

Panama

WHITE HOUSE,
WASHINGTON.

Personal

January 6, 1904.

My dear Mr. Bigelow:

I thank you for your letter. It was such a pleasure to catch a glimpse of your daughter. I wish you would be on here some time when we could have you break bread in the White House.

I am much pleased that you liked my message on Panama. The opposition, apparently under the guidance of Mr. MacVeagh, who is the confidential adviser of General Reyes in this matter, are, I am told, intending to insist that Bunau-Varilla knew or had assurance from either Hay or myself as to what our action would be, and advised the revolutionists in accordance therewith. Of course I have no idea what Bunau-Varilla advised the revolutionists, or what he said in any telegrams to them as to either Hay or myself; but I do know, of course, that he had no assurances in any way, either from Hay or myself, or from any one authorized to speak for us. He is a very able fellow, and it was his business to find out what he thought our Government would do. I have no doubt that he was able to make a very accurate guess, and to advise his people accordingly. In fact, he would have been a very dull man had he been unable to make such guess.

How extraordinary it is that men can be taken in by arguments like those advanced in this matter by Senators Hear, Morgan and Gorman! Bunau-Varilla was entirely within his rights in keeping the closest

watch on what we were doing; in finding out, as it was easy to find out, the movements of our ships; and in forecasting, not merely from the remote past but from the immediate past, what our action was likely to be. Yet papers like the Evening Post seem to consider that this showed infamous conduct on his part.

With regards,

Sincerely yours,

Theodore Roosevelt

Mr. John Bigelow,
21 Gramercy Park,
New York.