

743 S. Grand View Street
Los Angeles 57
California

January 16, 1959

Dear Laura:

You are most thoughtful to send along the clips from the NEW MEXICAN, which, so far as I can see, must be devoting an all time high in space to the topic. I consider this to be a most valuable example of progress, for my contention has always been that the Museum lacked support due to lack of interest on part of the public. At least when the Legislature votes this time they will know what they vote for.

Please do not be gloomy--it is inevitable that the report would be attacked--there were many things written into it as sitting ducks for the express purpose of drawing fire away from other more important facets and recommendations. I have noticed the flush of anger re. the change of the Art Museum, which is really a secondary matter in the organization. Also, the several references re. "shops under the portal"--which I had to write to the Editor about--but which again Mauzy saw fit to repeat in his rebuttal. If one reads the report it is clear--at least I hope so--that I meant "craft shops" in the back of the patio--where offices are now in use. Such shops would be teaching demonstrations of Spanish-American arts and crafts--weaving, tin work, woodwork(furniture), leather, iron mongering, and such. The products of the craft demonstrations could be sold on the spot--would be fairly costly, too. However, the function of the shop would be to educate by demonstration. It is the same thing that is done with such great success in Williamsburg and at Shelburne, Cooperstown, and Old Sturbridge. It is not a commercial operation--it does not intrude upon the portal or the physical authenticity of the Palace--it does bring into the picture the arts and crafts of the Spanish-Americans, which are totally lacking elsewhere in the Museum, not to mention in the region generally. It would be a source of great pride and no little accomplishment for the Spanish American groups to at last have a spot in the public eye at the Museum. Further, as the back area of the patio at the Palace was once stables, shops, etc. this would be an appropriate, if not a completely authentic operation. When one realizes that nearly all the crafts mentioned could be demonstrated out-of-doors under open shelter in the greater part of the Santa Fe weather, it makes the prospect of such an undertaking much more interesting both aesthetically as well as educationally.

I would be glad to speak for the Museum to Legislature or anyone else. However, I do not consider it as a defense either of the report or myself--I think the report is fair--in fact, in spots I went over backwards to avoid criticism of operations. However, I did avoid operations by and large, feeling that program was the real purpose of the study.

Fondest greetings to you, the Boss, and all Santa Fe.

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WILDER