

January 8, 1951

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

René Brosens, Esq.  
c/o CADE  
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Dear friend Brosens:

I have not written you sooner in reply to your letter of December 14th as things have been happening so fast since then, and I knew that you had been informed by Mr. Heineman that I was making this trip.

As soon as I got your letter of December 14th I realized that it would be desirable if I could get away to make this trip, and fortunately the affairs of Mexlight were in such shape that I could think of taking the holiday which Marion and I had been planning to take for some time. Maryssael was due back from Belgium at the middle of January and I knew that I could safely get away and that it would be all right for me to be away for several weeks before he came back.

The day after I got your letter and Marion and I had made the decision to take this trip, I received a message from up here the character of which I need not go into in this letter and concerning which I think I had better inform you when I arrive in Buenos Aires. While I really need a rest after these three years of strenuous work without a holiday and my doctor had advised me to take a rest and while we had been planning to take such a sea trip, your letter and the message which I received from another source up here the following day impelled me to reach the decision to make the trip. It is a fortunate thing that the Argentina is leaving on this cruise on January 10th, because it enabled me to give the best excuse in the world for making this trip because all my friends know that I love to travel by sea and Marion too and that I had been planning such a trip to Buenos Aires when the circumstances permitted. Fortunately the affairs of Mexlight are in such a position that our people in the company who are accustomed to seeing me working my head off quite understood when I told them that I was going to take this holiday and knew that the company affairs were in such shape that I could take it.

I spent the last three days of this last week in Washington and I had very fully talks in the Department with regard to Cade matters, and I also discussed these matters in the Exim Bank with Gaston and others and in a less detailed way with the World Bank. During the three days that I was there I had the opportunity to spend a good many hours with the right people to talk over the electricity situation in the Argentine and its importance in the Argentine position as well as in our relationships with the Argentine. The talks which I had with respect to Cade were the most encouraging that I have had so far and I think that when I arrive in Buenos Aires we will have a better basis than we have had in the past to discuss what can be done for Cade so far as foreign currency loans are concerned. I do not wish to be overly optimistic and I do not wish to take too encouraging a note in what I say, but I will confine myself

to saying that I feel very much encouraged for I found even more understanding than I expected to find of the necessity of doing something. Of course, as you know, loans to the electricity industry and private companies can only be made under certain conditions and these conditions are reasonable and proper and without them Cade and no other responsible company would want a loan. I will not go further into this matter now except to say that on my arrival in Buenos Aires we can talk things over and should do so as soon as possible after I arrive, and on the basis of what I can tell you and you can tell me we can determine what may be usefully undertaken while I am in Buenos Aires. All I can say is that I am very happy that I can take this holiday and rest, that the circumstances in Mexlight make it possible for me to make the trip to Buenos Aires which we have been so long looking forward to, and that I will have this opportunity of trying to be as helpful as I can in connection with the problems which I know are causing you such concern and which I am sure are causing much concern to the highest and responsible officials in the Argentine who must be cognizant of the importance of the electricity situation in the Argentine economy and in her whole capacity to perform.

There are other aspects of my trip which I cannot write about. All I can say is this. There will probably be speculation in the press in Buenos Aires when it is known that I am going on this trip there and there may even be speculation here in the press that I am going for our Government on some kind of a mission. I have made it very clear that if there is such speculation in the press that I am making this trip for the U. S. Government that there must be an official dementi from Washington to the effect that, while the State Department knows that I am making this trip on pleasure and for a needed rest and that while I may have some personal business in the Argentine, I am not going in any official capacity for our Government. I have made it clear that should there be such speculation such a statement is necessary from the point of view of the best interest of the Argentine Government as well as the U. S. Government. I am only mentioning this so that in case you should see such a statement made by the State Department you will understand it and the necessity of it you will appreciate should certain circumstances arise.

It was very thoughtful of you to suggest that the President might send me an invitation to come to the Argentine, but I do not believe that this will be necessary and under the circumstances it would I believe not serve the best purposes. In this respect I will confine myself to saying that by the time this letter reaches you the President should have information orally and directly from Mallory, the Chargé d'Affaires in Buenos Aires, concerning my trip, and all I can say is that what Mallory will say to the President will I hope be very pleasing and satisfactory to the President.

My talks in Washington on all subjects were very interesting and very satisfactory and showed great understanding and comprehension of all subjects, and I can assure you that there is a very real desire on behalf of the United States Government to collaborate very fully with the Argentine Government and with its President.

I am not writing you more fully and concretely as I do not think it would serve any useful purpose. The ship arrives in Buenos Aires on the 29th and we look forward to seeing you and Mrs. Brosens very much. Marion would much prefer to stay at the Plaza if you can arrange this as it is more centrally located than the Alvear. I do not know how long I will be in Buenos Aires, as



that will depend upon you and some other factors, but I am hoping that I will be able to arrange it so as not to stay more than two weeks or three weeks at the maximum. I should be back in Mexico City by the end of March at the latest as we have certain company matters then requiring my presence there.

Maryssael arrived this morning from Europe by air and I will have several days here to talk with him before the ship sails on Wednesday. Mr. Heineman has been in bed for several weeks but was up yesterday and his doctor tells me that he is ever so much better and that he will be able to make a trip to Washington this week which he very much wants to make. All Mr. Heineman needed was a real rest which he was prudent enough to take, and I am sure that he is as good as ever and you know how good that is. It has been a great pleasure to see him during this stay and we have several more days that we can talk things over before I sail.

I have been feeling pretty fit but last September my doctor told me that the cardiogram he took then was pretty poor and he ordered me to take a complete rest. I was not able to follow out his prescription completely as I felt that Maryssael simply had to have the opportunity to take this delayed holiday and to settle certain family matters in Belgium before I took my holiday. The doctor took another cardiogram this morning and he tells me that it shows a great improvement over September. I am feeling quite fit but I know that if anybody ever needed a bit of holiday I need it, and Marion and I are looking forward to repeating this long sea trip with the greatest anticipation for we have enjoyed it so much on previous occasions.

This is already a very long letter and there are many things I would have liked to write you about more clearly, but I think you will appreciate that under the circumstances it is much better that I tell you the whole story and all of its implications when I see you. That we are looking forward to the trip with keen anticipation I need not tell you.

Cordially and faithfully yours,

George S. Messersmith