

May 2nd, 1922.

Honorable Jose Tous Soto,
Ponce, Porto Rico.

My dear friend:

Your letter of April 25th, together with the copy of the same date to Judge Towner, came to hand this morning.

There is very little to report at this writing, except that a letter received from my son this morning supplements the news conveyed in yours. I received yesterday a cablegram from my son, telling me, confidentially, of what has transpired from the investigation made by the Department of Justice in the Reilly affair, and how much evidence there is to bring the matter before the next Grand Jury in the form of an indictment. I had this written out in long hand and showed it to both Secretary Weeks and Judge Towner, and the Secretary told me that there would be nobody going down to assist the Attorney General in the investigation, as Reilly undoubtedly would be brought home before anything should happen to him that would be fatal. He told me that just before I arrived a confidential friend of both the President and himself, who is a General in the United States Army, had been sent down in a civilian capacity to try and gather information regarding Reilly. And as soon as this information was in the hands of the President, he would act, in the premises. Of course, you know that this man cannot help getting the right information, if he starts right, and approaches the proper people.

Your answer to Judge Towner was very good. He had also written me at the same time and I also saw an answer he received this morning from Sifre, Jr., which more or less told him the same thing that you did, if not with so many details. After what I have written to you, you will readily understand how deeply interested Towner has become in this subject.

After I wrote you last, a friend called my attention to the May issue of the World's Work, in which there is an article on Porto Rico and in which my letter to the Editor and his reply to me are given much prominence. The article is an attack on the President for his appointment of Reilly. After reading the article, I took occasion to write the Governor a letter, telling him what I thought of the whole affair and because I wanted to have something in my files to show how that

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letter was ever written and by whom. I am enclosing herein a copy of my letter to the Governor and I want to say that when I handed it to Secretary Weeks, he threw up his hands and said that that was the limit. I told him that he would be able to see by that how much we have had to endure, and how suspicious we were that something worse might happen at any minute.

I am glad that the convention was postponed, as it would have been very difficult for you fellows to do anything in the unsettled condition in which we are now. Let us hope that we will have a clean bill of health for the date on which it will be held.

I had promised Reily that I would keep him posted by every mail of how things were progressing, but after I have read your letter and see that he is still suspicious of what I might do here, I have decided not to write him any more. The truth is also that after the publication of the article in the World's Work, I don't feel the same way as I felt when I left Porto Rico. And that you know that my feelings then were not very friendly. Of course, far from my intention to do anything harmful to the man, as that would also be against the positive instructions I received from my friends. Outside of Secretary Weeks and Judge Towner, to whom I have been very frank, I am telling everybody what a wonderful Governor Reily has made and how successful he has been in making the Unionist party drop their plank for independence and conceal the little flag which used to be waved over "Old Glory". I must be frank to say that no one believed me when I speak in defense of Reily. Even the young lady who is writing this letter for me smilingly tells me that she hates to write a lie, such as this, as she can't believe what I'm telling her. In fact, no one here takes Reily seriously, as he has become a joke and everybody, when he opens his morning paper, expects to find some headline saying that Reily has broken loose again with some new crazy action.

I have taken notice of the different suggestions made in your letter. But I want to say to you that Judge Towner has assured me that there will be no legislation this year about Porto Rico, with the exception of the amendment to our organic act giving the local courts concurrent jurisdiction in the matter of prohibition.

I received a clipping from "La Democracia", publishing a letter from its correspondent here, in which it is said that the Committee on Insular Affairs of the House had decided to take up favorably the Campbell Bill; that Judge Towner was for it; that the Administration was for it, and in fact, that it is a sure thing that it will pass. Judge Towner, to whom I spoke on the subject, tells me that there has not been such a decision by the Committee and that the only thing he did was to promise Congressman Campbell that there would be a hearing on his measure; that neither he (Towner) nor the administration was for the bill and no one was authorized to convey the contrary impression. I have found out

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from another source that even Mr. Davila is not for it, although he will not say so publicly. It is understood that he was not consulted when Barcelo and Guerra wrote the bill and gave it to Campbell to be introduced. The reference made by the correspondent as to the Nolan bill is also unauthorized, as I have been told by Towner. In fact, there will be no hearings at all and whenever there should be any hearings they will be on all the bills.

I had a cablegram this morning from Luis Castro, interpreter of the Federal Court, requesting that I endorse him for Marshal. I want your advice on the subject, but I must say to you that I found out yesterday that the President some time ago gave instructions to all heads of departments that before appointing to any office in Porto Rico, they should consult Reilly. I believe that this was done at the request of Reilly himself.

I will try and get all the data which you has asked for and enclose it in my next letter.

I forgot to mention the fact that a few days ago I met Davila in the War Department and he came up to speak to me and I made up my mind to listen to him and give no information whatever. When he spoke of the cable to the President signed jointly by Barcelo and Reilly and said that Barcelo had authorized him to deny that he had authorized the sending of such a cable and that the only thing which was discussed was financial matters, I told him that Barcelo had fooled him because I had seen the original cablegram signed by both the Governor and Barcelo. He wondered if the signature was not a forgery and I told him that it was not because I was very well acquainted with Barcelo's signature and I was certain that it was genuine. Then he wanted me to tell him what was the reading of the cable, and I told him, and he could not make it out. He told me positively that his instructions from Barcelo were to quit his attack on the Governor because that had been the basis of the so-called understanding between Reilly and Barcelo, but that he had refused entirely to comply with such instructions and had made up his mind to continue the fight to the limit. He said that the very acceptance of Reilly of such conditions, that is to say, the dropping of the charges against him both here and in Porto Rico, should be sufficient evidence to prove that the man was unfit to be Governor. Davila complimented me for our letter to Reilly, saying that it was a manly act on our part and very timely. The only thing Davila got from me was the statement that no matter what he and his friends did in the fight against Reilly that we would sustain him to the limit and as long as the Administration kept him as the executive of the Island, in which we wanted to prove that we were part of the Republican party of the States, his (Davila's) contention to the contrary notwithstanding.

Shanton told me a story which was afterwards confirmed by Judge Towner, to the effect that during the last stay of Reilly in Washington, he was put out of the Ebbitt House in broad daylight.

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It seems that some one who knew him was standing in the lobby of the hotel when he came in, escorting a lady, and saw him go up to the desk and register. This party went up to the desk and saw that Reily had registered under an assumed name and he told the clerk at the desk that that was not the man's name. The clerk asked the fellow what was the real name, and the man refused to give it, but as he was a friend of the hotel he assured the clerk that he knew Reily, without mentioning the name, and that the name under which he had registered was not his own. Under such an assurance, the clerk went upstairs, knocked at the door of the room given to Reily and was invited to leave the hotel immediately, or he would be arrested, and so he did. Judge Towner told me that the man who told him this story said he could get affidavits to prove that it was true. I am just giving it to you as it was told to me by both Shanton and Towner.

There is nothing more that I can say to you by this mail, but hope to be able to report some progress day after tomorrow. I have not seen Hull, but I suppose that if he comes to town he will look me up.

Very truly yours,

Address:

Congress Hall Hotel,
Washington, D. C.