may be less alive
than we are to the other aspects.

What a distracting predicament!

Yours ever,
Ch. Agnew



GOLF & SPORT-HOTEL CRANS / SIERRE

E. Bonvin, Propr.

7.VIII.40

Dear L.,

I understand the work of destruction continues unabated and with more method & vigor than ever.

What you write confirms what P. told me & what Lopez himself foresaw. The latter is very well informed of the big scheme. No doubt even the

few technical departments will
be promptly & deftly disposed
of. In the circumstances
don't you think I should in-
sist on my resignation given
on June 21st being accepted.
Indeed I feel heartbroken
to realize that I was displaying
useless efforts for the last 2
years. It is a terrible
admission & perhaps you will
understand my state of mind.
Could you not as Acting S.E.

facilitate my exit? I wish
the initiative now to come from
him. It is only fair as my
letter is in his hands for now
6 weeks. I hope you won't
misunderstand me or think I
am trying to desert you. You
know such is not my intention
but honestly what use would I
now be anyhow if nothing is
left of our activities? There is
much I could tell you when we
meet. The situation is far worse
than you depict in your letter. - I may
saw see you but I wish I could
stay on here! Yours ever
Ch. A.

copy of letters received from Mr. Aghaides

Crans, 6.VIII.40

My dear Lester,

Many thanks for your letter. Pardo had more or less given me part of the news contained in yours, but some of it is entirely new to me. I was appalled to learn that Biraud has been asked to leave. Never witnessed such senseless and furious desire of destruction. What will be left for you to conduct? Your simile of Samson is quite correct. I fear there won't be any meeting of the Supervisory Committee as if it were held it might wish to put a stop to the work of wilful disintegration which has been so methodically applied of late.

Won't Jacklin help us save the last remnants of our poor League? I fear he is so preoccupied with the purely financial aspect of the matter that he may be less alive than we are to the other aspects.

What a distracting predicament!

Yours ever,

Th. A.

Crans, 7.VIII.40

Dear L.,

I understand the work of destruction continues unabated and with more method and vigor than ever.

What you write confirms what P. told me and what Lopez himself foresaw. The latter is very well informed of the big scheme. No doubt even the few technical departments will be promptly and deftly disposed of. In the circumstances don't you think I should insist on my resignation given on June 25th being accepted. Indeed I feel heartbroken to realize that I was displaying useless efforts for the last 21 years. It is a terrible admission and perhaps you will understand my state of mind. Could you not as Acting S.G. facilitate my exit? I wish ~~to~~ the initiative now to come from him. It is only fair as my letter is in his hands for now 6 weeks. I hope you won't misunderstand me or think I am trying to desert you. You know such is not my intention. But honestly what use would I now be anyhow if nothing is left of our activities? There is much I could tell you when we meet. The situation is far worse than you depict in your letter. I may soon see you, but I wish I could stay on here!

Yours ever.

Th. A.

P. = Pardo, Argentine member SC
Lopez = Lopez Olivan, Registrar of
Court, Spain

Dear Foster

Here is the verbatim record of
my discussion with Hambro. It
is depressing!

It looks as if Avenol was
right: we shall not get a legal
budget & a legal allocation of expenses.
We can only hope for Supy Commission's
approval by telegram on specific
proposals put up by S.F.

Yrs truly

1 (X-40)

Jackson

right of transfer §. 7 to we 7.

Barème

Sect 5 mill ~

- J. You must meet to do that, and Holma is uncertain.
- H. I was told, due to the peculiar circumstances, he would hardly be allowed to come; on the other hand, we want to co-opt members that we have got here ... Goodrich ... We could get people to assist here. If Kisch and myself agree with you, you can get in touch with Holma and Boisanger.
- J. Unless you get a budget passed the continuance of the League is in doubt and you must have a budget passed, otherwise States can simply do what they wish, they could assume in absence of budget that the League does not exist any more ...

1.9.40.

RECORD OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN

H. The only way of getting a budget adopted ...
MR. HAMBRO AND MR. JACKLIN.

J. ... is by a Supervisory Commission meeting.

H. Under the circumstances it may be adopted by cable
between us.

H. I haven't received any documents at all from you.

J. I think there is a reason for that. There is valuable
information in my stuff. One or two questions I want to
ask. Can I fix the date of the meeting Tuesday, September
24th?

H. No. It is awfully difficult for me to get to Lisbon. I
am going back to-day. I have two lectures every day and
it has all been arranged a long time beforehand. My idea
... if documents could get through to me by way of
Princeton or anybody else, I could get Kisch on the phone
and discuss things with him and then telephone to you or
wire We have the most definite confidence in every-
thing you say and advocate, and if Kisch and myself O.K.
it you could get in touch with Pardo while he is there,
and also with Boisanger. My idea would be this: as
Carton de Wiart and Colijn have disappeared and are no
longer members of the Committee - they formed just an
extension of the Committee - three members would be a
quorum.

J. The Regulation says four is a quorum, and it has not been
altered.

H. We have the right to alter it now on the suggestion of
the Acting Secretary-General.

J. You must meet to do that, and Holma is uncertain.

H. I was told, due to the peculiar circumstances, he would
hardly be allowed to come; on the other hand, we want to
co-opt members that we have got here ... Goodrich ...
We could get people to assist here. If Kisch and myself
agree with you, you can get in touch with Holma and
Boisanger.

J. Unless you get a budget passed the continuance of the
League is in doubt and you must have a budget passed,
otherwise States can simply do what they wish, they could
assume in absence of budget that the League does not
exist any more ...

- H. The only way of getting a budget adopted ...
- J. ... is by a Supervisory Commission meeting.
- H. Under the circumstances it may be adopted by cable between us.
- J. If you think it possible; I did not think the ...
- H. I have discussed it with the British, and they would be ready to send Kisch over here - that would make things easier - or to Canada. Pardo is coming over here and we have the whole Labour side here, and there would be no difficulty in arranging things here. We have others ... here from Paris and Jorstad of the Court.
- J. Unless you can get four members of the Supervisory Commission it is not a legal meeting, and I do not want to have an illegal meeting, because if the budget's legality is uncertain income will not be obtained. We have to get Holma.
- H. Is it exact that under the Regulations four members are necessary?
- J. Definitely so. There is no question about it. You must get four together ...
- H. If you get Kisch and me by wire with Pardo and get Holma to come to Geneva ...
- J. I could go there (Vichy) perhaps ...
- H. Yes, you and Pardo, we O.K. it by wire.
- J. Pardo is leaving in a fortnight's time.
- H. Have you got any documents through to Kisch?
- J. Telegrams only, no documents.
- H. Has he - by way of Watterson or anybody - your draft budget?
- J. No one. Two letters to you ... I shall have to wire the whole thing.
- H. I have two letters from Lester and two from Avenol.
- J. I sent a duplicate off the other day of the letter I wrote in July. The ordinary documents are being sent off to you methodically in the usual way. I will prepare something now and send it on.

all right. Do not let it cost us any money. We are

- H. Send it under the address of Sweetser ...
- J. The stuff that I put to you is full of meat, gives full information, funds, etc. ...
- H. You might hand it to the British Minister and ask him to get it through by the diplomatic post. I am working hand in glove with their people here and they take a very keen interest in the League. Then I would surely get it.
- J. The meeting, you think, is not possible at the end of September?
- H. No. Of course, the position is: if you think it would be absolutely essential and a question of life and death to our Institution, and if we could not get things arranged the way I suggest, of course I would have to cancel some 20 or 30 lectures and come along. For many reasons I would prefer not to be forced to do it until ... I am booked for two lectures every day from now till December 17th.
- J. I would definitely say it is a matter of life and death, only I cannot guarantee a quorum and without a quorum it is no good your coming, as I must have a legal budget. I cannot ask you to come if there is uncertainty about a quorum.
- H. The only idea: you go with Pardo to Vichy, get Holma there, and Kisch and myself to O.K. it, and we will look upon that as a legal meeting.
- J. Message from Lester: trouble developed here but he has cleared it up with Costa du Rels' help ... (read messages).
- H. I congratulate him; am very glad.
We have here this League Pavilion. The question is, of course, we cannot send the stuff back to Geneva and legally they cannot give it as a gift to anybody. Some universities here have offered to take over the whole thing and I will arrange it in such a way that we simply look upon it as free storage. We deliver it into their hands, without giving it, to keep it for the League until...
The third member of the Committee was French...
The night was a little American on it.

- J. All right. Do not let it cost us any money. We are getting no money in. The important thing for me is to be in a position to collect money. I want you, as soon as you are free, to decide about income. See Phillips. I want you and he to decide that people can pay in dollars, and I want you to approve a Finance Office in New York so that the money can be collected and distributed there.
- H. I entirely agree.
- J. I have written you about it.
- H. Tell Pardo from Sweetser he has approached the American Export Line and the State Department and they have promised to do everything possible to get him a passage.
- J. I do not think we will be able to get out.
- H. I understand that.
- J. We are clearing up the accounts. I shall get out as soon as I can. I shall be stumped for doing anything here. As regards income, I must get out ...
- H. I entirely agree. I think there will be a good deal of assistance here. Things are not so doubtful as one might expect.
- J. I can get nothing in here.
- H. If you cannot come yourself, can you get Watterson across?
- J. He is now in hospital, but I could get one of the London people across. I want to send Watterson and Rohde to Princeton, because London is not important any more.
- H. I entirely agree. That is what I had in mind. I am going out to the West Coast, but I have cabled that if it is necessary I have to cancel the engagements. ... Always able to get in touch through Sweetser. He has been awfully good. Give my love to Lester, and I am glad to hear what you told me ...
- J. If we arrange a meeting and a quorum is not obtained, it is not much good.
- H. I will get in touch with Phillips on the other question. The third member of the Committee was Carton de Wiart.
- J. You might want a Latin American on it.

- H. I think they put an Indian on it ...
- J. He is not available now. I want you to put Najero or Pardo on it.
- H. Fine. I will get in touch with Phillips.
- J. Phillips is in America.
- H. I think he has already left, but I will get in touch with him.

1.9.40.

Questions to be put to Mr. HAMBRO

1. Fix date of meeting. I think Tuesday, September 24th, most suitable. Clipper leaves New York on Saturday, 21st, arrives Lisbon 22nd, and you will then have a day to read the documents which cannot be supplied in advance.
2. I hope you decide so that I can tell members convened that there must be no publicity about the meeting. Lester will arrange for the Government to be privately informed.
3. The convening notice will be sent to every member except Wiart and Colijn.

Must Avenol be invited in your name to attend? Brunskog has not been here but has wired that he is trying to get a visa. It is probable that the Commission will not be able to examine the 1939 accounts.
4. Guerrero and Olivan will want to come to discuss Judges' salaries and the budget.
5. Phelan is in Lisbon and I understand he will wait there for the meeting. Presumably Goodrich will come by Clipper, and I don't know whether Oersted will go, but I will leave these matters to Phelan.
6. I am planning to ^{to remain} go, but if you think Bieler can manage perhaps I ought to remain here. Lester will go.
7. To my mind the important thing is to secure an authorized budget for 1941 and authority to use the Guarantee Fund on the exhaustion of the Working Capital Fund. If we cannot secure a legally competent Committee now, we must go on trying to do so later in the year, as a meeting is vital to our continuance.
8. We propose to book at Aviz Hotel,
Avenida Fontes,
Lisbon.
9. What cash will you want cabled to you? Do you want it cabled direct to you, or to Loveday on your behalf? What Bank?

Dear Jackson

If you opt for one
please ask some one
to type 4 copies for
Livingston
I'll ask
to send it
yrs JL

Jacklin's draft

Very concerned regarding future income.

Contributions not being paid Geneva, possibly they would be paid elsewhere. Propose if Lisbon unfeasible to establish office in U.S.A. if allowed where would send Jacklin to organize vigorous collecting office final acknowledgment all payments being sent from Geneva. Jacklin would continue control funds and investments,

~~Bieler Undertaking work here.~~

Lester

Fully ^{appreciate} ~~understand~~ need for Secretary General and Treasurer remaining together but there is important work for latter elsewhere and time may shortly come when it would be impossible for him to leave.

Draft

Today
Lisbon has replied favourably
& Hester hopes to leave Saturday
stop. He would like Kisch
to be in position to discuss
possibility Jacklin organising
probably outside Europe
~~regional~~ office for collecting
contributions stop. Jacklin
would retain all present
responsibilities funds and
investments Bieler undertaking
work at Geneva stop.

P2/8 (25)
2 Sept 1946
Latter part at Jacklin's request
He objected however that
it was not strong
enough

LISBON HAS TODAY REPLIED FAVOURABLY AND
LESTER HOPES TO LEAVE SATURDAY ^{for Lisbon meeting} Stop HE WOULD LIKE
KISCH TO BE IN POSITION TO DISCUSS POSSIBILITY JACKLIN
ORGANISING PROBABLY OUTSIDE EUROPE OFFICE FOR COLLECTING
CONTRIBUTIONS Stop JACKLIN WOULD RETAIN ALL PRESENT
RESPONSIBILITIES FUNDS AND INVESTMENTS BIELER UNDERTAKING
WORK AT GENEVA Stop LESTER FULLY APPRECIATES NEED FOR
SECRETARY GENERAL AND TREASURER REMAINING TOGETHER BUT
THERE IS IMPORTANT WORK FOR LATTER ELSEWHERE AND TIME
MAY SHORTLY COME WHEN IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO
LEAVE

P1/8 (2b)
P1/8 (2b)

7 Greenwich

Princeton N.J.

10/05/40

My dear Jack,

It was really a very great relief to get your letter of the 20th Sept. belatedly, today although its enclosure led to a very clean cut reaction. This extremely sensitive & nervous reaction was what Americans wd. probably ^{call} 'the' thing do them an injustice) 'imposed' to the pleasant thought that you that like Ben's explanatory note on the absence of your signature caused me. I have that tomorrow or next day - tomorrow in any case but could even a postal service. Looked him with information about the inner workings of your mind. But I want to send this servant with my official, diplomatic and peace-loving, cover to my cable wherein I shall have to relate to an American type tomorrow or in so doing track his the rudiments of foreign English.

I don't know I have written you or said word about our life here since I arrived. Enjoy me; I have written to none. I have really been much too busy. But it is pleasant & hopeful busy -ness. You know what the Americans are like, full of helpfulness but; with kindness to the stranger, want to advertise him & incidentally themselves, without intent, by some special act, being foursome. I often say they are full of a new and desire to help than the English or the Scot, but perhaps not than you mispelt countrymen. Mrs. they are aristocratic, taken puritanic, intellectual snobs as America goes, but surely kind, open & candid by comparison with Oxford or Cambridge, & for all that to me pleasantly democratic. One can talk to one's maid servant, if one can afford one - without any fault about her having the courage to reply - say some unbecoming - from whom alas I have to buy beer - stuffy; drink -

has just given me a very distinction on the London family who ^{is} P1/8(24)
my great delight to say was originally Quaker. I am looking forward with
immense pleasure in proving this up to the hilt to my sisters who are
disgusted proud of possessing one of these Island nips with a mixture of Chas.
Magnificently magnified by a chunk of rock crystal. I am sure my Americans
are left as my forefather like his Quakers were gold ^{smiths} ~~miners~~ & I am
not to prove this my was no Quakers gift, but taken in pawn. So you see
I have my reputation & find have lots of old friends - amongst them one
Professor who is one of my earliest Neolithicans & shocked me the other night
by showing us a sketch of an hour in England some I suppose in about 1500
by my Architect brother.

X Makiaki has been finally being kept all his others to find
house and take them within household used. Thanks mainly to his
got them all - except his Polaka - fixed up with great rapidity. They are
taking a sterner life because the salaries are really too low for decent
existence here - they ought to get their "subsistence" and "refunded" & I also of
am to maintain the reputation of the League - but at any rate being
feel that they have a chance of doing work of value & upholding the
cause of the League. They are really a nice bunch of people & I get to
know them as families in a way I have had before during the journey. You
know how disgust my social behaviour always has been. And they are
really keen to do the League's job. But I was surprised how much this
in (another) foreign country impedes their power to get down to work.
I think it is very the worse. So Makiaki has been harassing them & I
have been getting to his office at 9 a.m. every morning, taking an hour
in March just leaving late partly to show them that it can be done.
The main work David must be done - You can imagine
Makiaki is Smith, & Green, & Smith, & Smith, & Smith (the latter being)
Expensive. I am told the last most expensive town in the L.S. The
curiously birds is really took like hummerbirds & not like
mass (proven) sausage machines. The houses are all surrounded,

Comed & hidden by trees & completely dark. Like - ray lamps are largely
sold for example on huge cloudless skirts in blackened rooms; hands are
always clean; sex has no appeal.

So on. Books, and can and sleep by night. & the facilities are
much better than I had really dared to hope. But when I awake, begin to
think of Americans I am too alarmed. They put that in the book too amazingly.
Some see them again; the time is too warm. They talk of fishing 50 miles
north. I shall see next year - maybe. They surf-fish. I have not
tried it yet. Apparently you still are enormous tonight & a skunk in the
the sea & about us. They say it is good fun. They find in bass
& vainglories of pack in the lake here. I shall try when I can afford
a license. Talking of affording please thank Martin for "fubminating" success-
fully. He has been a great deal. It was a word his wording & result
of which has caused me much pleasure & entertainment. But in America -
are so polite my own manners are becoming disgustingly good. I always say
welcome when I mean go to hell.

One of the difficulties is publicity. Mr S.D. wants me to be very discreet at
present. You know so do I. But I am told if you avoid the press you may
get a maximum of publicity & that of the worst sort. She they want
photo as all in strange attitudes. Indeed I think I. Incapable say they
make your choice or they will make theirs. But whatever can help
as she is the owner of photographs. So I shilly shally in the hope of
being able to push some. I wish friend in the picture.

I see I have written almost three pages without giving any news about
what we are doing. I can say "negot". I have had a book, I have taken
two hours perhaps, I have had one day off. But I feel full of pep, I don't
think we have made any serious blunders yet - he shall inevitably soon
be at it - & we are slowly & gradually putting the machine in position
to work. You cannot imagine how slow it is when one is one man staff.
financial, administration, printing, housing, office equipment, advertising, library,
liaison, etc, & after that, finally technical office on self. But for the
Van Housen who has been here, perhaps I should have given up the
job just day ago & started swearing to God.

Arthur & Ruth have bought a house here. I have acquired a new

ration an admiration for him. He seems to me to be continually
 doing certain fine things just because it is his nature to do so. He
 has given a tremendous amount of his time to the League in recent
 months - tho' curiously enough he was not the real initiator
 of the famous invitation. Mr. G. (Gibbs) was Ruffin who simply said his
 spirit must & such to maintain & hammered at it until he hit
 the right note. He got lots of support everywhere; but the dynamite was
 his. A.S. caught the spark. But A.S. isn't distinct - & before you
 take a decision is the first & most essential.

Now I am leaving this to the last - but I've not heard from
 Elsie. I think I had better write again, but I have been expecting
 to say some word. Perhaps you have heard by air - I hope so. If you
 expect from me my love. I am very sorry that I'm not better

I am a ... things I've like to say & want.
 But just what you look & Jackson ...
 to 45th & the lake (Kramer)? I've like to hear how the house
 looks, etc. of again. ... by car is coming in
 just, whether all my plants have had their heads in the

John

Heley

P.S. Got the information I wanted
 at the beginning of the letter. Thanks
 to my best to help



COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL
DE LA
CROIX - ROUGE

2 décembre 1940

GENÈVE, le

122, Rue de Lausanne

Mon cher Herbert,

Il y a longtemps que
j'aurais désiré vous recevoir
pour pouvoir reprendre nos
conversations qui se vivent
assités à mon grand regret.
depuis que la Croix Rouge
prend tout mon temps et
que je ne puis plus passer
à la S. I. N.

Je vous aurai volontiers demandé
de nous faire le grand plaisir de
venir dîner chez nous un de ces
soirs prochains, mais vu la distance,
le froid et le manque d'excuse
j'hésite, et si vous n'êtes pas trop pris

A MUNICH

Le chancelier Hitler et M. Mussolini sont tombés d'accord sur les conditions à faire à la France

Bordeaux n'a reçu encore aucune communication

ROME, 18. — On annonce que la conversation entre MM. Hitler et Mussolini a commencé à 16 heures, dans le bureau personnel du chancelier, dans le Führerbau et a duré jusqu'à 18 h. 30. Les deux chefs de gouvernement se sont entretenus seuls et c'est seulement ensuite qu'ils ont appelé les deux ministres des affaires étrangères, le comte Ciano et M. von Ribbentrop.

On déclare que l'accord est complet.

La suite des deux chefs d'Etat

MUNICH, 18. (D.N.B.) — Pendant que se déroulent au Führerbau les entretiens entre Hitler et Mussolini, auxquels participent M. von Ribbentrop et le comte Ciano, assistés du Dr Schmidt en qualité d'interprète, les autres membres des délégations respectives sont notamment présents : MM. Buti et Viletti, du ministère italien des affaires étrangères, le général Rotta, remplaçant du chef d'état-major italien, le général Castiglione, l'amiral de Courten, le général Perino et, du côté allemand, le général von Keitel, le général Bodenschatz, le Dr Dietrich, chef de la presse du Reich, le Dr Gaus, sous-secrétaire d'Etat, M. von Dornberg, chef du protocole, ainsi que MM. Alfieri, ambassadeur d'Italie, et von Mackensen, ambassadeur d'Allemagne.

L'accord germano-italien

MUNICH, 18. (D.N.B.) — Hitler et Mussolini se sont mis d'accord, mardi, au cours de leur entretien de Munich, sur l'attitude des deux gouvernements à l'égard de la demande d'armistice de la France.

Départ de Munich

MUNICH, 18. (D.N.B.) — Hitler et Mussolini ayant terminé leur entretien ont quitté Munich.

Encore aucune réponse à Bordeaux

BORDEAUX, 18. — On déclare, dans les milieux officiels français, que la réponse allemande à la demande du maréchal Pétain n'était pas encore parvenue à 22 h. 30.

La France devrait céder ses ports pour la lutte contre l'Angleterre et empêcher une aide des Etats-Unis

ROME, 18. — Le Lavoro fascista, parlant des décisions qui vont être prises à Munich, estime que l'une d'elles sera la cession par la France de ses ports aux forces italo-allemandes. Cette cession est nécessaire aux puissances de l'Axe pour pouvoir continuer la lutte contre l'Angleterre, et surtout pour une attitude de vigilance à l'égard des Etats-Unis. C'est pour cette raison que l'avance des troupes du Reich, tout en ayant perdu tout caractère de combat, se poursuit régulièrement, et l'on arrivera probablement ainsi à l'occupation de tout le territoire français.

Les conditions seront inévitablement dures

Le Telegrafo, organe du ministère des affaires étrangères, déclare que les puissances de l'Axe sont dans la nécessité d'imposer à la France des conditions qui la mettront dans l'impossibilité d'être utilisée comme point d'appui sur le continent pour les Anglo-Saxons. Ce journal ajoute que le désir du maréchal Pétain de traiter sera écarté. Pétain ne pourra pas traiter. Hitler et Mussolini, qui sont certainement remplis de compréhension humaine à l'égard du vieux maréchal, devront toutefois se prémunir contre tout danger découlant de la politique anglo-saxonne. Par conséquent, les conditions imposées à la France seront inévitablement dures.

L'Axe s'attend à faire face à une coalition anglo-américaine

Le Giornale d'Italia écrit dans son éditorial : Le traitement que l'Allemagne et l'Italie feront à la France dénotera que les puissances de l'Axe sont dans la nécessité d'imposer à la France des conditions qui la mettront dans l'impossibilité d'être utilisée comme point d'appui sur le continent pour les Anglo-Saxons. Ce journal ajoute que le désir du maréchal Pétain de traiter sera écarté. Pétain ne pourra pas traiter. Hitler et Mussolini, qui sont certainement remplis de compréhension humaine à l'égard du vieux maréchal, devront toutefois se prémunir contre tout danger découlant de la politique anglo-saxonne. Par conséquent, les conditions imposées à la France seront inévitablement dures.

Le journal remarque que la guerre n'est pas terminée et qu'elle imposera à l'avenir des tâches très graves à l'Italie, des tâches essentielles pour la victoire commune. Après avoir remarqué que l'Angleterre compte sur le matériel de guerre et sur l'aide financière des Etats-Unis, le Giornale d'Italia déclare que la poursuite de la guerre à l'aspect d'une lutte contre les Anglo-Saxons.

L'organe du palais Chigi reconnaît l'importance des ressources dont dispose le bloc anglo-saxon, mais il croit que la Grande-Bretagne sera incapable de se suffire longtemps par son propre ravitaillement, sous la menace d'une invasion en masse.

Et le plan d'action aurait été arrêté à Munich. Une note de l'agence Stefani déclare que la défaite française représente un premier

pas gigantesque vers l'expulsion de l'Angleterre du continent, ce qui assurera dans l'avenir une vie tranquille à l'Europe.

Le Lavoro fascista remarque qu'au cours de la rencontre de Munich, rendue nécessaire par le fonctionnement du « pacte d'acier » interdisant aux deux parties de signer une paix séparée, la question de la préparation du plan d'action prochain contre l'Angleterre, répartis entre l'Italie et l'Allemagne, seront mises au point. Le journal déclare que la part de l'Italie sera importante.

EN FRANCE

Les troupes allemandes poursuivent les opérations militaires

BERLIN, 18. — La situation militaire établie par le D.N.B. dit notamment :

L'allocution du maréchal Pétain disant que la France devait cesser le combat a été interprétée souvent comme signifiant que les hostilités devaient cesser sur tout le front franco-allemand. Ce n'est pas le cas. La lutte continue. Les troupes allemandes, avançant facilement, continuent de poursuivre l'ennemi. Les hostilités ne prendront fin que lorsqu'un armistice aura été conclu.

En s'emparant rapidement de la forteresse de Metz, le haut commandement allemand dispose d'une position d'une importance extraordinaire dans le dos de la ligne Maginot. Ainsi, dans ce secteur, cette ligne ne peut plus être tenue. D'autre part, l'occupation du Creusot, qui joue dans l'industrie des armements français le rôle que joue la Ruhr en Allemagne, est également d'une très grande importance. Les pertes énormes des Français en armes et en matériel de guerre ne pourront plus être compensées.

Tandis que la forteresse de Dijon a été prise sans combat, Colmar était attaquée. L'armée allemande dispose également de la maîtrise de l'air. Les formidables attaques aériennes qui ont eu lieu sur la gare de Rennes et sur des transports ennemis à l'embouchure de la Loire le prouvent éloquemment.

PRÈS DE VESOU

Les Français ont tenté une dernière attaque

BERLIN, 18. (D.N.B.) — Une partie des troupes françaises encerclées en Alsace et en Lorraine a tenté, lundi, d'enfoncer les lignes allemandes près de Vesoul, en direction du plateau de Langres. Cette attaque a été repoussée, avec des pertes énormes pour les Français. Les Allemands ont fait 20.000 prisonniers.

Près de Nevers, ils se sont emparés de 100 chars d'assaut, dont 6 de plus de 70 tonnes.

Les Allemands poussent avec force vers le Sud-Est

LONDRES, 18. (Reuter) — Selon les renseignements reçus des milieux autorisés de Londres, les forces françaises combattent toujours. La poussée allemande se poursuit avec force, surtout dans le Sud-Est. Pour autant que l'on peut en juger par les renseignements parvenus, il semble qu'il n'existe pas une grande activité allemande dans l'Ouest, en direction de Laïde. Les milieux compétents font allusion aux controverses sur la capacité des chars lourds allemands de résister aux tirs et déclarent qu'il existe des preuves abondantes que les projectiles des canons antitanks britanniques sont capables de pénétrer dans un blindage allemand de tout type rencontré jusqu'à présent, à la condition que les canons soient à portée effective.

Alerte aérienne à Bordeaux

NEW-YORK, 18. (Reuter) — Le correspondant à Bordeaux de la Columbia Broadcasting Co déclare que Bordeaux, qui est bndée de réfugiés, fut réveillée par une alerte aérienne, la nuit dernière. Les canons de la D.C.A. se firent entendre.

Le correspondant ajoute que « la population s'attend bien à ce que les Allemands continuent à harceler le gouvernement français le plus possible, afin d'obtenir le genre de paix désiré ».

Cherbourg et Rennes occupées

BORDEAUX, 18. — Communiqué officiel français du 18 juin au soir :

L'ennemi est parvenu aujourd'hui, après une action violente contre nos éléments de reconnaissance, à s'installer profondément en Normandie et en Bretagne. Ses éléments avancés ont atteint Cherbourg et Rennes.

Sur la Loire moyenne, l'ennemi a pu établir, au cours de la journée, quelques têtes de pont entre Orléans et Nevers.

Entre la Loire et les Vosges, les masses de l'ennemi ont continué à avancer vers le

Jura. Des combats se poursuivent en Alsace et en Lorraine, où nos troupes contiennent l'ennemi.

Des raids de la R.A.F. sur l'Allemagne

LONDRES, 18. (Reuter) — Selon des renseignements officiels, l'aviation britannique a bombardé pendant trois heures, dans la nuit de lundi à mardi, des raffineries et des réservoirs de pétrole à Gelsenkirchen, Homburg, Wanne-Eickel, dans la Ruhr et à Dellwergen, à l'est de Hanovre. De violents incendies éclatèrent.

Des avions bombardèrent également des gares de triage et de marchandises, entre Ham et Aix-la-Chapelle et le long du Rhin, de Duisburg à Coblenze. Trois aérodromes allemands furent également bombardés. Un incendie éclata près de Barmen. Des bombes furent également jetées sur les hangars de l'aérodrome de Schiphol, près d'Amsterdam, où un appareil allemand a été abattu tandis qu'il s'apprêtait à atterrir. Deux avions britanniques sont manquants.

A BORDEAUX

Réunion du Cabinet français

QUELQUE PART EN FRANCE, 18. — Le Cabinet français a tenu une réunion ce matin, à 11 heures. La plus grande partie des délibérations a été consacrée à l'examen de la situation militaire et diplomatique.

A LA RADIO DE LONDRES

Le général de Gaulle préconise la résistance

LONDRES, 18. (Reuter) — Le général de Gaulle, qui fut chef du cabinet militaire de M. Paul Reynaud, dans une allocution radiodiffusée mardi soir, a déclaré notamment :

« Les généraux qui, depuis de nombreuses années, nous commandent les armées françaises ont formé un gouvernement. Ce gouvernement, alléguant que nos armées ont été vaincues, a entamé des négociations avec l'ennemi pour faire cesser les hostilités. Nous avons certainement été et sommes encore submergés par la puissance mécanique de l'ennemi à la fois sur terre et dans les airs. Mais le dernier mot n'est-il pas dit ? Tout espoir n'est-il disparu ? Non ! Croyez-moi, conclut le général de Gaulle, je parle en connaissance de cause et je dis que la France n'est pas perdue. Les mêmes méthodes qui provoquent notre défaite peuvent très bien, un jour, nous mener à la victoire ! »

Le général de Gaulle a ajouté que la guerre ne saurait être limitée au territoire français, car c'est une guerre mondiale.

EN GRANDE-BRETAGNE

L'organisation de la défense

LONDRES, 18. (Reuter) — Les autorités britanniques ont commencé la distribution d'imprimés donnant des instructions à la population civile en cas d'invasion ennemie. Ces instructions conseillent notamment aux gens de ne pas évacuer leur lieu de résidence sans l'ordre des autorités, afin d'éviter l'encombrement des routes, qui aide l'ennemi en Belgique et en Hollande.

Raids allemands sur l'Angleterre

LONDRES, 18. (Reuter) — Des raids aériens ont eu lieu, hier soir, dans le Lincolnshire, le North Hampshire et le Norfolk. Des avions ennemis ont lancé des bombes incendiaires et explosives sur la Tamise. Une forte canonnade a été entendue à l'estuaire du fleuve.

M. Churchill s'empare toujours la victoire

LONDRES, 18. — Dans une allocution prononcée mardi soir au micro, M. Churchill a développé les mêmes thèmes qu'à la Chambre des Communes et confirmé que l'Empire britannique n'abandonne pas le combat, mais luttera jusqu'à la dernière extrémité. M. Churchill a ajouté qu'il y avait des raisons d'espérer que l'Allemagne serait finalement vaincue.

L'Afrique du Sud continue son effort

JOHANNESBURG, 18. (Reuter) — Dans un discours prononcé mardi soir, le général Smuts, premier ministre, a déclaré que « L'Union sud-africaine n'hésitera pas à doubler son effort de guerre. Elle fera la guerre jusqu'au bout, car il ne saurait exister aucun doute sur sa volonté de soutenir la Grande-Bretagne, au côté des autres Dominions. La tâche de l'Union sera de défendre en premier lieu le Nord de l'Afrique et le Moyen-Orient. »

Des troupes canadiennes ont débarqué en Islande

Et le Canada défendra les possessions françaises en Amérique

OTTAWA, 18. (Reuter) — M. Mackenzie King a annoncé au Parlement que le premier contingent du corps expéditionnaire canadien a débarqué en Islande. Il a annoncé également que le Canada étend sa puissance militaire défensive aux possessions françaises de l'hémisphère occidentale.

Les attaques de la R.A.F. en Afrique

LE CAIRE, 18. (Reuter) — De nouveaux raids ont été effectués par les bombardiers de la R.A.F. hier, contre Massarah (Erythrée), où un incendie fut causé dans les enclos près d'un dépôt de carburant et une installation d'essence endommagée. De nombreux vols de reconnaissance, dans la région d'Asmara et Ourra, ont rapporté

de précieuses informations. Un poste de défense a été détruit à Neobelli; des avions italiens à terre ont été bombardés.

Sur l'Ethiopie méridionale

NAIROBI (Kenya), 18. (Reuter) — On annonce officiellement que des concentrations de troupes ennemies, des colonnes de transport, des centres de radio et autres bâtiments ont été fortement bombardés dimanche, au cours de raids effectués par des unités des avions sud-africains et rhodésien sur l'Ethiopie méridionale.

Six cents prisonniers en Libye

LONDRES, 18. — Depuis le début des hostilités, les forces britanniques auraient fait en Libye 600 prisonniers et pris 12 tanks, ainsi que sept canons. Environ 100 avions ont été détruits par la R.A.F.

Raid italien sur Malte

LA VALLETTE, 18. (Reuter) — Une alerte aérienne a eu lieu, mardi, à Malte. Lundi, il y a eu quatre alertes. Cinq bombes furent jetées sur l'île, mais elles ne firent ni victimes ni dégâts.

L'empire britannique continue la lutte

LE CAIRE, 18. (Reuter) — Le lieutenant-général Wewell, commandant en chef des troupes britanniques dans le Moyen-Orient, déclare notamment, dans un ordre du jour, que « bien entendu, l'Empire britannique continuera la lutte jusqu'à la victoire. Nous demeurerons fermes, quoi qu'il advienne ! », conclut l'ordre du jour.

Un général italien fait prisonnier

LE CAIRE, 18. (Reuter) — On annonce qu'un général du génie italien a été fait prisonnier, au cours du raid britannique au sud-est de Sollum.

Bombardement des bases anglaises en Egypte

LE CAIRE, 18. (Reuter) — Le haut commandement du Moyen-Orient communique qu'au cours du bombardement effectué lundi sur Sollum, Sidi-Barran et Marsa-Matruh, il y eut 4 morts et 6 blessés parmi les troupes égyptiennes, ainsi que 4 ouvriers blessés. Marsa-Matruh a été de nouveau bombardée dans l'après-midi d'hier.

Nouveaux raids en Libye

En Libye, la R.A.F. a effectué un raid efficace sur Tobruk, sans perdre un appareil. Un dépôt de munitions et un dépôt d'essence ont été atteints. Les dégâts sont étendus.

Et en Ethiopie

De nouvelles attaques aériennes ont eu lieu en Afrique Orientale italienne et notamment sur Direaoua et Maccana. L'aviation sud-africaine a effectué un raid sur Yavelle : 28 avions ont été envoyés au sol. Des coups directs furent portés également à l'aérodrome militaire de Maga, où des camions furent détruits et des troupes dispersées.

En Indochine française

Les avertissements du Japon

TOKIO, 18. (Doméi) — L'armée japonaise dans la Chine du Sud a fait publier le communiqué officiel suivant :

Il semble que l'Indochine française maintienne son attitude antijaponaise en laissant transporter à Choung King des armes à travers son territoire, et cela malgré les protestations répétées du gouvernement japonais. Si elle refuse de modifier son attitude, l'armée japonaise, qui s'efforce de détruire le régime de Chang Kai Chek, sera obligée de prendre des mesures en conséquence.

Réunion du Cabinet nippon

TOKIO, 18. — L'agence Domei communique que des discussions relatives à l'Indochine ont eu lieu au ministère des affaires étrangères, sous la présidence de M. Arita. Celui-ci a assisté ensuite à une réunion plénière du Cabinet, qui a porté sur le maintien du « statu quo » en Indochine.

Aux Etats-Unis

Vers l'institution d'un service national

WASHINGTON, 18. (Reuter) — Le président Roosevelt a déclaré à la presse qu'il pensait que les Etats-Unis arriveraient un jour à une sorte de service national pour tous les jeunes gens, quel qu'il ne puisse s'agir de service militaire, au sens strict du mot.

Ford va construire 3000 moteurs d'avions

WASHINGTON, 18. (Reuter) — La commission sénatoriale compétente a approuvé un crédit supplémentaire de 43.500.000 dollars, pour financer le contrat passé avec la Compagnie Ford en vue de la construction de 3000 moteurs d'avion Rolls-Royce. Des pourparlers seraient entamés avec M. Ford pour la production en série de moteurs d'avions.

La marine comptera 738 unités

WASHINGTON, 18. (Reuter) — La commission navale de la Chambre des représentants a recommandé à l'unanimité un crédit supplémentaire de 4 milliards de dollars, afin de doter les Etats-Unis de la flotte la plus puissante du monde. Ce crédit permettrait de construire 200 vaisseaux de guerre et de porter le total des unités américaines à 738.

Une «pointe» allemande à la Cure

Au moment de mettre sous presse, on nous signale de La Cure, le passage de trois autos blindées allemandes, venant de Saint-Claude et remplissant, dans la région, une mission de reconnaissance.

BORDEAUX, 18. — Le gouvernement français s'est occupé du problème de l'exode de la population et du ravitaillement, ainsi que des problèmes relatifs aux transports et à la main-d'œuvre.

Dernière heure

Chronique locale

Guerre aux bobards!
La guerre des nerfs continue. Il suffit de se promener dans la rue pour entendre colporter les rumeurs les plus fantaisistes. Des personnes, apparemment sérieuses, affirment depuis plusieurs jours que les Allemands sont aux portes de Genève, qu'une division blindée descend du col de la Faucille, etc., etc.

L'espionnage fait ses ravages. On s'imaginerait aisément l'écrasante et délicate besogne de notre police en ces temps troublés. Elle n'a pas de temps à perdre à suivre des « affaires » qui n'ont pour toute base que l'imaginaire trouble de quelques-uns.

L'agitation actuelle est parfaitement stérile. Elle risque de se retourner, tôt ou tard, contre nous.

Il existe des lois sévères pour punir ceux qui répandent de fausses rumeurs. Celles-ci deviendraient certainement beaucoup plus rares si l'on châtiait implacablement quelques-uns de leurs colporteurs.

Chaque citoyen sensé a le devoir de participer à la guerre contre les bobards!

Ivresse
Max Stoutz, commis, Thurgovie, domicilié à Saint-Gall, a été conduit aux violents sur l'ordre de M. Nerbolier, commissaire de police, pour avoir causé un scandale au café.

Attentats à la pudeur
Pierre P., cuisinier, Genevois, né en 1885, domicilié à Russin, s'est rendu coupable d'attentats à la pudeur.

Il a été écroué sur l'ordre de M. Greffier.

Il y a Ludwig et Ludwig
Une récente lettre de notre correspondant de Berlin, parue sous le titre « Ludwig et l'Italie », a provoqué quelque méprise. Certains de nos lecteurs ont cru qu'il s'agissait de l'écrivain Emil Ludwig (d'ailleurs aux Etats-Unis actuellement) et se sont étonnés qu'il put tenir de tels propos. Or le Ludwig en question est un personnage créé par notre

correspondant pour nous faire connaître les idées et les sentiments de l'Allemand moyen.

Au Conseil municipal

Le Conseil municipal s'est réuni hier soir, sous la présidence de M. Marti.

Le président rend, au nom de l'assemblée, hommage aux victimes du bombardement du 12 juin et exprime des vœux de prompt rétablissement à l'adresse des blessés.

Un citoyen écrit au Conseil municipal pour se plaindre du fonctionnement défectueux des services d'alerte, lors du bombardement. Plusieurs conseillers, notamment MM. Castellino, Favre, Bernard, Rossier et Bernoud font des remarques à ce sujet. M. Uhler, président du conseil administratif, répond que la plupart des services alertés par une incursion aérienne échappent à l'autorité de la Ville. Le Conseil d'Etat a ouvert une enquête; il lui appartiendra d'en faire connaître les conclusions. Un seul point intéresse la commission de la Ville: l'extinction de la colonne de gaz enflammée sous le pont de Carouge; tous les renseignements recueillis par l'enquête s'accordent à dire que le nécessaire fut fait dans le minimum de temps possible.

Après que les comptes rendus administratifs et financiers de 1939 aient été renvoyés à l'examen de la commission, le Conseil désigne trois représentants de la Ville à la Société des émissions de Radio-Genève. Sont élus MM. Jacoud, Naville et Sesiano. Le Conseil administratif a désigné pour le représenter MM. Noul et Peney.

Sur proposition de M. Peney, le Conseil vote un crédit de fr. 20,000, représentant la participation de la Ville aux frais de la réfection de la Chapelle des Machabées, à la cathédrale Saint-Pierre.

Deux demandes de crédits pour subventionner l'aménagement d'abris privés et pour entreprendre la construction de tranchées-abris dans les jardins publics, sont renvoyées à l'examen de la commission des travaux, après quelques observations de MM. Naine et Kohler.

Séance levée.

A LA FRONTIERE NEUCHATOISE

Arrivée massive de soldats français et de réfugiés civils

(De notre envoyé spécial)

Comment, arrivant aux Verrières aux derniers jours, probablement, d'un conflit douloureux, la France sort saine et sauve, à bout de résistance, comment ne pas songer aux scènes tragiques dont la petite cité frontalière jurassienne fut le théâtre il y a tantôt 70 ans, lorsqu'une armée vaincue se présenta à ses portes, venant chercher sur notre territoire un refuge après des mois d'une lutte désespérée?

L'histoire, a-t-on écrit, se répète. Les événements dont les habitants des Verrières sont les témoins apitoyés semblent vouloir en apporter la preuve. Car, depuis deux fois quarante-huit heures, de petits détachements français en déroute tentent d'échapper à la captivité dont les menace l'avance foudroyante des troupes allemandes, en passant notre frontière sur les points mêmes où les soldats de 1871 affluaient en rangs pressés. Et aujourd'hui, parmi les soldats suisses qui accueillent ces fugitifs, se trouvent — coïncidence étonnante — les petits-fils des hommes qui recurent l'armée internée en 1871.

Au reste, l'afflux des militaires français diminue sans cesse depuis que les troupes allemandes qui les talonnaient ont occupé la région.

Avant de se retirer de Besançon, les Français ont eu le temps de faire sauter les ponts et gravement endommager les routes, dans l'espoir de retarder l'avance ennemie.

Besançon avait vu affluer, ces temps derniers, des détachements venus du Nord et de la région de Verdun, auxquels l'ordre avait été donné de gagner le plus rapidement possible cette ville où, déclarait-on, une armée nouvelle allait être formée.

Hélas! à leur arrivée, ils trouvèrent la ville abandonnée par les troupes françaises qui, avant de se retirer, avaient évacué vers le sud tous les wagons et toutes les locomotives de la gare. Il ne restait plus aux arrivants qu'à tenter de poursuivre leur route vers le sud ou de gagner la Suisse. C'est cette dernière solution que préférèrent adopter certains d'entre eux, qui réussirent, au prix de mille peines et des plus graves périls, à se faufiler entre les détachements blindés allemands qui surgissaient, et à cheminer jusqu'à la frontière en utilisant les sentiers des forêts.

Deux d'entre eux qui avaient combattu dans le Nord, près d'Amiens, nous déclarèrent que cette ville avait subi un bombardement terrible et était entièrement en ruines.

A Pontarlier, ils eurent la chance de n'être pas aperçus par un groupe de tanks allemands qui passa à une centaine de mètres d'eux seulement.

A Besançon et Pontarlier

Sur les quatre forts qui défendent les approches de la ville, sont déjà occupés par les Allemands, qui, hier matin, à 8 heures, y ont hissé le drapeau à croix gammée.

Seul le fort historique de Joux, célèbre par la détention qu'y subit Mirabeau, tient encore. Il semble que, comptant sur ses profondes casemates, la garnison ait décidé de résister jusqu'au bout.

Pontarlier, les ponts ont été détruits et l'eau manque.

Toute la journée d'hier, les industriels neuchâtelois qui ont des succursales dans cette ville ont passé à plusieurs reprises la frontière — profitant de la disparition des gendarmes et des douaniers français — pour ramener en Suisse le matériel transportable de leurs usines et la comptabilité de leurs bureaux.

Avant-hier matin, quatre parachutistes allemands ont atterri sur territoire français, non loin de la frontière, et ont été capturés par des soldats français qui se dirigeaient vers le sud et qui emmenèrent leurs prisonniers solidement encadrés.

L'exode des civils

Mais ce ne sont pas seulement des militaires, que les habitants des Verrières voient passer au loin ou se présenter à la frontière. Ce sont bien plutôt des civils de lamentables cohortes de malheureux villageois qui se sont traînés jour et nuit sur les routes, avant d'arriver à ce havre de grâce que la Suisse représente aujourd'hui pour eux. La Suisse où ils pourront enfin se restaurer, se reposer de leurs fatigues, dormir surtout, sans la menace perpétuelle suspendue sur leurs têtes des bombardiers ennemis.

Désolant cortège devant le spectacle duquel le témoin le plus endurci sent son cœur se serrer et les larmes lui venir irrésistiblement aux yeux.

En face de tant de misères, la Suisse ne faillit pas à ses traditions. Et tout le long de la frontière, un magnifique élan de charité neuchâteloise qui se dépense avec la plus chaleureuse sympathie auprès de ces victimes de la guerre.

A la gare de Neuchâtel, où convergent les trains venant du Locle et des Verrières, Samaritains et Samaritaines, éclaireurs et éclaireuses accueillent les réfugiés qui trouvent, de leur descente de wagon, les soins les plus empreints, et un ravitaillage auxquels ils font honneur, car beaucoup d'entre eux ont cheminé des heures et des heures sans trouver à manger.

Ils nous racontent leur fuite précipitée devant les troupes allemandes, leur départ à l'aveugle sans pouvoir rien emporter ou presque de leurs biens. L'interminable randonnée le long de routes encombrées où des ponts ont été détruits au fur et à mesure de la retraite des forces françaises.

Dans un train que nous croisons en gare de Boveresse, où nous faisons une halte prolongée, se trouve un convoi de ces malheureux.

Des vieillards, des femmes au visage décomposé par la terreur des heures récentes

et qui ont à peine la force de sourire quand nous leur disons, par la portière, un mot d'encouragement et d'espoir.

Une petite vieille, aux traits tirés et les yeux pleins de larmes, nous tend la main: « Enfin, on est en Suisse, s'écrie-t-elle. Ah! mais, moi, de nous sauver. Mais on a tout perdu. » Elle nous explique, entre ses compagnons de misère habitant en France, en face de la Brévine: « Nos hommes nous ont fait sauver. Alors on est toutes parties avec les gosses. »

Le calvaire des enfants

De ces gosses, le wagon est tout rempli: pauvres petits êtres dans les yeux desquels se lit l'épouvante. L'un d'eux, un gamin d'une dizaine d'années, s'est enfui sans avoir eu le temps de s'habiller. Des voisins l'ont enveloppé en hâte dans une couverture en laines d'où émerge sa tête, semblable à celle de Pierre l'Ébouriffé. Tous sont sales, la figure zébrée de traces de larmes.

Ils ont l'air si misérables, si apeurés que, dans mon compartiment, les portemonnaies s'ouvrent spontanément. Nous leur distribuons par la portière des pièces de quatre sous, qui amènent un sourire sur leurs lèvres. A côté de moi, un soldat, simple paysan, a les larmes aux yeux. « Quelle misère », répète-t-il en continuant à distribuer toute la petite monnaie qu'il possède. « Tant pis, me dit-il, tant pis, toute ma solde y passe! »

Tandis que notre train monte aux Verrières, nous croisons des files d'autos françaises dont les propriétaires ont réussi à passer la frontière. Toutes sont bondées de fugitifs et de bagages. Ceux-ci sont aussi amarrés tant bien que mal sur le toit des voitures. Ce sont des amoncellements extraordinaires, où des bicyclettes et des sommiers voisinent avec les objets les plus hétéroclites. J'aperçois même une niche à chien d'où sort la tête d'un bon vieux toutou, qui certainement ne doit rien comprendre à ce voyage inconfortable.

Sur le chemin du retour, j'ai la chance de rencontrer des automobilistes français qui me donnent quelques renseignements sur ce qui s'est passé, ces heures dernières, de l'autre côté de la frontière.

Dans les villages que les fugitifs ont traversés, il ne reste plus que quelques hommes hors d'âge qui n'ont pas voulu abandonner leurs foyers. Les femmes et les enfants se sont sauvés, qui à pied, qui en char. Les bêtes ont été lâchées à travers champs et errent lamentablement dans la campagne. C'est ainsi que le propriétaire d'une porcherie modèle a mis en liberté ses 500 pensionnaires!

Partout c'est l'image de la désolation, un désarroi dont rien ne peut donner une idée.

A l'abri

Du moins, les malheureux villageois qui ont dû abandonner tous leurs biens et se réfugier en Suisse ont-ils la consolation d'être accueillis chez nous avec un empressement et un dévouement qui adoucissent un peu leur misère.

Sur ce point, la population des Verrières, comme la troupe cantonnée dans le petit village jurassien, se montrent dignes de notre réputation.

Au retour à Neuchâtel, je trouve, arrêté sur le quai de la gare, un train interminable qui est plein de réfugiés et qui va conduire tous ces pauvres gens dans les localités romandes, où on leur a aménagé des abris provisoires.

Des infirmières, des éclaireurs et des jeunes filles passent de wagon en wagon, offrant à chacun du thé, des sandwiches, du lait pour les petits enfants, dont on change en hâte les linges sales.

Dans les filets, ce sont des amoncellements de baluchons minables qui, désormais, représentent toute la fortune de ces pauvres gens. Sur les banquettes, des enfants, des poupons de quelques mois dorment à poings fermés, crevés de fatigue. Il y a là une indicible misère matérielle et morale qu'il faut soulager.

Et, pour pareille tâche, ce ne sera pas trop de l'effort et de l'appui financier de tous ceux qui, chez nous, ont le cœur à la bonne place.

Arrivées tout au long du jour

NEUCHÂTEL, 19 (De notre correspondant) — L'après-midi, le pitoyable exode qui avait commencé samedi déjà s'est poursuivi pendant l'après-midi et la soirée d'hier à un rythme accéléré.

Des milliers de réfugiés civils sont entrés par les différents postes frontière du canton de Neuchâtel et plus de 2000 soldats ont franchi le Col des Roches près du Locle descendant leurs armes et demandant à être internés.

Dès les premières heures de l'après-midi, la plus grande partie de la population de Neuchâtel s'était massée devant la gare où devait arriver un convoi de soldats français.

Un comité de réception avait été constitué et une localité avait été préparée. Le convoi arriva aux environs de 14 heures. Il transportait quelque 120 soldats, fantassins pour la plus part, qui portaient l'uniforme kaki. Tous présentaient un état de fatigue indescriptible. Entrée en Suisse par le poste du Col des Roches, ils avaient été restaurés dans les montagnes neuchâteloises et ne tarissaient pas d'éloge sur la gentillesse helvétique.

Aussitôt après avoir été reconfortés, ils furent conduits en colonne sur la place du Mail, où à lieu chaque année la fête des écoles neuchâteloises, où une rapide visite sans tarder dans les différents collèges du chef-lieu, afin de pouvoir prendre le repos dont ils paraissaient avoir tant besoin.

Une heure après, quarante officiers aviateurs et plus de 150 soldats de la même armée, entrés par le même chemin, arrivèrent

à La Chaux-de-Fonds où ils furent reçus d'une façon enthousiaste. Il s'agissait d'un état-major complet, parmi lequel un général d'aviation, deux colonels, quatre lieutenants-colonels et plusieurs commandants.

Après avoir été désarmés à la frontière, ils étaient arrivés avec leurs voitures et leurs camions encore camouflés, formant toute une colonne motorisée d'aviation. Les officiers furent aussitôt conduits au Home catholique, tandis que les hommes étaient répartis dans la plus grande église neuchâteloise, rapidement débarrassée de ses bancs, et dans laquelle on avait placé des tas de paille.

A 20 heures, un train venant du Locle amenait une cinquantaine de réfugiés civils, que plusieurs familles neuchâteloises tinrent à héberger. Il faut signaler que le dernier wagon du convoi était occupé par quarante-deux membres des anciennes brigades internationales de la guerre d'Espagne. Ceux-ci avaient été internés au camp de Valdaoh et s'étaient échappés à l'approche des Allemands. Ils s'étaient présentés au poste frontière suisse. Comme il s'agit d'individus d'allure assez inquiétante, on les a laissés dans le wagon et, après qu'ils eussent été restaurés, on les a immédiatement conduits au pénitencier de Witzwil.

Pendant ce temps, d'innombrables camions continuent d'arriver, amenant près de 400 soldats de la ligne Maginot, qui s'étaient présentés, eux aussi, à la frontière suisse pour échapper aux Allemands. Comme pour leurs malheureux compatriotes, une fiche fut établie pour chacun d'eux et ils furent répartis dans les divers collèges de la ville.

Enfin, à 21 h. 38, un train de quelque 25 wagons, qui venait de Boveresse, amenait à Neuchâtel plusieurs centaines de réfugiés civils des régions de Belfort et du Doubs. Pauvres gens, qui racontent des histoires affreuses. Comme il n'y avait plus de place, on leur offrit une collation, puis ils repartirent en direction de Romont, où de vastes aménagements ont été préparés pour qu'ils puissent s'y loger, en attendant que leur sort soit réglé.

Le calvaire que ces pauvres gens ont enduré est effrayant. Des familles sont dispersées, des gens qui avaient travaillé toute leur vie n'ont pu emporter que quelques hardes. Une mère a vu son enfant mourir dans ses bras et, à moitié folle, refusait de se séparer du petit cadavre qu'elle continuait à bercer.

Jusque très avant dans la nuit, ils n'ont cessé, malgré leur fatigue, de crier: « Vive la Suisse! », répondant ainsi aux vœux et aux encouragements que la population leur prodiguait.

Leur séjour en Suisse durera jusqu'à ce que le gouvernement français ait décidé quelle sera son attitude en face des exigences allemandes.

Si la paix devait être signée, les militaires, militaires et civils, seraient immédiatement rendus à la France. En attendant, la Suisse est décidée à faire tout ce qu'elle peut pour adoucir les quelques jours qu'ils passeront chez elle.

A Yverdon

Hier soir sont encore arrivés à Yverdon environ 450 réfugiés français, dont 200 femmes et 200 enfants. Ils venaient de la région Delle-Héricourt-Montbéliard. La population leur fit le meilleur accueil.

A l'heure où nous téléphonons, on procède au rassemblement de ces réfugiés sur la place de la gare, d'où ils seront dirigés sur Romont et Bulle.

Le tunnel du Mont d'Or a sauté
A Vallorbe on apprend que les Français ont fait sauter le tunnel du Mont d'Or.

A la frontière genevoise

Pour l'instant en tout cas, les colonnes motorisées allemandes, en marche vers le sud et la région lyonnaise, semblent se désintéresser de la zone du Jura proche notre frontière zone, qui est complètement « démilitarisée » du côté français.

Dans la matinée d'hier, gendarmes et douaniers français ont quitté leurs postes. Quelques-uns d'entre eux revenaient, tôt après, mais désarmés.

Cette nuit, les réfugiés avaient cessé d'entrer. La frontière est fermée du côté français.

Aucune destruction n'a été opérée dans le Pays de Gex.

Bellegarde n'est pas non plus occupée par les troupes allemandes. Un train de marchandises, venant de cette localité, est arrivé à Genève, à 23 heures, hier soir.

Courrier valaisan

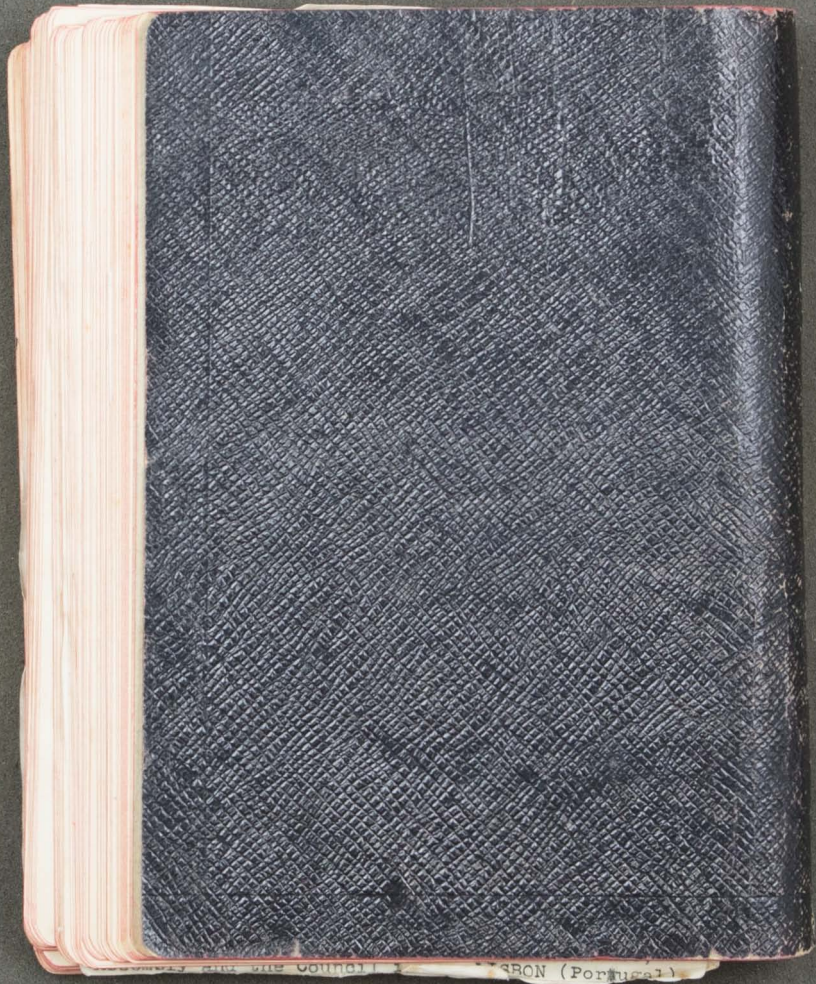
Les obsèques du député Emilie Haldi.
L'ensevelissement de M. Haldi, député, a eu lieu hier après-midi, à Vevey.

Avant le départ de Sierre, devant une nombreuse assistance, s'est déroulé un culte en l'église protestante, au cours duquel M. le pasteur Hahn prit la parole. Nous avons remarqué M. Schnyder, président du Grand Conseil, assisté des membres du bureau et de l'huissier de l'Etat.

Macabre découverte
Des soldats en patrouille au Chrishorn, près de Moerel (Haut-Valais), viennent de découvrir un squelette et des vêtements de femme. Il s'agit de la dépouille d'une pauvre femme de la région, Mlle Crésence Matig, âgée de 65 ans, un peu faible d'esprit, disparue depuis un certain temps.

On pense que la malheureuse a fait une chute mortelle en voulant gravir la montagne.

Le Don National et la Croix-Rouge ont besoin de votre appui! Ouvrez votre cœur et vos mains! Comptez de chèques postaux III/3519.



THE COUNCIL

BRON (Portugal)