

AIR MAIL

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Habana, Cuba,
November 26, 1941.

Dear Friend:

I have been wanting to write you for some days, but I have been literally, completely occupied, night as well as day. We have been in the midst of some important negotiations ever since I returned here from Hot Springs and we are still not yet in the clear. I am sure that we will bring them to a satisfactory conclusion, but the task is not an easy one and there are so many complicated and difficult factors involved.

I have been wanting to write you as these radio reports, and more recently newspaper comment, about me may have come to your attention. I understand that there was an article in both the TIMES and the HERALD-TRIBUNE a few days ago, that it was almost certain that I would go to Mexico City to succeed Mr. Daniels. It has all been naturally rather embarrassing for me as these reports, of course, reach here and there is much speculation. The situation is that I have no information that I am going to Mexico City, but that of course does not really mean anything. It is quite natural that there should be this speculation as to the successor of Mr. Daniels, and it is more or less natural that my name should come up in this connection. This speculation is something which I and no one else can avoid.

Mexico City is perhaps one of the two or three most important and difficult posts that we have abroad today. We have recently signed some rather far-reaching and important agreements with Mexico. These represent a very considerable advance in the stabilization of our relations with Mexico. These agreements are the result of long and hard work and I think they are very significant. These agreements, however, are largely agreements in principle and now the most difficult work remains to be done which is to implement them in more concrete agreements and in practice. The task in Mexico will be a difficult one, and in many respects as important a one as we have in our diplomatic

representation

Daniel Heineman, Esquire,
Hotel Beekman,
570 Park Avenue,
New York City.

AIR MAIL

representation today. It is even more important today than London, for our relations with Britain are so close that they are practically carried on in Washington with the tremendous number of British representatives which we have on this side of the water.

Although I know nothing more than what I read concerning the possibility, or probability, of my going to Mexico, I believe that it is not unlikely that the President will ask me to go there. I have felt for the last years, and even before I came to Cuba, that I would probably be asked to go to Mexico when Mr. Daniels retired. For this reason I think that there is at least a probability that I will be asked to go there.

So far as my personal inclinations are concerned, I will not go into them, for whatever they may be they do not count or have any bearing on the matter. I would naturally regret leaving, for Marion and I both enjoy our life here, and I like my work. I like the people and the surroundings and the work has been of a character to give me an opportunity to use fully any capacity I may have. On the other hand, these are days when any of us in the Foreign Service must be prepared to do anything we are asked to do, and I am prepared to go to Mexico City or Timbuktu as the circumstances may seem to dictate. Naturally the job in Mexico will be even more difficult than this, and I have no illusions as to that. It means too that Marion and I will both have to begin all over again in the forming of new contacts, and I would have a great deal to learn just as we did when we came to Cuba only a year and a half ago. When one is younger, one does this more easily and the effort is not so great, but the prospect in no sense appals me.

The situation, therefore, is that while I know nothing about the change, I think it is no more than probable that I may be asked to go there. There will probably be a decision by the President very shortly. Whatever decision he makes will be entirely satisfactory to me, for I know that he knows the whole picture and that whatever move he will make will be the one which he believes is the most desirable under the circumstances.

I saw

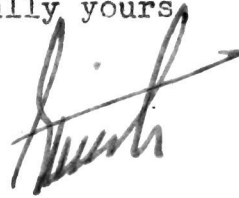
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I saw Mr. Casellas and Mr. Cypher the other day when they called to see me and I had a long talk with them. As both of them are new to Habana and to Cuba I took the opportunity to give them some general information with regard to the situation here, which I thought would be helpful to them for their background. I told them if there was any way at any time in which I could be useful they were not to hesitate to let me know.

I hope that anything which may happen will not interfere with Mae making us a visit here during the Christmas holidays. If I am asked to go to Mexico, it will, of course, depend upon the President's wishes as to how soon I would have to go. I think, however, this matter will be settled before very long, and in any event we hope that Mae is not abandoning her plans to come here because of these items which have appeared in the papers.

With all good wishes to you all, in which Marion joins me,

Faithfully yours



P.S. November 27th.

I was not able to get this letter off by the airmail today and, after writing it, there were developments in the sense that I anticipated. The President has asked me to go to Mexico City, and I have naturally agreed to do so, and I learn just now from the press agencies that my name was sent to the Senate today as Ambassador to Mexico. I have very mixed feelings about this, as you will gather from the letter which I wrote you yesterday, but there is only one thing to do even though it means going from a difficult job to an even more difficult one. This means that I will probably be coming home in the very near future and I will surely see you while I am there. Our plans are completely uncertain and I haven't the least idea when I shall be leaving Habana definitely for Mexico City. I shall write you as soon as I have more definite information.


G. S. M.