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AROSEMENA

NOTES EXCHANGED BETWEEN
MR. AROSEMENA, MINISTER
OF PANAMA AT WASHINGTON,
AND MR. BACON, SECRETARY
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NOTES EXCHANGED

BETWEEN

**MR. AROSEMENA, MINISTER OF PANAMA
AT WASHINGTON,**

AND

MR. BACON, SECRETARY OF STATE,

**Concerning the Addresses of Mr. Rainey, of Illinois,
Delivered in the House of Representatives.**



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Correspondence between Mr. Arosemena, Minister of Panama at Washington and Mr. Bacon, Secretary of State, concerning the address of Mr. Rainey of Illinois, delivered in the House of Representatives.

4-4-48 J. M.

LEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA.

WASHINGTON.

FEBRUARY 8, 1909.

EXCELLENCY :

Under instructions from His Excellency the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of my Government, and pursuant to Resolutions unanimously adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Panama on the first instant, I am directed to call the attention of your Excellency's Government to two public addresses delivered in the House of Representatives of your National Congress, by one of its members, on the 26th and 28th days of January last, which addresses constitute a direct attack upon the President of my Country, as well as upon the fair name and Administration of the Republic of Panama, and to convey to Your Excellency the solemn and emphatic protest of my Government against said attacks and this violation of international courtesy.

My Government and its people justly and naturally resent the baseless and unwarranted attacks upon their President contained in these public and official speeches of a member of your Government delivered in the National Congress of the United States of America. It is unnecessary for me to say to

Your Excellency that through years of intimacy and association my countrymen have the most implicit faith in the personal integrity, official uprightness and disinterested patriotism of their present honored President.

My Government and its people also feel that they have additional cause for exception by reason of the publication of the speeches referred to in the official organ of Your Excellency's Government, the Congressional Record, by which, in addition to their appearance in the public press, official circulation has been given to these wholly baseless and highly offensive statements and they have been communicated to the nations of the world with apparently official sanction, to the great humiliation of my Government and its people.

It is with surprise that my Government also notes that measures solely concerning the Republic of Panama and pending before its legislative body were at the same time made the subject of official discussion and opprobrious criticism in a legislative body of Your Excellency's Government, and this too, with the declared purpose of inducing action by the House of Representatives of the United States, designed to influence the action of the National Assembly of my Country. My Government further deplores the adverse comments contained in said official addresses of said member of the House of Representatives upon the treaties pending between the United States, Panama and Columbia, which were concluded on January 9th last, and which criticisms tend to affect their ultimate ratification.

The Republic of Panama is bound to that of Your Excellency, not only by ties of fraternity and by fervid admiration for its institutions, but also by the inseparable bond of a common interest in the Panama Canal located within its boundaries, and it is a source of profound regret to my Government and myself that occasion has arisen for calling attention to the occurrences to which I have referred; but their character is so extraordinary that even the warm devotion of my Country to that of Your Excellency does not permit my Government to disregard them.

Your Excellency will note that I am instructed to include in the protest the Counsel of this Legation and Fiscal Commissioner of Panama in this Country. I have not referred to him in the foregoing protest, solely in deference to his request

that I refrain from so doing, since he, as a citizen of the United States, does not desire that any foreign Government should intervene in his behalf. I should, however, fail in my duty if I did not express the perfect confidence of my Government and people in his personal integrity and official uprightness, and in the name of my Government absolutely deny the truth of any of the injurious statements in the addresses to which I have referred, concerning his relations or transactions with my Government or any member of it.

In conclusion, I beg to submit to Your Excellency, with this letter of protest, extract of a cablegram of instructions from His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs of my Government and the text of the Resolution before mentioned as adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Panama on the first instant, and copies of the Congressional Record containing the speeches and remarks to which I have referred, and finally I have the honor to request of Your Excellency's Government such disavowal of the offensive remarks, concerning the President and the Republic of Panama, as may be deemed just and commensurate with the deep and unwarranted injury inflicted on His Excellency Sr. Jose Domingo de Obaldia, President of the Republic of Panama.

I improve this opportunity to reiterate to Your Excellency the assurances of my high and distinguished consideration.

C. C. AROSEMENA,
Minister of Panama.

(Cables enclosures.)

PANAMA, February 1, 1909.

PANAMA CONSUL,
New York :

Inform Minister Arosemena that upon his return he is to emphatically protest against Congressman Rainey's disrespectful official speech against the President of the Republic and Counsellor of the Legation.

ARANGO,
Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

PANAMA, Feb. 1, 1909.

Panama Consul, New York,
18 Broadway.

Proposition approved today proposed by Diputado Morales, modified by Diputado Pablo Arosemena. Before proceeding with the order of the day the National Assembly considers the following: Having seen the dispatch of the Consul General of the Republic in New York addressed to His Excellency the President, in which he states the calumnious remarks made by Representative Rainey in the Chamber of Representatives of the United States of America against His Excellency, Senor Don Jose Domingo de Obaldia, President of the Republic, statements that should only be considered for the official character of the person who made them and the place and occasion in which they were made but that in themselves are nothing but an insult to the canons of history and a violation of international rights and courtesies, resolves to protest, as in fact it protests, publicly and solemnly against the offence committed in the Parliament of a friendly country to the present head of the Panamanian Nation, His Excellency Senor Don Jose Domingo de Obaldia. Transmit this resolution by cable to the Minister of the Republic in Washington so that he may lay it before the American Government and that he may give it the greatest publicity.

(Signed) ANTONIO BURGOS,
President of Assembly.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

Serial No.

FEBRUARY 9, 1909.

SIR :

The President directs me to say in answer to your communication of February 9, 1909, that the remarks complained of were made in the House of Representatives. Under our Constitution we have for what we regard as wise reasons provided that—

* * * “for any speech or debate in either House
“they (the Senators and Representatives) shall not be
“questioned in any other place.”

This provision we regard as essential to secure full liberty of speech to the elected representatives of the people; and we feel that such liberty of speech should be preserved even though it may occasionally be abused.

It ought to be understood, however, that the utterances of individual members are not to be taken as expressing the views either of the Government of the United States or of the House in which such remarks are made. As regards the statements in question made by Representative Rainey, the President attached so little importance to them that he had not even read them until your protest came; he has now read them, and none of them concerning which he has knowledge have any foundation in fact. The President wishes me to recall to your attention that the attack was made even more upon Americans, including the President-elect, than upon the officials of Panama. The President need hardly say that this Government disavows all responsibility for the remarks of Representative Rainey to which you refer.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurance of my high consideration.

(Signed) ROBERT BACON.

[To DON CARLOS C. AROSEMENA,
Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of
the Republic of Panama.]

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