

May 31, 1951.

Dear Ed:

I expect to leave here on June 15 by air for New York and to be there until the evening of June 18, when I expect to go to Washington to be there for at least three days and perhaps four, before going to Toronto for an important Board meeting of Mexlight and the Annual Meeting of the company in the last days of June, after which I shall be returning to Mexico City, as it is difficult for me to be away from here longer at this time. I am hoping very much that you may be in Washington during the days that I am there so that I may have the pleasure of seeing you.

I have just had a letter from Mr. Heineman, in New York, to the effect that he has been informed that Braddock, who has been Economic Counselor at the American Embassy in Madrid and the only person there now who is really au courant fully with the Barcelona problem, is about to leave Madrid definitely for another post.

Mr. Heineman also informs me that Mr. Opie, who was formerly in the British Embassy in an important capacity and who is now with the Brookings Institute in Washington, and who has been giving some time to the problems raised by the Spanish Government in connection with its treatment of the important Barcelona company, has been told by friends in the Department that it would be useful if he would take a trip to Madrid to give Griffis really full background on this Barcelona matter which has so many important implications which our Government and the Department have recognized. I understand that Mr. Opie is planning to make this trip and that it is likely that the Chief of the Western European Division of the Department will give him a note of introduction to Griffis.

Mr. Heineman suggests to me in a letter which I have just received that he is sure that it would be very useful if Mr. Opie could have a letter of introduction also from you to Griffis, and if you would feel free to do this I am sure it would be very helpful. I am going to take the liberty of suggesting to Mr. Heineman that he have Opie call you on the telephone some time after you are likely to receive this letter to ask to come to see you for a moment and to determine whether you can give him such a letter.

Personally

The Honorable  
Edward G. Miller,  
Assistant Secretary of State,  
Washington, D. C.

Personally I would appreciate it very much if you can do so. The way in which the Spanish Government has treated the Barcelona company, without any regard for Spanish law or practice and without any regard for international law, rules and decisions, is really a scandal which should be aired. The Department is fully aware of the situation and has been very helpful in bringing this matter to the attention of the Spanish Government and expressed strongly its views, and of course the Canadian Government has done the same, as the Barcelona company is a Canadian-incorporated company. As long as Franco and Suances, his Minister of Economy, can get away with what they have been doing to this important company, which has rendered such constructive service to the Spanish Government over many years, there is no hope to get other constructive things done in Spain, for if Franco believes that he can get away with such outrageous treatment of foreign capital he will think, as he does, that he can get away with anything. I will not go into details, but if you would want any information on the Barcelona situation there are officers in the Department in the European Division and men like Hickerson and Achilles and Dunham who have the most full information on the whole matter, as they have been following it for several years.

I am sure that Griffis would be very understanding of the whole matter if he has a full knowledge of the facts, and I think it would be useful for Opie to make this trip to Madrid to give them to him.

The article in TIME is not quite as bad as I feared it would be. As a matter of fact, the editorial which I understand appeared in the HERALD TRIBUNE a few days ago, or rather which I gather was to appear, must have been even worse, although I have not seen the text. Why the HERALD TRIBUNE should use such language and treat this matter in this way is difficult to understand.

I had been hoping that we might have the pleasure of seeing you down here. I am sure that Bohan will do a good job as head of the American delegation to the meeting now going on in Mexico City. I think it was a wise choice.

With all good wishes and hoping to have the pleasure of seeing you soon,

Cordially and faithfully yours,

  
G. S. Messersmith