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Letter From Francis Mairs Huntington-Wilson to Philander C. Knox, July 16, 1910

Francis Mairs Huntington-Wilson

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July 16, 1910.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Herewith I enclose copy of what I said on behalf of the mediating powers at the meetings which the two Chargés d'Affaires and I have had with the Ministers of Ecuador and Peru. I send also copy of the Protocol as finally presented. The rest of the story is told by the carbon copies of telegrams with the exception of this point— the two Chargés d'Affaires and I had a talk with the Spanish Minister who, you will remember, had expressed a desire to cooperate and to have for his Government full information. I have thought it best at all times to emphasize the unity of action of the mediators and on this principle I thought it proper that all three should participate in the conversation with Mr. Riano. Mr. Lima and Mr. Villegas were strongly in favor of giving him all proper information. They having returned to the country I gave Mr. Riano yesterday morning copy of the Protocol and of the various aide-memoires and memoranda. He was very grateful. I talked quite frankly but unofficially about the attitude of Ecuador, desiring
if desiring him to gather the impression that the mediators kept Spain informed of all developments and Spain took no radical steps without giving the mediators full intimations, the chance of adjusting everything in a way satisfactory to all concerned would seem to be increased. We all feel that no stone has been left unturned. I suppose this affair will now soak awhile and that we may hear from Lima and Quito within a week either that they assent to the Protocol or that they desire particular modifications. If the recriminations about demobilization go on possibly the mediators might appoint commissioners to watch the process in each country in the interest of the other (this occurs to me as a possibility).

Oh! there is one other point. Referring to what I said of the Chileans in my letter of July 11th, I wrote Mr. Yoachman a letter marked "personal" in response to the inquiry of his Government. I find they have failed to include a copy of it with the enclosures I asked to have prepared. I will send a copy Monday. The gist of the letter was precisely along the lines indicated in my letter of the 11th. When I saw Mr. Yoachman later at dinner here he said that before receiving it he had telegraphed his Government and had explained that without any criticism the Department had made a "friendly insinuation" as to Mr. Eastman, the Chilean Minister's
Minister's activities at Quito. Today I gave Mr. Yoacham a copy of the Protocol.

Turning to Nicaragua herewith Adee's memorandum of Calvo's conversation and a translation of the letter to the Costa Rican Minister from the President of El Salvador.

Today both the Costa Rican Minister and the Guatemalan Chargé d'Affaires called to ask if there was anything they could say in response to their Government. I said to each approximately this:

Their representation had been read with great interest by the Secretary of State but I had not been able to draw from him any definite expression of opinion. This trouble had gone on since last October and all those concerned of course realized that it would take a good deal of time to find a solution, as they realized also that there was not only no Government more anxious than the United States but, perhaps, none so anxious as the United States to find a solution which would be a real and radical solution. The extreme complexity of the situation was the principal reason and the prospective absence of the President was no doubt also a factor in the result that this Government would probably have no definite view to express for several weeks. Moreover, the recent gyrations of Doctor Madriz had not added to his popularity in this country. It was difficult to explain such conduct as his on the part of a sensible man unless upon the
theory that he was driven to desperation. If this last were true perhaps he would follow the example of Zelaya and clear out. If this were not the correct theory then certainly the recent attitude of Doctor Madriz made it still more difficult to find a solution.

It occurred to one also that the Zelaya machine had such a hold upon Nicaragua through unconscionable concessions that if an election were held today perhaps interested parties could elect a Zelaya figure head. If there were a locum tenens who could break up the Zelaya machine then there might be hope of real reform.

In short I prepared their minds for a non-committal attitude on our part for some weeks.

I gather that Manuel Bonilla may try to put Davila out in Honduras. Bonilla was thrown out by Zelaya, you will remember, and Davila was protected by that gentleman. I do not yet know how such a change would affect the loan proposition. Herewith copy of a letter from the Special Minister of Honduras as to the loan. I am glad to know that the Morgans will seek a six month’s extension of their option on the foreign debt, which option expires early in August. This gives us time to turn around although I myself would be inclined to press the thing in a few weeks anyway.

Herewith also letter from the Niles-Bement-Pond Company about
the visit of the President-Elect of Brazil. There is really no reason
to include it. We shall get up a schedule and assume that the Pres-
ident and you will each give a day to the entertainment, the idea
being that you would receive Field Marshal Hermes de Fonseca at the
farm and give him a luncheon and a talk. He is due in August.

Mr. Hoyt, Mr. Adee and I fully discussed today Doctor Hamilton
Wright and his extraordinary attitude. On Monday I shall write you
about it and venture some suggestions which I hope you will be good
enough to await before dealing with his remarkable letter.

I hope you will be satisfied with the reply to the telegram
announcing your appointment as an honorary president of the Fourth
Pan-American Conference. I did not think you ought to reply until
we knew how great the honor was, i. e. upon how few it was conferred.
Since the honorary presidents are only yourself and the Minister for
Foreign Affairs of the Argentine Republic I really think it is a
splendid thing and most gratifying and hard to beat as an answer to
those who criticize your Latin-American policy. Finding out about
it had caused some delay so I thought we ought to get off an answer today.

This is a very long letter but I hope it may serve as light
summer reading after your swim.

Hoping you are fit and enjoying Cape May and green with envy
at the thought of the surf, I remain always,

Yours very sincerely,

The Honorable P. C. Knox,

Cape May Hotel,

Cape May, N. J.