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CONFIDENTIAL

Mexico, D.F., July 27, 1944.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I have to refer to my confidential letter of July 25, covering conversations with Dr. Padilla concerning the Argentine. I had a talk with him late last evening and he said that he had read again our recent communications and that he was in complete agreement with every item of the statements which you have made with respect to the Argentine. He said that he would like to make a statement now but that he thought for the reasons I gave in my letter it would be better for him not to do so at this moment but that if it seemed desirable he wanted you to know that he would be prepared to do so later when any public statement from him would come with more force. Padilla said that if he had a word from you later indicating that a statement would be desirable or if he saw from here from the information he had that a statement was desirable, he would not hesitate to do so.

He said that the Argentine Chargé had expressed his desire to see him and that he had tentatively in mind calling him in on Friday evening, the 28th, at about 7 o'clock, to hear what he had to say. He reiterated that Pardo said that he had a message from his Government. Padilla said that he did not know whether this was merely a reiteration of what the Argentine regime has been saying in the way of what it has been doing to fulfill its obligations or whether he was trying to explore the possibility of Padilla acting as an intermediary on the basis of the Argentine doing certain things. Padilla said that if he saw Pardo without a word from you in response to the questions put in my letter of July 25, he would confine himself to listening to him and saying that he would have to think it over and would see him later, next week. If, however, he had word from you that it was all right to talk with him along the lines suggested

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

in my letter (1) that it was indispensable that the Argentine fulfill its obligations under the Rio Conference and (2) that certain of the really Nazi minded people in the regime be removed, then he would be willing to explore the possibility of recognition when and if these two things were done actively and fully. Padilla said that if he said these things to Pardo, he would, of course, say to him that the Mexican Government was absolutely solid with the other American Republics and the United States in the position taken on recognition. He would say that Mexico could not think of recognition or doing anything towards recognition until the Argentine regime had done the two above mentioned things. He would make it clear that when the United States had millions of its best men at the front and was making all these sacrifices and when the Americas were in danger and had been saved by our action and that of the United Nations, the attitude of the Argentine was inexcusable and incomprehensible and intolerable. He could, therefore, not take any steps of any kind towards recognition until and when the Argentine regime had taken these measures above mentioned.

Padilla said, of course, it might be helpful to say this to the Argentine regime through Pardo and in any event it could not do any harm and perhaps it would be helpful if it came from Mexico. It would probably dash the last hopes that the regime had of breaking the front through Mexico or through one of the other countries. They would have no more illusions left after a conversation of that kind.

Padilla said that perhaps these people were seeking a way out. He did not know. He was inclined to doubt it, but in any event no harm would be done by such an approach.

He said that, of course, if the Argentine regime took these steps in carrying through the obligations of Rio satisfactorily and in eliminating some of the pro-Nazi and Nazified elements in the Government and recognition came as a consequence, such a regime of course could not live very long in the Argentine for it would have admitted its defeat and the way would be open for a real government representing the Argentine people.

I told Padilla that I doubted whether I could have an answer by Friday evening and he said he understood that.

I am writing very hurriedly to catch the air mail this morning so have to be very inadequate in presenting Padilla's conversation. I may suggest to Padilla when I see him today that he put off seeing Pardo in any event until early next week so as to avoid even hearing what Pardo has to say before then. I am going to suggest this as Pardo has been trying to see Pardo now for some five days and the chances are that his instructions are old anyway and anti-date recent developments since your statement and since you sent the telegram to our Chiefs of Mission of July 20.

As Padilla is very much desirous of being helpful and as he will not make a single step of any kind which does not have your full approval in this particular matter, I will appreciate your letting me have your thoughts at the earliest possible moment so that I can pass them on to him.

With all good wishes,

Cordially and faithfully yours,

GSM:NA

G. S. Messersmith

In duplicate