

*The BOOKER T. WASHINGTON Papers*

the deepest interest. I am very glad to learn that you and your fellow Envoys have reached your homes in good health. I am sure that after so long an absence, it must have been a matter of the greatest satisfaction to be at your home again.

Please let the President and his official family know how very much I appreciate their kind words concerning myself. I sought to do what I thought it was my duty to do. My only regret is that I was not able to do more. I hope to prove of still greater service in the future.

Now, as to the matter in hand, I have had no communication with anyone concerning what should be England's attitude toward Liberia. In fact, the rumor connecting my name with any advice so far as to how Liberia should act in reference to England's claims, is entirely without foundation. I never talk about such matters, outside of official circles, to anyone, and in this particular case I have not discussed the subject with anyone outside of yourself and Secretary Root; and I am sure that Secretary Root made no such suggestion or gave any such advice when we saw him.

I have not attempted to see the Secretary on the subject since we were at the State Department together, for the reason that he and the President, in fact the whole Cabinet, have been out of Washington during the whole of the summer, and it was impossible to get any information, or do any business, except through subordinates, and dealing with subordinates, as you know, is always disagreeable, and besides one cannot get real information.

My present plan is to see the Secretary on the 13th of October and go over the whole matter fully with him, getting all the information that he is willing to give me. I think after a conference with him, I shall be able to write you again more definitely as to how matters stand. Certainly, by that time, he will have had some report from the Agent who visited Liberia. You can depend upon it, that I shall keep you informed if I hear of any new development.

I am glad that you mention in your letter the wish of England to annex Liberia to Sierra Leone. If you hear anything further in that direction, please inform me, as I wish to know how to present the case to the Secretary. My highest ambition is to see Liberia stand for all time on its own feet without being under obligation to any other nation, and whatever I do will be with that in view.

I wish to say, however, for your personal and private information,