

, July 5th, 1922.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL.

Honorable Horace M. Towner,
Chairman, Committee on Insular Affairs,
House Office Building,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

My dear Judge:-

On my arrival here on the 29th of June, I found ~~by~~ that same date that Mr. Huyke was leaving for the states on business of his Department, and that he expressed a desire of seeing me before he started. As I had to see other friends off on the same boat, I saw Mr. Huyke on the dock and he was very much interested in knowing from me what the situation was in Washington, but I refrained from telling him anything at all and told him that he would find it out for himself on his arrival and that things continued the same.

I gave a card of introduction to you to my friend Dr. Jose Gomez Brioso, one of the old Republican leaders and a life-long friend of the late Dr. Barbosa, and I hope that you will talk freely ~~freely~~ to him as he is one of our trusted leaders.

I saw the Governor that same day and it was two hours before I was able to get out of his office as he wanted me to tell him everything and most of anything else, he was interested in knowing what both you and Secretary Weeks had to say about the situation and whether or not I had explained to the latter the true situation, of course, as he, the Governor, sees it. You can imagine the difficulty of my position in the premises, as you know very well that I could not tell him what the true situation was.

One thing I was able to find out, and that is, that if you hear the Governor talk you will believe that he is not aware of the true condition of affairs in Washington,

Honorable Horace M. Towner.
Page (2).-

July 5th, 1922.

in other words, that he don't know what is coming to him. He insists that the President is backing him entirely and that he has Barcelo and other Unionist leaders entirely ~~backed~~. In other words, he believes that as soon as all his troubles with the Attorney general and the Grand Jury have blown away, that he will be able to sail in clear waters without any difficulty whatever. Under the circumstances and coming back from my ten weeks stay in Washington, and knowing first hand how the Administration feels about Reilly, it was very amusing for me to listen to the many things that the Governor had to say and the foolish questions which he propounded to me.

As the days go by, I come to the conclusion that the Governor has not gained by experience at all. In the midst of all these troubles with the Attorney General, he invited Mestre a few days ago to go with him in an open automobile to a pretended inspection of the Jails and this, of course, was the talk of the town for a few days. When I asked him, why he had done this, he said that it was because he wanted to show the Attorney General that he did not care whether he was prosecuting him or not in order to comply with his official duty. I told him that I thought that he could have complied with that duty in the same way by having Mestre ride in another automobile and wait for him at the Jail, but he did not seem to see it in the same light.

Of course, I know better why this demonstration was made by Reilly. I was informed that the day before, he had written an article attacking Mestre and had given it to the Spanish Editor of the Republican paper "EL TIEMPO" with the request that it be published in both English and Spanish. The article was published in Spanish and Mestre immediately commenced criminal proceedings against the paper for the published article. The Governor got scared lest Mestre should find out that he had anything to do with the publication and immediately thereafter invited him to go out with him to inspect the jails.

As I promised you that I would keep you posted of everything that I found out, I must convey to you a very pitiful story that was told to Tous goto and myself day before yesterday by Mr. Feliu, who has been appointed by

July 5th, 1922.

Governor Reily, Commissioner of Agriculture and Labor. The Governor wanted Feliu to make a Four Thousand Dollars job for a man by the name of S. D. Edick, who was lately discharged by Judge Odlin from the office of U. S. Commissioner for his misbehaviour in the Shanton matter. This man was a merchant who failed in business and is one of those never-do-well. When Feliu told the Governor that there was no such office in his Department, the Governor insisted that he should make the office through some combination or other, because he had promised Judge Sweet that he would take care of Edick and then went on to explain that Edick was to divide his salary with Judge Sweet. Feliu said that he thought immediately of presenting his resignation of the office of Commissioner, but wanted to consult with us before taking any action, and of course, both Senator Tous soto and myself told Feliu that he should keep firm in his decision and if the Governor insisted upon the proposition, that he should present his resignation with the statement that he would bring the matter to the attention of the Administration in Washington.

This Edick matter is not a new one according to what Bennett, the new Chief of the Insular Police, told me the very day I arrived. Reily requested the resignation of the Superintendent of Elections, whose salary is Four Thousand Dollars, and when this official, who is an intimate friend of Bennett, told him about it, Bennett went to see the Governor and protested, and the Governor told him the same story, that he wanted the job to put in this man Edick.

- THE FLAG INCIDENT. -

We have had another eruption of the little one star flag and the occasion has been the graduation exercises in the different towns of the Island. Here in San Juan and in many other towns of the Island, there has been trouble with the Police, because some foolish youngsters in the midst of the exercises would take from his pockets a one star flag and wave it to the audience and an outburst would follow, with the natural intervention of the Police force. In certain towns the School Supervisors have had to suppress the exercises entirely and in others, to the shame of the said authorities, as in the case of the City of Ponce and I understand of other cities, a compromise was effected, whereby the school authorities agreed not to have the American Flag in evidence and the school children on the other hand, agreed not to produce the one star flag.

Honorable Horace M. Towner.
Page (4).-

July 5th, 1922.

This is a most unfortunate outbreak of the old trouble. The Republican papers are unanimous in condemning ~~such~~ occurrences. On the other hand, the Unionist papers are unanimous in upholding and applauding the occurrences and claimed that there is a right on the part of the Porto Ricans to do such things. But I must say that it is not the graduating boys alone who have been raising this trouble in the graduating exercises, but in many cases the trouble has been brought about by young men that have nothing to do with the schools and who were old enough to know better.

I do not know at this writing all that has been done by the Department of Education in this trouble. I do know that both, the Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioner have been dealing harshly with the offenders, but I do believe that some drastic measure should be taken both with the boys offenders and the School Supervisors who have allowed such occurrences. And it is not only the matter of the flag but they tell me that in some towns of the Island, during the exercises, the speeches uttered were scandalous and it had more a savor of a political mass meeting with independence tendency than that of a school exercise.

I thought it was my duty to bring this matter to your attention, for it is evident that what we all predicted when the independence plank was taken out of the Unionist Platform, that it was only temporarily. I am sorry to see that we were not mistaken and it would not be surprising, when the elections of 1924 are at hand, that the Unionist Party will go back to their old slogan in order to catch the ignorant votes in the Island. #

Mr. Huyke is in the States and he may be able to explain to you what his department has done in regard to the flag incident. This morning Unionist paper announces that Mr. Barceló is to leave shortly to the States and as he will undoubtedly see you, I believe it well for him to explain what part he, his Party, and his newspaper have taken in condemning the scandalous flag incident.

At this writing the Supreme Court has not yet decided the different cases brought by the Attorney General affecting the Governor, but I understand that Justice Hutchinson

Honorable Horace M. Towner.
Page (5).-

July 5th, 1922.

is writing the opinion of the Court and the same will be given out shortly.

There is a good deal of talk here regarding what Mr. Travieso did in Washington in the Reily affair. On the one hand, Governor Reily claims that Travieso did not play fair with him after he had given Travieso such a wonderful letter of introduction to the President. On the other hand, the Unionists are condemning Travieso for the letter which he wrote Mestre asking him not to continue in his prosecution against the Governor. I have had occasion to see a copy of that letter before I left Washington and to me, who was in the secret, the letter did not have any meaning. That same letter, if read by Governor Reily, would prove that Travieso had been keeping faith with him and the same letter read by Travieso's political friends would show that Travieso was working against the interests of his own Party. Travieso will have to explain a good deal when he returns to the Island.

There is nothing more that I can write you about by this mail, but I promise to keep you posted of any happenings.

I do have to ask you to be very careful in what documents you let Cordova Davila see, as after my arrival, I have found out that he had been writing about letters which you showed him, written from people in the Island.

With very best regards, believe me to remain

Sincerely yours,