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201 Christie Street
Leonia, N. J.
January 18, 1961

Dear Max:

Remember my mentioning to you that three of us in Santiago had come up with a series of recommendations designed to improve U.S. relations with Latin America? Through my own contacts in State, I think our views have been circulated fairly well, but I do not know if they have gotten to people in the new Administration. Hoping that you may be able to help in this respect, I enclose a copy of the recommendations.

They were cooked up jointly by Bernard A. Femminella, Vice Consul, George McCready, Executive Director of the binational center, and myself. Femminella just passed his FSO exams, and has served in Mexico and Cuba, for 6 years in all. McCready served at binational centers in Colombia, Nicaragua, Mexico and Cuba, for a total of 10 years. I have had 13 years in the area, in the Dominican Republic, in two posts in Brazil, on the U.S. Delegation to the OAS, in Ecuador and finally in Cuba. This represents almost 30 years' service in 7 different Latin American countries.

We make no pretense that these views are new or original. We are sure that other people close to Latin American affairs have as good or better ideas. We realize that domestic political considerations may make some of them difficult to implement. Nevertheless, we earnestly and urgently believe that the U.S. must "move ahead" in Latin America, and we feel that our suggestions may contribute to the formulation of new policies. In any use you make of this material, please remember that our views have not been cleared with the Department of State, and hence may not be attributed to us.

You will note that one of the recommendations calls for bringing qualified Puerto Ricans into inter-American affairs. To me this has particular urgency in view of the fact that President-elect Kennedy has not yet filled the position of Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. I assume that Governor Muñoz Marín would not be available because he wants to continue devoting his full time to Puerto Rico. Well, then, why not some other top Puerto Rican for this job? I, for one, would be glad to serve under him. The accelerated development of Puerto Rico in the last few years represents, in my view, the most successful cooperative U.S.-Latin American venture to date. Let us then try to apply this technique to the rest of Latin America, making allowances for different situations in each country. To do this, what could be more encouraging and reassuring to Latin Americans than to have a well-qualified Puerto Rican, who sees both the North American and Latin American viewpoints, head up the U.S. effort? Do you think you would be in a position to push this suggestion?

I made it safely out of Cuba, by car from Santiago to the Base, on Saturday, January 14. I was the last official to leave Cuba. The last ten days in Santiago, which I spent by myself waiting for the Swiss representative to show up, were dull and boring more than anything else. I stayed out of harm's way by confining myself strictly to my residence and the Consulate. No one bothered me. I'm sorry I missed you at the Base. I read and enjoyed your series from there, as well as the excellent articles you wrote after your tour of Cuba, which I think captured the prevailing atmosphere splendidly. I've also read the sad news that you're now a Cuban exile too. Well, you're in good company.

I was glad to hear that the Szmants stayed with you when they first were evacuated. I'm looking forward to hearing more details of what's going to happen to them.

I'll be here this week on vacation, and then to the Department on January 23rd. I understand that my next assignment is to Managua as Political Officer, where I suppose I may get a chance to apply some of my own theories. However, I'm somewhat less than enthusiastic about it, since it will be my third differential post in a row and since I wish I could put my experience to use in some more important place.

With warmest regards,

Sincerely,

Mr. Max Frankel
5525 S.W. 80th Street
South Miami 43, Florida