

Department of the Interior

In reply refer to:
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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

April 28, 1954

My dear Mr. Secretary:

Late in 1939, the government of Portugal presented to the State of California a statue of Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, the Portuguese discoverer whose landing in San Diego Bay on September 28, 1542, marked the first contact of Europeans with the California coast. This statue now stands in Cabrillo National Monument at Point Loma, in San Diego County, California. The statue was the work of Alvaro de Bree, the distinguished Portuguese sculptor, and was intended to be exhibited at the San Francisco International Exposition in 1939. However, it was not completed in time for the celebration and it was necessary to display a copy of it there instead. Since September 15, 1942, the statue has been on display at Cabrillo National Monument, where it is visited by approximately 750,000 people each year.

Colonel Ed Fletcher, who served in the California State Senate for twelve years and who, more than any other United States citizen, has been responsible for the preservation and display of this fine statue at Cabrillo National Monument in San Diego, expects to be in Lisbon on June 7 and 8, possibly with the sculptor Alvaro de Bree. He will have with him resolutions of appreciation from the City of San Diego, the County of San Diego, and the State of California which he would like to present to President Lopez and Premier Salazar of Portugal as evidence of the gratitude of the people of California and of the San Diego area for the donation of the statue of Portugal.

If Ambassador Guggenheim can arrange for Colonel and Mrs. Fletcher to meet with President Lopez and Premier Salazar in order that Colonel Fletcher may present these resolutions of thanks and appreciation, I believe that this short ceremony would do much to cement the cordial feelings that the people of California have for Portugal, growing out of the fact that their coast was first discovered by Cabrillo on September 28, 1942.

Sincerely yours,

(signed) DOUGLAS MCKAY
Secretary of the Interior

Hon. John Foster Dulles
Secretary of State
Washington 25, D. C.

July 13, 1954

Honorable Douglas McKay
Secretary of the Interior
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. McKay:

I arrived home last night from a trip to Egypt, Jerusalem and Lisbon, taking in Europe and the North Cape, including the Scandinavian countries. We had a marvelous time Mrs. Fletcher and I, as well as our daughter and grand-daughter. Enroute I received a copy of your letter of April 28, 1954 through Senator Knowland's office, written to Honorable John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State, and want you to know that I appreciate that letter more than I can say.

I am enclosing copy of my letter to the children covering our visit to Lisbon, hoping you have time to read it.

At Stockholm, Sweden, I received a letter from Senator Knowland's office under date of June 22, after our visit to Lisbon, an extract of which follows and applies to my visit to Lisbon:

"The primary purpose that I want to write to you is to tell you that I received a call from the State Department late last week and their primary purpose in calling was to inform us how pleased they were with the meeting that you had with Premier Salazar. He indicated that the meeting had come off very well which, of course, is something you would know so well already. However, they were particularly interested in the after-effect and the fine things which Premier Salazar had to say about the meeting. Apparently, the press made comment on the get-together for several days following, and the general reaction among the Portuguese people was one of great pleasure toward the friendly display of good will from the people of the State of California as expressed by Senator Fletcher. I thought that you would be pleased to know of the international implications of your visit and the fact that the State Department felt that it is worth so much more than the efforts necessary to arrange the meeting."

I never was more surprised in my life than the warm reception received and I want to thank you again for your kind interest in the matter, for without it I am sure our Ambassador would never have taken the interest he did.

The statue was purchased out-right by the Portuguese government from the sculptor De Bree. I was sorry that the Premier would not allow

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the sculptor De Bree to be at the conference, although I made the request. But, I made a fine presentation at a separate meeting with De Bree of the gifts that come from California for De Bree.

I hope sometime that you will come to the Coast and let me return the compliment, either showing you the beauty spots of our back country; or better still, go up the beautiful Klamath River where we have a splendid summer home. We are trying to preserve four or five miles of that redwood canyon a thousand feet deep, the largest river in California, with the most beautiful Rhododendron, Dogwood, Azaleas and Swainsonas. I am trying in some way, through an exchange, to get the U. S. Government to take over this canyon and preserve it for all time. And, I would love to take you up the Klamath at any time agreeable to you.

I have sent a copy of this letter to Mr. Wirth, Director of National Parks, who has been so cooperative in this matter, in paying the compliment that is due Portugal, in connection with the Cabrillo Statue. It was only a chance invitation of De Bree, the sculptor, that prompted me to think of it and it certainly turned from a snowball to an avalanche of friendship and good will from the entire Nation, for which I am grateful.

Thanking you again for all your kindness and courtesy.

Sincerely yours,

EF:ls

cc: Conrad L. Wirth
E. T. Scoyen
Donald Robinson, Cabrillo Monument



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

Marion Hotel
Salem, Oregon
August 5, 1954

Dear Mr. Fletcher:

Your letter of July 13th with enclosures was sent to me from Washington and I am delighted to know of the cordial reception that was accorded to you in Portugal.

The account of your visit is interesting reading and I appreciate the opportunity to know of the details of your visit and about the presentation that you made to Premier Salazar. Such occasions certainly build toward international good will and I am sure that you derived much satisfaction from the opportunity to develop such a friendly contact with the leaders and people of Portugal.

Thank you for your invitation to visit you some time when I am in California. It would be a pleasure to do so. Unfortunately, most all of my trips are on such a rush basis with other meetings pending elsewhere and I seldom have time to linger and really enjoy a visit. I am making a trip to Yosemite this coming week for an inspection of park facilities and for some riding in the High Sierras, but again I will be returning to Oregon and not remaining in your state.

With best wishes, I am

Cordially yours,

Mr. Ed Fletcher
1020 9th Avenue
San Diego, 1, California

Douglas McKay

Ed Fletcher Papers

1870-1955

MSS.81

Box: 18 Folder: 3

General Correspondence - McKay, Douglas



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