

*February 17, 1917.*—I have a note from Gregory this evening in which he says that he has two other telegrams from London of the same tenor as the former telegram, to the effect that the C.R.B. leave Belgium. He thinks it obvious that these were sent before the receipt of the telegram giving the result of the conference of Wednesday, and suggests that we all go to Rotterdam next Thursday for a conference to clear up the complications. Pleasant prospect, that!

Ruddock has just been in (7:45) with a dispatch, brought in secretly by Gregory's cousin, a dispatch from Washington, referring to reports that Germans have withdrawn my diplomatic privileges and *ordered* me to lower my flag, and instructing me to leave Belgium at once, with the C.R.B., unless the Germans restore all privileges. Just why they think at Washington that they can break off diplomatic relations, and expect the Germans to continue to recognize our diplomats, is beyond me. Do you expect to be able to recall our Ambassador from Berlin, pack off the German Ambassador from Washington, and then have the Germans recognize a Minister in territory the Germans control? They let Hoover change their instructions—as in the famous telegram 248, in which there was no necessity for correction, but evidently a clumsily dovetailed second thought—Hoover's, of course. As Nell remarked at the time, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau."