**TNA FO 371/1201**

**Casement to Spicer**

**1 July 1911**

110 Philbeach Gardens¸

Earls' Court

1 July 1911.

Dear Spicer,

Excuse my very hurried line – but I have been away since I saw you at F.O. until late last evg.

Inclose a brief memo of the late meeting of the Directors of the P.A. Company, and will let you know the results of next Wednesday's meeting.

Since I saw you I have spent a night with Barnes the chief member of the Commission, and he is going to see Mr. J.F. Medina on Monday, and will urge on him the need of the Board individually putting up enough money to send out Boisragon. Mr. Medina struck me as a capable man. He has only just returned from Mexico where his firm (the Cortez Bank) has interests.

I am writing in same sense to Gubbins the Chairman – so that by Wednesday they should be able to make up their minds. Gubbins personally has no money – but Read has some and so has Medina.

The trouble is that the Coy owes Medina’s firm money – and they owe the Bank of Mexico £30,000 I believe and the latter presses for an early settlement. Their affairs seem hopeless. The business incapacity at this end has been a par with the criminal neglect at the other. The only men equal to the task were the murderers. They killed effectively – and got rubber too – which the Zumaeta – Arana family seems to have appropriated in one way or another between them.

Everything since the Company was founded has been left to J.C. Arana in London – and to Pablo Zumaeta in Iquitos.

What I said in my last official report about Arana having nothing to do with Suarez is quite correct. The latter firm is a Bolivian firm – one of the directors of it in London being Colonel Suarez who is, I believe, Consul General for Bolivia here – or was. The Suarez firm is an old one – they get their rubber out to the world by the Madeira river and there is not the remotest connection between them and the Arana gang in Peru.

Yours sincerely,

Roger Casement

June 28th 1911 at the Jr. Naval & Military Club

Present J. R. Gubbins, Chairman

Sir John Lister Kaye

J.F. Medina

Mr. Read

Mr. McQuillen

Messrs. Barnes and Fox of the Commission and R. Casement

also the Baron da Sousa Deiro

The Board met at 4.30 p.m. Senor Arana not present – it was stated because he had not been invited the other directors thinking his presence undesirable to Mr. Casement.

Nothing was again decided on – save to reply to the F.O. letter of June 26 drawing attention to the act of Mr. C. Double in sending back Indians from plantation work to the rubber gathering on old conditions – the Board expressed divergent views on this point, the general trend of which was that they did not know anything about it. It was evident to Mr. Casement that they had up to this, taken no effective steps to ensure their own control either at Iquitos or elsewhere on the Amazon. This was pointed out to them and was again met by the statement that they were afraid to cancel the power of attorney held by Pablo Zumaeta in Iquitos lest he should “sell everything and go off with the plunder.”

As they were quite without funds they could not send out Major Boisragon – and they had no idea of when money was to be found.

They are practically bankrupt – and the Chairman attributes much of their financial difficulty to the past action of Pablo Zumaeta in mortgaging, without the Board's knowledge – their interests out there in favour of Mrs. J.C. Arana (the sister of Pablo Zumaeta) for £65,000.

Mr. Casement pointed out that the consideration hitherto shown the Company in withholding from publicity the Reports of the true state of things on the Putumayo could not be indefinitely maintained and that unless some proof of the determination to deal with the situation in an earnest manner was soon forthcoming HM Government would undoubtedly publish the Reports.

This statement produced a good deal of “agitation” – and Mr. Read – the most capable member of the Board said – “You can't get blood out of a stone – and we have money to carry on anything – unless something ‘turns up’” –

The meeting left an unsatisfactory impression in Mr. Casement's mind as to the capacity of the Directors to deal at all effectively with the wrong doers in their midst or to grapple with the very serious reforms called for on the Putumayo itself.

It was understood that a full meeting of the Board to include Sen. J.C. Arana would be held on Wednesday next – 5th July – at which Mr. Casement promised to attend.

Mr. Casement is suggesting in a private note to the Chairman, Mr. Gubbins – that the Directors themselves should raise from their private purses a sum of say £1,200 to enable them to dispatch Major Boisragon at an early date to the Putumayo. This act, if so done, would be evidence of their personal zeal to bring about reform and would be proof that in the weak financial situation in which the Company found itself, they personally had not failed to make some personal sacrifices to put things straight.

R. Casement

1 July 1911