PRESS RELEASE.

Speech of the Honorable George S. Messersmith, American Ambassador to Mexico, at the opening of the exposition of the Philadelphia Museum of Art in the Palacio de Bellas Artes, Monday, April 20, 1942 at 6 p.m.

(Not for release prior to 6 p.m. Mexico City time, April 20).

It is an unusually generous act on the part of the Mexican Government to have agreed in such a cordial way to sponsor this exposition sent by the Philadelphia Museum of Art. We are especially grateful for the hospitality of Your Excellency's Government in this instance, keeping in mind the admirable development of modern painting in Mexico. It is my hope that this exposition be viewed as a modest gesture of good will toward Mexico; it comes without pretensions as an act of friendship and in order to give an idea of the artistic development in one section of my country. I am likewise happy that the people of the United States will have an opportunity to know at first hand important examples of contemporary Mexican art. There is at present an exposition of water colors in Chicago in which Mexican artists are represented and I hope that in the near future there will be other opportunities in the United States to appreciate the magnificent artistic talent of this country.

Cooperation between the Mexican Government and my country in an effort to maintain and intensify our cultural relations is an especially heartening development, above all in these days when civilization
is undergoing such a severe trial. Despite the fact that the entire resources of my country are being mobilized in an effort to put an end to the oppression which is threatening free men everywhere, we wish to cultivate spiritual and artistic values and we are very happy to enjoy the friendly collaboration of this great Republic in achieving this end.

In conclusion, I should like to repeat my gratitude to Your Excellency and to the other officials of the Mexican Government for your generous reception of this exposition.