

Apartado 538  
México, D.F.  
February 1, 1930

My dear Mr. Rogers:

During the time that we were awake on the trip from New York to Habana, nothing of any great moment transpired. I state the matter in this fashion, for, what with the after effects of the last strenuous days in New York and the enervating force of the Gulf Stream which we struck on the second day out, most of our days and all of our nights were devoted to the gentle art of snoozing. Thanks to Keith's bright idea of sending part of her bon voyage flowers to the Captain's table, that gentleman was most attentive and solicitous for our comfort. And this reminds me to add my formal thanks to those of Keith for your thoughtfulness in providing us with a fruit diet en route to Habana.

Our boat docked in Habana as scheduled on Tuesday morning. Mr. Moe had apparently functioned in his usual efficient manner, for we were greeted by one of the under-secretaries of the Embassy and conducted through the customs in proper and fitting style. In our innocence and ignorance of the ways of boats, we allowed ourselves to be taken to the Sevilla-Biltmore hotel. No sooner had we gotten ourselves installed in that den of pirates, however, than we learned that the boat which we were expecting to take the next day for Yucatán would be delayed three days in arriving. I need not add, we decided to forgo the privilege of helping the Sevilla-Biltmore pay off a large part of the Cuban national debt and that we sought other and less opulent quarters for the rest of our stay in Habana.

Three hours after our arrival we were invited to have luncheon with Ambassador and Mrs. Guggenheim. Unfortunately there were other guests present and the conversation was accordingly of a strictly social nature. The next morning I had a more businesslike conference with the Ambassador at his office in which he expressed great interest in my experience as representative of the Guggenheim Foundation in Mexico. He also stated that he hoped that it would be possible for him to prevail upon the Foundation to include Cuba in the list of Latin-American countries receiving the benefits of the fellowships.

I discussed briefly with the Ambassador my impressions of Mr. Morrow's regime in Mexico and asked him to introduce me to the two men (see the inclosed clipping) who, as he expressed it, were doing something of the same kind of work for him that Clark and Rublee had been doing for Ambassador Morrow. Mr. Jessup was not available but I was taken in at once to meet Mr. Grosvenor Jones. Jones had only been in Habana three weeks and therefore knew very little about the situation. However, we spent three hours discussing the ups and downs of the searcher-after-facts in Latin American countries and the theory and practice of unofficial expert advisers with reference to diplomacy and international relations. Jones proved to be a very friendly and hospitable person and later on took me to a luncheon of the local American Chamber of Commerce. There I met a number of both Cuban and American businessmen (see inclosed clipping) who may be useful at some future date.

Keith, for her part, spent a good deal of her time in Cuba tracking down and finally learning one of the native dances known as the "rumba." In view of the fact that this dance is of such

a nature that its public presentation has been prohibited, the tracking process referred to above proved to be both arduous and interesting.

Two days sailing from Habana brought us to the metropolis of Progreso. Dr. A.V. Kidder and other scientific gentlemen whose names will be given shortly were on the boat. As soon as Keith had been settled comfortably in a hotel in Mérida, we all departed for Chichén Itzá.

At the conference which Kidder had called the following persons were present -- S.G. Morley, director of the Carnegie Project in Chichén Itzá; H.B. Roberts and K. Ruppert, resident members of Morley's staff; C.L. Hay and G.C. Vaillant, archaeologists of the American Museum of Natural History; A.M. Tozzer, Department of Anthropology of Harvard University; G.C. Shattuck, Department of Tropical Medicine, Harvard University; F.M. Gaines, Department of Biology, University of Michigan; Robert Redfield, Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago; Eduardo Martínez G. Cantón, Inspector de Monumentos en Yucatán for the Mexican government; and Dr. A.V. Kidder of the Division of Historical Research, Carnegie Foundation.

On the first night of our several days of informal discussions, Kidder made an opening statement to the effect that the meeting had been arranged without any preconceived notion other than the general feeling that the peninsula of Yucatán offered a very excellent opportunity for students representing the various sciences to work together in a cooperative and mutually helpful fashion. Kidder further stated that the Carnegie group was willing to place its material equipment in Chichén and the knowledge which

had been gathered during the last five years of archaeological work there at the disposal of such a group of cooperating students. As illustrations of what he had in mind, Dr. Kidder pointed to the health survey which Shattuck had under way, the biological and ecological studies which Gaines proposed to make, and certain linguistic studies which Sapir of the University of Chicago is sending down one of his students to carry on.

After this introductory statement, Redfield was called upon as a representative of ethnology and sociology to state what he thought could be done in these fields. Redfield replied by saying that he did not have any very clear ideas on the subject, but that he would be very glad to have me make a statement. My first instinct was to refuse to accept the "buck" which had thus been passed to me, and, as later developments showed, it would probably have been much wiser for me to have followed my instinct in the matter. However, when Kidder and others expressed an interest in my notions, I made a statement including the following points:

(a) That the proposal made by the Carnegie group struck me as being eminently practical and useful.

(b) That as I understood the social sciences any attempt to bring in sociologists, economists, political scientists, and ethnologists would have to be made on the assumption that the Carnegie group was ready and willing to undertake investigations of the economic and social problems of present-day Yucatan in addition to the prehistorical and archaeological studies which they had been carrying on.

(c) That in my opinion studies of this type, especially if they were of a fact-finding character carried on in cooperation

wherever possible with Mexican students, were urgently needed in Yucatán and in Mexico in general and that they should be of the greatest practical value to the Mexican people.

(d) That the fact should be clearly faced that students attempting to make studies of present-day economic and social questions in Yucatán would very likely encounter problems and difficulties of a more delicate nature than those raised by purely historical and archaeological types of investigation.

The above statement, as Redfield expressed it, apparently "scared them to death." And it immediately became clear in the discussion which followed that the Carnegie group had no intention of engaging in any kind of research which would have the slightest likelihood of embarrassing the archaeological work which was already under way. The principle was laid down by Kidder and reiterated by Morley and Tozzer that all social studies undertaken under the auspices of the Carnegie group should be historical in character, and that, for the present at least, investigations of such questions as the labor movement in Yucatán, the henequen industry, the relations between church and state, etc. should be carefully avoided.

This statement of the matter left Redfield and myself on one side of the fence and everybody else on the other side. For obviously Redfield as an ethnologist could not make case studies of the life and customs of typical villages without immediately running into institutions having connections outside of the village and gaining their significance and meaning in and by their relationship to the larger living social and economic forces and factors which characterize present-day Yucatán. Both Redfield and I pointed out this fact and went on to indicate further that we were extremely doubtful of the value of prehistoric, archaeological data or of even

early colonial data, for anyone who wished to study the life of existing Yucatecans as opposed to those who lived some hundreds or even thousands of years ago in the same territory; and that, furthermore, anyone seeking to study the customs and procedures in a now existing Yucatecan village must take as a point of departure how the material culture, modes of life, and instruments of social control appear in the experience of the people now living in the village and that it was only of relatively academic interest how much or what part of the present culture may or may not have existed before the Conquest.

The alternative to this type of modern social and economic approach, it was pointed out, would be a purely historical investigation in which the study of any given village or community would be made in the interests of exhibiting it as the amalgam or end product of the mixture of various cultures. This would be essentially a process of "staining out" on the basis of information supplied by the archaeologists and historians, the culture in a given village with a view to simply identifying the Maya, Spanish, French, or whatnot component elements involved. Redfield was frank to state that the Carnegie group would undoubtedly be able to get someone else to carry on this kind of restricted taxidermic exercise much more cheaply than he would be willing to do the job.

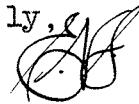
The final upshot of the whole discussion was that the archaeologists expressed their determination to stick to their principle of the historical emphasis and Redfield was invited to spend his three months in Yucatan making an outline of the kind of studies which in his opinion could or should be made by ethnologists, economists, and sociologists if and when the Carnegie group were willing to make them. And thus the matter now stands, with the added

fact that I greatly fear that Kidder, Tozzer, Morley, et al regard me as a disturbing factor, not to say a young upstart who tried to put poison in the historical soup.

Since returning to Mexico I have been engaged in writing up my notes of my trip to the States and cleaning up the accumulated work on my desk. I have, however, found time to have long talks with Reuben Clark and Moisés Sáenz in re my experiences in the States and the approaching visit of Day. I have also started negotiations with my friend Monteros for one of his librarians to do the job intrusted to me by Gerould. True to his promise, Gerould sent me the check for \$150 and this work will be gotten under way immediately. I have had a nice letter from Shelby Harrison inclosing bibliographic references on the subject of regional and national planning.

With best wishes, I am,

Yours very sincerely,



February 11, 1930

WCR - ENS

Dear Eyler:

Miss Maroussa Russell, Mr. Crane's niece, sails today on the Empress of Bedford for a cruise through the West Indies. She plans to leave the party at Havana, March 6th, and, after a week or ten days in that city, to go on to Vera Cruz and your home town. She will be accompanied by two of her friends: Miss Elizabeth Taylor and Miss Mary P. Ensign.

Miss Russell's father, as perhaps you will recall, is one of the directors of the Otis Elevator Co. and prominent in any number of other business activities. For years I have been trying to interest the Russell family in the Institute. A contribution in that direction can probably be made now by you and Keith helping Miss Russell and her friends enjoy their visit to Mexico.

They want to spend a day or so in Vera Cruz, then about the same length of time at some attractive place between that city and the capital, and then a week or ten days within sight of "Popo."

Perhaps Keith would like to meet them in Vera Cruz and pilot them about. However that may be, I suggest your writing to Miss Russell, in care of the Seville-Biltmore, so timing your letter that it will reach there about the 6th. Maybe if she telegraphs you the name and date of the steamer, you can make arrangements to facilitate her entrance into Mexico: she and her two friends may have a truck load of trunks and bags.

I suspect that but few people know that her first name is Maroussa, for she is generally known as Pussy. She is a good sort and likely to add to the gaiety of any party. I am sure that you and Keith will take kindly to her.

Greetings.



WSR..WNS...

February 14th, 1930

Dear Myler:

Young, who is here, says that he got a good deal out of reading your letter to John. Young, I suspect, is a bit unsystematic in keeping his notes, and knowledge of your precision in that regard should serve him as a useful stimulus.

The day I received your letter in re Yucatan, I happened to meet Keppel and to tell him about it. At his request I let him have it with the understanding that he should return it before the clock ran down. The other day when I inquired for it, his assistant told me that his chief had gone away for ten days and had taken the letter with him. Furthermore, the Young man went on to say that Keppel had left word for me that he was going to the mat with John Merriam, but would fully protect you!

It was a good letter, but as I had only skimmed it, I will defer comment, if any, until later on.

Enclosed is a memorandum which I gave Day several weeks ago. On the Sunday following your departure I set myself the task of trying to devise something that would move Day along and insinuate into his mind arguments that might be helpful to him in winning over the recalcitrants in his organization.

When you read it, keep in mind that I was indulging in the gentle art of finesse. He came back with a very appreciative letter. Unfortunately I cannot put my hands on it at the moment or I would enclose a copy.

Yesterday I had a long session with Day, who has decided not to go to Mexico for the time being. While he gives me the utmost assurance that he is a hundred per cent for the pending plan, he frankly admits that thus far he has been unable to sell it to his people. He thinks he might force them to give approval, but he draws back from making it a decisive issue.

So far as I can make out the real difficulty is not over our plan, but over Day's relationship to Mason and over the future attitude of the Foundation towards Social Science Research (perhaps particularly abroad) and over vague differences between officials of the Foundation as to progressivism vs. conservatism.

Perhaps Embree's hunch as to the nebulous plight of Day represents, at very least, the near truth. He was very apologetic and almost shame-faced.

There is nothing for us to do but to go ahead sowing wood. At the first favorable opportunity I will talk with Mason, and, when Morrow comes along, I will canvass the situation with him.

In enumerating his troubles Day said that, under the present setup in the Foundation, he had to sell any new idea to twenty-five people, most of whom were cautious and, in general, skeptical of the social sciences. He went on to say that seemingly the Foundation had rarely taken an advance step since the days when Gates dealt directly with Mr. Rockefeller.

The whole situation is a fine commentary on institutional bureaucracy! Perhaps we would be well advised to stick to knitting and spend what money we have when and how we please - and trust in due time to getting more on our terms (which I am certain we can do).

If I remember rightly, you were to send me a sketch of the kind of arrangement with the Institute that would be satisfactory to you and that would in future serve as a model. I am very anxious to get your ideas on this subject. In the first place I want you to be fully satisfied and in the second place I want your ideas as a guide in my working out something with Young. This I must do pretty soon.

Some time ago Achilles cabled from Japan that he had some free time and would put it on a further study of Keio University if Embree was still interested. In response to an inquiry, Embree blandly informed me that his interest in the matter was merely a holdover from his Rockefeller days. A none too subtle way of saying that he could not interest Mr. Rosenwald in anything in Japan. As a matter of fact Embree is a fan on Japan and would love to be spending money there so as to renew his old associations.

In a recent letter Embree says he will be here a week or two and will talk with me then about Mexico.

Well, let's get on about our real business.

Greetings to you and Keith.

WBR/FC  
encls.

Sincerely yours,

COPY.

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE

SWARTHMORE, PA.

February 14, 1930

Dear Simpson:

My heartiest congratulations on your report on the University of Mexico! I have read it with the keenest interest.

I hope you are making some wonderful selections for us from Mexico. Our candidates from this country who want to go to Latin America look awfully good.

I am leaving on Monday to go to Havana as one of the delegates from the United States to the conference to organize some kind of committee on Intellectual Cooperation between Latin America and the United States. I expect to make some acquaintances which will be useful next summer.

I have not yet had time to get actively to work on plans for next summer, but my ideas hold practically as we discussed them.

With kindest regards, I am,

Yours sincerely,

(sgd) Frank Aydellotte

Dr. Eyles N. Simpson,  
Apartado Postal 538,  
Mexico, D. F., Mexico.

Mexico City  
February 15, 1930

Dear Mr. Rogers:

I received your telegram of February 7 and your letter of February 11. I am very sorry to hear that you have been ill and I trust that long before this letter reaches you you will have recovered your health and good spirits. I have talked with Keith about the Misses Russell, Taylor, and Ensign. You may dismiss the matter from your mind and rest assured that the young ladies will be taken care of in proper and fitting style.

During the last ten days, among other things, I have been occupied with the following:

(a) Preparing the abstracts submitted by the candidates for the Guggenheim fellowships, and arranging for the meetings of the Mexican committee. The first meeting for the purpose of weeding out the undesirables and the ineligible will be held tonight. On the 24 of the month a second meeting will be held at which the final selection of the fellows will be made. The Committee is cooperating in splendid style.

(b) George Wythe, the American Commercial Attaché, received a request recently from the Julius Rosenwald Industrial Museum in Chicago for assistance in getting together a collection of Mexican industrial instruments and appliances. Wythe in turn called on me for assistance and I have succeeded in obtaining a man to make the collection for him and help the man make out the program which was submitted to the museum.

(c) A lunch with Mr. Woodul, Mexican manager of the American Smelting & Refining Co.

(d) I helped Mr. Benjamin L. Whorf who has come down to Mexican on a grant in aid from the Social Science Research Council for the purpose of studying the Nahua Indian language to get started with his work.

(e) I attended <sup>a banquet</sup> and made an address to the Mexican Alumni Association of Columbia University. The occasion of the banquet was to celebrate the awarding of medals for distinguished service by Columbia University to Moisés Sáenz, Carlos Contreras (my regional-plan friend), and a Sr. Barranca (until recently Secretary of the National University).

(f) I have had lunch and several conversations with young Foreman of the Rosenwald Fund. It appears that Foreman makes special studies for the Fund in re their work with the negroes in the South. Foreman is at the present time in Mexico on a vacation with

(g) Franz Blom, Director of the Middle American Research Department of Tulane University (see my letter 50, p.1). Blom has been selected by the Chicago Century of Progress Exposition to get together an exhibit of Maya archaeological remains (see the inclosed clipping). I have seen Blom on several occasions and offered to assist him in any way that I may. Blom has large ambitions for establishing a center of Central American research at Tulane. He wants to take five million dollars away from somebody.

(h) A lunch with James Westfall Thompson of the University of Chicago who is here en route to lecture at Rice Institute and the University of Texas.

Keith for her part has been occupied literally almost day and night practicing and dancing with the Opera Privé (Russian) which is in Mexico for a season of three weeks.

I am preparing a memorandum on the subject of financial arrangements and a statement about plans here during the next few months. These two documents will be sent to you in due time.

Yours very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "E. J. M." with a stylized flourish above the letters.

ENS:P

February 15, 1930

Dr. Herbert Blumer  
Department of Sociology  
University of Chicago  
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Dr. Blumer:

A very good friend of mine, Sr. Moisés Sáenz, <sup>until</sup> recently sub-secretary of Public Education in Mexico, has just been appointed Director of the Beneficencia Pública (Public Charities) of Mexico City and the Federal District. This group of charities includes the following divisions:  
(a) Three public hospitals devoted mostly to charity cases;  
(b) an insane asylum; (c) an orphan asylum for boys and girls;  
(d) an industrial school for boys; (e) a nursery asylum for abandoned infants; (f) dormitories for homeless men and women;  
(g) an old people's home; (h) a school for the deaf and dumb and blind; (i) eight out-patient medical dispensaries; (j) a psychiatric clinic; (k) a depósito de niños (i.e. a place where working women may leave their children during the day); and finally (l) an asylum for beggars.

These public charities are supported as follows: About four million five hundred thousand pesos per year from the National Lottery; about three-quarters of a million pesos a year from the General Budget of the Federal District; and various sums derived from income, inheritance, and other special taxes. The total budget per year is around eight million pesos.

During the last few years, for a number of reasons which I need not detail here, the administration of these charities in general has undergone a process of disorganization and degeneration. A considerable amount of money is wasted and with the exception of a few local cases modern scientific methods of procedure are almost unknown. Sr. Sáenz has decided to tackle the job and see what can be done in the way of a thorough reorganization of the whole show.

And this is where you come in.

That is, I wish that you would be kind enough, at your earliest possible convenience, to examine your own files and to talk with Burgess and the people in the Graduate School of Social Service Administration, and to anyone else that you may see fit, with a view to getting together for me a selected bibliography. In general, given the nature of the problem here, I believe that Sr. Sáenz would find books and reports on methods of procedures and administration in institutions of the type listed above, and manuals of the technique of case work, case records, etc., much more valuable than general books on the theory of poverty and social pathology. However, I wish that you would include in your list a few general works such as Parmelee's book on poverty and books of the type which appeared in the materials gotten together by Burgess for his course in social pathology. In all, I should think that some fifty titles would cover the ground.

In addition to the above subjects I would like for you to see if you can find any studies, of the type of Anderson's on the hobo, of beggars. Mr. Sáenz has asked me to assume the temporary direction of a department in the Beneficencia Pública designed to train personnel for the study of the problems of Public Charities and related subjects. I propose to carry on this training process by the method of concrete illustrations, i.e. by directing the staff in the study of such a specific problem as that of begging.

I ask you to do this job for me only on the condition that you will allow me to pay you for the time and energy which it takes. Needless to say, I would not bother you if there were any place else that I could turn for the information or if there were any one else whose judgment I felt I could trust in an emergency of this sort. Permit me to state again that time is at a premium and that I would greatly appreciate it if you would let me know by return airmail whether or not you can do this job for me and when I may expect to receive the data.

With best regards to your wife and the members of the Department, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Eyler N. Simpson

ENS:RDP



THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION

61 BROADWAY, NEW YORK

THE SOCIAL SCIENCES  
EDMUND E. DAY, DIRECTOR

CABLE ADDRESS:  
ROCKFOUND, NEW YORK

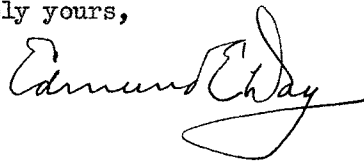
February 25, 1930.

Dear Rogers:

Thank you very much for letting me see Simpson's letter of the first. It is certainly interesting reading. Please let me know if you get reports on the reactions to Simpson's remarks to the conference on research in Yucatan. It seems to me that his remarks on that occasion were very much to the point. I trust they may have taken definite effect.

The more I see of Simpson's reporting, the more disappointed I am not to be making the trip to Mexico. I earnestly hope that he will still be there when I finally get down.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Edmund E. Day". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name "Edmund E. Day".

Mr. Walter S. Rogers,  
Institute of Current World Affairs,  
522 Fifth Avenue,  
New York, N.Y.

Encl.

COPY

Apartado 538  
Mexico, D. F.  
February 25, 1930.

Mr. Moises Saenz  
Donceles 39  
Mexico, D. F.

My dear Mr. Saenz:

In our informal conversation of several days ago, with reference to the Department of Social Studies which you propose to inaugurate as part of the Beneficiencia Publica, I made several suggestions which I herewith repeat in somewhat more formal fashion.

Organization:

For various reasons which need not be detailed here, I do not think that it would be desirable for my name to appear in connection with such a department or with any of the studies made by the department. I suggest, therefore, that the administration of the work of the department in question be placed under the direction of any one that you may see fit, and that my position be simply that of an unofficial and anonymous adviser. Informally, it would be understood that my function would be to (a) train and instruct the personnel of the department in methods of social work and scientific investigation of social problems; (b) to plan and to direct studies of specific problems relating to work of the Beneficencia Publica.

It will also be understood that, subject to the approval of the Director of the Institute of Current World Affairs, my services in the above mentioned connection shall be contributed without remuneration.

Before any studies are undertaken, detailed outlines and plans of the procedure involved shall be submitted to you for your approval and suggestions.

Physical Equipment and Office Space:

I am perfectly willing and ready to place at your service

part of the office space which I now occupy at Room 402, Monte de Piedad 15 as well as any books or materials in my library and files. This space, however, is not sufficient to accommodate more than two persons. I suggest, therefore, that it will perhaps be most convenient for all concerned to rent and equip another office in the building indicated above.

In view of the fact that there are very few if any published materials now in Mexico relating to the questions and problems with which the Department of Social Studies will be concerned, it will be necessary to build up as rapidly as possible a library of at least the most important and fundamental reference works. Many of these works can be obtained free of charge; others will have to be purchased.

#### Specific Studies:

Probably the best way to train individuals in the methods of social and in the scientific investigation of social problems is in connection with the investigation of one or more specific questions. It has been suggested that the problem of begging might offer a very interesting and useful field in which to begin activities. I am disposed to agree with this suggestion and propose therefore that a plan should be made for the study of begging in Mexico City. The study should be of a fact-finding character and, other things being equal, completed in the course of two months after it is started.

#### General Training:

Although it should not be the purpose of the Department to develop social theorists or social scientists in any strict meaning of these terms, it is obvious, nevertheless, that it will be necessary for the members of the Department to have some acquaintance with the materials ordinarily included in courses on social pathology, the family, and crime. Inevitably, the study of such specific questions as begging, unemployment, and juvenile delinquency will lead back to the more fundamental problems

of poverty, disorganization, and degeneration. In a word, it will be necessary, from the very beginning, to take into account, to some extent at least, the social and economic structure in which such derivative phenomena as begging, etc. appear.

I suggest, therefore, that part of my duties shall be to conduct a series of round table discussions with members of the Department relating to the topics mentioned in the above paragraph. I also suggest that representatives be invited from other governmental departments (such as the Departamento de Planeacion in the Secretaria de Comunicaciones and the Departamento de Accion Civica in the Gobierno del Distrito Federal) likely to be interested in the topics proposed here for round table discussion, to participate in these discussions and, if they desire, in the research work carried on by the Department of Social Studies.

The suggestion which have been submitted in the foregoing pages are to be considered as nothing more or less than suggestions and I await your pleasure in the matter.

Yours very sincerely,

Eyler N. Simpson

WNS:P