Dear Mr. Secretary:

I take the liberty of referring to my letters of May 20 and May 24, as well as to my letters of June 6, June 8 and June 12, on the Argentine situation and the attitude of the Mexican Government with respect thereto.

I received this morning the Department's strictly confidential telegram No. 1118 of June 12, 7 p.m. referring to my telegram No. 708 of May 15 and to my letters of May 20 and 24 to you, and saying for my information that the Department has been thinking very much of Dr. Padilla's evident interest and cooperative spirit in our mutual efforts to bring about a satisfactory solution of the problem of Argentina; that we are carefully studying the entire Argentine question since an impasse has obviously been reached and that we hope that in the near future we can exchange views with Padilla looking toward formulation of a basic policy. The telegram states that I may so inform the Foreign Minister.

I called on Dr. Padilla today and gave him the substance of the Department's telegram. He asked me to convey to you his appreciation of this message and said that he would be very glad to continue to collaborate in this matter and was looking forward to an exchange of views with you on it. I told him that I would get in touch with him immediately I had any word from you further on this matter.

In my letter of June 12, I acknowledged the Department's secret airgram A-1329 of June 8, 9:55 a.m. with regard to the attitude of the Mexican Ambassador Ojeda in Buenos Aires as reported by Ambassador Armour. In my letter of June 12, acknowledging this airgram, I stated that in view of the circumstances recited in the airgram there did not seem to be any doubt that Ojeda is not correctly reporting the attitude

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Secretary of State,
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attitude of the Mexican Government in every way in Buenos Aires among his colleagues, and that if he does not do it among his colleagues, it is very likely that he is not doing so in Argentine official circles. I said that in view of the obvious importance of this and in view of the Department's authorization in the airgram to bring its substance to the attention of Dr. Padilla, it was my intention to do so.

Today therefore after conveying to Dr. Padilla the substance of the Department's confidential telegram number 1116 of June 12, 7 p.m. as above stated, I told him that I had a matter of a very confidential character and delicate character which I felt I should bring to his attention. I told him that before giving this information to him I wished to make it clear that I was only doing so because of the spirit of collaboration in which our two Governments were working and particularly in view of the cordial and friendly and informal manner, and completely frank manner, that we were able to discuss some of these questions with each other. I then went on to say that I had a confidential instruction from the Department conveying to me information which it had received from Ambassador Armour with regard to certain attitudes on the part of the Mexican Ambassador in Buenos Aires, Ojeda, and which seemed to definitely indicate that he was not correctly conveying there the attitudes of the Mexican Government with respect to the Argentine and the general American picture. I said that Ambassador Armour had reported to the Department that in a long talk which one of the officers of his Embassy had with Ojeda on May 23, and just on the eve of the Argentine Independence Day celebrations on May 25, Ojeda had argued with this officer of our Embassy in Buenos Aires that failure to accept the Argentine invitations to all the official functions would constitute a discourtesy to the Argentine people. I said that Ojeda had said that this was the only point he had made to his own Foreign Office but that he had made it perfectly clear to the officer of our Embassy that he hoped the entire American diplomatic corps would accept the invitations because this would be a further step in the direction of recognition. I further said that Ojeda had expressed the opinion to this officer of our Embassy that the nonrecognizing Governments should move gradually in the direction of recognition, to be accorded on the basis of certain anti-Axis measures to be adopted by the Argentine regime after recognition. I further said that in reply to a direct question, apparently directed to him by this officer of our Embassy, Ojeda had said that he had not submitted these views to Dr. Padilla. I said that nevertheless Ambassador Armour's
telegram indicated that Ojeda had persistently urged these views upon his diplomatic colleagues and had not informed his diplomatic colleagues on the eve of the May 25 Independence Day celebrations of Dr. Padilla's categoric instructions to attend only one function and to make clear his reasons therefore to all concerned.

At this point I should say that this part of our conversation on the Argentine was at the end of a two hour conversation during which we had discussed a number of other matters of importance. When I made this particular statement with respect to Ojeda it was 2:40 p.m. and Dr. Padilla's private secretary came in at that moment and reminded the Minister that he was having a luncheon upstairs in the Ministry in honor of some guests of the Government and that he was already 40 minutes late for his waiting guests. It was, therefore, under the circumstances impossible for us to go into this matter at any length and I could not remain more than a few minutes longer. I merely mention this in parenthesis to explain why there was not further discussion of Ojeda's attitude, which there would otherwise have been.

I may say, however, that while I was making the statement with regard to Ojeda for the Minister's confidential information, he showed obvious concern. The only remarks which he made in view of the circumstances above described which made it necessary for him to go to the luncheon he was giving in the Ministry were as follows.

He said that there could be no doubt on the part of Ojeda as to what the attitude of the Mexican Government was. He said that I knew very thoroughly what the attitude of the Mexican Government was to the effect that there could be no recognition of the Argentine regime until after certain concrete acts of a satisfactory character had been taken in accord with consultation among the American States concerned. He said that the attitude of the Mexican Government in this respect, as I knew it, must be known by Ojeda and that it was therefore incomprehensible to him that Ojeda should have taken such an attitude with respect to the participation in the Independence Day celebrations because he had made it clear to Ojeda at the outset that he could not attend the te deum but that he could attend one of the other ceremonies. When I had brought it to his attention that there seemed to be a misunderstanding in Buenos Aires of the Mexican position, he said that he had sent Ojeda the telegram, of which he had given me a copy, which was as specific as it could be.
He had information that Ojeda had attended only one ceremony but, of course, not the te deum. He asked me whether Ojeda had made the statements I had repeated to him to Ambassador Armour or to whom. I told him that Ambassador Armour had reported to the Department that Ojeda had made these statements to an officer of the Embassy whose name I did not know but that it was quite clear that he must have made them or Ambassador Armour would not have reported them. I said that it was also clear from Ambassador Armour's telegram to the Department that Ojeda had made the same statements and assumed the same attitudes to other American colleagues. The Minister said that he hoped that it was all a misunderstanding and that he would go into the matter.

Parenthetically I may say that when I said that in a reply to a direct question, apparently by an officer of our Embassy to Ojeda, Ojeda had indicated that he had not submitted these extraordinary views he had expressed to Dr. Padilla, I noticed that Dr. Padilla was quite startled and must have taken special note of this particular part of the information which I gave him.

I think it came as quite a blow to Dr. Padilla to get this information but I still think that it was desirable for me to convey it to him and I think he appreciated our doing so. I am particularly appreciative of the Department's authorization in its airgram A-1329 of June 8, which enabled me to give this information to Dr. Padilla.

I do not think that Dr. Padilla had any previous information concerning these statements and attitudes of Ojeda in Buenos Aires. I doubt whether he has too much confidence in Ojeda because it will be recalled that when the new Mexican Ambassador was sent to Montevideo he was made a member of the Political Defense Committee, instead of Ojeda who had formerly been the member. While I think this was in some ways a natural procedure in view of the fact that it was more convenient to have the Mexican Ambassador in Montevideo a member than to have Ojeda come over from Buenos Aires for the meetings, it indicated I believe, however, also a certain feeling here in the Ministry with regard to Ojeda.

I feel sure that the Minister will revert to this matter in a further conversation and if he does, I shall not
not fail to report what he may say. That the statement made
a deep impression on the Minister, there is no doubt and
that he will make his own investigation of Ojeda's activities
and attitudes, there is no doubt.

In any event I feel that it has been useful and desirable
to bring this situation to the Minister's attention.

In the Department's secret Weekly Report on the Other
American Republics, dated June 8, for the period June 1 to
June 7, there appears on page 1 in the third paragraph of
the section on Developments in the Argentine, the following
statement "It is generally accepted that the situation on
nonrecognition will have to be brought to a showdown in the
near future. At present the diplomatic missions of about
25 nations are established in Buenos Aires but are carrying
on no official relations with the Argentine Government.
Intense study is being given to the problem by the Depart-
ment and by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Brazil and
Great Britain, among which there is accord on the policy of
nonrecognition unless and until the O'Ferrell regime can give
more definite assurances than it has up to now, of implement-
ing the break with the Axis."

As I have said in a previous letter or letters, I doubt
whether it is wise in these reports which go to our Missions
in the other American Republics to give this misleading
impression with regard to the attitude of the Mexican Govern-
ment towards recognition of the present Argentine regime.
The inference would be left by the above quotation that
while we and Brazil and Great Britain are in accord on the
question of nonrecognition until there are implementing acts
actually carried through of a break with the Axis, Mexico
is pursuing a different policy. As a matter of fact, I am
sure the Department will agree that whatever Ojeda, the
Mexican Ambassador in Buenos Aires, may say cannot be taken
as the attitude of the Mexican Government for the telegrams
which Dr. Padilla sent to Ojeda with regard to the Independ-
dence Day celebrations and what he should say to the Argentine
Under Secretary of Foreign Relations concerning recognition
are certainly as definite and clear and unequivocal as our
own attitude and that of Brazil, not to speak of Great Britain.
In my letters covering the conversations with the Mexican
Government and particularly with Dr. Padilla and in the
official acts of the Mexican Government it is clear what the
attitude of the Mexican Government is, which in this matter
of nonrecognition until after adequate acts are taken, as
unequivocal and well defined as our own. I venture to
suggest
suggest that it does not serve any good purpose to have this misapprehension with regard to Mexico's attitude being given this official circulation among our Chiefs of Mission in the other American Republics.

I further believe that it is unhappy to state that "intense study is being given the problem by the Department and by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Great Britain, among which there is accord on the policy of nonrecognition", when it must be clear from the reports and letters of this Embassy that Dr. Padilla and the Mexican Government are giving as much attention to this question as Brazil and certainly Great Britain. As I have frequently tried to point out there is no statesman in the other American Republics, excluding ourselves, who has greater prestige in the other Americas than Dr. Padilla. He is firm, stable, and clear in his ideas. He has consistently shown his desire to collaborate. I have tried to make clear that in his conversations with me he has shown his consistent and continuous preoccupation with this problem of the Argentine and the desire to help in finding an adequate and really helpful solution. Concerning the soundness of his views, there cannot I believe be any doubt because they are in accord with our own. I do not know of any Minister of Foreign Affairs in the other American Republics on whom we can depend for a more helpful or constructive or firm attitude.

I am led to make these observations in the last paragraphs of this letter because I believe that we are running the risk of losing the collaboration of a good and helpful friend.

I wish to take the liberty of repeating what I have said in previous letters that I think it is unwise for us to be talking always in terms of Brazil to the exclusion of Mexico when in many respects Mexico can be more helpful in the solution of the grave problems which we have before us, or certainly as helpful as Brazil.

I know you will wish me to write frankly about this matter and I have done so in the desire to be helpful.

With all good wishes,

Cordially and faithfully yours,

G. S. Messersmith