

Carrera 7; No. 18-78
Bogotá, Colombia
March 4, 1942

W. C. Simons, President
The Lawrence Daily Journal World
Lawrence, Kansas.

Dear Mr. Simons,

Your letter of January 22nd, slightly delayed by the dry condition of the Magdalena River, arrived February 21st. Thank you very much for sending the clipping--indeed, for printing the story, and for putting such a dandy headline over it. I have sent your letter back to my parents in the States.

You were right not to send all of the paper if there was something that should not be known down here. The censorship is very strict, and trying to pass something, even innocently, causes trouble. I have to deal with the Kingston and Cristobal air mail censors, as well as the cable censors here, and now just to make things interesting, I have to have all radio scripts censored. Some very amusing things happen--as the day when the A.P. office here tried to send out a cable reporting that Venus, for some inexplicable reason was visible in the middle of the day. Half the citizens of Bogotá were craning their necks along the main streets watching the unusual sight. When A. P. tried to file a cable, the censor refused to pass it. The only reason we could figure out was that the censor was afraid the cable would give away the position of Colombia!

On more than one occasion I have had to hold back even air mail stories. At this moment I have one locked away that gives me nightmares to even think about it. Through a well meaning Colombian friend, I was enabled to read a confidential report of the National Police on the Nazi organization in Colombia. Part of the stuff could be released without injuring the rest of the investigation. I wrote it up, and went to the U.S. Embassy for advice as to whether I should release it via N.A.N.A. as planned. They asked me, off the record of course, to hold it for a while, fearful of the political repercussions here if the story should be published in the States. I'm still holding it, because the situation, especially in the leading Atlantic coast cities, has become much more serious since the submarine campaign in the Caribbean. I can tell you in confidence what you may have suspected already: the fifth column in South America is doubly dangerous because it is closely connected with official circles--the only circles that count down here.

Incidentally, it's awfully easy to get mixed up in intrigues down here. I had a funny experience with two English ladies who thought I was a German spy and had me followed everywhere I went for almost a week! The result? I'm writing a mystery novel. I'll give you an autographed copy if it ever gets finished!

A day or two after writing you, I received a letter from home giving me the correct spelling of your name, but by that time I had figured it out myself. I guess you'll have to forgive both Governor Bradford and me for our lack of spelling ability! I have a terrible time getting my name across to people down here. Spanish has no "J" as we pronounce it in "Jean", and Crawford looks like Sanskrit to them. I settle for "la señorita Juanita de los Estados Unidos" and consider myself lucky. Force of circumstances has already given me a fair command of newspaper Spanish--both written and spoken--but I occasionally drop into an American motion picture just to hear English spoken for a few hours. At this very