México, D.F., June 23, 1944.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL
FIRST PRIORITY POUCH

No. 18,405

SUBJECT: Resumption of Relations with Bolivia; Mexican Statement on This Matter and Concerning Mexican Prestige Abroad; Reference to Activities of Soviet Embassy in México.

The Honorable
Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor in continuation of my despatch No. 18,359 of this morning to transmit herewith a translation of the report published in NOVEDADES today concerning the above captioned matters.

It is somewhat unfortunate that the Foreign Office statement and the press comment thereon with respect to the mechanics of bringing about the resumption of diplomatic relations with Bolivia carries the implication that this development was largely the result of a Mexican initiative. While mention is made of the cooperation of the diplomats of the other American Republics stationed in México as having contributed to the result, there is no specific reference to the initiative of our Government. As the Department is aware, the Mexican Government has been thoroughly cooperative in dealing with this problem and did no June 16 furnish copies of the Guzman report to the other American Governments. The Mexican Government did suggest June 23, as the date for the resumption of relations. It is interesting to note, however, that so far as we can determine there were relatively few replies by the other Governments to the Mexican initiative. It would seem, therefore, that the main contribution of the Mexican Government to the happy outcome was in suggesting the date for resumption and perhaps in some stimulation of interest in our initiative. Throughout the consultative period this Embassy on the basis of information furnished it by the Department was far more completely and promptly informed of developments than the Foreign Office appeared to be. This discrepancy may be due either to lack of response by a number of other American Governments to the Mexican suggestions or to delays on the part of Mexican diplomatic representatives in other countries in keeping the Mexican Foreign Office informed.
I submit these observations merely in order that the record may be kept straight and without the slightest thought that it would be necessary or desirable to discuss the Mexican statement with the Mexican Government, to reproach the Mexican Government in any way, or to give any currency to the information we have on this subject. Laboring as it does under so many difficulties created by rather conscienceless enemies, the Foreign Minister, Dr. Padilla, probably needed to make some such announcement to strengthen his position, that of his Ministry and that of the administration of President Avila Camacho. We can scarcely quarrel with this since the strengthening of the President and the Foreign Minister is in the interest of the United States and of the United Nations especially at this critical time. Moreover, there would appear to be certain very definite advantages for us in having it believed in some quarters that Mexico rather than the United States was the prime mover in the movement towards resumption of relations with Bolivia.

I felt that I should report fully and frankly on this matter to the Department but I urge that these observations be considered as solely for the secret information of the Department.

The remarks of the Foreign Minister regarding Mexican prestige abroad require no particular comment. These remarks too undoubtedly have as their purpose establishment of opinion that the Mexican Foreign Office is making great progress in enhancing the prestige of Mexico. One could draw the inference that the remarks reveal a certain underlying inferiority complex but this comment also is intended only for the Department.

As previously reported, the statement regarding the Soviet Embassy is the subject of a separate despatch.

Respectfully yours,

G. S. Messersmith

Enclosure:
Translation of report in Notedades.

FILE No. 800 Bolivia
H3B:NA
To Department in quintuplicate