



**IE DCUA C1/1**

**Seán Lester Diary - PDF**

**October 1935 - January 1936**

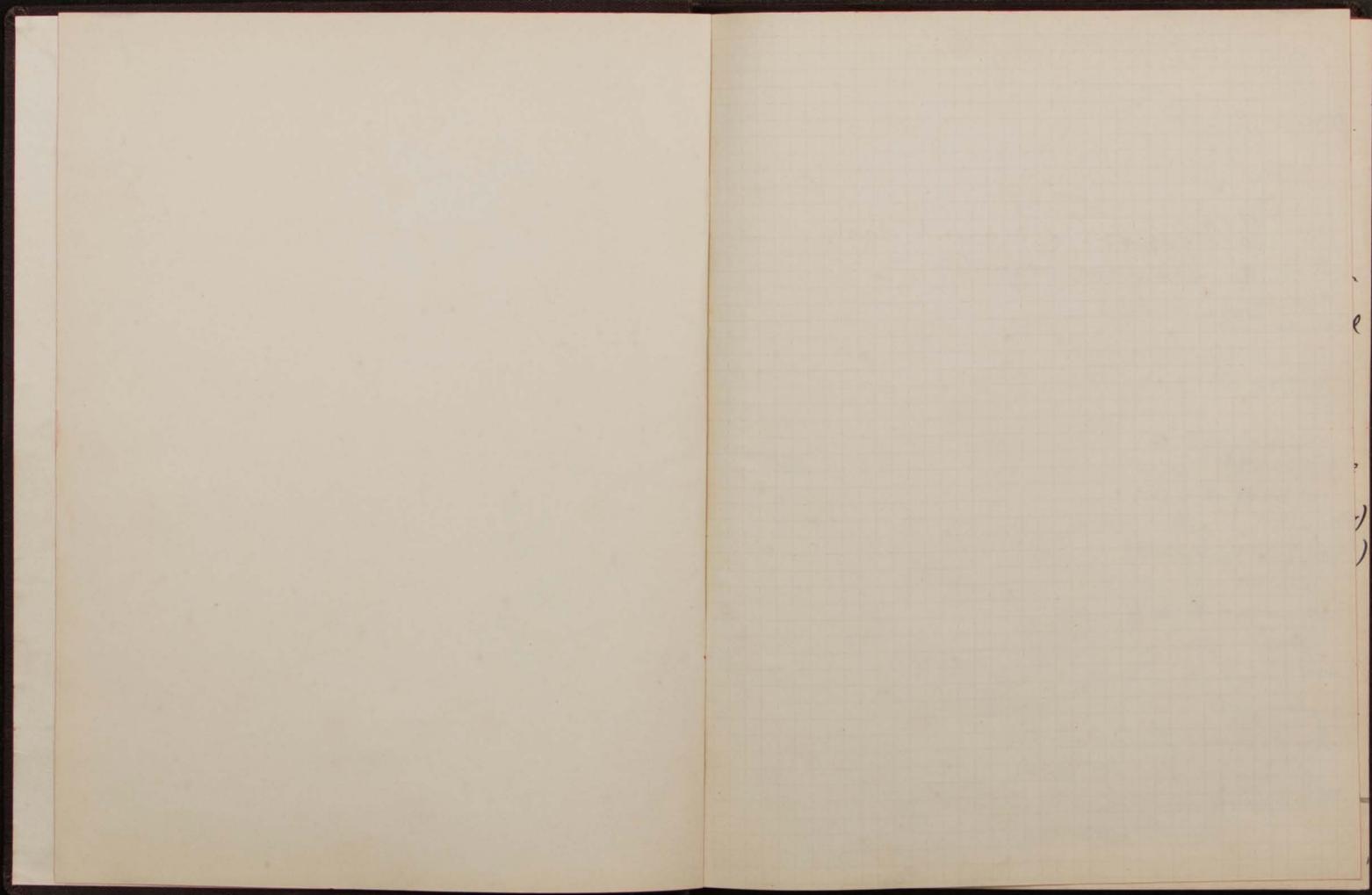
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October 1935.

75<sup>th</sup>

So I've opened a diary at last.  
The odds are against a  
dozen entries.

Sad to hear of Arthur Henderson's death.  
We knew him & his wife, a sweet &  
unpretentious little woman, genteel well  
and I'll miss "Uncle Arthur's" cheery  
greetings in the Geneva lobbies.

While he was Foreign Secretary for Britain  
& a member of the Council his courage  
and honesty impressed me on several  
occasions, and the same qualities  
distinguished him throughout the years  
of the Disarmament Conference.

His presidency of that Conference  
saved his life three years ago. The collapse  
of the Fabian Government, his defeat  
in his own constituency when in 1931 (Oct.)  
Labour was overwhelmed (devaluation of the £)  
led to a break-down, & when he came  
back to Geneva as Pres. of the Disarmament  
Conference he shocked us all with  
the appearance of a broken & dying man.  
But the new duties kept him in affairs -  
big affairs - and he slowly reconstructed  
his ego (!). He certainly "won merit" by  
his impetuosity and energy in endeavouring  
to bring peace to a peaceless Europe.

Henderson had two aids in his despatched work. One was Philek Noel Baker (Univ. Professor: Labor;) who has published a book on Inter Commonwealth Relations. Baker had for a time been helping Nansen in I think his Russian refugee work, and is a humanitarian & a good Empirian. A.H. must have owed much to him during the first strenuous year of the Conference.

And then Zilliacus - "Zill" to all the world - a member of the Information Section of the Secretariat, but a man of character & opinions. Regarded rather as a "Radicell" Zill is strong labor in politics & international in outlook. A British subject of Finnish origin & married to a fascinating Belgian. We worked together to some extent in the Bio-Japanes question on which our views coincided.

Bernard Shaw went to Geneva once & apparently Zill had been in touch with him about arrangements. He met Shaw at the Railway station & introduced himself. "To Zilliacus!", said Shaw - "why I always thought it was a telegraphic address!"

I knew Nansen but not very intimately. This hero of the Arctic, whose adventures had thrilled my generation of boys, came often to Geneva as a Norwegian delegate. But he was getting old then and in my time at any rate did not seem to me to be very effective. His services to the world would however, have made him an ornament of any delegation. One of his colleagues Hambræ, President of the Starting, is one of my best friends in League circles. I worked with him for years in the Truth Committee of the Assembly. We fought together - it was rarely wrong to follow his lead - against bigger & less altruistic interests, and often in a ~~large~~ small but never hopeless minority. Concerned with the finances & administration of the League, the 4<sup>th</sup> Ctee was nearly every year in my time the scene of big political clashes on questions of principle which seemed to us important for the future of the organization. Hambræ is a fighter, a good speaker, (he uses English as a rule) and his courage is beyond question. Strictly built, with a round clear shaven face,

blue Norwegian eyes. He told me where  
how his newspaper in Oslo had exposed  
the attempt on Sir Roger Casement's life  
when he was passing through Norway en route  
to Germany during the War, & of a  
subsequent attempt (by English political  
interests) to ruin him.

Last month in Geneva Hanboe  
was up to his best form. Laval,  
French Premier, had come into the  
council with a proposal for "economy". He did  
not wait for Hanboe's speech but it was  
the talk of the Assembly - in spite of  
preoccupation with the graver issues of  
Italy and Abyssinia. The hornet  
not only buzzed but stung. Laval's  
intervention was purely for effect in  
France where he had been reducing  
salaries & was accompanied by  
demands from the French Delegation  
for fresh expenditures. and now Hanboe has joined the Oxford Group.

While I am writing about Geneva  
I may recall that I was dining  
alone with Anthony Eden, &  
discussing Downing one night

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when young Joukay, his secretary,  
came in with a telegram.  
~~which~~ Eden said: "So they are moving  
ships. He knew & the Hood are  
on the way to "Sib." He arranged  
to see the French that night to  
inform them. It was a sensation  
— the moving of the British Home  
Fleet to the Mediterranean, and  
a sign, unmistakable, that G.B.  
was in earnest. I asked Eden  
as to the danger of war and  
he replied that Mussolini  
was unpredictable: he might  
even attack them. Italia,  
despotism, naval & military,  
had been in frogness for some  
weeks — the Dodecanese, Libya, etc.

General Lord called to  
see me here in Dangip last  
week & said he had just spent  
a month or so in Italy. In  
Spezia, the great Italian naval  
port, he had found the Italians  
making light of their situation

the more active Council representatives  
apart from Brand & the British. "There  
is no use for a town meeting" was  
his answer to an informal suggestion  
about a visit to our meeting.

Arthur Sweetser ~~saw~~ told me  
that Dawes had once said  
that all a diplomat needed was  
a good pair of feet & a stomach;  
whereupon a colleague sotto voce  
commented: "It depends on what  
you work with." At any rate  
Dawes was told quite clearly in  
Dobler that he could not smoke  
his <sup>notorious</sup> famous pipe in a Dobler  
drawing room.

28/10/1931. The usual morning's reports - little changed  
bearing a Jewish messenger & taking letters from him.  
A trade union leader informed - question of  
the immunity of Volkstag deputies. The French  
Consul, going to see his (Warsaw) ambassador  
calls for a talk. Estimates, as many do,  
that the Nazis would get no more than 25%  
in a new election. Conversations having failed I have written  
to President Grévy about the suppression  
& decay of the Opposing Press - a list which  
is impressive in view of the Council's warnings  
last month.

Lord Robert Cecil in an article says: *La guerre*

29.4.1935

"Si l'on me demande pourquoi ils ne l'ont pas défendue pendant la crise extrême-orientale, je répondrai que ce fut seulement parce que le gouvernement britannique avait des doutes sur ses possibilités de coercition contre le Japon, seul, en l'absence des Etats-Unis, et sans l'encouragement de la France"

Lord Robert should know, <sup>as</sup> for the first few weeks at any rate of that long-drawn-out discussion at the Council ~~which~~ he was British Representative, ~~HE WAS PLACED~~ outside or, if I recollect aright, he withdrew, as British policy became more precise and shortly after the National Government came into power in the autumn of 1931.

I certainly remember Sir John Pratt, who was the principal Far Eastern Advisor in the Foreign Office, saying to me in a private conversation that à propos of the Shanghai incident they were afraid that any kind of economic sanction would lead to an immediate attack by the Japanese; that the weakening of British sea power in the Far East since the War had made it virtually certain they would be driven out of the China Seas. There is no doubt that much the heaviest burden of any trouble which might have developed there would have fallen <sup>upon</sup> Britain and that British economic interests would also have suffered infinitely more than any other. I wonder however if Cecil is recalling quite clearly the earliest stages of the dispute, for my recollection certainly is that Britain was at that time the most cautious of the three Powers he mentions.

Briand had during the first month or so shown independence and courage as President of the Council. The United States had gone so far as for the first time to send a representative to sit as observer at the Council table - Prentiss Gilbert. It is true that ~~that~~ there ~~was~~ some retreat from this position at the Paris meeting of October and November when General Dawes came to Paris from London ~~and~~ contented himself by remaining in his hotel. But it was the United States also who made the first declaration as to non-recognition of territorial changes brought about by force. Through all the subsequent discussions one clearly got the impression that Britain was braking and clogging the machinery to prevent or delay action.

It is true therefore that Britain was certainly preoccupied by considerations of the facts that the main burden and most of the sacrifices would fall upon her, and that she felt she was not strong enough to carry it off alone. American opinion at that time was pretty deeply stirred but there was no formal or legal commitment as in the case of League members, and one must notice that popular sentiment in the United States in sympathy with Abyssinia has not so far led to any action likely to embarrass Italy very seriously. I think it is the "New York Times" which a few days ago said that if sanctions fail in this case it would be due to absence of cooperation from the United States.

De Madariaga, who was by reason of intellect and courage the leader of the group of small Powers which fought for the Covenant throughout the Sino-Japanese dispute, was President also of the Committee of Five to investigate the Italo-Abyssinian question. Three different diplomats said to me in Geneva last month that de Madariaga was very "weak" and had disappointed many people. Italy is very much nearer Spain than Japan was. I hope, however, that consideration is not a complete explanation of de Madariaga's reported weakness. I had no talk with him on the subject myself.

30-10-35. Hugh McNeill is dead - a brother of John, James & Charles - one of a remarkable family. A scholar, Hugh was lazy, to the N<sup>o</sup> degree, & sometimes drunker. I did not know him as well as John & James but remember one or two talks with him: e.g. in James's garden in Woodtown Park about Easter, 1916, when his peculiar wide & detailed knowledge of unusual subjects impressed me, a pity that he could not use it better. He used to wander into newspaper offices late at night & occasionally in need of a little guidance. Hugo, one of his sons, has been Adjutant General of the R.H.A. & he has at least one charming daughter. I haven't seen Hugh for 10 years, & one never heard of him.

The irrepressible Mrs. Neave, has again caught me for dinner - this morning gave to Dublin Cosmopolitan, she clearly belongs to the last century, her clothes (though always chic), her manner, & even her figure. She very fair, nonchalant, a fluttering with emotion, aids the impression. Her first husband was a British Consul - then Boston, Nicaragua, St. Lucia (a tiny French colony-island in the Gulf of St Lawrence of which I had never before heard), the Faroe Islands, & then Petersburg. She saw it pass from St Petersburg to Petrograd to Leningrad, & her tales of the Red Revolution for which she escaped, after many terrifying experiences, a poor refugee. Kind, but a gossip whose tongue is not always reliable, socially ambitious with a flair

of a kind for social affairs, she is rather  
too pressing in her invitations. Her present  
husband is a timber merchant who lived at  
Odessa for most of his life. She knew  
Bishop Court Harke in Petrograd & he comes  
with them once at a week to talk Russian  
& play his quite formidable game of bridge.

Dongji received its share of refugees  
from Russia & Mrs Nairns is an interesting  
type. Many of them come here as a good jumping  
off ground when normal conditions would be  
restored - and have naturally had no opportunity  
of jumping back into Russia.

31st October. de Feto, Italian Counsel general, has  
just called to say goodbye. He had been  
appointed Minister in Ecuador but  
declined & now goes to Rome. He has  
been a pleasant participant in our little  
society here. A rather good type of Italian  
diplomat & gentleman - ~~and~~ one of the  
more intelligent members of the  
Carolean-diplomatic corps in the free city.

Talking today of the dangers of the present  
Dongji situation he said that the machinery  
of the League might be difficult to put in  
motion but might be even more difficult  
to stop. And he felt the same about the  
present League-Italian situation.

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1935, may well be described as an historic day in international affairs. Fifty states have agreed to apply sanctions to a great power found guilty of making war in violation of the League Covenant, & to apply these as from 18<sup>th</sup> November.

Will they be effective? Italy is not strong financially or economically and but there are big leaks through Germany & the U.S.A. Then there are Mussolini's & Benito's spirit he has aroused throughout Italy. Yesterday his aeroplane dropped 1000 bombs on an Abyssinian town. If the Abyssinians can hold them for six months international law may gain a success which should mean several new orientations in Europe. It may mean much in the outlook for Eastern Europe.

During a few nights ago with Dr Grundmann, hon. Consul general for Bulgaria & wealthy one of the largest stars in Bulgaria he told me ~~that~~ he was in the Senate's "Black List" with about 60 others. He said they were specially watched with the object of detecting any technical breach of law. He is openly anti-bolshevik, & won in a free election the N.S.A.P. would not get 20% of the vote.

In June, after the devaluation, he moved 500,000 guilders worth of gold from his Langfuhr branch to Odessa where he is opening a new branch - despite police effort to stop it. The law did not prevent the export of gold to Poland. His meant a considerable financial gain as prices here <sup>a peasant market!</sup> were kept at old levels. He has

He had a "stay" of the H.C. taking tea in a gastrhaus in a country village nearly & subject to noisy Nazis in the same village. Pure fantasy, I hear occasionally some of the stories circulated. One (from von Radovitzky) from Council General a few months ago that I attended a meeting of the Parish Priest and urged them to go ahead in their policy & that I would back them. Needless to say I never attended any such meeting although twice I have received delegations from them to thank me for intervention on their behalf.

November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1935.

The "Danziger Vorposten", the organ of the National Socialist Party, has an article this morning commenting on the refusal of the International Court at the Hague to appoint an ad hoc Judge to represent Danzig in the case of the amendment to the Criminal Code. First of all it expresses its regret that a question of this kind should ever have gone to the Court instead of being settled with good-will at Geneva. This seems a little comic in view of the facts. I asked the Senate to withdraw the decree and they refused to discuss it with me, saying that it was perfectly correct; I said I would insist upon the Council taking the responsibility as to the constitutionality of the law. The representative of the Senate said in that event they would endeavour to have the matter referred to the Permanent Court. I pointed out to him at the time that if this question were allowed to come up for decision by the Council and/or, the Permanent Court, the result would be to put on trial not only the action of the Danzig Government in the eyes of the legal world, but the action of Germany whose law had been copied by Danzig. It would seem that this fact has after two months percolated into what passes for a political mind in Danzig.

The writer of the article concludes with the humorous remark that the decision of the Court when known will show whether a Danzig Judge was needed or not!

Zarski, the editor of the Vorwärts, is now 23 years, having been appointed to edit the Party's official journal at 21.

He takes orders direct from Zwickau, the Gauleiter. A slim dark-haired man, with deep brown eyes, and with a nose ending in "she" he preaches the Nazi doctrines of hooliganism & blood & race to the racially-mixed population of this frontier town. He might well, from appearance, be a handsome young Jew.

6<sup>th</sup> November - Dined last night with re-Senator Frank of the Port Board. Ferber, who was principal advisor to the Senate on foreign affairs for twelve years, was there as well as Dr. Prof. Kauffmann, of the Hospital. The latter feels very deeply humiliated by German Nazi doctrines which he defines as barbarous & medieval. He thinks a revolution will come in Germany even within six months, a view I do not share.

I ask him "where are the leaders?" & he answers "Hunger will be the leader." He also says the Nazis would get 15% to 20% in a free election in January, "with an international police force."

Ferber thinks the "Kraft durch Freude" policy by which N.S. Party sends hundreds & even thousands of poor people on free trips to Germany & elsewhere is having a big effect.

*Extract from one of my epistolary curiosities consigned  
to W.P.B.*

" Some weeks ago I have had the intention to write to Your Excellency about certain matters. But in the moment as I finished my notices it knocked at the door, alas! policemen stepped in, and the common procedures against the foes of the Brown Government took place. My manuscripts a.s.o. they took with them. The next day when I did make my return of visit they snaked hands with me, but my written to give back they made no preparations. Well, I am thinking they need the stuff for their museum wherein - that is a fact - the stolen goods furnished with names, are laid out for objects of culture. Fine culture that, in which the oppressors play the part as cultural guardians.

" In comparison to the bearings of those people who are fearing revenge if they complain their sufferings, my unpleasantnesses are less important. How hard the Brown Dictatorship is lasting upon the people of Danzig tells a remarkable sentence:

" Your sufferings still bear,  
You are only a foreign legionar,  
When you perish by the roadside  
Then it got you the brown tide.

" More of this songs would be heard if people could say what it thinks, but their sayings are forbidden, and to have an opinion is not allowed.

.....

" Yes, Hitler fears the loss of Danzig, more, he fears the loss of his head, then where a pear is rolling there roll others too. If this occurs sometimes it means only a revenge of development against its despisers, it is the iron law of perpetual repaying.

" I for my part do not believe in political christian charity, likewise I do not believe in the generosity of trampled folks. Once a day the hate will reach the explosive efficacy of a whole leading of dynamite.

11 November

Henry Carron, Rector of the Irish College in Rome, has written to the Dublin newspaper a letter protesting against the application of sanctions to Italy - "attempt to starve 40,000,000 people"; "position of Irish clerics who are guests of Italy etc. Not a word about law between nations, or the rights of a League member attacked by an Imperialist aggressor. Apart from the medeavelling of abyssines every word says Carron wants could be used to excuse any Imperialist move from the consequences of grab.

The Catholic Church is of course in a very difficult position ~~and~~ even if its government were not largely Italian in nationality (over 50% of the <sup>the</sup> ~~Constituted~~)

Its Irish Independent of course takes a ~~completely~~ article in what is virtually a pro-Hitler leading article. My intimate knowledge of this newspaper for more than 20 years has brought conviction that its direction is entirely without principles or courage in any political crisis.

I have particularly in mind its behaviour in the Black & Tan campaign & in our tragic civil war. It is a business concern.

dined with Ziehen, who was President of the Senate for several years. As we alighted from the car four young men converged, examined us & then withdrew. Police or Nazi. Ziehen who is about 70 & for many years a distinguished Prussian official, is no longer "in politics". He gives the impression of being cultivated & well-bred - while most, if not all, of the present Cabinet are obviously primitive. Not that that ruined matter if they had political balance and common sense. The dinner party was small. Count von Krakow whose old mounted castle near Lutzig (now in Poland) has been occupied by his family for 800 years. A typical Junker, rather boorish in fact, and with very limited interests. His wife a striking contrast, vivacious & intelligent - a daughter of the von Belows, Maxine Schmidt, fiancee to Ziehen's son, has just spent a year in T.C.D. & brought messages from friends such as the houses Cunningham & von Paseck had a new story. The King of Italy, interviewed <sup>was</sup>, asked what would happen to him if Italy won the war. "I suppose I would become the Negro;" "And if Italy lost?" "Then I might become the King of Italy;" von Paseck, just back from Warsaw where he has many connections is certain that both sides as Foreign Ministers are numbered, and that this will be no further development towards closer Polish-German relations.

(a Dane)

Krabbe from Geneva has been staying with me for a week. He has been the officer in Geneva who has been most concerned with Danzig questions for the past couple of years, and had never seen Danzig. His visit is a purely personal one of course, and Krabbe had been frequently urged by Böttcher and Greiser and other members of the Danzig delegation to visit the City.

Böttcher dined with us the first night after Krabbe's arrival and made use of his first private conversation with Krabbe to complain that he had not been consulted about the visit and knew nothing about it until that day; he said that he supposed he had come up to see the Opposition and proceeded then to attack the High Commissioner. This all made an extremely bad impression on Krabbe and was another confirmation of Böttcher's stupidity. On the same occasion Böttcher had a conversation with myself, in the course of which I said that I proposed very formally and very seriously in my next interview with President Greiser to warn him of the dangers of continuing his present policy of ignoring and defying the League. (Böttcher had said to Krabbe that there would be great difficulty in carrying out the Council recommendations with regard to the Ehrenschutz law, which is of course the most vital principle decided by the Council.)

Since that night the Danzig people have done everything possible to impress Krabbe, and beyond bringing him also into contact with the Poles I have naturally given them a free hand. Greiser has been absent attending Nazi Party meetings in Germany.

November

8/11/35

"Le Matin" publishes a story that the U.S. chief  
in Geneva actually proposed to the Senate  
to forbid my return to Geneva because  
from Geneva on the ground that I had  
injured Geneva's interest by my statement  
to the Council of the League of Nations!

I don't know. Some of them are  
capable of any kind of stupidity.

13-11-35.

A trench is being dug in the garden this  
morning - ostensibly to repair drains. It is  
equally probable of course here that I take note  
of any operations of this kind. I heard from  
Mr. President Runcaching some time ago that  
a <sup>Cable</sup> had actually been laid from the  
Senate to my garden wall with the intent  
of installing dictaphones during his period  
of office as the first U.S. President. It came to  
his knowledge & he stopped it. Several times  
since then I have had reports that the  
project was being ~~so~~ considered. I have had  
to give orders, when leaving for Geneva etc  
that during my absence no workmen are  
to be allowed near my office under any  
pretense. The telephones are of course  
tapped. My butler is a spy, responsible Part  
leader of the Catholic Party, is photographed in my  
doorstep by a plain clothes detective.

13/11/35. Count Amedeo Ponzoni, the new Consul General  
of Italy, has called on me. He is rather like the a  
satiricature of a diplomat, both in manner & appearance.  
"Très distingué" from his impression of curled mustache  
and grey-streaked bushy beard, will add to  
the novelty of Dreyfus' parties. He told of his  
sparking interest, mentioned casually his polo (over  
his 93 cases of pictures & objets d'art, how he  
had shot grouse in England (and the birds  
went up in ecstasy!) and fished for salmon  
& trout in Waterford, & the music & theater  
of Dresden (where he had been left for 9 years).

I said to Gauthierini afterward that  
he looked like a diplomat from the  
romances of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

I thought he might have walked out  
of the ballet I once saw in Geneva "la  
Table Verte" where a score of mincing  
mannikins, eye-glasses & cravate all erect, bowed  
& mimed their way until the tiny pestals were  
drown & cracked. (The next scene showed Death &  
Tragedy & Want and the crippled harvest of war)

This morning Gauthierini bought me a stor  
one which we sampled. It appears that in returning  
the card of the Polish Minister (after the clerk  
had addressed the C.G. as an admiral "honoré") &  
omitted "le Comte". Ponzoni was furious and  
told Brati (the vice Consul) to send back the envelope  
to the Legation with a written protest! The thing

Seemed incredible but Prati's march not being  
of the best he had consulted (unwittingly) G. as to  
the composition of The Note! I roared with  
laughter - but hurried called in Beiers  
to make sure he had not also overlooked  
the title which was represented on the visiting  
card, of course, only by a coronet! I suppose a  
million of the 40,000,000 of Italies have  
titles. Nevertheless my anticipation that  
Ponzae will add a touch of color to  
our little Doyce society seems well-founded.

~~He~~ <sup>and</sup> Ponzae round us a little of  
Dame le Ray who was French Consul General  
in Geneva & although I never saw him  
~~very~~ as a delegate in any capacity he was  
always on view specially when the  
photographers were snapping some newly-  
arrived French Foreign Ministers. Le Ray was  
pro account but had "a full" as he was  
the illegitimate son of? -

14/11/35. Received a very nice note from Sir Arthur Willard who is also sending a copy of his new book on European situation. The Willards stayed with us a few days in the Spring. Formerly the Times' correspondent in Washington he became about ten years ago Director of the Press Section in the Foreign Office & we met them often in Geneva. A tall good-looking & goodmannered fellow with liberal sympathies & an independent mind; he told me he was glad to leave the Diplomatic Service & regain his freedom to write. He goes now on a lecture tour in the U.S.A where he will gather material for one the book on that country. I shared W's. news on his late chief Sir John Simon but was surprised to find him an admirer of Ramsay MacDonald. He is an "Interventionist", i.e. believes his country cannot isolate itself & that therefore they should play a greater part in Europe in preventing war etc. Sir Comell Hoare has, since I saw him, taken some of the wind out of his sails!

16-11-1935

Ramsay MacDonald, twice Labour Prime Minister & until two months ago P.M. of the National Govt., has been beaten in the English General Election. It is the end of his career unless he accepts a peerage.

I met him a number of times at Geneva and he never impressed me in that setting at any rate. His speeches had a slight touch of cordial ~~cooperation~~ & apartness which was somewhat irritating to international audiences; and smacked <sup>too</sup> often of generalities suggesting "woolliness" in the head!

At Commonwealth meetings it was the same - big father stuff & not very clever at that. One at Batavia's Day I sat at a luncheon party of about 40 diplomats. I was wearing shamrock & Ramsay was on the opposite side of the table. He spoke across to me asking for a piece of shamrock. I pretended not to understand & raised my glass to him. Then Beres, directly opposite, said to me guttural English that Mr. M. wanted to share my shamrock.

The creator of "National Government" - R. K. D. acted with patriotic objective regular in 1931, even against his old colleagues of the Labour Party. And the R. K. D. who was a conscientious objector when we never swept England possessed high moral courage

My hesitation had been to avoid a kind of British demonstration but equally I wished to avoid the boorish <sup>before all the general</sup> ~~Irish~~ <sup>Irish</sup> or an anti-Irish demonstration. So I ~~had~~ <sup>had</sup> smilingly passed a sprig. After luncheon R. came up to me & asked if I had not objected to his request. I hastened to assure him. He said he also was a Gael and our peoples had a common origin. That was charming; and I said that myself had ~~a Scottish~~ <sup>an</sup> ancestor from Inverness. I still think it was as well that I should have let him see that the Irish Shamrock needed no patronage - especially in view of the impression he had created ~~me~~ at two B.C. of N. meetings.

A few months ago I had a short conversation with Sir Arthur Willard (Chancery of the Foreign Office) & found that he had a very high opinion of R. K. D.'s abilities as well as his character and he had worked with him much more closely, naturally, than my short acquaintance. After all, he had been P.M. of England, three times!

17-11-35.

When Knobell was here last week we talked a good deal of French politics & French policy. His name of Orsmond Briand naturally led to a big place. Of the seven or eight French Presidents of Council whom I have met Briand stands out above them all. (I think of course of foreign affairs).

I was prejudiced against him at first but gradually comes to admire & even to regard the old veteran with a kind of affection and confidence.

I suppose he had scarcely ever noticed me until one secret meeting of the League Council in 1831 when I, with much trepidation, raised a voice against ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~policy~~ <sup>policy</sup> which had been followed by the great Dukes, prominent members of the Council, in regard to the Sans-Culotte despite. They had formed a kind of informal Committee & the other members of the Council were not, it was thought, getting full & adequate knowledge of what was going on. We had been told a certain amount.

I claimed equality for all members  
of the Council in this respect & said  
the successful application of the Covenant  
might be even more important for the  
small states; & posed the principle  
that we, elected members, represented  
our electors, the Assembly. Broad was  
more than gracious (as any Frenchman  
can): he accepted my suggestions, accepted  
the claim of equality at once, & it was  
in consequence of this that discussions  
subsequently took place in secret  
meetings attended by all except the  
parties to the dispute.

Broad once told me he had  
Irish ancestry - (? O'Brien) - he was a  
Bretton. I'll always remember  
the picture of Broad, sitting half-asleep  
with the soles from his innumerable  
Capovels spread over his broad  
wastcoat. One would think he  
scarcely heard the discussion but  
suddenly he would take part, picking  
out essentials & expressing opinion.

in  
with clear, unmistakeable and  
amazingly adroit language. He spoke  
my French.

The Italian & French members  
sat side by side at the horseshoe  
table of the Council. Scialoja, the  
Italian, was also sleepy-looking at the  
table but in my time at any rate  
showed little - indeed none - of the  
boisterous activity which had made  
him a reputation. (Perhaps Mussolini's  
desire for indifference to the League  
was responsible). One day in meeting  
Briand nudged his old companion  
awake after a somewhat dull &  
tedious discussion. Scialoja turned  
to him with mild protest: "ah, mon  
cher Briand, est-ce que vous souffrez  
de l'insomnie?"

Briand was notorious as a difficult  
leader for his delegation: they said he  
~~would not read documents~~. One never  
noticed any histrionics. He always  
refused invitations to evening parties and

It was rumored that he had well read all his documents before 8-30 in each morning. He enjoyed reading detective stories and he said he never knew what he had read as he promptly forgot them. He was a fisherman - a la François - sitting for hours on a stool by the river bank in Brittany waiting for the cork to bob.

Krabbé (whose wife is Breton) says Friend went fishing in old clothes - though the Lord knows he was never a dud - and coming from the river one day was met by two gendarmes who thought him to a suspicious-looking tramp. They asked for his papers & he said he never carried papers d'identité! Asked who he was he said he was the President du Conseil. For this "impudence" they brought him to the village gendarmerie. It is so easy to picture old Friend, with his humour & sense of humor and absence of what is called "deputy" trudging along between his captors. Of course he made them

go with him to the cafe' afterwards to  
solace them with a glass of wine

Briand was for long the only permanent  
element in French Government. The cabinets  
would fall, half a dozen in the year -  
but Briand came back to us. I remember  
Arthur Henderson, while British Foreign  
Secretary, smacking Briand on the  
shoulder, a little too heartily - and  
declaring: "Cabinets come & go but  
Briand goes on for ever". Neither  
of them understood the other, perhaps,  
so perhaps it was all right.

Briand was certainly the  
greatest Frenchman I have met or  
seen. But his monument in a  
Bretton village has been daubed  
with paint - "traitre" - & no one  
troubles to remove it. The Croix de  
Jen & the extremists of the left hated  
him. He said once to half a  
dozen of us at Quai d'Oxygène when we  
were pressing for some action, in a  
deprecating way: "You must remember that  
I, too, have my difficulties in external  
politics". Half the Press of Paris, bright as

was commonly believed by Japanese may  
was conspiring against him or rather  
against any development of French  
policy which depended in the end on  
England & France.

Well, France would be feeling  
more comfortable today if she  
had given Briand's policy of conciliation  
with Germany a trial.

18<sup>th</sup> November.

Fifteen years of happy married life with  
Elsie. God bless her!

Today begins the greatest experiment  
in modern history: the application of  
economic & financial sanctions by  
the League against a great Power.

Italy is flagrantly in defiance. Will  
the League succeed in enforcing law  
on the lawless & bring peace to Europe for  
20 years at any rate? If "sanctions" - economic  
& financial - appear to be succeeding well  
Mussolini decides to go down in a blaze  
of the military glory he has sung for  
ten years - that would seem to be too mad  
but no one is certain.

19 Mar '35

Gouletta Foster has made a speech in the presence of President Greizer, which seems to predict open defiance of the League. He says the time is coming when the Opposition Herren will be behind the walls of a concentration camp - the terror of Nazi Germany - and the new flag of the Fatherland will fly over Danzig. I don't think this is "hot air" preliminary to carrying out the orders of the League Council. The struggle has begun and will, I think, now take a critical form.

Foster is a young man, very self-possessed, and like all the leaders of the new German revolution never bears, or allows himself to bear, anything critical of himself or Party. He is a pure revolutionist - perhaps of a type useful within German parties but at an international point like this - the meeting place of conflicting interests - a danger to everybody including Germany. He claims to represent the Führer, demands obedience even from the Senate. I am told he is known to

Hitler as "Bobby" & was a pupil under Hitler's sister.

The city has been filled for the past week with rumours of a conflict between Forster & Greiser - the former resisting the fulfilment of the latter's pledges to the Council regarding the Constitution. I always held that G. had not the guts to fight Forster - ~~physical~~ <sup>political</sup> courage, yes, but he is not the man to go into the political wilderness, as Rauschning did under similar circumstances a year ago. But I gave credence to the story that he (Greiser) had accepted a high post in German administration - rather than face the Council again in January with unfulfilled promises. It may be that Greiser has received orders from Germany to hold his post. We shall see.

I have warned Greiser and now can only await the outcome.

20/11/35

Senatus Henri Berenger, president de la Commission territoriale des affaires étrangères, has made a speech at Paris, speaking of "la ruine de l'Etat lui-même" - because it has missed a great opportunity in permitting in certain regions the continuation of slavery!. He also speaks of the abuse of ~~de~~ vérités puritaines in regard to Italy.

The shocking cynicism of or the intolerable bumbling of this man. The most pronounced isolationist in England, contemptuous of the League, could not equal it.

My indignation is due to my having listened to several speeches by Berenger at Geneva a few years ago. At the assembly in Sept. 1933 Berenger was on the 6<sup>e</sup> cte which dealt with minority questions. (That before, acting as rapporteur to the Comité on minority questions I had had to deal with the rather well-known case of Bernstein, a German Jew in Upper Silesia & which in a way raised the question of German persecution of Jews) A sub-cte was formed to discuss drafts of a resolution which while not mentioning Germany were designed to condemn her publicly - not on the legal basis of the Silesian Treaty but on general grounds - the rights of man. Berenger led the band, ably assisted by Ormsby-Gore, a tribal

Cabinet minister. Berenger made speeches about liberty, equality, & fraternity which at the time I found nauseating. He set out of his way to throw a few unexpected bouquets at me. I believed his object was merely anti-German & I believed it to be the worst possible policy for the League: at the time I said that with Nazi-ism just come into power it was like an invitation to Germany to leave the League. So far Berenger's bouquets I returned a few suggestions - sand in his machine. I was backed by

Dr. Lange, that grand old Norwegian gentleman. Ormsby Gore ran round the table to show me an account in the "Times" of Nazi atrocities. I didn't like the atrocities but I also didn't like Ormsby-Gore's interference though I knew it was well-meant. Old Berenger changes his note: for flattery compliment he substitutes what we virtually threat - "chacun prend sa responsabilite." There was then an adjournment. Ambassador von Keller told me afterward that his delegation had at first disliked my intervention but he had himself seen

that it was friendly and helpful.  
I had indeed said openly that while  
the French proposal was general  
in its wording everyone in the world  
would know that it was made  
with reference to Germany.

An attack was staged in the Press  
("Journal des Nations") against Hough &  
myself & he (Hough) referred to this at  
the next meeting. I joined him but added  
that I could only consider it an ~~honour~~  
a compliment that my name  
should be associated with that of  
a man whose honour & integrity  
made him an orator of the  
League of Nations. He was much  
touched. I regret now that I did not  
force the attack on the Bernstorff proposal.  
I feel I weakened. naturally, I had  
no kind of ~~other~~ instructions from  
the Government. (Such instructions  
were very, very rare & on League  
matters were usually bad).  
The fight was continued on other lines (Guch-Bloch  
proposal etc) but I yielded to the general view  
of the committee.

Germany had left the League after  
two months one month, and I firmly  
believe her decision was partly due  
to the impressions carried away by  
Goebbels of his experiences in the French-  
dominated Assembly, as well as to  
the position created in the Disarmament  
Conference. Ormsby-Gore's speech, by the way, was excellent.

Bussdag (Repentance Day) - all offices  
& shops closed and most people are  
meets are carrying wreaths to the graveyards.  
an Evangelical holiday dating from  
the Reformation.

The care bestowed by the people  
here on the graves would be a  
model for Ireland. This interest  
accounts for the strikingly large number  
of florists in Danzig. And on All  
Souls' night candles deck the graves  
like constellations of stars.

22/11/35. He sly has been a conform grey and temperature at zero (C.) for the past few days. The political situation is warmer however and an occasional story lightens the tension. The Oberstatsschreiber (Chief public prosecutor) was spending a social evening with some of the Nazi journalists, including Tarska and after dinner & drinking the party went to a dancing place which I had never heard. Justinian says it is "a law place". He slept off schnapps passed freely. In the room was an official of the Polish Legation who was showing a Warsaw journalist round Warsaw. The C.P.P. recognized him & shouted in a loud voice: "The Poles will save us from the Nazi goons" Casperius, of course. The Nazi journalists tried to restrain the C.P.P.'s exuberance but he had drunk himself past that. Tarska went out & brought back two S.A. men but when they tried persuasion the C.P.P. is said to have struck one of them declaring he was "a free man".

The story comes from the Polish official who witnessed the affair. His prosecuter has been responsible for ~~most~~ all the prosecutions launched against the opposition elements - acting no doubt on orders & in accordance with ~~measures~~ of the Nazi Weltanschauung.

I guess that will serve as a warning - or an intensified effort to show that a certain Officer is 100%.

New Emperor Dr. Noë, head of the International Shipbuilding & Engineering works (formerly German Harp) is one of the most interesting personalities in this town. Bulky in body, vigorous in mind, a good talker in three languages, Noë controls (under an international Board) the greatest industry in Danzig. He was born in the Saar and takes a childlike delight in tracing his descent from a noble French family. In a house crammed with valuable pictures and silver I believe his ~~choice~~ most treasured possession is a post card illustration of an old French chateau where a Noë family lived. It is always possible that this obsession is not only a harbinger and balsamer for the suspicious reader might see in Noë's brazenfaced bearing lead and slightly equine nose the possibility of a great-grandfather who had married an Aryan. I myself could well see it as a French type. But there is little doubt about true Noë's mixed blood. Most these things enter my mind in indecation of the situation created by Noë's crazy fanaticism against the Jews. Noë is a very wealthy man & tells me he put all his money into land, owning three large estates.

I have the greatest respect for his intelligence & political perspicacity. He knows Europe from Moscow to London & Stockholm to Rome. a great man of affairs. He has to play a careful game here and maintains contacts of a close character with Nazi and Social Democrat. Like myself & many other objective observers he sees in young Hitler a danger to Germany as well as to Danzig.

(Two years ago the assassination of Chancellor Dollfus Maury was usually attributed to Germany, rightly enough, because of the wild campaign conducted against austrian independence by Nazis of Foster's type. Last year I warned a couple of German officials that Foster might well end German hopes in Dorgig as they had been ended, or at least indefinitely postponed, in Austria.)

During my Court-martial at Krakow's old castle at the beginning of Sept. I found myself in talk with Noë and Von Hagens President of the Dorgig Supreme Court. Von Hagens knew that I had objected to the law amending the Criminal Code so that a person could be executed "in accordance with healthy (i.e. Nazi) public opinion" even if his offence were against no law. He began to make arguments as to the new principle filling a vacuum in the legal system. E.g. the theft of electricity! I very emphatically said that I was not going to take responsibility for allowing the law to pass if the Council found it in accordance with the Constitution, well & good, but I feared

the consequences in a place dominated by Nazi ideas, of the upsetting of a legal principle which I thought had existed for two thousand years.

To my surprise Neé, usually discreet in the presence of others, intervened to say I was quite right & that otherwise life would become impossible in Danzig. von Hagens' heart, I felt, was not in his defense of the new law.

Dining with me last week Neé offered advice & philosophy: Do what you think is right: it is a man's best reward that he should never be ashamed to face himself in a mirror. (my own mother's earliest teaching). and his last words were Hold fast. Well, I had just been telling him I had every intention to hold fast.

23/4/35. Otto von Radovitz & his wife  
~~(the former Gertrude) dined alone~~  
with us last night. His father &  
grandfather were in the German  
diplomatic service. He had been  
in the service (Russia etc) but had  
retired (various versions) to Finland  
until after Hitler came into power  
when, as a member of the N.S. Party,  
he came back & was appointed  
to Danzig. He has been married to  
an Englishwoman but was divorced  
during the war & his present wife  
is a Finnish Swede or a Swedish Finn.

I like von Radovitz. he is  
intelligent & sincere & good company  
— a rare combination in Danzig.

I speak to him quite freely but as I  
have little to say in private that I  
am afraid of the question of god's faith  
does not come in. And I have  
confidence in him, he is a man  
of the world & we might well find  
ourselves on hostile sides but even  
should that happen one can always  
have liking & respect for a good opponent.

I spoke on politics to him for my 60 seconds before we began a bridge foursome. I said that of Foster's speech was a symptom of forthcoming events I would be compelled to bring the case of Foster ~~open~~ before the Council & also to point out that F. claimed to exercise authority as the representative of Adolph Hitler, the head of a <sup>so-called</sup> State. I was not anti-German but German support of an anti-League policy in Danzig would only continue with the full knowledge of the Council.

He murmured some weakly optimistic remark & I said I wanted him to know in advance.

His personal position, it seems, has improved - he says he has now stronger foundations under him in Berlin - in the Party as well as in Wilhelmstrasse. It might have been better, he said, if the official refus. in Danzig were not in the Party. I knew he was referring to Foster's claim to give orders to all members of the N.S. Party in his district - Senior Council General and Senate president included.

At the dinner table I laughed at Mr Radcliffe's description of his first interview with Count Pongracz; he looked like a prestidigitator & one expected every moment to see him produce the rabbits out of his hat,

Advent Sunday: An Advent Krantz or wreath, circling a  
horizontally suspended ribbon from a wooden pedestal. 4 candles on  
wreath, of which one is lighted each Advent Sunday until  
Xmas day, when all four are lighted. A pretty custom.

1-12-35.

My semi-official diary notes for the past few days will record the opening of what must be a major crisis in League-Douglas affairs. My lunch with Geise in Bottler's house; his gratutious assault to Eden in the presence of Robinson, British Consul General; his intimation that in that afternoon he would announce in the Volksdag the Senate's decision not to carry out the Council's recommendations; my grave warning to him. Baron de la Tournelle (French Consul) who was also present told me afterwards that he thought Geise was frightened by a warning: I did not get that impression.

And then the speech: not merely defeat of but unnecessary offensive to the League and his unfounded charge against myself, and his public disclosure of what I had learned from him - that the new League policy is possible because of German rearmament - in fact a warning to Geneva!

I am very worried and anxious. The directors of the policy are counting, no doubt, on the

Newspaper headline today: "Europas Barometer steht auf Sturm"

general situation in Europe - some people think Hitler's threats are bluff but may see war clouds hovering. Britain & France are fully preoccupied: no one knows what will follow the decision of the League or an oil embargo if decided upon on 12<sup>th</sup> Dec.

But the Danzig situation cannot be neglected. It is difficult to see the possibility of any compromise - the League must ensure its decisions being carried out or must abdicate in Danzig.

And though no one likes to prophesy in the present international chaos it seems to me that the way in which this question will be treated will decide not only the value of the League guarantee of the Constitution but also the fate of Germany's status. As I said several balloons d'essai have been sent up here but have been prepared in Berlin.

And behind all is the terrible financial economic muddle the Nazis have made in Danzig - a very critical situation which I do not overlook in estimating the outlook.

I am going to Warsaw for a day or two. I suggested it some months ago & two days after G. S. speech the Polish Minister proposed that the shares take place this week. And after that to Geneva for some talks before preparing for the January Council meeting.

8<sup>th</sup> December 37. Just returned from Warsaw.

The Poles made out a formal & official visit. Elsie & I were met at the Danzig Railway station and conducted to the specially decorated Reception Room, along a line of Polish railway officials, behind whom stood a line of Danzig Police. In the room waited the three principal Counsellors of the Polish Commissariat, with the Polish officials & their ~~wives~~ wives. We presented Elsie with a bouquet &

then we made another cortego to the train. Mr. Papie, wife of the Polish minister, waited at the steps of the State Coach which had also been provided. She accompanied us to Warsaw. The coach had four sleepers & a saloon. About 10-30

pm. we were met in Warsaw by Papie, Count Lubomirski (on behalf of the Foreign Ministry) & Mr. Marlewsky, who was attached to me during our stay. After the usual flashlight photographs we all went to our hotel. A car was also placed at our disposal by the Govt. We stayed of course at the Europa - perhaps the real meeting place on the Continent between East & West.

as Port Said is by sea. Today we ate a late supper in our room which looked out on the great Ploschadki Place - an empty looking square where formerly stood a magnificent Russian church. The Poles demolished it some years ago regarding it as a symbol of the period of Russian subjection. Even at that time there was some controversy about it as it was a fine piece of architecture.

In the morning a skin of snow decorated the somewhat drab streets. Else got some shop names & went out in a drosky (an open horse carriage at a flor a trip) to find some of the shops for which Moscow is justly famous.

I went with Barlevsky to buy my official calls - President Prince Kurnikoff, etc. I sent cards this time

also to the diplomatic corps. I had a talk with Count Zembech, the vice minister for foreign affairs. Each time we approached anything faintly resembling an injury he said that his Beck personally dealt with Danzig matters.

I found a letter waiting from Mr. Edward Kennedy, British Ambassador, who said they were in Warsaw (King's side) but he would like us to ~~dinner~~, or lunch, or at least have tea & a quiet talk with them. I had suggested my few observations & soon able to lunch with him yesterday.

We lunched the first day with Colonel Beck, the Foreign Minister, dark hair, eyes, un-Slav looking, & his voracious wife who talks & talks & is chomping with all in an impersonal way. In a party of about 18 with the Deputy Foreign Minister, we were the principal guests in the old Palace of our friend Count Raczyński (now Polish Ambassador in ~~order~~) which is the residence of the Minister until the official house is completed. It was here that the transfer of Warsaw government was formally complete in ?1919 before the final evacuation & the facsimile signatures are inset in the table used.

After lunch I had a talk with Beck - satisfactory enough: he again emphasises that Poland will neglect none of her duties (ie. Doying)

as a member of the Council. He asked if I would see him again at Warsaw, or he would come to Geneva, after I had made the "sondages" at Geneva. He did not know how far Dantzig action was local or important for Berlin &, with a hint from me, said he would have his representatives in Berlin, London, etc., asked to interest themselves. His Germany position should be carefully prepared. Said that was why I was in Warsaw & was going to Geneva.

We dined at Sniad i Stecki, the famous restaurant, a small company, and had a box at the opera - "The Gypsy Baron" very gay & one or two girl dancers who will be remembered. Next to a boite de nuit, at the table next to us sat no less than seven Polish journals! The army occupies a big place in Polish life. Cabaret quite good.

Next morning, some shopping & an inspection of the President's Palace, & the King Jan Sobieski's beautiful little chateau (at the outskirts).

Lunched with Sir Howard & Lady Kennard in the British Embassy - alone. He is on good terms with Von Moltke, German ambassador & promised to inform him of my preoccupation

Afternoon: S's hunt for her inevitable successor + Mrs. Beck's call out. A gayish dinner in the Hotel before finding our sleeping car. Warsaw is drab but too attractive to one must visit in the innumerable private "palaces", unpretentious walls dignified in architecture & still filled with tokens of Polish aristocratic life. Rather a friendly city, attractive in spite of the poverty of many of its million & a quarter inhabitants.

Of course the visit was a political demonstration - following Geise's visits & challenges to the League, & an opportunity for sounding the Polish Govt's position in view of possible developments.

9/12/35 Von Radenzy called on me. He had been in Berlin & had seen the Foreign Minister von Neurath following my last conversation when I had warned him that the German relations with Danzig had now become publicly involved brought into greater by Speiser's speech; & that I would be compelled to to raise the question of the source of Hitler's authority. Von Radenzy said he had been charged by von Neurath to say officially that the speech represented in no way the result of General Goering's inspiration. It was contrary to their wishes & he was astonished at the attacks on myself & the League. The most formal assurances, which von R. would like to repeat to me personally on my way thru' Berlin. I was invited to see von Neurath (whom I had met once at a time in Berlin).

This invitation placed me in a difficult. The diplomatic fiction that Germany has nothing to say about Danzig must be maintained especially by me. My predecessors (certainly Goering) had it was pointed out, made calls in Berlin. I replied that at that time Germany was a member of the League Council & had Canal interests.

I had had in mind that they might like to have a set-off to my Warsaw visit but von Radenzy volunteered that it would be kept from the press, & that it could take place in the private residence. I told von R. I found it extremely difficult to accept but that rather than say "no" at once I would reflect on the matter & see him tomorrow.

I'm afraid the Poles will not like it. Count Szembek had asked me in Warsaw if I ever saw people in Berlin & I replied that I had even avoided my personal friends there. But that I imagined it would at this stage be useful to tell concerns. He put me off by saying that Beck dealt with all Downing matter himself (which I think is quite true). I do not remember to have dropped a hint to Beck but later mentioned it to Pfeiffer & Lubenski - as arising out of Szembek's remark. Lubenski said nothing. Pfeiffer said they had disliked Gravina's frequent calls there - "but they had confidence in me". So there the matter rested.

Von Radenau had remarked that in Berlin I was esteemed, mentioned my part in the Indo-Japanese affair (1931-32) & I wondered how that had arisen - was it as a result of discussing the possibility of influencing me thro' the British & some one recalling evidence that that would be unfruitful? I don't know: perhaps not.

It appears that Greiser met von Neurath after the Septm. Comint meeting & it had been understood that the Comint's recommendations would be carried out - whatever might be done administratively to reach the same ends. But just recently some private conversation with Adolf Hitler ~~was~~ held that A.H. told him the League didn't matter!

Beck's doubts as to how far the Senate's actions  
were inspired by Berlin & my view that it was  
difficult if not impossible to regard Forster as  
taking his ideas "from the air" remain.

After much persuasion from von Radovitz;  
& a pressing request from von Neurath I agreed  
to see the latter on my journey through Berlin.  
It was with hesitation & doubt I agreed to see  
a high German - especially as it might be regarded in  
some quarters as a counterbalance to the Warsaw  
visit. It was however definitely agreed to be  
strictly personal, & strictly secret. and as it was  
to discuss the activity of a German Official, Forster, in  
Danzig & might help to ease a serious complication  
I felt it could be justified before anyone.

I called on the German Foreign Minister in the  
Wilhelmstrasse & talked for more than half an hour.  
I had met him previously in Geneva at the Council &  
in Dr. Bismarck's house. I described the  
situation in Danzig & said it was mainly due  
to the actions of Forster who claimed to act in the  
name of the ReichsPresident. Von N. said it was  
not German policy to raise Danzig & now, that he  
had understood the Council's recommendation,  
would be carried out & that the difficult claim  
Forster was particularly because he held  
Official positions also in the Reich.

He finally said I said I had exhausted my  
effort and had been met with private threats  
& public insults; that Denby was now being  
involved and I had again & again warned  
his official rep. in Denby that that situation  
would arise. No D. situation of course was not foreseen.

He said it was not in Denby's interests and he  
would see if he could get F. removed.

I said that that would be a beginning but  
only a beginning.

I refused a luncheon invitation with \_\_\_\_\_  
and lunched with Bevley instead. He was full  
of the usual complaints with the Dept; & on the  
Italy situation myself for Italia, anti League,  
anti British & against Devolva's action in applying  
sanctions. But two years or so in Berlin has  
seen an extraordinary volte face in his former  
admiration for the Nazis.

In Geneva for three days - and I never saw  
it in such a ferment. The Anglo-French footwork  
and especially the British participation had aroused  
indignation & a sense of outrage. Major Abrahams,  
English conservative, said wif respect at intervals  
"But I thought Baldwin was a honest man".

Dick Walters, in a note asking me to lunch  
said "we have all got one in the solar  
pleas": Jones, the Daily Mail journalist,  
(readily anti-sensationist respectable) said Europe  
was all saying "Perfidious Albion".

The United Delegates felt it & knew the situation  
& could afford satisfaction that they were not  
alone. "in the mud" - the hand were with them!

Anthony Eden was carrying the burden of it,  
& it was not his policy. I felt embarrassed  
at adding to his worries. We talked for 3 hours  
& I found him, as ever, most sympathetic & ready  
to help. He appreciated the gravity of the new Dauy  
problem. We discussed all the possibilities  
and a line of diplomatic action, prior to the  
January Council, is to be suggested by him  
to his government. I also talked with  
General Massigli. Eden approved whole-  
heartedly with my Berlin visit - the others were  
non-committal. Eden consoled with me on  
my job. I said it was nothing to his who replied  
"I am getting it at the moment but you have it all  
the time." Knobbe speaking of his not to

Horing said that he believed I had more  
united support from the Council than any  
previous H.C. Wolters, mentioning the January  
agenda, said that if there were any hope  
of my accepting a re-appointment the entire  
Council would be "on its knees" to me. But allowing  
for friendly dragging I found 100% support  
in Geneva which is encouraging.

I also talked with Rajchman, the Head Director

of the Health Sector, and I got some news on  
Polish wine politics. R. is a small dark man  
with some Jewish blood and a man of great  
intelligence, sincere. He says, he says, will  
more & more dominate Polish policy & the Army  
does not trust Germany. I put it to him  
that Beck's German policy was not going  
to be reversed but that it would be halted,  
would be developed no further, & that a better  
relationship with western Powers would be sought  
for. He entirely agreed.

R 25/12/35. Von R. called. His sequel to my visit was that  
von Neurath saw both Hitler & Göring re. Danzig.  
Germany does not know of things will turn  
in such a way as to make it desirable  
for Germany to rejoin a reformed League  
and, generally, there is disapproval of the  
policy pursued in Danzig. Foote has  
been asked for an immediate report.

Speaking to von R. Foote ~~expressed~~ <sup>less</sup>  
surprise at Greiser's maladroit speech!!  
Von R. was disgusted but could not disclose  
his knowledge that F. had forced G. to  
this policy. <sup>(F.)</sup> He seems to be preparing  
to sacrifice Greiser!

Grevin also told Van R. that his reference to me in his speech (which he had admitted to have been wrong) had been founded on a statement by a third person that he had seen a letter from me!! Such are our leading statesmen.

Mrs Berton, "the Queen of Geneva", is dead. a grand-daughter of Robert Peel, she had married an Indian named Berton who was British Consul in Geneva until his death many years ago. She was the principal international (unofficial) hostess in Geneva with a lively villa on the Lakeside.

She spent much time in the public gallery during conferences & liked to think she could always put two & two together. She overlooked us for our first two years in Geneva until I found myself with some little position. I suppose she could not understand our lack of interest in her invitations. She was "well-preserved" (& gave that impression!) for her years - ?70 a.m.

One we were invited to meet the King of the Hedjaz when that arabian potentate was en passage. Elsie found it hard to submit to the idea that she could not be served until Royalty had arrived - a French Duchess of 18<sup>th</sup>-century vintage laid down, however, that it was impossible!

And when H.M. arrived he quickly退了 into  
a corner with the game known as  
"Cavinthian Billiards". This, I believe, was  
the lure which had brought him to Mrs  
Barter's Party. I think it was on the same  
occasion when Anthony Eden arrived at a  
reception on the afternoon of Gray's withdrawal  
from the League. The stress & burden  
of League affairs had been heavy on Eden  
and that day I was shocked with his  
appearance as a result of the Geneva bombshell.  
He was young, haggard, & desiccated.  
"A stocken man" might have described him.

And in recent years arose a pretender  
to the throne of Mrs Barter who had lost  
something by the departure of the  
Drimmards to Rome. Mrs Bullard, an  
American, with, I think, a strong & similar  
type of superficial mind. There was  
gossip concerning incidents in the social  
war.

On the side, aided by real  
intelligence, youth (confidence), & an high  
temperament & sense of humor Mrs  
H.B. Butler was an infinite superior  
of hostess. Lady Drimmard, with her  
dresden head, was not much interested  
& did the minimum, although that was a  
lot, no doubt. Miss ("Tiger") Howard,

Drummond's personal secretary, may have been  
largely responsible for the unpopularity of  
the Drummond Social regime.

Sir Samuel Hoare has resigned. Baldwin has  
said a public "Peculiar". H. hoped to be  
next Prime Minister. It seems a big career  
has been broken. On the whole a tribute  
to decency of English opinion, I think. Laval  
holds on but the Anglo-French proposals are  
dead. Is the oil embargo dead too?  
And Mussolini makes on the world舞台  
- decrepit old Europe cannot keep itself  
from her place in the sun.

23-12-35.

Eden's appointment as Far. Sec. rather surprises  
me - mainly on acc. of his youth perhaps. He is  
such a likeable fellow, with the gift of  
making friends without the drawback of  
so many Englishmen abroad - what is  
called, perhaps rightly, their superior complaisance.  
in evidence. His honest & sincerity  
count for much in League affairs and  
Geneva is still Sunyaev's diplomatic centre.  
I like him & he makes a irreproachable  
partner as rapporteur for Disarmament Questions.  
He will carry a heavy burden for the next year.

28/12/35 we have had a strenuous Christmas - from my point of view. Children very happy with many presents, a huge Xmas tree & some parties. On Xmas Eve we had the usual celebration for the household staff in the dining room. A small tree with candles and the huge Bundes-Schussel filled with sweets & nuts, Pfefferkuchen cakes etc & their cash presents (2 weeks wages for each). And the singing of the most beautiful of all Xmas hymns - "Stille Nacht" while all Herrschaft & servants held hands around the table. The bull-dog provided diversion by parading round the circle & endeavouring to get some play. Captain Wally, of the English ship Baltimore & Anna Martindale joined us in formal dinner on 25<sup>th</sup>. On 26<sup>th</sup> we went to von Belows for the old man's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Once in the General diplomatic service he is one of the great landowners in "The Condor" & his two daughters are married to other landowners in the same district - one to Count Krakow & the other to young Count von Keyserlingk. A cold buffet with Baumkuchen - made by slowly revolving a log before the fire while the batter drops on to it.

A short letter from Mr. Strong, of the F.O. "I wish I could say that 1936 will be a good year". Very pessimistic as a New Year's greeting but it indicates how serious the situation is viewed from London. John Marcus Sullivan writes with a budget of home news - not much more cheerful. He is much worried by the forced imminent abolition of the Senate & the absence of any serious attempt to end the Anglo-Irish economic war.

Edouard Benes, for 15 years Fin. Min. of Czechoslovakia, has been chosen as President to succeed Masaryk. He has occupied a big place in international affairs - which is a surprise in recent years for foreign affairs. Small, unimpressive in appearance, friendly & intelligent, — an Irish delegate (was it Fieldy Boland) once remarked to me that we had many like him in our County Councils — which was either a reference only to his appearance or very ignorant! He has I suppose made the Little Entente and constantly played a rôle in Geneva. A Univ. professor, of humble origin, a patriot who joined Masaryk's Little Revolutionary Club in Paris when the war broke out, the guide to a country in a most difficult political & geographical situation, he has

evoked not only admiration but also  
one might almost say affection. Host  
of debts, as President of the Assembly he gave  
a reception to a thousand guests. In the  
course of the evening he walked me  
up & down for 20 minutes talking mostly  
of Germany, the intentions & the hope  
of a pacific orientation to his policy.

a couple of years ago <sup>(earlier in 1933)</sup> at a dinner I  
sat beside him. We were talking  
of the Disarmament Conference & the  
desirability of a settlement with  
Germany. I said to him that a country  
like Germany could not be kept down  
and that no peace could be built in  
Europe on a Germany which was kept  
in a condition of inequality & under the  
heel. A little to my surprise perhaps  
he agreed. But he said any  
geographical changes or proposals would  
mean war. I said that ~~so~~ it had  
often seemed to me that the geographical  
frontiers had been drawn not so much  
to help the new states as to weaken  
Germany. He told me that he was in  
Paris during the Peace Conference & when  
he learned ~~the~~ the proposals for C.S.I. &

frontiers he has gone to the great powers  
to ask them to take away a million  
of the Germans who were to be included  
in Czechoslovakia (which has about 3 mlln).  
They refused, he said, & now the frontiers  
were made out must remain.

That was before Hugle came to power,  
before Jansa left the League, & before  
~~she~~ learned.

I introduced him to Devaletz. It was  
rather a contrast to me - this unpretentious  
& not quite insignificant looking little man  
and the dark, tall reserved President of  
the Ex. Council - rather conscious sometimes  
of his own importance. In Geneva, of  
course, Dev. suffered from some handicaps,  
his experience in international affairs, his  
slight acquaintance with other European  
statesmen, and his short sight.

28/12/35. An English-speaking party of 24 to dinner & games.

Mrs. Robinson records as notable memories - an effective if slightly inhibited impression of Napoleon created mainly by my cocked paper hat; Gunther von Passeck leading his group in a Nursery Rhymes competition while knowing none himself; the wonderful (or awe-filled) drawing of a baby-in-a-bath in the Identifications game; to which I might add Cyril Gerald Robinson as the Negus in a chorale. Our annual riot is over. Robinsons, Gallions, V. Passecks, Blights, Grandmamas, Pophams (damp squids), Salter, Gunnochie, Una, etc.

20<sup>th</sup> Dec. The Marquis of Headley died today, a few who held some of the highest posts in the British Empire. I met him a few times when he acted for some months in 1931 as Vice-Chairman, & was much impressed. The fine lines of his distinguished face gave him as in all human relationships - a "good start". I admired him so far as our limited acquaintance enabled me to know him & it was a sad day for England when he gave way to Sir John Simon. He succeeded Henderson, & then Cecil, at the Council meetings for a few months, including the Paris meetings.

31<sup>st</sup> Dec. Steaming over my annual report, deplored  
the staff holiday this week which delayed me, and meeting  
only one delegation - of railwaymen to thank me  
for Kines' cigars!

COUNT Edward O'Rourke, Bishop of Donegal, called  
to see me. There are some notes about him  
in my papers. I think it was his great-(or only)  
grandfather who left Ireland mercifully took  
service with the Gas, winning wealth & high  
place as a soldier. His descendants were mostly  
in the Army or Navy, & the family estate in  
what is now Lithuania. Speaks Polish,  
Russian, Italian, German, French very well; English  
not so good & the manners which (I guess)  
rather alarmed me before I arrived that he  
also spoke Irish was unpromised. Probably  
more Welsh in feeling than anything else, the  
Bishop maintains a certain sentimental  
regard for Ireland, & is proud of his Irish  
descent. Mathematical problem = of his great-  
grandfather married a Pole or a Russian  
& gets with his grandfather & father, what proportion  
of blood has he? But (This is really a reflection  
on some of our home "political" arguments).

We like the Bishop very much, & are  
glad less often comes to us, socially or as  
today, on a mixed mission

A gentle Christian is how I most often think of him. I am not sure if he is entirely happy in his present diocese - all its always pugnacious clergy & its increasing bitter follies. Deputations of the P.P.'s have been with me from time to time, & the Revd Mr. T. F. Knocks when I am on occasion gently suggested that the Bishop might be consulted, used quite openly "With Composure, I must tell you that neither the priests nor the Catholic people have any confidence in their Bishop." I protested mildly & said that in Ireland a Bishop would not be so regarded. Late Fr. Knocks told me the P.P.'s had written directly to Rome & showed me a copy of a reply which stated that they should of course take all necessary steps, in agreement with the Bishop, to protect church interests. On another occasion in connection with a petition the Bishop told me he had known nothing about it. It ~~was~~ <sup>is</sup> true, I think, that the Bishop, as Elsie says, would be happier & more suited to an Irish cathedral or some place where he could look after the poor & the care of souls without the anxieties of a political revolution.

In the middle of the elections here last March, when I was inundated with complaints from Catholics & realists & all the "non-conforming" elements I met the Bishop. He told me with innocent glee that his rooms at Oliva were being repaired and he was occupying a cell in the Convent of the Grey Sisters. He had no telephone & no one knew where he was! I asked him if he could not find another cell for me! But later reflection made me ask myself if a more pugnacious type would not have been more active. (Two or three priests had been arrested about that time). But perhaps it would not have made much difference.

I have recorded somewhere how Count O'Rourke came in to see me one day to talk of some business matter & in his hand carried, oh, so ingeniously, a copy of — "Ireland's Own". Some one had sent him this innocuous product of our less sophisticated writers, and I believe His Lordship was not above a little demonstration of his Irish sentiments!

The Bishop called today, first with new years greetings, & secondly to report a peculiar happening. A Herr Gamm, of the German National Party, (not a Catholic) had called on him & asked him to let me know that fifteen men of Hitler's body guard had arrived & taken up residence in Langfuhr. Their mission, he has been told, was to assault if not to kill, the leaders of the Opposition. They were to carry out the policy of intimidation which Foster has said will be developed.

With a different kind of government I could make inquiries about this kind of rumor, & perhaps check any such policy if it is really serious. But in recent months such representations with the Nazi leaders here have become utterly useless. They answer with bland provocation.

And the story may well be true. I cannot forget the incident of Herr Weisse, his Police permit for a pistol, & his certain pre-knowledge that he would be attacked again.

1st January 1936.

Official calls this morning.  
First an Greiser at the old Rathaus,  
rifle-beating sentries (police) at the  
door. Greetings quite cordial &c. G.  
said he hoped our collaboration in  
the New year would be more satisfactory!

Then the Polish Minister Papie, & the  
Harbour President Nederbragt, called on  
me; Six glasses of pre-luncheon  
sherry left me rather sickish.

The Camouflaged Caps, or as they are  
here described, the Deplumated Caps,  
were not seen; they are left cards.

2<sup>nd</sup> Journey. Dorothy Day, who has been dining well  
as at 8 o'clock for the past few months on occasions,  
when we are alone, goes out <sup>alone</sup> tonight to her  
first "dinner party" 7:30 to 10, chez les Noës.

3<sup>rd</sup> Journey.  
Today I attended a Shoot-Snatching Party "eines Jagd  
auf Hase und Fuchs" on the invitation of  
Greiser as "Hirschjägermeister" at Sobbowitz,  
near the Polish frontier. Left Danzig in  
good daylight about 7:45 AM & on the way  
noticed the high clouds flecked with pink.  
Then the sun rose over the horizon of the  
long plain, vast blood-gold globe, & which  
one could stare entranced until it passed  
above the earth mists. We met, some  
20 guests, including Papée, Baron de la Tornelle,  
& many high officials at the Forstmeister's  
house. Here we left our cars & mounted  
in five forest wagons, each with about  
5 persons, the drivers riding postillion on  
one of the horses. I brought no gun! I  
a forester was attached to me & I  
fired once during the day with his gun  
I twice at a hare which came directly  
towards me & passed unscathed  
within two yards. In my case, a difficult  
shot. I mostly left the gun in the hands of

the forest. I could not, as is easier when  
a hare comes direct at me let him  
pass & shoot him behind, for there  
was a forester, a dog, and a bear.  
Photographer is my immediate rear.  
about midday, sportsmen, foresters, &  
beaters gathered in a sheltered glade  
where two great wood fires were  
burning. We got hot soup, hot red-  
wine-grog, & great dishes of split  
brodchens covered with fish, meat, & cheese.

The bag was forty-eight hares, four  
foxes, and one rabbit. Many "ree"  
(deer) fled before the beaters but  
no wildschwein were seen. The bag  
was small as the temperature was  
rather high ~~but~~  $3^{\circ}$  or  $4^{\circ}$  C. above and  
the hares were out in the fields, not  
in the forest.

Coffee & cakes at the Postmeister's  
house at 4; and at 6 p.m. we were  
due at a ceremony in Danzig  
where the "bag" was to be handed  
over to aid the Winterhilfswerk.  
Two bonfires blazed in the open  
place before the Polish Headquarters

and between them lay the hares in a long  
line - with a special place of honor  
for the foxes. A little speechmaking  
& the Police band played Hunting  
calls including "Jagd vorbei" etc.

I avoided this ceremony as I feared Party display.  
Then we had to go to dinner in  
the only ~~large~~ restaurant - Lauterbach  
- rooms decorated with forest foliage  
& berries. The King of the Hunt  
- Jagdkönig - was named - the man  
who shot most; a Crown Prince  
the second; & the Poodlekönig, the  
man who shot least. Then I said  
a few words in German (first time) thanking  
Greiss on behalf of the guests. The König -  
as is his duty - made a criticism of the  
jagd; (He commences usually speaks for  
the ladies but none were present); then  
the Poodlekönig speaks on behalf of the  
hares. The young vice president of the  
Senate - Huth - made the latter in  
rhyme to the air of an old hunting  
song, which all shouted a chorus.  
He referred to me amongst others - in the

following doggerel:-

The reference was to a mistake which I  
hoped - most foolishly - would not be  
noised about too much. I was startled  
by a big hare rushing between two clumps  
of bushes and hesitated to fire because  
I feared it was a Reh (deer). Then smelly  
else rustled out & I heard what seemed  
to be an encouraging sound from  
my forester & let fly - at a Reh!! Fortunately  
missing. A mark Hunter's <sup>A mark Hunter's</sup> gun was set up & rear,  
<sup>lives or dies being sentenced to various drunks!</sup>  
(The next day Bottcher called on  
me & said the President had been much  
annoyed at Huth's references to me in the  
song. I laughed & said I took that in the  
spirit of the comical & private meeting).

On his visit to me Bottcher said the  
usual things about Semple's very good personal  
feeling for me etc. We went round the  
objectionable unquestioned

usual circle about Dorzij's situation.  
They will not accept the situation in  
which the League's guarantee is a reality.

8-1-36. Have sent off my annual  
report to Geneva. It says not all  
I could but puts the situation as one  
requiring a new policy or new machinery.  
I make a mild enough indictment of Doctor  
Greiser has indicted himself in his speech.

Regierungs-President Budding from  
East Prussia launched with me. He  
tells me that it is generally recognised  
that Doctor is unsuitable for Dorzij  
& that it has been decided to move him  
but that it is a question of when & where.

Doctor is supported by the Left Wing in  
Germany - Himmler, Darre, Stoetzel etc  
and Hitler himself stands always  
by an 'alte Kampfer' - he has not  
the faculty of getting rid of men who  
may be excellent in a revolution but  
whose usefulness is limited when  
the revolution has succeeded - unless  
as in a case like that of June 30<sup>th</sup> '34  
when his measures struck the world  
as rather drastic.

Budding is an excellent propagandist. He always brings the talk to Russia and I notice a change beginning in regard to colonies & territorial ambitions. Formerly it was mainly economic expansion.

As other Germans do, he argues that Poland has no alternative to the German alliance - a policy based largely on fear of Russia.

11<sup>th</sup> January '36. Dined Greiser, & twenty other principal Dantzig officials - Obergralfr friend von Hoyer, Pol.-Pres. Höbels, Bank Pres. Schieffl, Port Director, Pres. B Frank, Protestant Bishop Beermann, Bottcher, Blume & Co. all Dantzig. Nothing for G. to walk out about this time. This is first occasion he has been socially in my house since the "Admiral Scheer" incident. I hope they liked it! which is a trifle feminine. Some often observed that Courtney was national rather than international. All went very well however, many thanks to Elsie as usual and "Lashings" of good drink. Borchart tells me "all four Presidents drank a lot - especially Hartell!" So good. It is also reported that Greiser asked for claret at 11 pm. It is always nice to see guests enjoying their drink.

Nothing political - Freiss's customary hope that all will go better between us officially. He is giving the dinner in the Red Hall Rot. Saal of the Old Rathaus on 13<sup>th</sup> in my honour, he says. He's really not a bad chap - apart from his politics here.

Krabbe wrote some of an interview at Geneva with Col. Gen. Krael of Germany, now the only link there - expenses of Danzig. Spoke as though Hitler's removal were imminent & said Freiss was more soldier than diplomat. and injured as to the result of my talk with Iden last month.

Tea party with the Ignacy Zietkiewicz's also yesterday. Paper's principal aid. Pleasant people.

Today the old Coment Countess von Keyserlingk came for lunch, stayed for afternoon tea & bridge - She says to me to be patient with Danzig. Their position in the "corridor" not so bad in a way as far Danzig as they were of course Poles also there but here were only Germans etc. I said that the attitude of the Danzig Government was ~~was~~ that now they needed neither sympathy nor aid & relied only on the strong arm of Germany.

Von Radowitz said that there should be no hesitation in a very definite line being taken in Geneva with regard to Forster. He remarked that Hitler did not hear all that he should hear perhaps, and that if the question became public it would be inevitable that it should be brought to his attention and he believed the results would <sup>be</sup> good for Danzig, for Poland, for the League and also for Germany. The dualism in Danzig administration created an impossible situation for all interested. When I said that I found it impossible to make any distinction between the public position of Greiser and that of Forster and that on the other hand statements of the head of the Government had to be taken even more seriously; that furthermore there had been no evidence in any official transaction since the speech of November 27th of any weakening in the Senate's anti-League policy, he remarked that from his knowledge of events here he believed that would be cleared up. Greiser, he said, could not talk to me as <sup>he</sup> was talking to me, and his comment was to the effect that Greiser dare not until Forster goes.

In recording this conversation I wish it to remain clear that any relations I have had with the German Consul General have always been strictly correct in so far as the Status of the Free City might be said to be concerned. The conversation is interesting, however, as a further confirmation of the information I obtained in Berlin as to the attitude of the German official authorities with regard to Forster.

Have been re-reading today last year's letters to several on affairs here and rather pleased to find nothing in them in the way of false prophecy or warning - on the contrary.

14. January 1935. 6

Dined with Pres. Jucker in the Rathaus for the first time in the history of Danzig, so far as can be traced, ladies were allowed to dine in the Red Room, decorated with fine panelling, the pictures on the wall above the panels being indirectly illuminated and the dinner tables lit with candles. A lovely set room with old silver glass on the table.

The only notable political conversation was with Senior Cons. Gen. von Radowitz who said "I must go and G. must stay" a service to all concerned, League, Danzig & Poland, if the parallelism could be once for all abolished. I said it was more than difficult to see how G. could be dissociated especially in view of his speech: that had dominated my report & would greatly influence decisions in general.

I also said much might depend on  
G.S. attitude at Geneva. And said I ~~felt~~ had  
no reason to believe that things would  
go better even without ~~G.~~. G. he replied  
could not say anything to me as he  
might even be shot which was  
perhaps a recognizable exaggeration.  
He urged me to represent his views  
at Geneva as having official support.

It may help. No polite or  
diplomatic ambiguities, he said,  
I replied that the time for that at  
any rate was passed.

Nice Pres. Huth again sat by Elsie and  
wouldn't let her say a word to  
Freiser. His youthfulness is rather  
attractive & he is genuinely attracted  
~~to~~ attracted to Elsie. Another fellow  
who, with more reasonable advisers,  
might or in a situation in which  
the League & the Port <sup>were not</sup> cast in  
opposing roles could help to make  
dormy life more pleasant. Young  
Linsenreid, of course and with a  
horizon entirely limited by his Port fm  
which he says he would die.

Half-way through the dinner last night President Greiser made a speech welcoming his guests. He began with the High Commissioner, to whom he gave a special welcome as the representative of the League, guarantor of the Status and Constitution of Danzig and to whom he made some cordial references in connection with the collaboration between the two.

Anyone listening to this little complimentary speech would have thought there wasn't a cloud on the horizon and it was a rather interesting introduction to the discussions at Geneva. I had, however, to make a mental reservation as I had noticed a similar tendency immediately prior to other meetings of the Council during the past year, but I think perhaps a little more was behind the remarks, which on this occasion were rather public, than a desire to appeal to my good nature in view of Geneva discussions. (Naturally I always take the line that Geneva discussions are entirely between the Council and the Senate).

The President's statement was made before the Polish representative, the President of the Harbour Board, the Doyen of the Consular Corps, the German Consul General and several Senators and leaders of the S.A. and S.S. Mr. Forster was absent from this function.

Papee called this evening. Said he found my report very objective and ~~but~~ interesting in the way it put the whole situation and yet left the Council plenty of latitude for what it felt could or could not be done. He tells me that an hour after I left he was sitting with von Radawitz & Bottche come to the table to be greeted by von R. with "Well, you Machiavelli, you 'lancheur' (Spy!). There is no love lost between them but I guess von R. had been enjoying his beer!"

I'm off to Geneva tomorrow morning and  
haven't much idea of what the Council  
will do. But time is on the Nazi  
side; and if there is any shirking  
of the issue I shall warn them.

