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AIR MAIL

Personal and  
Confidential

Habana, Cuba,  
August 6, 1940.

The Honorable  
Henry Morgenthau, Jr.,  
Secretary of the Treasury,  
Washington.

*Copy*

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am sending you this personal word with regard to my friend Daniel Heineman. He is a native of the Carolinas, and as a young man studied in a German University. He showed such great promise that he was offered a position with a Belgian company in Brussels. That company he has built up through a long period of years into an organization known as the "Sofina", which is perhaps the largest public utility holding and operating company in the world. It is a Belgian corporation with subsidiaries in many countries throughout the world. They operate electric light and power companies in the Argentine, in Brazil, in Spain, in France, and many other countries. The companies have been extraordinarily well run and in a constructive manner. The whole organization is the work of Heineman, who is a constructive genius and one of the finest characters I know. He is, of course, an American, and during many years has purchased from the United States millions of dollars of equipment for his companies in various parts of the world.

I knew him very well during my long stay in Belgium and have continued my contact with him. During his visits to the United States he has, on several occasions, seen the President and the Secretary of State who have very high regard for him. He is not only a great engineer and business man, but a man of keen economic and political sense. He is in some ways the best informed man I knew in Europe. One of his companies owns half of the electric light and power company of Berlin, and he was one of the few business men who stood out against the Nazis. With the occupation of Brussels, Heineman had to leave. I think they were successful in transferring in the last year or so a good part of the great assets of the company to the United States. He is now trying to operate his companies from the United States and he has come there recently. He tells me he is experiencing great difficulties in the operation of their companies because their funds in the United States are now blocked. They operate, of course, these companies in Argentina, Brazil, Spain, Portugal, and other countries, and the fact that their capital is tied up makes him infinite difficulties.

He is

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help I possibly can to him.

I was interested in what you said the other day over the telephone concerning your approval of King Leopold's action. I have not been able to form any judgment on this myself, and I have reserved my judgment, but I confess that I have been unable to explain to myself the reasons for his action. It is of particular interest for me to know that you believe that he followed the only course which he could follow. Knowing your views in general as I believe I do, I shall be particularly interested when I see you to hear more of this from you.

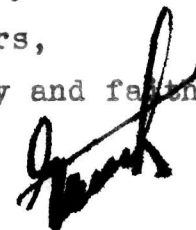
I sent an air mail letter to Mr. Morgenthau, the Secretary of the Treasury, on August 6, and in accord with your request I am sending you herewith a copy of my letter to him. I had to write the letter rather hurriedly in order to catch the air mail that noon after talking with you, and I would have gone into greater detail had I had time. I am confident, however, that what I said was sufficient for the purpose. You will find Mr. Morgenthau a somewhat shy and reserved person. If you have not yet already seen him it might not be a bad idea to have his father, whom you know, write him a personal word also. Mr. Morgenthau has such heavy burdens these days that it is very difficult to see him, and he is in many respects a very shy man. I am sure once you see each other that you will become friends.

I am still hoping very strongly that I will be able to leave here with my wife on the AMERICA on the evening of August 19. There is some highly important business pending here and whether I will be able to leave depends entirely on developments. I ought to be able to tell in the next day or two whether I will be able to leave. It depends on action by the Cuban Congress and it is not a very responsible body. If I am not able to leave on the AMERICA I will send you a telegram. If I am able to leave on it and you are not in New York at that time, I will arrange to get in touch with you somewhere after our arrival.

I am sorry that your arrival in the United States should be coincident with the very hot weather which I understand is prevalent in New York, and I hope that it is not giving Mrs. Heineman too bad an impression of the country. We look forward very much to seeing you. If I do not get away from here on August 19 it is quite impossible for me to have any idea as to when I can get away.

With every good wish to you and yours,

Cordially and faithfully yours,



Enclosure:

Copy of letter to Mr. Morgenthau.