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20 May 1946

Dear Dr. Cosío Villegas:

I am not going to attempt at this time to answer your long and interesting letter concerning publication plans of the Fondo. This is a matter which, as you supposed, will take time for proper consideration which I do not have at the present moment. You may be sure that I shall not disregard your inquiry concerning these problems, and that I shall prepare for you a memorandum on the points you bring up as soon as I am relatively free from the most heavy complex of activities I have had to date. If you would like to send me your itinerary during your South American journey, I could make some attempt to send you by airmail the memorandum, in case I should complete it before your return to Mexico.

Please thank Don Alfonso Reyes for his telegram advising me of the death of Pedro Henríquez Ureña. Word has already gone forth to one or two of the institutions in which he collaborated in Argentina. I cannot begin to tell you how deeply the loss of Don Pedro has affected me at this time. I can think of no other one person who could be spared less than he, in view of present necessities. Certainly the quality of his work and his exemplary selflessness must remain as a vital lesson to his contemporaries and successors. His death will doubtless alter the plans we discussed when I was in Mexico the first of the year. I am sure that you and Don Alfonso Reyes will keep me informed of developments.

Dr. Borbolla very kindly sent me a copy of his letter of May 8 to Mr. Díaz-Thomé. Dr. Borbolla sent a check providing coverage for Mr. Díaz-Thomé and Miss Lopezlira through the first week in June, on the basis of the allotments suggested in my letter of October 4, 1945, to you.

I have seen little of these two young scholars during the past months. They came to see me two weeks ago to inform me that they had decided to remain here in Cambridge through the Summer Term, in preference to going elsewhere for the completion of their twelve months' study. I judge that there remains within the funds made available to the Colegio de México by The Rockefeller Foundation approximately \$1,000 for the completion of twelve months' study in this country and they return home to Mexico City. Along with the modest balance they will have on hand by June 10, I judge that this sum will provide coverage for their tuition during the Summer Term, maintenance, and return to Mexico City, especially if they administer these funds wisely. You and Dr. Borbolla may wish to forward to them the balance remaining from the \$2,700 fund, so that they will receive it around June 10, and give them such instructions at that time as you deem advisable concerning the expenditure of these funds for coverage of summer study and the return trip to Mexico.

I shall make no attempt at this time to give you a detailed report concerning the work of these two fellows from the Colegio de México. In general terms, I regret to say that their performance has been disappointing. They have shown less self-reliance and maturity than one might have expected from students who have been given the educational advantages which were provided to them in Mexico and in this country. In terms of the assistance given these two young people for the year's work ending September next, I should say that this assistance has not been negligible; the equivalent of \$1,000 from Radcliffe for Miss Lopezlira plus \$1,200 from Harvard for Mr. Díaz-Thomé plus \$2,700 from The Rockefeller Foundation for both of them, adds up to a total of almost \$5,000 over a period of twelve months. I am sure that everyone concerned on this end

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has made a special effort to provide understanding and collaboration needed to make a success of their study in Cambridge. What are the causes which explain their relative lack of success, I am not qualified to say at this time. Difficulties of adaptation can at best offer only a partial explanation; these difficulties I am familiar with from an experience of five years' close association with young Latin Americans studying in this country and with North Americans who have gone abroad for specialized study or experience. Their being Latin Americans does not explain the fact that their total performance here has been unimpressive, measured in terms of graduate study and the sense of responsibility which this type of study is supposed to reveal. Latin Americans have in the past shown a sense of responsibility and an awareness of graduate standards, and continue to do so at present, in so far as their resident study in North American institutions is concerned. At Harvard, for instance, of the top four graduate students in economics, two are Argentines; in sociology, a young Brazilian woman has demonstrated standards of attainment which have made it possible for her to combine teaching duties in this field in Harvard College with advanced graduate studies in sociology. I do not have to tell you that it takes an unusual young woman to cause any department to relinquish even temporarily the precedent that teaching duties at Harvard are not assigned to women. The thing which puzzles me is that it is generally agreed that facilities for the study of such social science disciplines as sociology and economics are not of the best in South America. And here we have the case of three young South Americans excelling in competition with our best graduate students, in fields in which the basic training program of the South Americans is felt to have been deficient by general agreement and by their own statements. On the other hand, we have a disappointing performance by Mr. Díaz-Thomé and Miss Lopezlira after a period of subsidized training in a Mexican program especially set up to provide the best standards and under more favorable conditions than had prevailed before the establishment of the Center for Historical Studies in the Colegio de México. Given my own particular interest in the program of this Center, over a period of several years, and my conviction that facilities for the proper training were provided within the Center, I am sure that you can understand my perplexity with reference to the unimpressive performance by its first two graduates to be subsidized, fairly generously, for study abroad. It may be that some day in conversation we can get at the heart of this matter. For the present I have nothing further to contribute than a frank sense of perplexity.

I am sure that you and I, and the two young Mexicans concerned had hopes that their performance would be such as to pave the way for further graduate training here for promising graduates of the Colegio de México. I believe this is not the time to consider other such possibilities. It seems equally undesirable that Mr. Díaz-Thomé or Miss Lopezlira should be disciplined in the sense that they should be discouraged from completing their twelve months' study here. They have doubtless gained considerable useful experience, and will probably be able to complete the M. A. degree by remaining on for study in the Summer Term. It is unlikely that either one of them would make an acceptable candidate for the Ph. D. degree on the basis of further study, after September. Possibilities for further scholarship assistance from Harvard or Radcliffe are evidently out of the question, and I should be disinclined to recommend further supplementary or total assistance from The Rockefeller Foundation. The practical solution is doubtless to make the best of the situation as it exists and to hope that eventual results of their experience will be generally useful to them, even if the present level of performance is less than we had hoped for originally.

I am sure that no one feels that the assistance given these two young people has been a total loss, and that everyone concerned can only hope that the eventual outcome of their study will prove our present evaluation of results to have been over-pessimistic. For this reason, I suggest that you add Dr. Borbolla forward to them the remaining funds intended for their study in this country, with the instructions that this total coverage is to provide for their summer's study and return home.

I shall be writing you and Don Alfonso Reyes again on other matters in the near future. In case my letter arrives after your departure for South America, I want to take advantage of this opportunity to wish you successful trip, and to express the hope that you will give us an opportunity to share some of your interesting experiences there from time to time.

Cordially yours.

Copia de la Carta del Dr. Berrien.