

*February 24, 1917.*—To Political Department at eleven o'clock. Had to wait for von der Lancken and von Moltke asked me to come to his room.

"You are leaving, then?" he said.

I knew then that von der Lancken was not going to yield, and I said instantly, "Yes."

Nearly two hours with von der Lancken in his warm little room upstairs. He was at his best, cordial, pleasant, smiling, and for once, I believe, sincere. Began by saying that we would talk first as friends, and then officially. Began by saying that Villalobar had given him the dispatch, and he wished first to correct certain misapprehensions. First, the privileges of the Americans in the C.R.B. had never been taken away, and hence it was unnecessary to speak of them as having been restored. I said we would speak then of his having given us new assurances, to which he agreed.

Von der Lancken said that the English were trying to inflame American sentiment against the Germans by exaggerating reports of what the Germans were doing to me and the C.R.B. He made a little mock speech as though an Englishman were speaking, in French, of course—denouncing the conduct of the Germans, and so forth.

As to the flag, I had told him that Villalobar had said that I had the right to keep it up, and on my motor. I corrected him and told him that I had said that von Moltke had told me that; that before leaving home that morning I had taken the flag off my motor in order not to attract attention in the streets and because it seemed more chic for me to do so. That talking with von Moltke, he had said that it was proper to keep it on the Legation, that I had done so until his, von der Lancken's, return, when he had said that it was correct to do so, and so on. We talked of many things—the con-

versation drifted from time to time, but coming back to the point, I said: "But, where are we now?" Then I put it boldly: "I have given you an order of my Government, to the effect that if my diplomatic privileges are not restored, I must demand my passports." Then he said that they greatly desired the revictualing to continue, that they wished the Americans to remain, that it was purely an American work, and that he had no faith in the ability of any others to carry it on; if it should become necessary, in case of war—a word he did not like to utter, and he was happy to say that he thought war was less likely now than it had been—he hoped the organization of the C.R.B. at New York, London, and Rotterdam would continue undisturbed, as it is now, and that if others had to come in, they should gradually replace American delegates. But above all, they wanted me to stay.

Coming at last, as I supposed, to the point, he said: "As for the flag,"—and I thought he was going to say put it up—"I prefer that you do not raise it any more."

As for the courier, the military chiefs would not consent to my having a regular courier, but I could send mail by Villalobar's.

"Thanks," I said, "it is a privilege of which I have already availed myself."

He blushed and laughed.