

Brownsville, Texas.

Jan. 2, 1960.

The Ford Foundation,
New York City, New York.

Gentlemen:

I was in your office on Easter Monday, 1953, and talked with those in charge about adult education, especially for our Spanish speaking people, you did not have your setup at that time. But I note press reports that you are fixing to expand your facilities, especially for adult education.

I hope I am not violating the proprieties in sending you copy of letter to Hon. Lyndon B. Johnson, our Senior Senator, and very definitely my choice for the Democratic nomination for President. I think Senator Johnson's election could be turned into the greatest possible force in fighting Communism all over the world--and I think the place to start is on the Border, between the U. S. and Mexico, and especially to start across the River from Brownsville in Matamoros.

I feel that if a setup for adult education and for preventative medicine were set up all along the Border from Brownsville to San Diego, it could be turned into a tremendous asset in fighting this hideous thing we call 'Communism'. No wonder that the Communists get a toe-hold in Latin America, and like the camel that got its nose in the tent, they finally get control.

We have an example of it in Guatemala. I understand that when that super-thief, Utico, was President of Guatemala, that he worked the poor indigents for three cents per day and board--such board as it was. My recollection is that two or three years ago, I read an article in Time that brought this out. And unbelievable as it is, travelers in Latin America have told me that this is true.

Those Latins have been pushed around ever since Cortez landed in the sixteenth century--and if we could do something to help them help themselves, it would work wonders in fighting Communism all over the world. And I have two reasons for stating that Matamoros would be the place to start--one reason is that it is on the nearest route from four-fifths of the U. S. to Mexico City and all Latin America. And that all-weather road from the Potomac to Panama is timed to be completed June 1, 1961.

The other is that then those poor people in Central America can get out. They have been hemmed in. The only way to reasonably get out is by plane; and they are too poor to ride that way. But if we could start out with an institution across the River here, those people could get in their jalopies and come to the Border.

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I feel that you could let them give notes for their tuition and expenses; and that we could, through a revolving fund, do wonders. I have been here on the Border fifty years; and the more I live with these Latins, the better I like them. They have some wonderful traits. Generally speaking, they are loyal to a fault. If they know you are their friend, there is no limit to what they will do for you. And what an opportunity to train these young people, and adults too--and let them go out as teachers, nurses and doctors, and revolutionize Latin America. They would then become friends of the U. S. I think the majority would prefer going in debt for their tuition, and later paying it--than having it free.

But if we were to give it to them free, it would perhaps be one of the greatest investments of public money that our Government, or your Foundation, ever made. I would say that from here to El Paso, on an average, two-thirds of the people in the Border Counties are Latins. This County of Cameron is about fifty-fifty. They are ambitious in trying to make something of themselves.

My youngest granddaughter graduated from the Brownsville High School in the 1955 class. Of over two hundred in the class, only fifty-eight were what we term 'Anglos'. The relations between the two races here could not be better. And the relations between the leaders and citizenship of Brownsville and Matamoros could not be improved upon. Even during the Mexican revolution, which unseated Diaz and later unseated Carranza--and we certainly had problems on the Border--the friendship between the two cities survived.

We have a splendid Junior College here in Brownsville, soon to be turned into a regular four-year term college. At Edinburg, the County seat of our neighboring County of Hidalgo, they already have a four-year college. The colleges on the other side of the River, and the colleges on this side could and could cooperate. And the Latins on the North side of the Rio Grande could do outstanding work as adult, and other teachers and in health work South of the Rio Grande.

I am sending copy of this letter to our Congressman, the Hon. Joe Kilgore, one of the liveliest wires on Capitol Hill. I am also sending a copy to Senator Johnson, and to our Junior Senator, the Hon. Ralph Yarborough, who is on one of the most important Committees in the Senate, and in outstanding position to cooperate. No one can question the fact that Texas is well represented on Capitol Hill--and this Congressional District is also well represented.

I would be glad to come to New York and discuss this matter fully with you.

I am also sending copy of this letter to the Rockefeller Foundation, which has done such an outstanding work in Health. Health and education are the two magical words to start this program. You take a sick person and heal him; and he will be your friend.

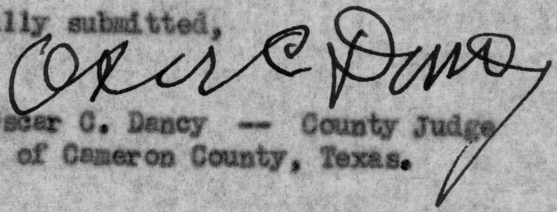
Were I Dictator of America, instead of a Country County Judge down at the tip of Texas, I would draft the Hon. Nelson A. Rockefeller to handle foreign relief in all Latin America; and he would simply do wonders.

The eyes of the world are on the United States; and to my mind, opportunity is not tapping on our door, with relation to Latin America, but trying to break in with a bulldozer.

It is common knowledge that His Excellency, the Hon. Adolfo Lopez Mateos, President of Mexico, and Senator Johnson are almost like brothers. This is a wonderful argument for putting Senator Johnson over at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. But of course, I don't expect your Foundation to enter politics--but it helps present an opportunity. After all, we are human, and we prefer to do business with people whom we like.

So far as I know, President Lopez Mateos is an honest man. So was his immediate predecessor. I think also President Cardenas -- but unfortunately, many of their Presidents have been plain, dirty thieves, which is an affliction all over Latin America. For instance, it now looks like our neighbor, Cuba, while getting rid of one of the greatest thieves in the world, has jumped from the frying pan into the fire, with a psycho in the saddle. Latin America is a problem; but it is also an opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,


Oscar C. Dancy -- County Judge
of Cameron County, Texas.

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