Dear Mr. Messersmith-

Permit me to request your attention to the enclosed manuscript, which deals with Barcelona Traction, Light and Power Company and Compañía Argentina de Electricidad. I recognize that this essay cannot pretend to much merit in your experienced eyes; yet it may serve to indicate my interest in the international utility business.

I am neither an investor nor an engineer -- just a student of Latin American history. From my limited study of two principal utilities identified with the SOPINA group, it seems to me that the policies adopted by its management most nearly answer the vital question: How can the demands of organized labor be reconciled to the proper interests of foreign and domestic capital, without undue government intervention?

I would very much like to observe your practical answer to such question in the day-by-day operation of a utility company in Latin America, and have the opportunity to do some original research in the records of the company. Unfortunately I cannot finance such a project from my personal resources, and have been unable to obtain a travel fellowship for the purpose.

Therefore I must appeal to you, as a principal representative of management in both the Mexican and Argentine utility companies which interest me the most. Do you feel that Compañía Argentina de Electricidad or Mexican Light and Power Company would be willing to encourage the research of an independent student of their history?

I realize that you already have capable research personnel and public relations staff engaged in studies similar to that I wish to undertake. I would not intend to duplicate their efforts, although my work might have an incidental value of that sort.

Of more immediate concern to me is the general prejudice against international capital investments which seems to be held by my academic colleagues, even those who teach Latin American subjects in the United States. Perhaps to publish my research and some articles in the appropriate professional journals would help offset this prejudice. By your personal efforts in Buenos Aires it seems Argentine opinion was improved, and Mr. Borden has done the same for Brazilian Light and Power Company. But a similar task needs to be done with certain segment of United States opinion as well.

My qualifications for this project are largely academic, except for a year as a newspaper editor in Michigan immediately after my graduation in 1947 from Bowling Green State University. I earned my master's degree from the University of Michigan in 1949, and return to Bowling Green for a year of post-graduate work in business economics. I have completed one year toward my doctorate in the University of Florida, where I hold a fellowship in Latin American history and could use this project as my thesis.

I am sure that we could work out a suitable fellowship arrangement for such a project, either in Buenos Aires, or Mexico, if you agree that it would be valuable. I will gladly provide transcripts of my college credits and letters
of recommendation that you may desire, and any additional information about myself. Do not hesitate to discuss the matter in more detail; as I am available at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed.)

Nelson G. Williams.