

Oil: Mexico: Expropriation 5

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THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON

April 1, 1940.

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Dear Mr. Ambassador:

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I have your letter of March 28 regarding the Mexican oil dispute, in which you state you understood me to make inquiry about the views of His Majesty's Government relative to the question of the submission of the claims of all the interests (American, British and Dutch) to some form of international arbitration.

Probably I did not make myself clearly understood with respect to this point. I was merely endeavoring to keep you informed as to developments in the Mexican oil situation, rather than to seek British views, and in doing so I stated that the American companies had represented to the State Department that they did not desire anything done by this Government in the matter, unless arbitration by the Hague Tribunal of the American, British and Dutch interests could be brought about.

You may recall that some weeks ago the press carried what purported to be an authorized public statement by

President

The Right Honorable
The Marquess of Lothian,
British Ambassador,
Washington.

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President Cardenas which in effect expressed his attitude of opposition to any arbitration with any oil interests. In these circumstances I undertook by oral conversation, put in memorandum form, to secure from President Cardenas or the Mexican Government either confirmation or denial of this published attitude of his Government. And as was anticipated, the Mexican Government replied that it was unwilling to arbitrate any oil interest of any country before any Tribunal at the present time and stage of the matter. I promptly gave this information received through the Mexican Ambassador to Mr. Donald Richberg, representing the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey.

This I believe is an accurate recapitulation intended to make clear the understanding I sought to convey to you about developments in the oil controversy.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Cordell Hull". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Cordell Hull".