

C O P Y

Memorandum

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SECRET

American Embassy,  
Mexico, D. F.,  
April 3, 1946,  
9:30 a.m.

To: The Ambassador

From: Mr. Ailshie

Yesterday, April 2, at around noon, Senator Dennis Chavez and a number of the members of the U. S. Government group including myself were leaving the conference hall to attend a committee meeting. Senator Chavez stopped to talk with a newspaper reporter, while the rest of the group walked ahead a few paces and waited. After a few minutes, fearing that we would be late to our committee meeting, and judging that Senator Chavez might welcome a gesture that would permit him to break away from the reporter, I approached the Senator and said, courteously: "Senator, I think we should be getting along to the meeting."

Senator Chavez said to me with considerable heat: "I will be responsible for that!" I immediately replied that of course I understood that and had no intention of pressing him in anyway; that I only was trying to be helpful and that I was very sorry if my desire to be helpful had been misunderstood, etc. I then started to withdraw from his presence. The Senator followed me, and with some show of temper stated: "I want to make this clear. I don't have to be told what to do." By this time we were joined by Mr. Verne Zimmer and Mr. Bernard Wiesman of the State Department. Senator Chavez continued to reproach me. We stopped on the sidewalk, en route to the committee room, and Chavez exclaimed, in a rather loud voice charged with considerable passion: "I am just as good an American as you are; and I think I am just as smart as you are, and ---" I replied: "I am sure you are much smarter, Senator; and no question has been raised on those points. If you feel that way about it, I apologize." Senator Chavez, however, continued: "Oh, I know your breed; I know the State Department breed!" I said: "I beg your pardon, Senator?" He then exclaimed: "You State Department people are trying to shove me around

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and tell me what to do." I replied: "Senator Chavez, no one in the State Department is trying to shove you around, as you put it, and I am only here to be helpful. If you don't wish me to attend the meetings, you have only to say so." Senator Chavez replied: "No, I want you to attend the meetings; but don't try to tell me what to do" or words to that effect. He then proceeded to the meeting alone, while Mr. Zimmer and Wiesman and I followed at a respectful distance.

Since then, I have not spoken to the Senator and he has not spoken to me, and I have stayed as far in the background as possible.

Around one o'clock the same day (an hour later) Mr. Zimmer informed me that "the Senator is rather penitent; he says he realizes that he lost his temper". Mr. Zimmer added that the Senator wanted me to be appointed to the Committee on Labor Relations. Mr. Zimmer added that two officers of the Labor Department who are advisers on the government delegation, had already been designated as our representatives on that committee, but that perhaps I wouldn't mind working together with them. I said that that was fine and that I would be glad to serve in any way that the delegates desired.

The foregoing does not represent the actual words that were exchanged between the Senator and me, but contains the gist of what was said in the order in which it was said.

I might add, for the record, that many of the American delegates came to me afterward to assure me of their support and expressed a very unfavorable opinion of Senator Chavez. I shall not give their names here, as it is for them to express their opinions or not as they choose if anything further develops out of this unfortunate situation, but I can assure you that the opinion of all of our delegation regarding Senator Chavez is unanimous, and, unfortunately, his actuation thus far in the conference has not won him the respect and support of the other delegations that is usually accorded to a delegate of our Government, particularly a United States Senator.

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1776

I shall, of course, continue to give Senator Chavez my unswerving loyal support in presenting the views of the United States Government Delegation to the Conference, and my advice whenever it is requested.

(SIGNED) W.K. AILSHIE

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