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BIBLIOTHECA NAZIONALE

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WosHlamm. Charles Alfred

Assuicio. 11 agosto 1868



A Excmo Sr. Ministro de Relações Exteriores do Sr. Repu-
blica del Paraguay
Sr. Sr. Perez.

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Amiciion

Al Excmo Señor Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores de la Repu-
blica del Paraguay,

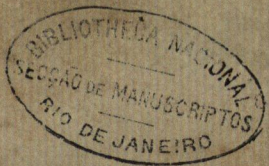
Don José Beres.

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Amicor



Legation of the United States

His Honor

Gomesindo Penitez

Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs

Luque.



Confidential



Sept 11-1868.

4820

30, 19, 80



Legation of the United States,
 Asuncion August 14th 1868,
 His Honor
 Guemesindo Beritez,
 Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs,
 Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note bearing date of the 6th inst. but not received by me till the evening of the 7th. In this note Your Honor advises me that Ex. Minister Berges has made another declaration, giving at great length conversations with me, from which he inferred I knew long ago of his treason and his reasons for believing I never had been a friend of Paraguay, but rather a friend of him and his fellow-conspirators. I am likewise informed that Dr. Carreras has also made a declaration in which he acknowledges that he was in correspondence with the Marquis de Caxias, and that he sent his letters through this Legation, and that I was at the time aware of the fact. Your Honor also takes occasion to protest that in your previous

notes you had no intention to express any doubt as to the truth of my words, but had limited yourself to giving the declarations of criminals.

Regarding this last matter, the correspondence itself will show whether or not I had reason to complain. But Your Honor will remember that after I had distinctly and in language as clear as I could use, declared that I had never received any package or letter or communications of any kind from Berges you repeatedly expressed in your note of the 3^d ult. your regret that in spite of all your friendly efforts I still refused to deliver up - not the package that he said he delivered to me - but the package which he did deliver, thus assuming, as it appears to me, that in spite of my absolute denial he had done so, and you knew it. But I have no wish to discuss technical or verbal questions. Your disclaimer that it was not your intention to question the truth of my statements, I shall accept as satisfactory.

Your Honor then states that it is

not your fault that you have been obliged to put in your official correspondence the declarations of criminals as you had in a friendly manner in the personal interview of the 25th of July informed me of all that you afterwards wrote in your official notes. To this I must object to this extent: Your Honor told me that you knew all: that you knew I had received such a package from Berges and that you also knew of my relations with the traitors. I told you that you could not know of things that did not exist. But you did not tell me of any specific declaration of any body, and I had no more idea of what you were alluding to, or of what might be the purport of your next note than I now have of the questions to be discussed this evening by the Parliament of England. As I knew of no such package and as I had never heard the word conspiracy, combination, collusion or correspondence with the enemy, and did not believe there were any persons in the

country so utterly reckless and foolish as to engage in any such desperate enterprise I think I was justified in saying that in coming to me for information you were seeking after impossibilities; You were looking for proof where it did not exist.

The report of the declaration of Dr. Carreras as given to me in your note is so full of news, and contains so many statements of occurrences and circumstances that I had never heard of or suspected before, that it seems to be unnecessary to examine them in detail. I will therefore give, to the best of my recollection, all that I know of him or his doings in this country:-

A long time ago, I think near a year, at a time when, owing to certain rumors, it was believed that the war was not going on favorably to the cause of Paraguay, Dr. Carreras came to my house, and in the course of conversation, expressed his apprehension that if the allies were to succeed he would be in very

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great danger: that he was very obnoxious to them, by reason of the active part he had taken against them as head of the government of Montevideo, at the commencement of the war. I told him that in such emergency, whenever he felt the danger to be nigh, if he came to my house I would give him all the protection that my Legation and flag could afford. Nothing more was ever said on that subject till we received the news that a part of the enemies' squadron had passed Humayta. The next day Rodriguez Sarreta came to my house and said that Carreras was then inclined to accept my offer of months before, and that if it was agreeable to me, he would accompany him. I told him to act according to his own pleasure, and that I should do all in my power to aid and protect all persons who might be obnoxious to the enemy. The next day, if I recollect aright, they both came in and I gave them shelter. We all believed that their residence here would be but a temporary affair - a few

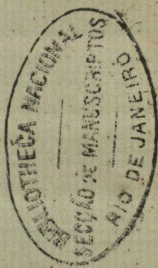


days more or less. Yet when the iron clads
came up, the next day and returned af-
ter making such a sorry exhibition of them-
selves it appeared that though they had
passed Humayta, the enemy was afraid
to take the chances of a general and decisive
battle. Then both Carreras and Rodriguez
expressed their fears that they were an in-
cumbrance in our family, but we told
them to be easy on that score; the town
having been evacuated, we wanted company
and as they were both men of education and
intelligence, we preferred that they should
remain with us. One important object in
this was that we might learn Spanish.

They remained therefore, but never was
a word, or hint, or expression made
in my hearing or to my knowledge, by
either of them, in regard to any conspira-
cion, revolution or political combina-
tion against the government. On the
contrary when I went down to San Fer-
nando, Dr. Carreras requested me par-
ticularly to advise His Ex. Marshal
Lopez of the pecuniary loss he was sub-

jected to by remaining, and to say that he came here as the determined enemy of Brazil and her policy, and that he had not changed his opinions since he had been here, and that if he could get away it was his purpose to go to the Pacific States to enlist them in behalf of the cause of Paraguay. These representations I made to His Ex. but as I saw he was not disposed to give a favorable answer, I so reported to Carreras on my return. But though he seemed to be disappointed he never intimated to me any knowledge of a conspiracy, or gave me the least intimation that he had ever had any communication with Curias.

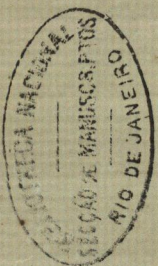
A few days previous to receiving information of the arrival of the "Wasp" at Curupaity, I had sent away my last despatches for Washington, that is on the 28th of April. Your Honor expresses regret that I should not have noted in my diary the names of the persons for whom I sent letters. I also regret it. But such is the fact - and it is now too late to remedy it. The declaration of Carreras, however, calls to mind one circumstance



that I had previously forgotten. It is that he sent letters at that time under cover to John F. Gowland. That I believe is correct. He did send his letters thus addressed thinking, or pretending to think, that being thus directed, there would be less danger that they would fall into the hands of the enemy, than if directed to members of his own family. He professed to fear lest his letters would be intercepted or opened on the other side, and therefore sent them to a friend in Buenos Aires to avoid suspicion. I had known Mr. Gowland as the most enthusiastic friend of Paraguay I had ever met in Buenos Aires or Montevideo, and as Carreras said his letters were only family letters, I could not imagine that any Paraguayan interest could be prejudiced by sending them. I may have been wrong, in sending letters for anybody without first knowing their contents, but as the Minister of Foreign Affairs had already asked me to do the same thing for him, I could not suppose that the Government would object to my sending family letters from persons holding no of-

ficial position. If Berges as Minister could
 ask me to send his letters at a time when
 I believed him a loyal man and a patriot,
 can this Government complain with justice
 that I sent family letters for other persons?
 But why ask questions of this kind? The
 government does not complain that I did
 not send the letters of Berges, but that I
 did. I, on the contrary, say that I never
 did send a letter for him under flag of
 truce, and I never could send any in
 any other way, since my return from São
 Paulo in March 1867, at which time I
 presumed Berges was still loyal and in
 sending through his official note and other
 correspondence, I supposed I was doing
 a favor to the Government.

After my return from São Fernando,
 nothing occurred to vary the monotony,
 until on the 16th of June, Leite Pereira
 and his wife appeared here to the sur-
 prise and regret of all, and asked per-
 mission to stay. I could not turn them
 away without exposing myself to the charge
 of inhospitality, and though in my judge-

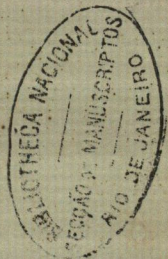


ment, his coming here was an unwise step, yet if he preferred to remain and see if the Government had anything against him, he might do so. This resolution of mine was approved by both Carreras and Rodriguez, and they both agreed with me that it was not a wise step for Pereira to take. We knew, or, at least, I knew nothing of the relations of Pereira with the Government except what he then told me, and I remember well Rodriguez told me he had said to Leite Pereira that if the government had anything against him, if he was in any way implicated in any transaction that might compromise him, he ought to confess all and everything to me confidentially, before taking up his residence in my legation, and exposing me, my family and all the other inmates of my house to the annoyance and pain that, if there was anything serious against him, would result from his coming here. But Pereira always said there was and could be nothing against him, except that he had spent all his own money and all he could borrow to relieve the necessities of destitute foreigners, trusting that they or their friends, or their governments would repay him after the war. He always protested however, that he had no security, nor assurance from any

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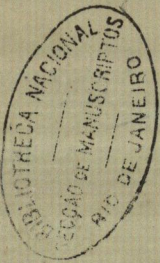
government that a single shilling would ever be repaid to him.

When on the 2nd of June Your Honor requested me to deliver up the said Leite Pereira, you will recollect that I declined to do so, and in my note of the next day, I took the ground — that I was under no obligations either to deliver up or send from my legation any person who was not specifically accused of some grave offence against the government or laws. I have ever since strictly adhered to this position, and when I received your note of the 11th of July, repeating your request that he and all the others not belonging to the Legation should be sent away from it, but making no specific charge against him or any one else, I told them all that they might go or stay, that I should turn no one into the street till some charge was made. Pereira was of the opinion in which Carreras, Rodriguez and myself concurred, that he had better go voluntarily, as if the government had nothing against him he would have nothing to fear, and if it had, it would certainly get possession of him either by making a specific charge or by taking him away by force. The next day



Carreras and Rodriguez were called for in still more urgent terms, but as no specific charge was made I told them as I had told Pereira the day before, that they could go or stay, as to them should appear the better course. They both said that the government had not and could not have any specific charge against them; that they had done nothing during their residence in Paraguay that could compromise either themselves or anybody else, and that if every act of their lives was known to the government, not a thing could be discovered hostile to it. They therefore said that if I would promise to remain in Paraguay till the close of the war, they would not leave the Legation, as, if I refused to send them away till a direct charge was alleged ^{against} them, which charge they said it was impossible to make, they did not believe that the government would take them by force. But I told them I could not promise to remain in Paraguay till the end of the war. I was every day expecting the American Gun boat; that it would probably bring me instructions to return immediately to the United States, and also very

likely, bring a successor to take my place as Minister. Under those circumstances, I could not promise to stay here to the end of the war. They both said then, it would be better for them to go away voluntarily, as a few days or weeks, more or less, would make little difference, and if the fortune of war were to be finally adverse to Paraguay, they would at last be exposed to fall into the hands of the enemy, from whom they expected little mercy. Carreras particularly dwelt upon the dangers to which he would be exposed if ever he fell into the enemies hands, and I thought did not when he left, appear quite satisfied with my course. He seemed to think that I ought to have promised to stay till the end of the war. He may have felt a deep resentment towards me on that account, but it is hard for me to believe that from such motive he would fabricate a series of such monstrous falsehoods as appear in his declaration, and try to implicate me as knowing of a conspiracy of whose existence I had not the most remote idea. But I can think of no other motive that could have



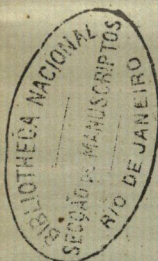
induced him to make a declaration so false
and so wicked. In fact the more I know
of this affair, the greater is the mystery in
which I am involved. I can make nothing
of it, except that directly under my eyes there
was a horrible conspiracy being formed, of
which I knew or suspected nothing, and that
the parties to it after having abused my con-
fidence and hospitality, have sought to divert
the world's indignation from themselves by im-
plicating in their crimes the minister of a great,
a powerful and an honorable nation. I
may be wrong in my suspicions. God knows
I would not wrongfully or unjustly accuse
or suspect anybody, but that there has been
treachery, ingratitude and villainy practiced
upon me, in some quarter, is but too evident.
All however, will some day be made clear,
and the guilty parties must hold a place in
history of infamy, never before paralleled.

As this statement of mine is entirely
inconsistent with and directly contradicts
everything in the declaration of Carreras,
it is not necessary to deny in detail the numer-
ous falsehoods which his contains. The two

statements are directly at variance. There is no possibility of harmonizing or mixing the two. One or the other is a string of monstrous falsehoods and I leave it to the government of Paraguay to pronounce which it will accept as the true one.

There is one point, however, in this declaration of Carreras, on which I would be glad to have further information. It is that where he says he has "the most profound conviction" that there exists in the office of this Legation, probably in an iron safe there, the papers brought from the house of Berge, as he has previously declared.

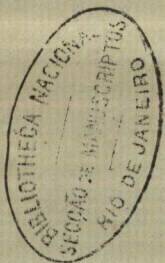
Of course I cannot know for a certainty that among the multiplicity of sealed papers, trunks and boxes that have been left in my house within the last six months, that none of them contain the papers referred to. Yet I do not believe it. But if there be such papers here, and the person who left them or sent them, will send me a written order for them, and give such a description of the package that I may know it, I shall be most happy to deliver it. But I have no knowledge of any such papers.



The statement of Vasconcellos that there was a letter for Carreras in the package sent by the Baron de Sousa and that I brought it in from his chacara and delivered it, contains so far as I can see, but two errors and as these are not important, his declaration may be considered as truthful in comparison with the others. He says he opened the package of ^{the} Baron de Sousa in my presence and that the letter which he delivered to me for Carreras was a large letter. Neither of these statements is correct. He took the package inside to open it while I sat outside, and brought out some of his own letters that he read, and afterwards gave me, not a large, but a very small letter for Carreras, which I brought in and delivered. But I do not mention this to correct the mis-statements of Vasconcellos, I allude to it only to protest against the complaint made by Your Honor that I have thus been a channel of communication between the conspirators and the enemy. I had received a package from the Baron de Sousa, Portuguese Charge

Affairs in Montevideo for His Majesty's
 Vice Consul in Asuncion. Was it not my
 duty to deliver it? I knew nothing; sus-
 pected nothing, of its contents, and I did
 as I had always done when letters had
 come to my care from beyond the lines -
 that is I delivered it, asking no questions.
 When Borges was Minister, I have received
 documents and communications for the
 foreign office, that had been sent to me
 and I promptly delivered them - What
 else could I do? If there were treasonable
 letters in his correspondence was it my
 fault? If a gun-boat should come to-
 morrow and bring more correspondence
 for your ministry shall I not instantly
 deliver it? Or shall I say that because
 one minister has been proved a traitor,
 and lest there be more treason in the
 letters sent to my care, I will deliver nothing.
 I think that on further reflection Your Honor
 will admit that in regard to the delivery of
 that package, I did only what in duty and
 courtesy, I was bound to do.

But dismissing the declarations of Car-

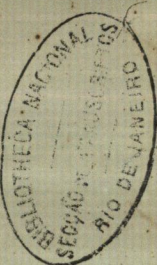


reras and Vasconcellos I pass to that of Ber-
ges, and I will remark, that were it not for
the gravity of the subject, it would afford me
much amusement to expose its contradictions
and absurdities. I shall show from the decla-
ration itself that it contains as many false-
hoods and contradictions as it has sentences;
that my best and most friendly acts towards
Paraguay have been studiously and mali-
ciously perverted, and that so far from his
bearing no malice towards me, he has for a
long time been treasuring up the most in-
nocent and harmless expressions to misquote
and misrepresent them, with all the devilish
malignity of an inquisitor. What his original
motive was I do not know. Whether it was
that he had heard I had spoken to His
Ex. the President of his reserve and want
of frankness with me, or whether he hated
me from a consciousness that I would
not be a party to his conspiracy, or what-
ever was his motive, it now appears that
my charitable judgement that he had
not acted from malice towards me was
a great mistake.

I regret that Bergees has not yet given the date of his first treason, and told us when, from a patriot, he turned traitor. Without the knowledge of that fact, it is scarcely possible to make anything intelligible from the whole of his long, confused and contradictory declaration. At one time he represents himself as talking to me like a loyal man and a patriot: then he talks of the plans of himself and his fellow-revolutionists, and then again is acting the part of a patriot and friend of his country, changing thus his character as readily as harlequin in a pantomime.

I will now proceed to examine in detail this jargon of contradictions: this medley of patriotism and treason.

And first I will take up his statements that when I made my second visit to him, at his house in the Salinares, I expressed my sympathy for him in his sickness and my desire to be of service to him, he understood by that, that I would give him asylum in my Legation in any unlooked for event. He afterwards speaks of that

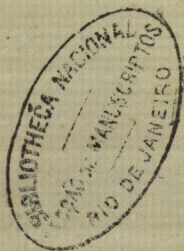


not as an asylum against the enemy, but against the government of Paraguay. This is a self-evident absurdity. If there were to be a revolution or pronunciamiento and it were to be successful, there could be no need of asylum for any of the parties engaged in it, and if it were unsuccessful, was he so stupid, or so ignorant, as to suppose that the conspirators could escape the punishment of their treason by taking refuge in my Legation? How then could he understand a simple expression of courtesy to mean an offer absurd and ridiculous in its very terms? It is impossible.

I next pass to his very grave accusation that when His Ex. Marshal Lopez was sick at Paso Pucú in 1866, I often went or wrote to inquire after his health. He also says that I spoke to him about that time of the necessity of making terms of peace with the allies, indicating Gen. Bartolome Mitre as a proper person to negotiate with, to which he adds, that I made various remarks on the questions involved in the war, and the terms that Paraguay ought to make with the enemy. Of any such conversation I have

not the faintest recollection, yet that the whole statement is so absurd as to prove its falsity, Your Honor will see by reference to dates.

It was not till the 8th of November 1866, that I arrived at this place on my return from the United States. To get here I had spent a year and two months, during which I had been exposed to almost every inconvenience and annoyance imaginable. I had been rudely treated in Buenos Aires by the Brazilian Minister, Octaviano, I had had my letter from the Argentine Minister for Foreign Affairs, Elizalde, repudiated by Gen. Mitre though he had previously promised to respect it. I had been rudely told by Admiral Tamandari that I should not pass through his lines and what was worst and most mortifying of all, I received no support or sympathy from any representative high in the confidence of my own government, except from my late colleague in Buenos Aires, the brave, noble old soldier (heaven rest his soul.)



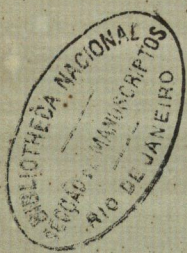
Gen. Asboth. Yet I forced my way through, greatly to the disgust of both Mitre and Tamandari. I had not seen Mitre for four months before, or since. I had written him a strong protest against my detention, and against his duplicity and bad faith towards me. And yet Bergees says that I had no sooner got here than I proposed Mitre as the proper person with whom to negotiate terms of peace. The mere statement of the facts is a sufficient refutation of this clause of his declaration.

The next allegation of Bergees is that when I went to visit the Marquis de Caxias to treat about peace I had neither the spirit nor the desire of laboring for the interests of Paraguay and in proof of it he then reports me as saying the very things in regard to Paraguay and its people that their best friends might, and naturally would, have said under the circumstances. He adds that if I was badly affected when I left to treat with the enemy's General, I was still worse after my return. As he gives no reason for this opinion, I am led to infer that he judged me to be friendly to Caxias from the tone of my letter to him after my return from his

encampment. From his captiousness and complaints of my lack of zeal in behalf of Paraguay at that time, I conclude that he was then acting the patriot and not the traitor.

The next event in the declaration of Berge, being only an expression of opinion that all my efforts to return to Paraguay were but a farce to deceive this Government and that my real desire was to serve the allies, I will pass it by with the simple remark that should it ever meet the eye of the Marquis de Carias it will doubtless cause a grim, sardonic smile, and that Admiral Tamandare will be surprised to learn that when the "Shamokin" forced the blockade against all his protests and objections, it was doing so in the interest of himself and his allies.

To the charge that I never gave credit to the papers of the country, when they published news of brilliant feats of arms, I have to say that I freely admit that I have thought some of the reports of victories in the Semanario were a little exaggerated. But this opinion I never expressed, where I supposed it could dampen the spirit or hopes of the people. In conversing

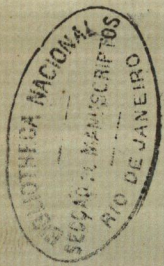


with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, I saw no reason why I should not express my real opinions. My object was always to endeavor to learn as much as possible of the actual situation, and to judge from that, whether I could devise any means by which a peace honorable and advantageous to Paraguay could be effected.

But though there is a grain of truth in what Bergey says of my not giving credence to all that was published in the Semanario, it seems he could not state even that without mixing it up with several palpable, self-evident falsehoods. He says that I even discredited the news of the defeat of the allies at Curupaity, and that I said it was simply a retreat, and that I gave as my authority, the late French Consul here, Mr. Cochelet, who had received the information from the French Agent, who was present at the combat. At the time the battle of Curupaity was fought, I had not arrived in the country. I was still in Buenos Aires, and I remembered well that the Buenos Aires papers spoke of it as a most terrible and disastrous defeat.

for the allies. It was six weeks after that, before I arrived here, and yet Berges represents that after my arrival, I tried to make it appear that it was no defeat at all.

The next point that Berges makes, is that I was constantly seeking for some occasion of controversy in order to get away from the country. I was not aware before, that a foreign Minister must get up a controversy or have a breach with the government to which he is accredited, in order to leave the country. I had supposed that he had only to ask for his passports and the government was not only bound to give them, but furnish him with the means of going away. The exact contrary of what Berges says is the truth. I have indeed long been desirous of returning to the United States, but thought it my duty to remain, though much against my interest, either till the war was ended or my successor should arrive. But Berges says that by means of his personal friendship, he was able to quiet me and prevent me from having a breach with the government. I say, however, that previous to his leaving for



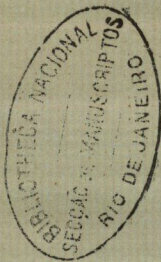
Paso Pucú in February, there was scarcely a wave or ruffle of discord between me and the Government of Paraguay. Personally I had always been treated with marked kindness by both Government and people, and it is impossible for him or any body else to show the occasion that I tried to make a breach of our friendly relations.

Respecting the allegation that I was an intimate friend of Mr. Cochelet and my opinions and remarks upon his successor and the Italian Consul, I have only to say that though I have expressed the opinion to others that the latter ought not to have left their posts to which they were appointed, for one not known to their respective Governments, I do not see that such being my opinion, why I should not express it.

Berges' opinion that I have received money from the Brazilian Government, and that because I have not succeeded in doing the same with that of Paraguay, I have therefore tried to work against it, is perhaps worth as much as that of any other man who knows nothing of the mat-

ter. I would ask, however, if it is quite just and proper to put such a statement in an official note, when not a particle of evidence is or can be adduced to support it?

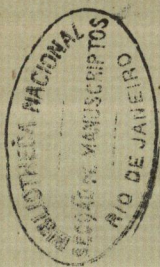
There are several conversations reported in this declaration of Berges of which I have no recollection. When I was in the camp of Cavias, he told me that Gen. Osorio would soon be at Itapua with 10,000 troops, and after my return, I remember looking over the map with Berges, in his office, and asking him concerning the forces that Marshal Lopez would have to oppose to him, if he should attempt to march with that force directly on the capital. Berges remarked that if such a thing were attempted by Osorio, not a man of his whole army would escape alive. When at Paso Dicin a short time before, I had discussed the same thing with His Ex. Marshal Lopez. I talked with Berges on various occasions of the prospects of the war, and the dangers to be averted, and supposed that all I said would be taken as the words of a friend, taking it for granted that if I said any-



thing of sufficient importance to merit it he would communicate it to His Ex. at Paso Pucú. Many of his statements, however, such as that the war was popular in Brazil; that the public spirit in the Argentine Republic was aroused, that the allies could get all the money they required; which he alleges that I made at different times cannot be true, as I had no information on which to base such opinions, and the little information I did have was entirely to the contrary. Many rumors used to be afloat, some false, and some that afterwards proved true. Whenever speaking of these rumors, if, for any reason, I did not wish to give the name of my informant, I sometimes said, if asked how I had obtained my information, that the birds had whispered it to me. and I remember that some days before I heard of the passage of the iron-clads by Humaitá, he told me we should soon have important news from below, and when I asked him his reasons for thinking so, he replied with the same expression, that "the birds had told him."

That led me afterwards to suppose, that the news of the passage was known by him at the time and several days before it was publicly announced.

The next point in this strange declaration of Berge's to which I will call your attention is that where he says I showed great indignation towards the allies because of their inaction. I think that every loyal Paraguayan was angry with them for the same reason. It was known, or at least it was constantly asserted in the Semanario, that the Paraguayan army was only anxious to be attacked; that the Legions of Marshal Lopez were confident that if attacked in force at any point they would give the enemy another Curupaity; they were anxious to close in with their foes and decide the contest by honorable and hard fighting. The allies, however, with their large army and immense squadron always kept at a safe distance and in my indignation at their mode of warfare I remember to have said to Berge's it was cowardly; it was barbarous; that if they



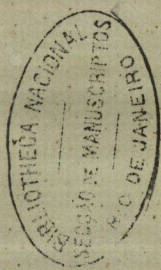
could conquer Paraguay by fair fighting it would be legitimate warfare but if they attempted to exhaust and starve out the people by means of superior numbers and resources it was infamous and deserved the execration of all civilized nations. I wrote repeatedly to my government in the same strain saying that other nations ought not to allow such a brave and gallant people, as the Paraguayans had shown themselves, to be thus exterminated. But the heart of Berge's it seems was so full of treason and his eyes so jaundiced by corruption that in expressions of this sort he could only see allusions to his own treacherous plans.

The next statement of Berge's is entire fiction and therefore I can only oppose to it my positive and absolute denial. I had never heard of any combination or conspiracy in the country nor of any committer of conspirators, nor did I ever suspect till so advised by Your Honor that Larrea was in correspondence with any person in Paraguay. The name of

Don Benigno was never mentioned to me by Berges unless it was casually and in connection with some matter of no importance whatever.

Indeed Berges and all his fellow accomplices did me the greatest compliment in their power. They never directly or indirectly confided to me anything of their plans and until so advised by Your Honor I had no idea of the conspiracy that was on foot. I had always supposed that only by hard fighting could this war ever be brought to an end and had never believed, since the efforts of my Government at mediation had failed, that any other solution was possible.

I pass over several other of the statements of Berges in regard to conversations held with me with this remark that I remember nothing of them. I only know that I never entertained any such ideas or opinions as he attributes to me. Very likely I said to him that notwithstanding I remained here, much to my own personal loss, and was exposed with my family to many

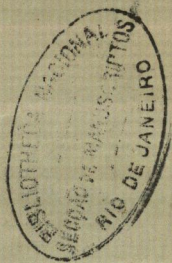


inconveniences and discomforts I was nevertheless disposed to remain to the end of the war. But it was that I might be of service to the Paraguay nation and people and not to the insurgents and traitors as he represents. In fact I never suspected there were any such in the country. All knowledge I have of their existence has come to me within the last month. Of one thing Berge's notwithstanding he has been in the United States seems to have been entirely oblivious or ignorant; and that is that a Minister of the United States who should be known to have taken part in a revolution against the government to which he was accredited would, whether it were successful or not, be thence forward ruined and disgraced in his own country. His public career would be ended and he would be held infamous both by his government and countrymen.

I observe that Berge's declares that I did not like to use the word ~~revolution~~ in my conversations with him. That is true and for the very good reason that I never had occasion to use it as I never suspected

that any such thing was in contemplation. His other statements that I did not wish to leave the country because of my desire to be of service to people here will be both true and intelligible if instead of insurgents and revolutionists are used the words Paraguayans and patriots.

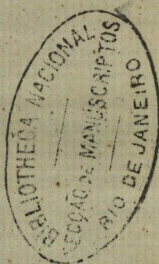
Regarding the assertion that after my return from the enemies' camp nearly a year and a half ago I said to Berges that I should write to my own government that the cause of President Lopez was losing ground, and prepare it for the revolutionary movement that was to follow I would be glad to know if I made this statement to him in the character of a loyal man or a traitor. In other conversations held subsequent to that time he assumes the character of loyalty. I will say, however, that all my despatches have been of the same general tone and tendency and they will show to my government that every thing alleged by Berges, as that I have never been in



reality a friend to Paraguay, is utterly, basely, scandalously false. All the testimony of all the conspirators united, if it were to this effect, would be utterly disproved by the despatches that I have sent from time to time to Washington. Unless I am greatly mistaken the effect of my representations to my government will soon be perceptible in the allied squadron. The allies will soon be compelled to allow an American gunboat to pass their blockade or detain it by force and a forcible detention will be war with the great Republic. Such a war commenced under such circumstances, when taken in connection with this correspondence, will certainly be an anomaly and a curiosity in history.

From one of the statements in the declaration of Berge I am led to infer that this conspiracy, of which he seems to have been the master spirit, has been a long time smouldering. He says that his reply to the first letter of Cavias was sent by me. As I never sent any

letters for him when I sent my correspondence under flag of truce to be ~~sent~~ forwarded by the favor or courtesy of the enemy, this letter must have gone as long as a year ago last March either when I went through to the camp of the Marquis de Caxias, or shortly after, when the Commander of the American gunboat "Wasp" came through to bring me my despatches. Those were the only two occasions I have ever had of sending anything for this government without abusing the confidence of the allies. On both occasions I sent numerous letters from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. If there was among them a letter for Señor Brito I was not aware of it and it must have been under cover to some one else. If that letter passed through at the time of my last visit to Paso Pucu it must have accompanied the copy of Berge's long official letter to me of the 24th of March 1867. If at that time he could send forward so elaborate a defence of Paraguay and



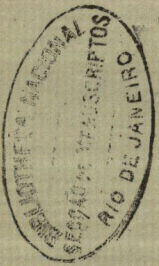
her cause at the same time send a
reasonable letter offering to betray that
very cause Your Honor must admit
that conduct so infamous would
merit universal execration, and that
whatever declaration he might make
when caught in the snares of his own
plot, while it might be true, should
be presumed to be false.

The last count in Berge's declaration
purports to be a report of a conversation
held with me a long time ago, soon
after my return from the camp of Caxi-
as. What he says that I told him in
regard to the expenses of Brazil I am
inclined to think is in the main part
true. But even this he could not tell
without adding a transparent false-
hood. He states that I said the Bra-
zilians, to make up the million a day
that they were spending, would show
'las cuentas del Gran Capitán'. What
the meaning of this expression was I
did not know when I first saw it in
Your note and was obliged to ask my

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translator, Mr. Bliss, to explain it -
 Thanks to Berges, however, I have now
 learned its meaning and in a way
 I shall not soon forget it -

There are other points in your note
 to which I ought perhaps to allude but
 this letter is already run to such great
 length that I will bring it to a close -
 Had these declarations come from men
 of low or even ordinary positions Your
 Honor will admit that the only proper
 and dignified course for me would have
 been to have indignantly denied them -
 But when men who have held high
 positions, like Berges and Carreras, make
 such charges it is due to myself and
 is due to the government of Paraguay
 that I should lend my assistance
 in exposing their falsity and arriving
 at the truth - It is fortunate for me
 that I had not left the country previous
 to the discovery of this plot - Though
 my despatches to my Government would
 have completely disproved the declarations
 of the conspirators and though I have

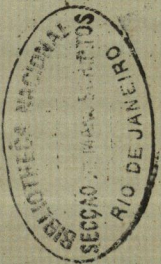


no doubt that the letters which they have sent below will show that I was entirely ignorant of their plans and that they had not dared to confide them to me, yet the impression would still have prevailed among many people that I had been a party to the, not only wicked, but inexpressibly stupid plot. I make no complaint that these declarations have been included in an official correspondence though had Your Honor informed me unofficially of their nature I would have given you in the same manner all the information that I have been able to give in this correspondence. But even then all the information I could have given would only have amounted to this; that if there was a conspiracy against the Government I have never known it or even suspected it.

Having thus declared so explicitly that I had never known anything about the conspiracy till advised of it by Your Honor and that the conspirators

never confided to me any of their plans, the correspondence for my part on this matter must here close. If the Government accepts my words as true it must admit that I can give no information. I have no information now on the subject except what I have obtained from your notes and of course I can give none. If therefore the Government accepts my statements in good faith as true it must be willing to drop the correspondence here. But if it does not thus accept them, then respect to my own character and the dignity of my office would forbid me to continue it.

Under these circumstances it appears to me that in justice to itself and to me the Government of Paraguay should adopt one of two courses. It should accept my statement as true and drop the correspondence, or, refusing so to accept it, it should accede to my request in my letter of the 14th of July and send me my



passports and provide me with the means of leaving the country.

I observe that this correspondence is being published in the Semanario. I observe, however, that one of my letters that of July 21st has not appeared. Will Your Honor pardon me for calling your attention to this matter.

This note is already so long that I must again crave your indulgence for postponing the consideration of the case of Mr. Bliss and Mr. Neusterman. As soon as I can prepare the letter, however, I will give my reasons at length why I have not sent them from my Legation.

I avail myself of this occasion to renew assurances of distinguished consideration.

Charles A. Washburn