

Documents britanniques, juillet-août 1914

<http://net.lib.byu.edu/estu/wwi/1914m/gooch/goochidx.htm#651-677>

(32282) No. 50.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.

Vienna, July 16, 1914.

D. 1:50 P.M.

R. 3:15 P.M.

Tel. (No. 85.)

Confidential.

From language held by Minister for Foreign Affairs to a friend of mine, who has repeated it to me, I gather that situation is regarded at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in a serious light and that a kind of indictment is being prepared against the Servian Government for alleged complicity in the conspiracy which led to assassination of the Archduke. Accusation will be founded on the proceedings in the Serajevo Court. My informant states that the Servian Government will be required to adopt certain definite measures in restraint of nationalist and anarchist propaganda, and that Austro-Hungarian Government are in no mood to parley with Servia, but will insist on immediate unconditional compliance, failing which force will be used. Germany is said to be in complete agreement with this procedure, and it is thought that the rest of Europe will sympathise with Austria-Hungary in demanding that Servia shall adopt in future more submissive attitude.

My informant states that Count Forgach entirely shares these views with his chief and that they are very generally held by all classes in this country.

I asked if Russia would be expected to stand by quietly in the event of force being used against Servia.

My informant said that he presumed that Russia would not wish to protect racial assassins, but in any case Austria-Hungary would go ahead regardless of results. She would lose her position as a Great Power if she stood any further nonsense from Servia.

This language is also held by a portion of the press, including the "Neue Freie Presse," which is now in touch with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The official "Fremdenblatt" is more moderate.

I hope to see Minister for Foreign Affairs Friday.

(Repeated to Belgrade.)

32510) No. 54.

Lord Granville to Sir Edward Grey. (Received July 18.)

(No. 351.)

Paris, July 17, 1914

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that the annual congress of French Socialists has been taking place in Paris during this week. The most important question which has been discussed is that of the attitude of Socialism in the event of a European War. The proposal put forward by Messrs. Keir Hardie and Vaillant, the French Deputy, that a declaration of war should be met by a general strike on the part of the working classes in the countries concerned was the subject of a lengthy debate, in which a considerable difference of opinion was shown among the delegates. Several of them pointed out the difficulties attending the declaration of a general strike at a time when the country was on the verge of war. It was argued that such a course might merely play the game of the enemy country, where socialist organisation might be less strong or where the war was popular, however unjust. To be effective the General Strike would have to be declared simultaneously in both countries, and it was extremely difficult to ensure this happening. It was not to be supposed, said M. Guesde, the leader of one school of French socialists, that the German working class would declare, in company with the French, a general strike that would put their country in the hands of the Russians, France's allies. The delegates were reminded of the difficulties in the way of the success of a general strike in the face of mobilisation orders, martial law and the general excitement preceding war. M. Hervé, the well-known anti-militarist, laid stress, in this connection, on the difficulty of distinguishing between an offensive and a defensive war.

M. Marcel Sembat, speaking in favour of the General Strike, asked what was the good of any international organisation if Socialists were going to quail before every obstacle. M. Jaurès said that though he quite recognised the objections to a general strike as being a one-sided measure which might recoil on his own country, he considered that it was the best means by which the working class could combat war, it was, at least preventive, and what the Congress should consider was how to make it as efficacious a weapon as possible.

After further discussion a Committee was appointed to draw up a formula which would be in accordance with the general opinion of the Congress.

M. Jaurès as spokesman of this Committee read the following motion:

"Entre tous les moyens employés pour prévenir empêcher la guerre et pour imposer aux Gouvernements le recours à l'arbitrage, le Congrès considère comme particulièrement efficace:

"La Grève Générale Ouvrière, simultanément et internationalement organisée dans les pays intéressés, ainsi que l'agitation et l'action populaires sous les formes les plus actives."

This motion was carried by 1,690 votes against 1,174, eighty-three delegates abstaining.

Before separating, the Congress passed unanimously a motion approving the Franco-German inter-parliamentary unions at Bâle and Berne, and expressing the hope that autonomy would be granted to Alsace-Lorraine, as this would greatly conduce to a reconciliation between France and Germany.

I have, &c.
GRANVILLE.

(33199) No. 73.
Sir H. Rumbold to Sir Edward Grey. (Received July 22.)
(No. 297)
Berlin, July 20, 1914.

Sir,
The following semi-official statement appeared in the "*North German Gazette*" of yesterday's date:

"In the utterances of the European press in regard to the existing tension between Austria-Hungary and Servia it is increasingly recognised that Austria Hungary's desire to clear up her relations with Servia is justified. In this connection we share the hope expressed in more than one quarter that a serious crisis will be avoided by the Servian Government giving way in time. In any event the solidarity of Europe, which made itself felt during the long Balkan crisis in maintaining peace among the great Powers, demands and requires that the discussions ("Austinandersetzungen") which may arise between Austria Hungary and Servia should remain localised."

I have, &c.
HORACE RUMBOLD.

(33322) No. 77.

Sir. H. Rumbold to Sir Edward Grey
Berlin, July 22, 1914.
D. 2:20 P.M.
Tel. (No. 88.) Confidential. R. 4 P.M.

Austria-Hungary and Servia.

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs spoke to me last night about forthcoming Austro-Hungarian *démarche* at Belgrade, which he evidently expected would have been made before now. He said that attitude of German Government was as described in semi-official statement published in "*North German Gazette*" of 19th July, and admitted that he had practically drafted this statement himself.(1) He insisted that question at issue between Austria and Servia was one for discussion and settlement by those two countries alone without interference from outside. That being his view, he had not considered it opportune to say anything to Austro-Hungarian Government. He added, however, that he had repeatedly impressed on Servian Minister (2) necessity of putting Servia's relations with Austria-Hungary on a proper footing. Servian Minister had said that his Government could not control Servian press, which was free to publish what it liked.

Secretary for Foreign Affairs observed, with regard to this point, that if a person would or could do nothing to put a stop to a nuisance the complainant must take remedy into his own hands. He said that, in his opinion, Austro-Hungarian Government had shown great forbearance towards Servia for a long time past.

Published in BB No. 2 (paraphrased -- parts omitted).
Cf. despatch No. 158.

MINUTES.

It is difficult to understand the attitude of the German Government. On the face of it, it does not bear the stamp of straightforwardness. If they really are anxious to see Austria kept reasonably in check, they are in the best position to speak at Vienna. All they are doing is to inflame the passions at Belgrade and it looks very much like egging on the Austrians when they openly and persistently threaten the Servian Government through their official newspapers.

It may be presumed that the German Government do not believe that there is any real danger of war. They appear to rely on the British Government to reinforce the German and Austrian threats at Belgrade- it is clear that if the British Government did intervene in this sense, or by addressing admonitions to St. Petersburg, the much desired breach between England and Russia would be brought one step nearer realisation.

But I admit that all this is speculation. We do not know the facts. The German Government clearly do know. They know what the Austrian Government is going to demand, they are aware that those demands will raise a grave issue, and I think we may say with some assurance that they have expressed approval of those demands and promised support, should dangerous complications ensue. So much can, I think, be read in the present telegram.

Prince Lichnowsky's vague hints and apprehensions do not quite correspond to the actual situation which his Government is helping to create. -- E. A. C. July 22.

I will answer this telegram to-morrow after I have seen Count Mensdorff. (3) -- E. G. July 22, 1914.

This telegram is now not worth answering separately. -- E. G. July 24, 1914.

(3781) No. 86.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir M. de Bunsen.

(No. 121.)

Foreign Office}, July 23, 1914.

Sir.

Count Mensdorff told me to-day that he would be able to-morrow morning to let me have officially the communication that he understood was being made to Servia to-day by Austria. He then explained privately what the nature of the demand would be. As he told me that the

facts would all be set out in the paper that he would give me to-morrow, it is unnecessary to record them now. I gathered that they would include proof of the complicity of some Servian officials in the plot to murder the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, and a long list of demands consequently made by Austria on Servia.

A regards all this, I said that it was not a matter on which I would make any comment until I received an official communication, and it seemed to me probably a matter on which I should not be able to make any comment at first sight.

But, when Count Mensdorff told me that he supposed there would be something in the nature of a time-limit, which was in effect akin to an ultimatum, I said that I regretted this very much. To begin with a time-limit might inflame opinion in Russia, and it would make it difficult, if not impossible, to give more time, even if after a few days it appeared that by giving more time there would be a prospect of securing a peaceful settlement and getting a satisfactory reply from Servia. I admitted that if there was no time-limit, the proceedings might be unduly protracted, but I urged that a time-limit could always be introduced afterwards; that if the demands were made without a time-limit in the first instance, Russian public opinion might be less excited, after a week it might have cooled down, and if the Austrian case was very strong it might be apparent that the Russian Government would be in a position to use their influence in favour of a satisfactory reply from Servia. A time-limit was generally a thing to be used only in the last resort, after other means had been tried and failed.

Count Mensdorff said that if Servia, in the interval that had elapsed since the murder of the Archduke, had voluntarily instituted an enquiry on her own territory, all this might have been avoided. In 1909 Servia had said in a note that she intended to live on terms of good neighbourhood with Austria; but she had never kept her promise, she had stirred up agitation the object of which was to disintegrate Austria and it was absolutely necessary for Austria to protect herself.

I said that I would not comment upon or criticise what Count Mensdorff had told me this afternoon, but I could not help dwelling upon the awful consequences involved in the situation. Great apprehension had been expressed to me, not specially by M. Cambon and Count Benckendorff, but also by others, as to what might happen, and it had been represented to me that it would be very desirable that those who had influence in St. Petersburg should use it on behalf of patience and moderation. I had replied that the amount of influence that could be used in this sense would depend upon how reasonable were the Austrian demands and how strong the justification that Austria might have discovered for making her demands. The possible consequences of the present situation were terrible. If as many as four Great Powers of Europe -- let us say Austria, France, Russia, and Germany -- were engaged in war, it seemed to me that it must involve the expenditure of so vast a sum of money and such an interference with trade, that a war would be accompanied or followed by a complete collapse of European credit and industry. In these days, in great industrial States, this would mean a state of things worse than that of 1848, and, irrespective of who were victors in the war, many things might be completely swept away.

Count Mensdorff did not demur to this statement of the possible consequences of the present situation, but he said that all would depend upon Russia.

I made the remark that in a time of difficulties such as this, it was just as true to say that it required two to keep the peace as it was to say, ordinarily, that it took two to make a quarrel. I hoped very much that if there were difficulties, Austria and Russia would be able in the first instance to discuss them directly with each other.

Count Mensdorff said that he hoped this would be possible, but he was under the impression that the attitude in St. Petersburg had not been very favourable recently.

I am, &c
E. GREY.

(33652) No. 91.
Sir Edward Grey to Sir M. de Bunsen.
Foreign Office, July 24, 1914.
Tel. (No. 148.) D. 1:30 P.M.

Austro-Hungarian Ambassador has communicated to me the note addressed to Servia with the explanation of the Austro-Hungarian Government upon it.(1)

I said that the murder of the Archduke and some of the circumstances stated in the Austro-Hungarian note with regard to Servia naturally aroused sympathy with Austria, but I thought it a great pity that a time-limit, and such a short time-limit, had been introduced at this stage, and the note seemed to me the most formidable document I had ever seen addressed by one State to another that was independent. Demand No. 5 might mean that the Austro-Hungarian Government were to be entitled to appoint officials who should have authority in Servian territory and this would hardly be consistent with maintenance of independent sovereignty of Servia.

I was not, however, making these comments in order to discuss the merits of the dispute between Austria-Hungary and Servia; that was not our concern. It was solely from the point of view of the peace of Europe that I should concern myself with the matter, and I felt great apprehension.

I must wait to hear the views of other Powers and no doubt we should consult with them to see what could be done to mitigate difficulties.

The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador observed that there had been so much procrastination on the part of Servia that a time-limit was essential. Some weeks had passed since the murder of the Archduke and Servia had made no sign of sympathy or help; if she had held out a hand after the murder the present situation might have been prevented.

I observed that a time-limit could have been introduced at any later stage if Serbia had procrastinated about a reply; as it was, the Austro-Hungarian Government not only demanded a reply within forty-eight hours, but dictated the terms of the reply.

(Repeated to Paris No. 206/7 J Berlin No. 198/4; Rome No. 186/7; and St. Petersburg No. 342/3: "For information only.")

(33736) No. 100.

Communication by the German Ambassador, July 24, 1914.

The publications of the Austro-Hungarian Government concerning the circumstances under which the assassination of the Austrian heir presumptive and his consort has taken place disclose unmistakably the aims which the great Servian propaganda has set itself and the means it employs to realise them. The facts now made known must also do away with the last doubts that the centre of activity of all those tendencies which are directed towards the detachment of the southern Slav provinces from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and their incorporation into the Servian Kingdom is to be found in Belgrade, and is at work there with at least the connivance of members of Government and army.

The Servian intrigues have been going on for many years. In an especially marked form the great Servian chauvinism manifested itself during the Bosnian crisis. It was only owing to the far-reaching self-restraint and moderation of the Austro-Hungarian Government and to the energetic interference of the Great Powers that the Servian provocations to which Austria-Hungary was then exposed did not lead to a conflict. The assurance of good conduct in future which was given by the Servian Government at that time has not been kept. Under the eyes, at least with the tacit permission of official Serbia, the great Servian propaganda has continuously increased in extension and intensity; to its account must be set the recent crime, the threads of which lead to Belgrade. It has become clearly evident that it would not be consistent either with the dignity or with the self-preservation of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy still longer to remain inactive in face of this movement on the other side of the frontier, by which the security and the integrity of her territories are constantly menaced. Under these circumstances the course of procedure and demands of the Austro-Hungarian Government can only be regarded as equitable and moderate. In spite of that, the attitude which public opinion as well as the Government in Serbia have recently adopted does not exclude the apprehension that the Servian Government might refuse to comply with those demands and might allow themselves to be carried away into a provocative attitude against Austria-Hungary. The Austro-Hungarian Government, if it does not wish definitely to abandon Austria's position as a Great Power, would then have no choice but to obtain the fulfilment of their demands from the Servian Government by strong pressure and, if necessary, by using military measures, the choice of the means having to be left to them.

The Imperial Government want to emphasise their opinion that in the present case there is only question of a matter to be settled exclusively between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, and

that the Great Powers ought seriously to endeavour to reserve it to those two immediately concerned. The Imperial Government desire urgently the localisation of the conflict because every interference of another Power would, owing to the different treaty obligations, be followed by incalculable consequences.

German Embassy, London.

Published in BB No. 9.

For the German original see DD No. 100. The translation here printed is that of the type-written copy in English left by the German Ambassador.

MINUTES.

Very strong support. -- G. R. C. July 25, 1914.

The answer is that owing to the extreme nature of the Austrian demands and the time limit imposed, the localisation of the conflict has been made exceedingly difficult. Because the Austrian terms bear on their face the character of a design to provoke a war. The statements made by Austria and now reasserted by Germany concerning Servia's misdeeds rest for the present on no evidence that is available for the Powers whom the Austrian Government has invited to accept those statements. Time ought to be given to allow the Powers to satisfy themselves as to the facts which they are asked to endorse. -- E. A. C. July 25.

(33673) No. 101.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.

St. Petersburg, July 24, 1914.

D. 5:40 P.M.

Tel. (No. 166.) Urgent. R. 8 P.M.

My immediately preceding telegram.(1)

Minister for Foreign Affairs telephoned to me this morning saying that he had just received text of ultimatum presented by Austria at Belgrade yesterday that demands a reply in forty-eight hours. Step thus taken by Austria meant war, and he begged me to meet him at the French Embassy.

*Minister for Foreign Affairs and French Ambassador told me confidentially that result of the visit of the President of the French Republic had been to establish the following points: --

1. Perfect community of views on the various problems with which the Powers are confronted as regards the maintenance of general peace and balance of power in Europe, more especially in the East.

2. Decision to take action at Vienna with a view to the prevention of a demand for explanation or any summons equivalent to an intervention in the internal affairs of Serbia which the latter would be justified in regarding as an attack on her sovereignty and independence.

3. Solemn affirmation of obligations imposed by the alliance of the two countries.*

Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed the hope that His Majesty's Government would proclaim their solidarity with France and Russia. He characterised Austria's conduct as immoral and provocative. Some of the demands which she had presented were absolutely unacceptable, and she would never have acted as she had done without having first consulted Germany. The French Ambassador gave me to understand that France would not only give Russia strong diplomatic support, but would, if necessary, fulfil all the obligations imposed on her by the alliance.

I said that I could not speak in the name of His Majesty's Government, but that I would telegraph all that they had said. I could personally hold out no hope that His Majesty's Government would make any declaration of solidarity that would entail engagement to support France and Russia by force of arms. We had no direct interests in Serbia, and public opinion in England would never sanction a war on her behalf. Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that the Serbian question was but part of general European question and that we could not efface ourselves.

I said that I gathered that His Excellency wished us to join in telling Austria that we could not tolerate her active intervention in Serbian internal affairs. If she paid no attention to our representations and took military action against Serbia, did Russia propose to declare war upon her? Minister for Foreign Affairs said that the whole question would be considered by a Council of Ministers to be held this afternoon, but that no decision would be taken till a further Council of Ministers had been held under the presidency of the Emperor, probably tomorrow. He personally thought that Russia would at any rate have to mobilise.

I suggested that the first thing to be done was to try to gain time by bringing our influence to bear to induce Austria to extend term of delay accorded to Serbia. The French Ambassador replied that time did not permit of this; either Austria was bluffing or had made up her mind to act at once. In either case a firm and united attitude was our only chance of averting war. I then asked whether it would not be advisable to urge Serbian Government to state precisely how far they were prepared to go to meet Austria's wishes. Minister for Foreign Affairs said that some of the demands contained in ultimatum might no doubt be accepted, but that he must first consult his colleagues.

As they both continued to press me to declare our complete solidarity with them, I said that I thought you might be prepared to represent strongly at Vienna and Berlin danger to European peace of an Austrian attack on Serbia. You might perhaps point out that it would in all probability force Russia to intervene, that this would bring Germany and (?France) into the field, and that if war became general, it would be difficult for England to remain neutral. Minister for Foreign Affairs said that he hoped that we would in any case express strong reprobation of Austria's action. If war did break out, we would sooner or later be dragged into

it, but if we did not make common cause with France and Russia from the outset we should have rendered war more likely, and should not have played a "*beau rôle*."

From French Ambassador's language it almost looked as if France and Russia were determined to make a strong stand even if we declined to join them. Language of Minister for Foreign Affairs, however, was not so (?decided) on this subject.

Austrian Government seemed purposely to have presented their ultimatum at moment when President of the French Republic and President of the Council were leaving Russia on their return to France, where they cannot arrive for four or five days.

Towards the close of our interview we were joined by Roumanian Minister, with whom Minister for Foreign Affairs had a private conversation in which is Excellency invited also Roumanian Government to make representations at Vienna.

(Repeated to Paris, 1:20 P.M., No. 217.)

(1) No. 84

Published in BB No. 6 (paraphrased and parts omitted).

MINUTES.

The moment has passed when it might have been possible to enlist French support in an effort to hold back Russia.

It is clear that France and Russia are decided to accept the challenge thrown out to them. Whatever we may think of the merits of the Austrian charges against Servia, France and Russia consider that these are the pretexts, and that the bigger cause of Triple Alliance versus Triple Entente is definitely engaged.

I think it would be impolitic, not to say dangerous, for England to attempt to controvert this opinion, or to endeavour to obscure the plain issue, by any representation at St. Petersburg and Paris.

The point that matters is whether Germany is or is not absolutely determined to have this war now.

There is still the chance that she can be made to hesitate, if she can be induced to apprehend that the war will find England by the side of France and Russia.

I can suggest only one effective way of bringing this home to the German Government without absolutely committing us definitely at this stage. If, the moment either Austria or Russia begin to mobilise, His Majesty's Government give orders to put our whole fleet on an immediate war footing, this may conceivably make Germany realise the seriousness of the danger to which she would be exposed if England took part in the war.

It would be right, supposing this decision could be taken now, to inform the French and Russian Governments of it, and this again would be the best thing we could do to prevent a very grave situation arising as between England and Russia.

It is difficult not to agree with Sazonof that sooner or later England will be dragged into the war if it does come. We shall gain nothing by not making up our minds what we can do in circumstances that may arise to-morrow.

Should the war come, and England stand aside, one of two things must happen: --

(a.) Either Germany and Austria win, crush France, and humiliate Russia. With the French fleet gone, Germany in occupation of the Channel, with the willing or unwilling cooperation of Holland and Belgium, what will be the position of a friendless England?

(b.) Or France and Russia win. What would then be their attitude towards England? What about India and the Mediterranean?

Our interests are tied up with those of France and Russia in this struggle, which is not for the possession of Servia, but one between Germany aiming at a political dictatorship in Europe and the Powers who desire to retain individual free dom. If we can help to avoid the conflict by showing our naval strength, ready to be instantly used, it would be wrong not to make the effort.

Whatever therefore our ultimate decision, I consider we should decide now to mobilise the fleet as soon as any other Great Power mobilises, and that we should announce this decision without delay to the French and Russian Governments. -- E. A. C. July 25.

The points raised by Sir Eyre Crowe merit serious consideration, and doubtless the Cabinet will review the situation. Our attitude during the crisis will be regarded by Russia as a test and we must be most careful not to alienate her. -- A. N.

Mr. Churchill told me to-day that the fleet can be mobilised in twenty-four hours, but I think it is premature to make any statement to France and Russia yet. -- E. G.

* [NOTE. -- In the Blue Book this passage was omitted (see Introduction, p. vii. By an oversight, however, a reference to it was left in the table of contents. The attention of the Office having been drawn to this fact by a German scholar in the spring of 1924, the text of the missing passage was communicated to him with the permission of the Secretary of State. The passage has therefore since then been published in Germany.]

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.
Vienna, July 25, 1914.
D. 12-5 P.M.
R. 1:45 P.M.
Tel. (No. 101.)

Language of press this morning leaves the impression that the surrender of Serbia is neither expected nor really desired. It is officially announced that the Austrian Minister is instructed to leave Belgrade with staff of legation failing unconditional acceptance of note at 6 P.M. to-day.

Minister for Foreign Affairs goes to Ischl to-day to communicate personally to the Emperor Servian reply when it comes.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.
Foreign Office, July 25, 1914.
Tel. (No. 353.
D. 2 :15 P.M.

Your telegram No. 166 of 24th July (1): Austria and Servia.

You spoke quite rightly in very difficult circumstances as to attitude of His Majesty's Government. I entirely approve, and I cannot promise more on behalf of His Majesty's Government.

I do not consider that public opinion here would or ought to sanction our going to war in the Servian quarrel.

But if war does take place we may be drawn into it by development of other issues, and I am therefore anxious to prevent war.

The brusque, sudden, and peremptory character of the Austrian d,marche makes it almost inevitable that in very short time Austria and Russia will both have mobilised against each other. In this event, it seems to me that the only chance of peace is for the other four Powers to join in asking Austria and Russia not to cross frontier, and to give time for the four Powers acting at Vienna and St. Petersburg to endeavour to arrange matters.

If Germany will adopt this view, I am strongly of opinion that France and ourselves should act upon it.(2) Italy no doubt would gladly co- operate.

But the co-operation of Germany would be essential. No diplomatic intervention or mediation would be tolerated by either Russia or Austria unless it was clearly impartial and included friends or allies of both.

(Repeated to Paris No. 218/19: "You should inform M.F.A.")

(34245) No. 176.
Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.
Foreign Office, July 27, 1914.
Tel. (No. 208.)
D. 3 P.M.

German Ambassador has informed me that German Government accept in principle mediation between Austria and Russia by the four Powers, reserving, of course, their right as an ally to help Austria if attacked. He has also been instructed to request me to use influence in St. Petersburg to localise the war and to keep up the peace of Europe.

I have replied that the Servian reply went further than could have been expected to meet the Austrian demands. German Minister for Foreign Affairs has himself said that there were some things in the Austrian note that Servia could hardly be expected to accept. I assumed that Servian reply could not have gone as far as it did unless Russia had exercised conciliatory influence at Belgrade, and it was really at Vienna that moderating influence was now required. If Austria put the Servian reply aside as being worth nothing and marched into Servia, it meant that she was determined to crush Servia at all costs, being reckless of the consequences that might be involved. Servian reply should at least be treated as a basis for discussion and pause. I said German Government should urge this at Vienna.

I recalled what German Government had said as to the gravity of the situation if the war could not be localised, and observed that if Germany assisted Austria against Russia it would be because, without any reference to the merits of the dispute, Germany could not afford to see Austria crushed. Just so other issues might be raised that would supersede the dispute between Austria and Servia, and would bring other Powers in, and the war would be the biggest ever known; but as long as Germany would work to keep the peace I would keep closely in touch. I repeated that after the Servian reply it was at Vienna that some moderation must be urged.

(Repeated to Paris No. 241/2; Vienna No. 165/6; Rome No. 202/3; and St. Petersburg No. 375/6: "You should inform M.F.A.")

(34227) No. 183

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.

Paris, July 27, 1914.

D. 2:45 P.M.

R. 4:45 P.M.

Tel. (No. 88.)

Your telegrams Nos. 232 and 234 of yesterday :(1) Austria and Servia.

French Government accept your proposal and have sent instructions accordingly to French Ambassador in London, who returns there this evening. French Ambassador in Berlin instructed to concert with British Ambassador as to advisability of joining him in speaking to the German Government. French representatives at Vienna, St. Petersburg and Belgrade have also received necessary instructions, but Ministry for Foreign Affairs thinks that it would be dangerous for Entente Ambassadors to speak at Vienna until it is known that Germans have done so with some success.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs gathers from German Ambassador that Austrians are particularly suspicious of words "intervention," "mediation" and "conference" and suggests therefore that care should be taken to speak of conversations, moderating advice, &c.

(Repeated to Embassies and Nish.)

(34231) No. 185.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.

Berlin, July 27, 1914.

D. 6:17 P.M.

R. 9 P.M.

Tel. (No. 96.)

Your telegram No. 232 of 26th July to Paris.(1)

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs says that conference you suggest would practically amount to a court of arbitration and could not, in his opinion, be called together except at the request of Austria and Russia. He could not therefore, desirous though he was to co-operate for the maintenance of peace, fall in with your suggestion. I said I was sure that your idea had nothing to do with arbitration, but meant that representatives of the four nations not directly interested should discuss and suggest means for avoiding a dangerous situation. He maintained, however, that such a conference as you proposed was not practicable. He added that news he had just received from St. Petersburg showed that there was an intention on the part of M. Sazonof to exchange views with Count Berchtold. He thought that this method of procedure might lead to a satisfactory result, and that it would be best, before doing anything else, to await outcome of the exchange of views between the Austrian and Russian Governments.

In the course of a short conversation Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said that as yet Austria was only partially mobilising, but that if Russia mobilised against Germany latter would have to follow suit. I asked him what he meant by "mobilising against Germany." He said that if Russia only mobilised in south Germany would not mobilise, but if she mobilised in north Germany would have to do so too, and Russian system of mobilisation was so complicated that it might be difficult exactly to locate her mobilisation. Germany would therefore have to be very careful not to be taken by surprise.

Finally, Secretary of State said that news from St. Petersburg had caused him to take more hopeful view of the general situation.

(Repeated to Embassies and Nish.)

MINUTE.

So far as we know, the German Government has up to now said not a single word at Vienna in the direction of restraint or moderation. If a word had been said, we may be certain that the German Government would claim credit for having spoken at all. The inference is not reassuring as to Germany's goodwill.

At the same time the rapid succession of fresh proposals and suggestions coming from St. Petersburg made it easier for Germany to find fresh excuses for her inactivity. E. A. C. July 28.

No. 192.
Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.
British Embassy, Paris, July 27, 1914.
Private.

My dear Grey.

I am sure that the French Government do not want to fight and they should be encouraged to put pressure on the Russian Government not to assume the absurd and obsolete attitude of Russia being the protectress of all Slav States whatever their conduct, for this will lead to war.

I do not believe that the German Emperor and Government were accessories before the fact to the terms of the Austrian note. If they had been the Emperor would not have been away yachting.

The demonstrations in the streets here are nothing compared with those at Berlin where the attitude of the populace is not reassuring.

Iswolsky is expected back here to-day or to-morrow and he is not an element of peace.

If you get together meetings between yourself and the French; German and Italian Ambassadors call them consultations for the Austrians would resent a sort of repetition of the London reunions which ended in being dubbed the London Conference. They would consider that they were being treated as a Balkan Minor State.

The Quai d'Orsay represented by M. Berthelot is not sufficiently *coulant* with the German Ambassador. It might well have consented to announce in the Press as suggested by him that his d,marches had been very friendly and that some mention should be made of solidarité.

Yours sincerely,
FRANCIS BERTIE.

(34465) No. 230.
Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.
Vienna, July 28, 1914.
D. 4:10 P.M.
Tel. (No. 115.)
R. 9 40 P.M.

As directed by your circular telegram No. 242 of 27th July (1) to Paris, I spoke to Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day in the sense of your telegram No. 208 of 27th July to Berlin.(1) I

avoided the word "mediation," but said that, as mentioned in your speech, which he had just read to me, you had hopes that conversations in London between the four Powers less interested might yet lead to an arrangement which Austro-Hungarian Government would accept as satisfactory and as rendering actual hostilities unnecessary. I added that you had regarded Servian reply as having gone far to meet just demands of Austria-Hungary; that you thought it constituted a fair base of discussion during which warlike operations might remain in abeyance, and that Austrian (sic) Ambassador at Berlin was speaking in this sense. Minister for Foreign Affairs said quietly, but firmly, that no discussion could be accepted on basis of Servian note; that war would be declared to-day, and that well-known pacific character of Emperor, as well as, he might add, his own, might be accepted as a guarantee that war was both just and inevitable. This was a matter that must be settled directly between the two parties immediately concerned. I said that you would hear with regret that hostilities could not now be arrested, as you feared that they might lead to complications threatening the peace of Europe.

In taking leave of his Excellency, I begged him to believe that if in the course of present grave crisis our point of view should sometimes differ from his, this would arise, not from want of sympathy with the many just complaints which Austria-Hungary had against Servia, but from the fact that whereas Austria-Hungary put first her quarrel with Servia, you were anxious in the first instance for peace of Europe. I trusted this larger aspect of the question would appeal with equal force to his Excellency. He said he had it also in mind, but thought that Russia ought not to oppose operations like those impending, which did not aim at territorial aggrandisement and which could no longer be postponed.

(Repeated to Embassies.)

No. 239.

Sir Arthur Nicolson to Sir G. Buchanan.

Private.

Foreign Office, July 28, 1914.

My dear Buchanan,
I am much obliged to you for your letter received by the last Messenger, which was written before the crisis had assumed such a very acute stage. I hope that we have kept you fully informed by repeating to you the telegrams which we have received and sent, so it is unnecessary for me to go into details. What has puzzled me a little have been the fresh proposals which Sazonof makes almost daily.⁽¹⁾ One day he said that if Servia would agree, Russia would be ready to stand aside and leave the question in the hands of ourselves, France, Germany and Italy. On receipt of your telegram mentioning this we put forward the suggestion that a small conference of the four Powers should be held here, and that the other Powers should engage to abstain from active military operations pending the results of this conference. However, Germany declined to entertain the idea, so the matter has fallen through. Then came next day the proposal which Sazonof had made to your Austrian colleague that Italy and ourselves should collaborate with Austria in finding an issue. We had not time to digest this new idea when another telegram arrived saying that he was going to open up conversations direct with Vienna. I must say that this seems the best procedure, but I

do not know whether Austria will be ready to fall in with it. The great hope that we have of course is that Austria will abstain from actually entering Servian territory, as I rather gather from what you tell us and from what we hear from others that an actual invasion of Servia by Austria could not possibly be regarded with indifference by Russia. Of course in that case all hope of a peaceful solution will vanish.

I can quite understand Russia not being able to permit Austria to crush Servia. I think the talk about localising the war merely means that all the Powers are to hold the ring while Austria quietly strangles Servia. This to my mind is quite preposterous, not to say iniquitous. I do not understand after the very satisfactory way in which Servia has met the Austrian requests how Austria can with any justification proceed to hostile measures against her. If she deliberately provokes war with Servia with the intention of giving her what she calls a lesson, she is, I think, acting most wrongly, for she must know very well that such action on her part would in all probability lead to a general European conflagration, with all its untold disastrous consequences. Germany has not played a very straight game at least so far as we are concerned in all this business. On two occasions we asked her to use moderating language at Vienna and we promised to support her if she did so. She contented herself with simply passing on our proposal as our proposal, which of course was not what we desired or requested, and again she brushed on one side the idea of a small conference here a being an impractical suggestion. Then Lichnowsky says that he is so pleased that Anglo-German co-operation seems likely to be successful. His interpretation of the word "co-operation" must be totally different from that which is usually accepted.

It is no use indulging in surmises as to how much Germany knew of Austria's move before it was actually made. I know for the past two or three weeks the German Ambassador here has been exceedingly anxious and perturbed, and on more than one occasion has said to some of his colleagues that if they knew all that he did they would be equally disquieted. Moreover I cannot believe that Austria would have gone so far as she has done without having informed Germany, her ally, of her proposed procedure, and secured her promise of co-operation.

What has preoccupied, and I confess has troubled, me very much, is satisfying Russia's very natural request as to what we should do in certain eventualities. I foresaw as well as you did that this crisis might be taken by Russia as a test of our friendship, and that were we to disappoint her all hope of a friendly and permanent understanding with her would disappear. We, of course, living under such conditions as we do here, when no Government practically can take any decided line without feeling that public opinion amply supports them, are unable to give any decided engagements as to what we should or should not do in any future emergencies; but I think; we have made it perfectly clear that in any case neither Germany nor Austria could possibly rely with any certainty upon our remaining neutral, and I think this fact has been much impressed upon them by one or two incidents which have occurred within the last two or three days. The decision to keep our battle fleet together instead of allowing it to disperse in order to give leave to its crews was officially notified and given prominence in the papers, and has been immediately taken as a sign by Germany and others that we are prepared to take our share in hostilities if circumstances arose to make it necessary for us to do so. Moreover you will see that the tone of our press, after the first shock which was occasioned by the Austrian ultimatum, has come round to the fact that it would be difficult, if not

impossible, for us to stand outside a general European conflagration. There is no doubt whatsoever that were we drawn into this conflagration we should be on the side of our friends. Although therefore we were unable to give Sazonof a definite undertaking as to what our attitude would be, I think you will see that there is very little doubt, supposing we were called upon to take a share, that we should not hesitate to do our duty.

You have certainly handled a most difficult situation in your usual skilful and tactful manner, and you can be quite sure that your action and language have been thoroughly appreciated and approved here. I am sorry that I cannot write further to-day, but you will understand that one is quite overwhelmed with work at this moment.

(34466) No. 250.
Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.
Vienna, July 28, 1914.
Tel. (No. 116.)
R. July 29.

I have received *note verbale* from Ministry for Foreign Affairs, stating that the Servian Government, not having replied to note of 23rd July in a satisfactory manner, Imperial and Royal Government is compelled itself to provide for protection of its rights and to have recourse for that object to force of arms. Austria-Hungary has addressed to Servia formal declaration according to article 1 of convention of 18th October, 1907, relative to opening of hostilities and considers herself from to-day in state of war with Servia. Austria-Hungary will conform, provided Servia does so, to stipulations of Hague Conventions of 18th October, 1907, and to Declaration of London of 26th February, 1909.

Published in BB No. 73.
Confirmed by despatch, see BB No. 50.

MINUTES.

I think we should not, in present circumstances, issue the otherwise usual declaration of neutrality. . A . C . July 29.

I agree, better wait as to neutrality declaration. A. N.

(34699) No. 263.
Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.
Foreign Office, July 29, 1914.
Tel. (No. 226.)
D. 4:45 P.M.

The German Ambassador has been instructed by the German Chancellor to inform me that he is endeavouring to mediate between Vienna and St. Petersburg, and he hopes with good success. Austria and Russia seem to be in constant touch and he is endeavouring to make Vienna explain in a satisfactory form at St. Petersburg the scope and extension of Austrian proceedings in Servia. I told the German Ambassador that an agreement arrived at direct between Austria and Russia would be the best possible solution. I would press no proposal as long as there was a prospect of that, but my information this morning was that the Austrian Government have declined the suggestion of the Russian Government that the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg should be authorised to discuss directly with the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs the means of settling the Austro-Servian conflict. The press correspondent at St. Petersburg had been told that Russian Government would mobilise. The German Government had said that they were favourable in principle to mediation between Russia and Austria if necessary. They seemed to think the particular method of conference, consultation or discussion, or even conversations à quatre in London too formal a method. I urged that the German Government should suggest any method by which the influence of the four Powers could be used together to prevent war between Austria and Russia. France agreed, Italy agreed. The whole idea of mediation or mediating influence was ready to be put into operation by any method that Germany could suggest if mine was not acceptable. In fact, mediation was ready to come into operation by any method that Germany thought possible if only Germany would "press the button" in the interests of peace.

(Repeated to Paris No. 263/4, St. Petersburg No. 402/3: "You should inform M.F.A"; also to Vienna No. 183/4, Rome No. 222/3: "For information only.")

35000) No. 283.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

(No. 509.)

Foreign Office, July 29, 1914.

Sir,

After telling M. Cambon to-day how grave the situation seemed to be, I told him that I meant to tell the German Ambassador to-day that he must not be misled by the friendly tone of our conversations into any sense of false security that we should stand aside if all the efforts to preserve the peace, which we were now making in common with Germany, failed.(1) But I went on to say to M. Cambon that I thought it necessary to tell him also that public opinion here approached the present difficulty from a quite different point of view from that taken during the difficulty as to Morocco a few years ago. In the case of Morocco the dispute was one in which France was primarily interested and in which it appeared that Germany, in an attempt to crush France, was fastening a quarrel on France on a question that was the subject of a special agreement between France and us. In the present case the dispute between Austria and Servia was not one in which we felt called to take a hand. Even if the question became one between Austria and Russia we should not feel called upon to take a hand in it. It would then be a question of the supremacy of Teuton or Slav a struggle for supremacy in the Balkans; and our idea had always been to avoid being drawn into a war over a Balkan question. If Germany became involved and France became involved, we had not made up our minds what we should do; it was a case that we should have to consider. France would then

have been drawn into a quarrel which was not hers, but in which, owing to her alliance, her honour and interest obliged her to engage. We were free from engagements, and we should have to decide what British interests required us to do. I thought it necessary to say that, because, as he knew, we were taking all precautions with regard to our fleet, and I was about to warn Prince Lichnowsky not to count on our standing aside, but it would not be fair that I should let M. Cambon be misled into supposing that this meant that we had decided what to do in a contingency that I still hoped might not arise.

M. Cambon said that I had explained the situation very clearly. He understood it to be that in a Balkan quarrel and in a struggle for supremacy between Teuton and Slav, we should not feel called to intervene; should other issues be raised, and Germany and France become involved so that the question became one of the hegemony of Europe, we should then decide what it was necessary for us to do. He seemed quite prepared for this announcement and made no criticism upon it.

He said French opinion was calm, but decided. He anticipated a demand from Germany that France would be neutral while Germany attacked Russia. This assurance France, of course, could not give; she was bound to help Russia if Russia was attacked.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

(36819) No. 294.

Viviani à M. Paul Cambon. (Communicated by French Embassy.) (No date.)

Tél.

Paris, le 30 juillet, 1914.

L'Ambassadeur de Russie me fait savoir cette nuit que l'Ambassadeur d'Allemagne a notifié à M. Sazonof la décision de son Gouvernement de mobiliser ses forces armées si la Russie ne cesse pas ses préparatifs militaires. Le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères du Gouvernement du Tsar fait remarquer que ces préparatifs n'ont été commencés qu'à la suite de la mobilisation par l'Autriche de huit corps d'armée et du refus de cette Puissance de régler pacifiquement son différend avec la Serbie. M. Sazonof déclare que, dans ces conditions, la Russie ne peut que hâter ses armements et envisager l'imminence de la guerre, qu'elle compte sur le secours d'une alliée, la France et qu'elle considère comme désirable que l'Angleterre se joigne sans perte de temps à la Russie et à la France. Comme je vous l'ai indiqué dans mon télégramme du 27 de ce mois, le Gouvernement de la République est décidé à ne négliger aucun effort en vue d'une solution du conflit et à seconder l'action du Gouvernement impérial dans l'intérêt de la paix générale. La France est d'autre part résolue à remplir toutes ses obligations d'alliance.

Mais dans l'intérêt même de la paix générale et étant donné qu'une conversation est engagée entre les Puissances moins intéressées je crois qu'il serait opportun que, dans les mesures de précaution et de défense auxquelles la Russie croit devoir procéder elle ne prenne immédiatement aucune disposition qui offrît à l'Allemagne un prétexte pour une mobilisation totale ou partielle de ses forces.

(34807) No. 299.

Russian Ambassador to Sir Arthur Nicolson. (Received July 30.)

Russian Embassy, London,

July 30, 1914.

My dear Nicolson,
I received yesterday night two of the enclosed telegrams. They seem to me of importance. As they refer to Schebeko's telegram of which I gave you a résumé yesterday afternoon, I enclose a translation of that telegram as well.

Yours sincerely,
BENCKENDORFF.

Enclosures in No. 299.

(1.)

Confidentiel.

Télégramme de l'Ambassadeur de Russie à Vienne à M. Sazonoff en date du 15/28 Juillet 1914.

J'ai entretenu aujourd'hui le Comte Berchtold dans le sens des instructions de votre Excellence. Je lui fis observer, en termes les plus amicaux, combien il était désirable de trouver une solution qui en consolidant les bons rapports entre l'Autriche-Hongrie et la Russie, donnerait à la Monarchie Austro-Hongroise des garanties sérieuses pour ses rapports futurs avec la Serbie.

J'attirais l'attention du Comte Berchtold sur tous les dangers pour la paix de l'Europe, qu'entraînerait un conflit armé, entre l'Autriche-Hongrie et la Serbie.

Le Comte Berchtold me répondit qu'il se rendait parfaitement compte du sérieux de la situation et des avantages d'une franche explication avec le Cabinet de St.-Pétersbourg. Il me dit que d'un autre côté le Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois, qui ne s'était décidé que très mal volontiers aux mesures énergiques qu'il avait prises contre la Serbie, ne pouvait plus ni reculer, ni entrer en discussion aucune des termes de la note Austro-Hongroise.

Le Comte Berchtold ajouta que la crise était devenue si aiguë et que l'excitation de l'opinion publique avait atteint tel degré, que le Gouvernement, le voulait-il, ne pouvait plus y consentir, d'autant moins, me dit-il, que la réponse même de la Serbie donne la preuve du manque de sincérité, de ses promesses pour l'avenir.

34734) No. 303.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.

Foreign Office, July 30, 1914.

Tel. (No. 231.)

D. 3:30 P.M.

Your telegram No. 102.(1)

You must inform German Chancellor that his proposal that we should bind ourselves to neutrality on such terms cannot for a moment be entertained.

He asks us in effect to engage to stand by while French colonies are taken and France is beaten so long as Germany does not take French territory as distinct from the colonies.

From the material point of view such a proposal is unacceptable, for France could be so crushed as to lose her position as a Great Power, and become subordinate to German policy without further territory in Europe being taken from her.

But apart from that, for us to make this bargain with Germany at the expense of France would be a disgrace from which the good name of this country would never recover.

The Chancellor also in effect asks us to bargain away whatever obligation or interest we have as regards the neutrality of Belgium. We could not entertain that bargain either.

Having said so much, it is unnecessary to examine whether prospect of a future general neutrality agreement between Germany and England would offer positive advantages sufficient to compensate us for tying our hands now. My answer must be that we must preserve our full freedom to act as circumstances may seem to us to require in any development of the present crisis, so unfavourable and regrettable, as the Chancellor contemplates.

You should add most earnestly that the one way of maintaining the good relations between England and Germany is to continue to work together to preserve the peace of Europe; if we succeed in this object, the mutual relations of Germany and England will, I believe, be ipso facto improved and strengthened. For that object His Majesty's Government will work in that way with all sincerity and goodwill.

And if the peace of Europe can be preserved, and this crisis be safely passed, my own endeavour would be to promote some arrangement to which Germany could be a party, by which she could be assured that no hostile or aggressive policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia, and ourselves, jointly or separately. I have desired this and worked for it, as far as I could, through the last Balkan crisis, and, Germany having a corresponding object, our relations sensibly improved. The idea has hitherto been too utopian to form the subject of definite proposals, but if this present crisis, so much more acute than any that Europe has had for generations, be safely passed, I am hopeful that the reaction and relief that will follow may make some more definite rapprochement between the Powers possible than was possible before.

(34878) No. 318.
Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.
Paris, July 30, 1914.
D. 8 15 P.M.

Tel. (No. 95.)
R. 10:30 P.M.

I had audience of President of the Republic this evening in order to give him your message of congratulation on success of his visit to St. Petersburg, for which he wishes me to thank you.

He told me that in middle of last night French Government received information that German Government had informed Russian Government that unless Russia stopped her mobilisation Germany would mobilise. (1) In middle of day a further report from St. Petersburg stated that German communication had been modified and had become a request to be informed on what conditions Russia would consent to demobilisation, answer to which is that she will do so provided that Austria will give assurance that she will respect sovereignty of Servia, and will submit certain of the demands of Austrian note not accepted by Servia to an international discussion.

President of Republic thinks that Austro-Hungarian Government will not accept these Russian conditions. He is convinced that preservation of peace between Powers is in hands of England, for if His Majesty's Government announce that, in the event of conflict between Germany and France, resulting from present differences between Austria and Servia, England would come to aid of France, there would be no war, for Germany would at once modify her attitude.

I explained to him how difficult it would be for His Majesty's Government to make such an announcement. He, however, said that he must maintain that it would be in the interests of peace. France is pacific, she does not desire war, and she has not gone farther at present than to make preparations for mobilisation so as not to be taken unawares, and French Government will keep His Majesty's Government informed of everything that may be done in that way. French Government have reliable information that round Thionville and Metz German troops are concentrated ready for war.

President of Republic said that if there were a general war on the continent England would inevitably be involved in course of it, for protection of her vital interests, and a declaration by her now of her intention to support France, who desires to remain at peace, would almost certainly prevent Germany from embarking on a war.

(Repeated to Embassies.)

(35076) No. 347.
Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.
St. Petersburg, July 31, 1914.
D. 6:40 P.M.
Telegram
R. 5: 20 P.M.

It has been decided to issue orders for general mobilisation.

This decision was taken in consequence of report received from Russian Ambassador in Vienna to the effect that Austria is determined not to yield to intervention of Powers, and that she is moving troops against Russia as well as against Servia.

Russia has also reason to believe that Germany is making active military preparations and she cannot afford to let her get a start.

(Repeated to Embassies.)

Published in BB No. 113.

[NOTE. The date of despatch seems to be wrong. The final decision to issue orders for general mobilisation was made by the Tsar during the afternoon of July 30 and the official telegram ordering mobilisation was despatched at 6 o'clock that evening. Mobilisation orders were posted in the streets of St. Petersburg during the night. It is therefore most improbable that Sir George Buchanan should have despatched a telegram on the evening of the 31st announcing that it had been decided to issue orders for general mobilisation; on that day he must have said that the orders for general mobilisation had been issued. The telegram was probably sent at 6:40 P.M. on July 30 and delayed in transmission and a mistake made by the clerk who decyphered the original telegram.

(35091) No. 363.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.

Paris, July 31, 1914.

D. 9:20 P.M.

Telegram (No. 101.)

R. 11 P . M .

Following from military attaché for War Office:

"Position of French troops as follows:

"Those absolutely on frontier took up their covering positions on the 30th July with orders not to approach within 8 kilom. of frontier. Remainder in garrison quarters at Rheims, Dijon, Bourges. War Office just received news that railways in Alsace-Lorraine reserved for military purposes. German troop trains moving towards frontier; some railway and telegraph lines cut. War Office think Germany mobilises this afternoon."

(35093) No. 380.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.

Paris, July 31, 1914.

D. August 1, 1:10 A.M.

Telegram (No. 103.)

R. August 1, 2:5 P.M.

On the receipt at 8 80 to-night of your telegram No. 287 of this afternoon,(1) I sent a message to Minister for Foreign Affairs requesting to see him. He received me at 10:30 to-night at the Elysée, where a Cabinet Council was being held. He took a note of the enquiry as to the respecting by France of the neutrality of Belgium which you instructed me to make [group undecypherable].

He told me that a communication had been made to you by the German Ambassador in London of the intention of Germany to order a general mobilisation of her army if Russia does not demobilise at once.(2) He is urgently anxious as to what the attitude of England will be in the circumstances, and begs an answer may be made by His Majesty's Government at the earliest moment possible.

Minister for Foreign Affairs also told me that the German Embassy is packing up.

M. Jaurès has been killed in a restaurant by a young man on the ground that he was a pacifist and a traitor.

(35094) No. 382.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.

Paris, July 31, 1914.

D. August 1, 1:12 A.M.

Tel. (No. 104.)

R. August 1, 2:15 A.M.

My telegram No. 103 of to-night.(1)

Political Director has brought me the reply of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to your enquiry respecting the neutrality of Belgium. It is as follows:

French Government are resolved to respect the neutrality of Belgium, and it would only be in the event of some other Power violating that neutrality that France might find herself under the necessity, in order to assure defence of her own security, to act otherwise. This assurance has been given several times. President of the Republic spoke of it to the King of the Belgians, and the French Minister at Brussels has spontaneously renewed the assurance to the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day.

Published in BB No. 125.

Cf. No. 474.

MINUTES.

France will respect Belgian neutrality, Germany will not. But Germany will delay a definite answer until it is too late for England to act effectively. E. A. C. August 1.

We should take no reply or a postponed reply as a refusal. A. N.

(35370) No. 426.
Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Bertie.
Foreign Office, August 1, 1914.
Tel (No. 299.)
D. 8:20 P.M.

After the Cabinet to-day, I told M. Cambon that the present position differed entirely from that created by the Morocco incidents. In the latter, Germany made upon France demands that France could not grant, and in connection with which we had undertaken special obligations towards France. In these, public opinion would have justified the British Government in supporting France to the utmost of their ability. Now, the position was that Germany would agree not to attack France if France remained neutral in the event of war between Russia and Germany. If France could not take advantage of this position it was because she was bound by an alliance to which we were not parties, and of which we did not know the terms. This did not mean that under no circumstances would we assist France, but it did mean that France must take her own decision at this moment without reckoning on an assistance that we were not now in a position to promise.

M. Cambon said that he could not transmit this reply to his Government, and he asked me to authorise him to say that the British Cabinet had not yet taken any decision.

I said that we had come to a decision: that we could not propose to Parliament at this moment to send an expeditionary military force to the continent. Such a step had always been regarded here as very dangerous and doubtful. It was one that we could not propose, and Parliament would not authorise unless our interests and obligations were deeply and desperately involved.

M. Cambon said that the French coasts were undefended. The German fleet might come through the Straits any day and attack them.

I said that that might alter public feeling here, and so might a violation of the neutrality of Belgium. He could tell his Government that we were already considering the Belgian point, and that I would ask the Cabinet to consider the point about the French coasts. He could say that the Cabinet had not yet taken any decision on these points.

(35568) No. 448.
Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.
(No. 256.)
Foreign Office, August 1, 1914.

Sir,
I told the German Ambassador to-day that the reply of the German Government with regard to the neutrality of Belgium was a matter of very great regret, because the neutrality of Belgium affected feeling in this country. If Germany could see her way to give the same assurance as that which had been given by France it would materially contribute to relieve anxiety and tension here. On the other hand, if there were a violation of the neutrality of Belgium by one

combatant while the other respected it, it would be extremely difficult to restrain public feeling in this country. I said that we had been discussing this question at a Cabinet meeting, and, as I was authorised to tell him this, I gave him an aide-mémoire of it.

He asked me whether, if Germany gave a promise not to violate Belgian neutrality, we would engage to remain neutral.

I replied that I could not say that; our hands were still free, and we were considering what our attitude should be. All I could say was that our attitude would be determined largely by public opinion here, and that the neutrality of Belgium would appeal very strongly to public opinion here. I did not think that we could give a promise of neutrality on that condition alone.

The Ambassador pressed me as to whether I could not formulate conditions on which we would remain neutral. He even suggested that the integrity of France and her colonies might be guaranteed.

I said that I felt obliged to refuse definitely any promise to remain neutral on similar terms, and I could only say that we must keep our hands free.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

(35552) No. 471.
Communication from German Embassy.

Herr von Schubert called to communicate the annexed telegram(1) from his Government which he was directed to request should be brought to the notice of Sir Edward Grey at once.

I translate:

"This morning 80 French officers in Prussian uniform attempted to cross the German frontier in 12 motor cars at Walbeck, west of Geldern. This constituted the most serious violation of neutrality on the part of France."

(Geldern is near the Dutch-German frontier, some way north of Venloo over 200 kilom. distant from the northernmost point of the Franco-German frontier).

I asked Herr von Schubert in a bantering way whether he meant me to take this statement seriously. The reference to breach of neutrality sounded to me like a joke, in view of the invasion of French territory by the German forces without a declaration of war.

He indignantly declared that the matter was most serious, as the statement emanated from his Government itself.

35476) No. 514.

**Germany's Ultimatum to Belgium (Exchange Company's special Telegram).
Brussels, August 3, 1914.**

The Belgian Government has received an ultimatum from Germany offering an entente if Belgium is willing to facilitate the movements of German troops.

The Cabinet is now sitting to discuss the answer which had to be given at 7 o'clock this morning.

The German troops are in operation to the north of Liège in Belgium.

(35796) No. 515.

**Communicated by Belgian Minister (August 3.)
Bruxelles, le 8 août 1914.**

Allemagne a remis hier soir, 7 heures, note proposant neutralité amicale comportant passage libre par notre territoire, promettant maintien indépendance royaume et possession à la conclusion de la paix, menaçant en cas de refus, traitement comme ennemi. Délai réponse fixée douze heures. Nous avons répondu atteinte à neutralité serait violation flagrante droit des gens; acceptation proposition sacrifierait honneur nation, consciente de son devoir. Belgique fermement décidée repousser agression par tous les moyens possibles.

DAVIGNON.

(35675) No. 573.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.

(a.)

Foreign Office, August 4, 1914.

Tel. (No. 266.)

D. 9 30 A.M.

The King of the Belgians has made an appeal to His Majesty the King for diplomatic intervention on behalf of Belgium.

His Majesty's Government are also informed that the German Government has delivered to the Belgium Government a note proposing friendly neutrality entailing free passage through Belgian territory and promising to maintain the independence and integrity of the kingdom and its possessions at the conclusion of peace, threatening in case of refusal to treat Belgium as an enemy. An answer was requested within twelve hours.

We also understand that Belgium has categorically refused this as a flagrant violation of the law of nations.

His Majesty's Government are bound to protest against this violation of a treaty to which Germany is a party in common with themselves, and must request an assurance that the

demand made upon Belgium will not be proceeded with, and that her neutrality will be respected by Germany. You should ask for an immediate reply.

(35798) No. 594.
Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.
Foreign Office, August 4, 1914.
Tel (No. 270.)
D. 2 P.M.

We hear that Germany has addressed note to Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs stating that German Government will be compelled to carry out, if necessary by force of arms, the measures considered indispensable.

We are also informed that Belgian territory has been violated at Gemmenich.

In these circumstances, and in view of the fact that Germany declined to give the same assurance respecting Belgium as France gave last week in reply to our request made simultaneously at Berlin and Paris, we must repeat that request, and ask that a satisfactory reply to it and to my telegram No. 266 of this morning(1) be received here by 12 o'clock to-night. If not, you are instructed to ask for your passports and to say that His Majesty's Government felt bound to take all steps in their power to uphold the neutrality of Belgium and the observance of a Treaty to which Germany is as much a party as ourselves.

(36017) No. 658.
Sir F. Villiers to Sir Edward Grey. (Received August 5.)
(No. 119.) Confidential.
Brussels, August 3, 1914.

Sir,
With reference to my telegram No. 15 of to-day,(1) I have the honour to forward copies of the German ultimatum and of the Belgian reply.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs asked me to treat these documents as strictly confidential. Their contents have not been made public, and their full text has so far been communicated only to myself.

I have, &c.
F. H. VILLIERS.

Enclosure 1 in No. 658.

Ultimatum presented to Belgium by Germany, August 2, 1914, 7 30 P.M.

Le Gouvernement allemand a reçu des nouvelles sûres d'après lesquelles les forces françaises auraient l'intention de marcher par la Meuse sur Givet et Namur. Ces nouvelles ne laissent aucun doute sur l'intention de la France de marcher sur l'Allemagne par territoire belge. Le

Gouvernement allemand ne peut s'empêcher de craindre que la Belgique, malgré la meilleure volonté, ne sera pas en mesure de repousser sans secours une marche en avant française d'un si grand développement. Dans ce fait on trouve une certitude suffisante d'une menace dirigée contre l'Allemagne.

C'est un devoir impérieux de conservation pour l'Allemagne de prévenir cette attaque.

Le Gouvernement allemand regretterait très vivement que la Belgique regardât comme un acte d'hostilité contre elle le fait que les mesures des ennemies de l'Allemagne l'oblige de violer de son côté le territoire belge.

Afin de dissiper tout malentendu, le Gouvernement allemand déclare ce qui suit:

1. L'Allemagne n'a en vue aucun acte d'hostilité contre la Belgique, si la Belgique consent dans la guerre qui va commencer à prendre une attitude de neutralité bienveillante vis-à-vis de l'Allemagne; le Gouvernement allemand de son côté s'engage au moment de la paix à garantir le royaume et ses possessions dans toute leur étendue.
2. L'Allemagne s'engage sous la condition énoncée à évacuer le territoire belge aussitôt la paix conclue.
3. Si la Belgique observe une attitude amicale, l'Allemagne est prête, d'accord avec le Gouvernement belge, à acheter contre argent comptant tout ce qui serait nécessaire à ses troupes et à indemniser tout le dommage causé en Belgique.
4. Si la Belgique se comporte d'une manière hostile contre les Allemands et particulièrement fait des difficultés à leur marche en avant par une opposition des fortifications de la Meuse ou par des destructions de routes, chemins de fer, &c., l'Allemagne sera obligée de considérer la Belgique en ennemie; en ce cas l'Allemagne ne prendra aucun engagement vis-à-vis du royaume, mais elle laissera le règlement ultérieur des rapports des deux États l'un vis-à-vis de l'autre à la décision des armes. Le Gouvernement allemand a l'espoir justifié que cette éventualité ne se produira pas et que le Gouvernement belge saura prendre les mesures appropriées pour l'empêcher de se produire. Dans ce cas, les relations d'amitié qui unissent les deux États voisins deviendront plus étroites et durables.

(1) No. 561.

Enclosure 2 in No. 658.

Reply of Belgian Government to German Ultimatum.

Par sa note du 2 août, le Gouvernement allemand a fait connaître que, d'après des nouvelles sûres, les forces françaises auraient l'intention de marcher sur la Meuse par Givet et Namur, et que la Belgique, malgré sa meilleure volonté, ne serait pas en état de repousser sans secours une marche en avant des troupes françaises. Le Gouvernement allemand s'estimerait dans l'obligation de prévenir cette attaque et de violer le territoire belge. Dans ces conditions,

L'Allemagne propose au Gouvernement du Roi de prendre vis-à-vis d'elle une attitude amicale et s'engage, au moment de la paix, à garantir l'intégrité du royaume et de ses possessions dans toute leur étendue. La note ajoute que si la Belgique fait des difficultés à la marche en avant des troupes allemandes, l'Allemagne sera obligée de la considérer comme ennemie et de laisser le règlement ultérieur des deux États l'un vis-à-vis de l'autre à la décision des armes.

Cette note a provoqué chez le Gouvernement du Roi un profond et douloureux étonnement.

Les intentions qu'elle attribue à la France sont en contradiction avec les déclarations formelles qui nous ont été faites le 1 août au nom du Gouvernement de la république.

D'ailleurs si, contrairement à notre attente, une violation de la neutralité belge venait à être commise par la France, la Belgique remplirait tous ses devoirs internationaux et son armée opposerait à l'envahisseur la plus rigoureuse résistance.

Les traités de 1839, confirmés par les traités de 1870, consacrent l'indépendance et la neutralité de la Belgique, sous la garantie des Puissances, et notamment du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Roi de Prusse.

La Belgique a toujours été fidèle à ses obligations internationales; elle a accompli ses devoirs dans un esprit de loyale impartialité; elle n'a négligé aucun effort pour maintenir et faire respecter sa neutralité.

L'atteinte à son indépendance dont la menace le Gouvernement allemand, constituerait une flagrante violation du droit des gens. Aucun intérêt stratégique ne justifie la violation du droit.

Le Gouvernement belge en acceptant les propositions qui lui sont notifiées, sacrifierait l'honneur de la nation en même temps qu'il trahirait ses devoirs vis-à-vis de l'Europe.

Conscient du rôle que la Belgique joue depuis plus de quatre-vingts ans dans la civilisation du monde, il se refuse à croire que l'indépendance de la Belgique ne puisse être conservée qu'au prix de la violation de sa neutralité.

Si cet espoir était déçu, le Gouvernement belge est fermement décidé à repousser par tous les moyens en son pouvoir toute atteinte à son droit.

No. 665.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Arthur Nicolson.

Private.

St. Petersburg, August 3, 1914.

My dear Nicolson,
I have reported so fully in my telegrams all my conversations during the last ten eventful days that I have indeed but little to add. From the very first moment the Russian Government took up a firm attitude and made it perfectly clear that they would not allow Austria to crush Servia. There was no attempt at blustering or at using tall language as so often happened

during the Balkan crisis. Sazonow was calm but determined; and the language held by the French Ambassador showed plainly enough that Russia could count on the support of France. Sazonow's anxiety has been what England would do, as he has always held that the British Fleet alone can inflict a mortal wound on Germany. My aim throughout has been to dissuade him from doing anything to precipitate a conflict, so as to allow time for us and the other Powers to mediate; and if our efforts to maintain peace have failed it is in no way his fault. He showed throughout the most conciliatory spirit and caught at every proposal put forward for a pacific settlement. Now that we can look back on all that has taken place since the assassination of the Archduke there is, I think, strong evidence to show that Germany really desired war, or at all events the disruption of the Triple Entente, which must have followed a failure on our part to support Russia. The military party in Germany who favoured the idea of a preventive war before Russia became too strong had evidently gained the upper hand and there can be little doubt that Tchirsky at Vienna encouraged the Austrians in their forward policy. Jagow was probably kept in the dark as to the terms of the Austrian ultimatum so as to be able honestly to say that the text had never been submitted to him: but Tchirsky and others were certainly in the secret. Austria never believed that Russia would face a war against her and Germany did not intend to embark on one which would involve all the Powers of Europe. In my last annual report I pointed out that one of the most unfortunate results of the two Balkan wars was the impression that had gained ground that Russia was committed to a policy of peace at any price; and I predicted that if any Power acting under this belief put Russia's patience to too severe a proof it would find that there was an intense though latent patriotism in the Russian people, with which it would have to count. From the Emperor down to the humblest moujik Russia has risen like one man to the occasion; and even the Socialist working men have proclaimed a truce to strikes now that war has been forced upon their country. The speech which the Emperor made after reading the Manifesto on the declaration of war at the Winter Palace yesterday voiced the sentiments of the whole nation and, if Russia meets with reverses in the commencement and is forced to abandon Petersburg, she will fall back on Moscow and continue fighting till not a single enemy is left on Russian soil. The words of the Emperor are the same as those used by Alexander I when Napoleon invaded Russia and the same spirit that animated the Russian people in 1812 inspires them to-day. I trust that they will not be called on to make the same sacrifices as they made after the capture of Moscow; but I believe that they are prepared to do so and that, if defeated in the first pitched battles, they will, conscious of their innate strength, offer such a protracted and stubborn resistance that Germany will slowly bleed to death and succumb to sheer exhaustion. The Minister of War told me the other day that the war might last three years and our Military Attaché tells me that when all the military preparations are completed, Russia will have between seven and eight million men under arms.

(38780) No. 667.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey. (Received August 1.)

Tel. (No. 137.)

Berlin, August 4, 1914.

Your telegram No. 270 of 4th August.(1)

Both Chancellor and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs regretted that they could give no other answer than that which they gave me this afternoon. I told them that in that case I had been instructed to ask for my passports.

My interview with the Chancellor was very painful. He said that he could not but consider it an intolerable thing that because they were taking the only course open to them to save the Empire from disaster, England should fall upon them just for the sake of the neutrality of Belgium. He looked upon England as entirely responsible for what might now happen.

I asked him whether he could not understand that we were bound in honour to do our best to preserve a neutrality which we had guaranteed. He said: "But at what price!"

MINUTE .

This, and the immediately preceding telegram(2) never reached us from Berlin, but have been given to us now by Sir E. Goschen for our archives.

(4041) No. 671.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey. (Received August 19.)

(No. 309.)

Berlin, August 6, 1914.

Sir,

In accordance with the instructions contained in your telegram No. 266 of the 4th instant(1) I called upon the Under-Secretary(2) of State for Foreign Affairs that afternoon and enquired in the name of His Majesty's Government whether the Imperial Government would refrain from violating Belgian neutrality. Herr von Jagow at once replied that he was sorry to say that his answer must be "No" as, in consequence of the German troops having crossed the frontier that morning, Belgian neutrality had been already violated. Herr von Jagow again went into the reasons why the Imperial Government had been obliged to take this step--namely that they had to advance into France by the quickest and easiest way so as to be able to get well ahead with their operations and endeavour to strike some decisive blow as early as possible. It was a matter of life and death for them, as if they had gone by the more southern route they could not have hoped, in view of the paucity of roads and the strength of the Fortresses, to have got through without formidable opposition entailing great loss of time. This loss of time would have meant time gained by the Russians for bringing up their troops to the German frontier. Rapidity of action was the great German asset while that of Russia was an inexhaustible supply of troops. I pointed out to Herr von Jagow that this fait accompli of the violation of the Belgian frontier rendered, as he would readily understand, the situation exceedingly grave and I asked him whether there was not still time to draw back and avoid possible consequences which both he and I would deplore. He replied that for the reasons he had given me it was now impossible for them to draw back.

During the afternoon I received your telegram No. 270(3) and, in compliance with the instructions therein contained, I again proceeded to the Imperial Foreign Office and informed the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that unless the Imperial Government could give the

assurance by 12 o'clock that night that they would proceed no further with their violation of the Belgian frontier and stop their advance, I had been instructed to demand my passports and inform the Imperial Government that His Majesty's Government would have to take all steps in their power to uphold the neutrality of Belgium and the observance of a treaty to which Germany was as much a party as themselves.

Herr von Jagow replied that to his great regret he could give no other answer than that which he had given me earlier in the day, namely that the safety of the Empire rendered it absolutely necessary that the Imperial troops should advance through Belgium. I gave his Excellency a paraphrase of your telegram and, pointing out that you had mentioned 12 o'clock as the time when His Majesty's Government would expect an answer, asked him whether, in view of the terrible consequences which would necessarily ensue, it were not possible even at the last moment that their answer should be reconsidered. He replied that if the time given were even twenty four hours or more his answer must be the same. I said that in that case I should have to demand my passports. This interview would have taken place at about 7 o'clock. In a short conversation which ensued Herr von Jagow expressed his poignant regret at the crumbling of his entire policy and that of the Chancellor, which had been to make friends with Great Britain and then, through Great Britain to get closer to France. I said that this sudden end to my work in Berlin was to me also a matter of deep regret and disappointment, but that he must understand that under the circumstances and in view of our engagements His Majesty's Government could not possibly have acted otherwise than they had done.

I then said that I should like to go and see the Chancellor as it might be perhaps the last time I should have an opportunity of seeing him. He begged me to do so. I found the Chancellor very agitated. His Excellency at once began a harangue which lasted for about 20 minutes.(4) He said that the step taken by His Majesty's Government was terrible to a degree, just for a word "neutrality" a word which in war time had so often been disregarded just for a scrap of paper, Great Britain was going to make war on a kindred nation who desired nothing better than to be friends with her. All his efforts in that direction had been rendered useless by this last terrible step, and the policy to which, as I knew, he had devoted himself since his accession to office, had tumbled down like a house of cards. What we had done was unthinkable; it was like striking a man from behind while he was fighting for his life against two assailants. He held Great Britain responsible for all the terrible events that might happen! I protested strongly against that statement and said that in the same way as he and Herr von Jagow wished me to understand that for strategical reasons it was a matter of life and death to Germany to advance through Belgium and violate her neutrality, so I would wish him to understand that it was, so to speak, a matter of "life and death" for the honour of Great Britain that she should keep her solemn engagement to do her utmost to defend Belgium's neutrality if attacked. That solemn compact simply had to be kept, or what confidence could anyone have in engagements given by Great Britain in the future? The Chancellor said "But at what price will that compact have been kept. Has the British Government thought of that?" I hinted to his Excellency as plainly as I could that fear of consequences could hardly be regarded as an excuse for breaking solemn engagements, but his Excellency was so excited, so evidently overcome by the news of our action and so little disposed to hear reason, that I refrained from adding fuel to the flame by further argument. As I was leaving he said that the blow of Great Britain joining Germany's enemies was all the greater that almost up to the last moment he

and his Government had been working with us and supporting our effort to maintain peace between Austria and Russia. I admitted that that had been the case and said that it was part of the tragedy which saw the two nations fall apart just at the moment when the relations between them had been more friendly and cordial than they had been for years. Unfortunately notwithstanding our efforts to maintain peace between Russia and Austria the war had spread and had brought us face to face with a situation which, if we held to our engagements, we could not possibly avoid, and which unfortunately entailed our separation from our late fellow-workers. He would readily understand that no one regretted this more than I.

After this somewhat painful interview I returned to the embassy and drew up my telegram No. 137. This telegram was handed in at the Central Telegraph Office a little before 9 P.M. It was accepted by that office but apparently never despatched.

At about 9.0 P.M. Herr von Zimmermann, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs came to see me. After expressing his deep regret that the very friendly official and personal relations between us were about to cease, he asked me casually whether a demand for passports was equivalent to a declaration of war. I said that such an authority on international law as he was known to be must know as well, or better than I what was usual in such cases. I added that there were many cases where diplomatic relations had been broken off and nevertheless war had not ensued, but that in this case he would have seen from my instructions of which I had given Herr von Jagow a paraphrase that His Majesty's Government expected an answer to a definite question by 12 o'clock that night, and that in default of a satisfactory answer they would be forced to take such steps as their engagements required. Herr Zimmermann said that that was in fact a declaration of war, as the Imperial Government could not possibly give the assurance required either that night or any other night.

The next morning I demanded my passports in writing.

In the meantime after Herr Zimmermann left me a flying sheet, issued by the "Berliner Tageblatt" was circulated stating that Great Britain had declared war against Germany. The immediate result of this news was the assemblage of an exceedingly excited and unruly mob before His Majesty's Embassy. The small force of police which had been sent to guard the embassy was soon overpowered and the attitude of the mob became more threatening. We took no notice of this demonstration as long as it was confined to noise but when the crash of glass and the landing of cobble stones into the drawing-room where we were all sitting warned us that the situation was getting unpleasant, I telephoned to the Foreign Office an account of what was happening. Herr von Jagow at once informed the Chief of Police, and an adequate force of mounted police sent with great promptness, very soon cleared the street. From that moment on we were well guarded and no more direct unpleasantness occurred.

After order had been restored Herr von Jagow came to see me and expressed his most heartfelt regrets at what had occurred. He said that the behaviour of his countrymen had made him feel more ashamed than he had words to express. It was an indelible stain on the reputation of Berlin. He said that the flying sheet circulated in the streets had not been authorised by the Government; in fact, the Chancellor had asked him by telephone whether he thought that such a statement should be issued and he had replied "Certainly not until the

morning." It was in consequence of his decision to that effect that only a small force of police had been sent to the neighbourhood of the Embassy, as he had thought that the presence of a large force would inevitably attract attention and perhaps lead to disturbances. It was the "pestilential 'Tageblatt,' " which had somehow got hold of the news, that had upset his calculations. He had heard rumours that the mob had been excited to violence by gestures made and missiles thrown from the Embassy, but he felt sure that that was not true, (I was able soon to assure him that the report had no foundation whatever) and even if it was, it was no excuse for the disgraceful scenes which had taken place. He feared that I would take home with me a sorry impression of Berlin manners in moments of excitement. In fact, no apology could have been more full and complete.

On the following morning, the 5th August, the Emperor sent one of His Majesty's Aides-de-Camps to me with the following message:

"The Emperor has charged me to express to your Excellency his regret for the occurrences of last night but to tell you at the same time that you will gather from those occurrences an idea of the feelings of his people respecting the action of Great Britain in joining with other nations against her old allies of Waterloo. His Majesty also begs that you will tell the King that he has been proud of the titles of British Field-Marshal and British Admiral but that in consequence of what has occurred he must now, at once, divest himself of those titles."

I would add that the above message lost none of its petulant acerbity by the manner of its delivery.

On the other hand I should like to state that I received all through this trying time nothing but courtesy at the hands of Herr von Jagow and the officials of the Imperial Foreign Office. At about 11 o'clock on the same morning Count Wedel handed me my passports and told me that he had been instructed to confer with me as to the route which I should follow for my return to England. He said that he had understood that I preferred the route viâ the Hook of Holland to that viâ Copenhagen; they had therefore arranged that I should go by the former route, only I should have to wait till the following morning. I agreed to this and he said that I might be quite assured that there would be no repetition of the disgraceful scenes of the preceding night as full precautions would be taken. He added that they were doing all in their power to have a restaurant car attached to the train, but it was rather a difficult matter. He also brought me a charming letter from Herr von Jagow couched in the most friendly terms. The day was passed in burning the cyphers and other confidential papers, in sealing up the archives with the help of the secretaries of the United States Embassy and in packing up such articles as time allowed.

The night passed quietly without any incident. In the morning a strong force of police was posted along the usual route to the Lehrter Station, while the Embassy was smuggled away in taxi-cabs to the station by side streets. We there suffered no molestation whatever and avoided the treatment meted out by the crowd to my Russian and French colleagues. Count Wedel met us at the station to say good-bye on behalf of Herr von Jagow and to see that all the arrangements ordered for our comfort had been properly carried out. A retired colonel of the Guards accompanied the train to the Dutch frontier and was exceedingly kind in his efforts to

prevent the great crowds which thronged the platforms at every station where we stopped from insulting us. But beyond the yelling of patriotic songs, and a few jeers and insulting gestures we had really nothing to complain of during our tedious journey to the Dutch frontier.

Before closing this long account of our last days in Berlin, I should like to place on record and bring to your notice the quite admirable behaviour of my staff under the most trying circumstances possible. One and all they worked night and day with scarcely any rest: and I cannot praise too highly the cheerful zeal with which Counsellor, Naval and Military Attachés, Secretaries and the two young Attachés buckled to their work and kept their nerve with often a yelling mob outside and inside hundreds of British subjects clamouring for advice and assistance. I was proud to have such a staff to work with and feel most grateful to them all for the invaluable assistance and support, often exposing them to considerable personal risk, which they so readily and cheerfully gave to me.

I should also like to mention the great assistance rendered to us all by my American colleague, Mr. Gerard, and his staff. Undeterred by the hooting and hisses with which he was often greeted by the mob on entering and leaving the Embassy, his Excellency came repeatedly to see me to ask how he could help us and to make arrangements for the safety of stranded British subjects. He extricated many of these from extremely difficult situations at some personal risk to himself and his calmness and savoir-faire and his firmness in dealing with the Imperial authorities gave full assurance that the protection of British subjects and interests could not have been left in more efficient and able hands.

I have, &c.
W. E. GOSCHEN.