

120

*René Jimmy - I'm not sure
that the processes for
making newspaper from
bagasse are yet commercially
& practically feasible. That
needs looking into. Sincerely
E. H. S.*

Sierra Paracaima 1285
México, D. F.
February 8, 1955

Personal

Dear René:

I have to refer to my letter of January 25 in acknowledgement of yours of January 18 concerning the trip which Mr. Praet is making to Cuba regarding a pulp and paper mill to produce news print out of bagasse. I have received your acknowledgement of January 31 and note that you will be interested in hearing from me further.

I had intended to write you more fully about this matter earlier but in spite of my having no fixed responsibilities I find that I have my time much more occupied than I would like and for that reason I have not written you further before this.

I have read again carefully your letter to me of January 18 and have now studied the enclosures. I talked with Mr. Heineman Jr. on the phone last night and he tells me that Mr. Praet has been in New York and is now going to Cuba, where he will be for some weeks and on his departure from Cuba may stop here in Mexico City for a few days and that I may see him here then. I told Jimmy to say to Mr. Praet in Havana that if during his stay in Havana he thinks it would be useful for me to write to President Batista or to any of my friends there I will be glad to do so, if he gets in touch with me in Mexico City as to developments.

I have really very little to add to the letter which I wrote you on January 25. I think the project is one well worth going into very carefully. It will of course require very careful investigation from many points of view and I am sure that Mr. Praet's stay in Havana will bring out fully answers to some of the major questions.

If the Cuban government is as much interested in this project of making news print out of bagasse as would appear from your letter and its enclosures, it is one of the basic factors which would have to be considered in going ahead with such a project because it would not be really worth while going ahead with so important a project unless the government is really interested, and this completely aside from any financial participation which the Cuban government may in one way or another take in the project. Such financial participation by the government of course is useful in a project of this kind, but completely aside from such financial participation by the government, it is in a position to take positive or negative steps on which the success or failure of such a mill would depend. I know President Batista well and I think the chances are that if a sound project is developed he will be for it and if he says that the Cuban government will give its help financially and otherwise, I think his word can be depended upon.

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I also wish to repeat that the interest of Mr. Agustin Batista is a good augury, for unless his position has very much changed in the last few years, he is one of the sound, constructive, respected businessmen in Cuba.

I think it will be very useful for Mr. Praet to be in close touch with Mr. Amadeo Lopez Castro, who was Minister of Agriculture while I was Ambassador to Cuba. He used to be a little bit too much to the left but I understand that his position now is very sound and understanding. He is a little difficult to deal with in some respects but he is a good man. We were good friends and I shall be glad to write him if Mr. Praet thinks it desirable that I do so and to do it during Mr. Praet's stay in Havana.

As I said in my previous letter, I do not know just what part Dr. Carlos Saladrigas is playing in the political and economic situation in Cuba today, but if the relations between him and the President are still what they used to be, he is a very important man in the picture. He is I think one of the very best Cubans whom I have known and a man of broad and sound views. He used to head up this program of industrial development in Cuba for the President, but I think he had to leave the responsibilities of that post as well as others, because he felt the President was not being sufficiently decisive in some of his attitudes and actions. In any event, it is always useful for Mr. Praet to talk with Carlos Saladrigas because he knows the political and economic situation in Cuba as few Cubans do, and if Mr. Praet tells Saladrigas that he is a friend of mine I am sure that Mr. Saladrigas will speak to him quite frankly.

One of the things which I think is of greatest importance in this question of a bagasse mill for news print is whether the technical processes have really been adequately developed for the making of news print from bagasse. A lot of people in many countries have been interested in this, both from the technical and financial end, but I am not sure to what degree the processes have been adequately developed for making news print of acceptable quality from bagasse. I rather have the notion that up to now the technical end has not been adequately developed. The specimen of news print which is enclosed with your letter of January 18 seems to be pretty good, but I am in no position whatever to have any opinion as to the technical end and to what degree news print made from bagasse so far has been found commercially economic and acceptable. This I think is one of the very important factors.

In this connection you may be interested to know that as the production of sugar in Mexico has increased in recent years and news print becomes constantly more costly, there has been a lot of interest in Mexico in the making of news print from bagasse here. Up to now it has been all conversation and although the interest continues, there has been nothing really done. It is interesting to note that several years ago an Italian group associated with Mr. Sandor Cusi, who is a wealthy and I think quite responsible Mexican, became interested in the making of cardboard and similar products from bagasse. The Italian financial interests in Mexico are represented by Count Mapelli, whom I know and who seems to be a very responsible man. They have built a mill which has been in operation for several years and they are making cardboard and other similar materials from bagasse from the sugar mills, but they are not making any news print and apparently are not thinking of making any news print. I have gone into this project recently and I find that the Italian and Mexican interests concerned in this

mill in Mexico are presently in touch with a firm in the United States -- Kimberly-Clark -- concerning which Amayas can get you full information. This firm of Kimberly-Clark is, I understand, a very important one in the United States with considerable resources of its own and the idea apparently is to expand the mill here in Mexico City with Kimberly-Clark taking a financial interest together with the Italians and Mexicans who are now in this plant. I am told, however, they are not interested in or thinking of making news print but wish to expand the production of cardboard and related products. I am told that this firm has recently secured on a permanent basis the services of an American, Mr. Latrop, who was formerly an expert for years of the Department of Agriculture in Washington on matters of the use of bagasse. I gather that he is staying permanently in Mexico in the employ of this firm and is no longer with the Department of Agriculture. Mr. Praet can see him when he comes to Mexico. What I cannot understand is with so much bagasse available in Mexico and with this keen interest here in getting news print manufactured in the country that this firm which is actually using bagasse as the basis of its operation is even now not thinking of making news print, and so far as I can learn there is no active news print project under consideration in Mexico.

There has been so much technical study in the United States in particular, and in certain other countries, as to the economic and commercial use of bagasse for making news print that there is certainly a considerable body of information available and I think the Department of Agriculture in the United States probably has as much information as anybody on the results of these studies, and I am sure that Mr. Praet can get all the available information there is from them. I understand that the process used in the Mexican mill which produces only cardboard is one which was elaborated in the North Western Laboratories in Peoria, Illinois.

I have read with much interest the letter of December 8 which you and Mr. Praet addressed to Mr. Archibald in Paris and I think the approach which you have made to this matter is a very sound one. I repeat that I think one of the troublesome problems which I am not sure has been successfully resolved is whether news print produced from bagasse by the processes now known is adequately developed so as to produce news print adequately economically and of a quality to be acceptable to the trade.

If I can be useful in any way to Mr. Praet while he is in Cuba or later during a visit which he may make to Mexico City, I will be very happy. I plan to be here until the middle of May at least and it may be that I may not be going north until later in May, but I hope to stick to my present plan of leaving around the middle of May. I am not getting in touch with any of my friends in Cuba until I hear from Mr. Praet, and if he considers it desirable that I should write to any of them during his present stay in Cuba and before I see him in Mexico, I will be glad to write to them in a preliminary way now. I am sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Praet, as well as to Mr. Heineman in New York and I shall await hearing from Mr. Praet before I do anything further.

I hope that Hilda may have a pleasant trip to Buenos Aires and should you be joining her, I hope that we may see you in Mexico City en route. Marion joins in all good wishes.

Cordially and faithfully yours,