

December 28, 1950.

SECRET.

Dear Ed:

By this time you have the letter which I wrote you the other day telling you about my plans. I have found it difficult to get away from here in so short a time, but we are leaving by train on Saturday morning, December 30, and I will call you in the Department on Tuesday, January 2, from the Hotel Carlyle in New York, and I will be at the Mayflower beginning late Tuesday evening, the 2nd.

As I shall be seeing you I will not burden you with a long letter, but in addition to the few thoughts I advanced in my letter of the other day I did want to say this. In my experience the conferences of the American states which we have promoted for the most part have been prepared very inadequately. In the first place the preparation of these conferences has not had for the most part in the past even adequate attention on the part of the highest officers of the Department, who have left the preparation to subordinates who, no matter how capable they might have been, did not have the authority to make policy decisions of importance which had to be made for the success and real usefulness of these conferences. Further than this, in more recent years the preparation of these conferences of the American states involved not only political, but financial, economic and military aspects of first importance, and the top level people making policy in these aspects were not adequately brought into the picture. In some of these conferences, to my knowledge, we just pulled through by the skin of our teeth and we suffered a lot in prestige by the lack of adequate preparation before the meetings and the meetings were not as useful as they could have been if there had been the collaboration of the highest policy officers in the various aspects involved.

I do not think anyone doubts that we are in the most serious position we have ever been. This conference, if it is to take place, has to be effective in every way. To make it effective we will have to give it the same consideration at the highest levels in the political, economic, financial and military fields as we give to the European and Far Eastern meetings. I think on that point you would be in full agreement. We will have to face the issues in the American picture more realistically, more definitely and more effectively than we have ever done before, and in order to do this there has to be

this

The Honorable
Edward Miller,
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this full understanding by those heading policy in the four fields under the coordination of State. With the best will in the world such a meeting cannot be prepared by the most competent people unless they have the broadest policy directives and information on implementation which our Government has decided on.

The Argentine is going to be a key country, if not the key country, among the Latin states. Mexico and Brazil are important and in a measure Chile, but those of us who have had long experience with these conferences know that unless the Argentine can be got in line from the outset the decisions of the conference are watered down. Besides that, some of our friends who have stood by us all the way in the past have had a good many deceptions and have been disappointed in not only our performance but in our leadership. Most of this has come about because the highest persons formulating policy in the four fields had not given serious attention to the conference before it was actually under way, and then some of them could only give casual attention.

I know how understanding you are of this situation in which we are and of the hemisphere problem, and this encourages me to make this comment to you, because I feel that, out of past experience, if we fail to keep in mind our mistakes in connection with ~~these~~ meetings in the past we may be losing out, at the most critical time, in this important meeting.

In other words, some very broad decisions have to be taken not only by the President, but by the Secretaries of State, Defense, Treasury and Commerce, and, in my opinion, the heads of the Export-Import Bank and the World Bank should be in the financial picture. If you can get them together and get them to reach the really fundamental decisions which have to be made, this conference can result in the most effective of any held by the American states and the results thereof in every field can strengthen our hand immeasurably. If it isn't done in the right way we will have really unhappy consequences, and our position so close home will be so weakened, and we must be strong everywhere.

I know you will forgive my expressing these thoughts because you will appreciate the spirit in which they are expressed.

Looking forward to seeing you and with all good wishes,

Cordially and faithfully yours,