

New York,

April 25 1922.

Hon. Jesse Jones Soto,

My dear friend:-

On the arrival of the steamer yesterday, I was handed a telegram from Nixon, asking me to call him up on the 'phone in Washington, at Noon. I did so and he informed me that Judge Towner would be last evening at the Pennsylvania Hotel and was very anxious to have a talk with me before I saw the Secretary of War.

I had the expected talk this morning and the Judge told me that when my cablegram came, the Secretary and himself thought that the object of my trip was to uphold and defend the Governor, but after I spoke confidentially with Towner, he told me he was relieved and he expected that the Secretary would also be relieved as my conversation with the Secretary and the President would certainly change the whole situation and help them to decide the situation.

Towner claims that the President at last has seen the light and told him confidentially that he had been upholding Reilly all along and giving him enough time to redeem himself and make good, but that the time had come for decisive action.

It seems, as Towner told me, that there are sufficient members of Congress to report favorably and pass a resolution for impeachment, the Democrats using this as a political campaign measure to discredit the Republican party and the President and that there were sufficient independent Republicans in the House joining the Democrats to make this action successful. Towner says that many of the things known by the Administration and those close to the Administration, are, of course, kept back from the other friends in Congress and this makes the situation worse.

Towner believes that it is my duty to talk freely to the President and the Secretary because this will help them to arrive at a conclusive decision, meaning by this that I should talk to them in the same spirit that I spoke to him.

It is evident from all the long talk I had with Towner that the Administration is ready to drop Reilly and Mestre will be dropped with him. What has killed Mestre was his instructions to Collazo not to prosecute Reilly and to consult him in the premises. They have taken this to mean that he had agreed with

Reilly that he would not be prosecuted. I should say also that Kassinger is also in bad for permitting the Governor to deal with the public funds - without regard to the regulations, as he did.

Talking about possible candidates to succeed Reilly, Towner told me that Major La Guardia, former President of the Municipal Borough of Manhattan, as well as a former member of Congress, told him last night that in case the place became vacant, that he would try to get the appointment. Towner also spoke of Solo of Baldo and also that he had heard that ex-Senator Coats would also be a candidate. I told him that the only one I knew was Coates and that he would be an excellent man. Towner said that he did not know what the President and the Secretary would do after the place became vacant, that he knew that the President would try to relieve Reilly easily, but that as to a successor, the Secretary would insist that the man appointed should be of the very highest type and one who should not take the position thinking of the salary compensation.

Towner told me that as soon as I find out what is to be done in Washington, after I had seen both the President and the Secretary, that it would be my duty to write Reilly, apprising him of the whole proof, so that he would be prepared for what he must expect; that this was due to Reilly - both from a political standpoint and as a friend.

I discussed with Towner the matter of hearings on the different Bills before Congress and he told me positively that after the ugly advertisement that the Island had received lately, it was useless to think of any hearings at all - because there would be no chance of getting anybody in Congress to extend any measure of self-government for Porto Rico and that, on the other hand, the present act had not received sufficient trial to think seriously, in the face of the late events, of amending same.

I am leaving for Washington tomorrow morning and have agreed to have another talk with Towner before my interview with the Secretary of War. I repeat that Judge Towner is taking a good deal of interest in our problems...

I am writing this letter, hoping that there will be a mail tomorrow, so that you will be advised of the situation, as I find it before arriving in Washington. I will write you again on Friday so that I will be able to correct any misinformation which I may have given you in this letter.

Believe me to remain,

Very truly yours,

P.S.

Please keep this strictly confidential.