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CONFIDENTIAL

Mexico, D.F.,
November 10, 1944.

Dear Norman:

I have to refer to previous correspondence and particularly to my telegram No. 1404 of November 8, 8 p.m., my despatch No. 21,309 of November 9, my confidential letter to you of November 9, and now to my secret telegram No. 1407 of November 10, and my despatch No. 21,330 of November 10, hereto attached. As the appended despatch and my telegram No. 1407 of November 10 cover my conversation with Padilla last evening quite fully, I will not go into further detail with respect thereto.

I do want to refer to one remark which Padilla made. He said at the close of our conversation last evening that he had been a good deal concerned after our conversation on the evening of November 8, that he might not be correctly interpreting the fundamental attitude of our Government and that he, of course, wished to act in the most complete accord with us. He said that he had been disturbed by the thought that in presenting this procedure to the American Republics he might not be acting in complete accord with our own thoughts in the sense that he, of course, was proceeding with the idea that we all wanted the Argentine to get back into the community of American Nations if it could be done on a proper basis and at times he was not sure whether we wished that. I told Padilla that I could not see how he could have got that impression for certainly that was what we wanted just as much as he but that we could not accept the practices of this present Government or have any confidence in it any more than I thought the other American Republics could. I said that certainly we could not enter into any conference of the American Republics to discuss important matters of common interest with the Argentine there as long as its Government had not taken the adequate steps to give us the guarantees which were necessary. I

said

The Honorable
Norman Armour,
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said that to do so would be to build up in this hemisphere just the kind of a Government which the United Nations were making these great sacrifices to destroy elsewhere and that we would be building up in this hemisphere a haven where all these ideas would have a chance to develop and prosper. Padilla said that he was in complete agreement, of course, and that he, just as much as we, felt that no dependence could be placed in these men now having taken over the Argentine Government.

I mention the foregoing because I think we must recognize the fact that among some of these Latin countries there has really grown up the idea that we may not want the Argentine back in the American community. In saying what he did above I do not think that Padilla was expressing any doubt as to our own fundamental views about having the Argentine back but was merely taking this way of letting me know what some of the other American Republics are undoubtedly thinking and saying.

As I have informed the Department in my letters during the last months with regard to the Argentine situation, Padilla in his conversations with the American Chiefs of Mission in Mexico has been reinforcing our points of view very strongly and has been combating this idea which the Argentine has propagated so energetically that this whole question is a matter between us and the Argentine. Before I left for Washington, Padilla told me about a conversation which he had had with the British Ambassador here, in which he had told the Ambassador that he had a good deal of information to the effect that the British residents in the Argentine were strongly supporting the present Argentine regime. Padilla at that time expressed his own views very strongly to the British Ambassador who Padilla said did not like it but did not have very much to say.

For the strictly confidential information of the Department and not to be used except for its own background, Padilla told me last evening that he had recently seen the British Ambassador here and that he had taken occasion again to speak to him with regard to the information which came to him with regard to the attitude of British residents in the Argentine. He emphasized to the British Ambassador that all the information which reached him indicated that the British residents in the Argentine were strongly supporting in every possible way the Farrel regime. Padilla said to the British Ambassador that he was sometime in a good deal

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of doubt as to what the real attitude of the British Government was on this matter and that he felt that the attitude of the British Government with respect to the Argentine situation should be one of complete collaboration with the United States and the other American Republics in their attitude on the present Argentine regime and practices.

Padilla said that the British Ambassador said that the information which he, Padilla, had concerning the attitude of the British residents in the Argentine was not correct and the attitude of the British Government was one of complete collaboration with the United States and with the other American Republics as concerned the Farrel regime and its practices.

Padilla said that the British Ambassador then went on to say that he wondered whether the United States Government had not dealt with this Argentine situation too harshly and with lack of understanding. The British Ambassador said that Britain had a problem just like that with Ireland but that they had to handle it and had handled it in an entirely different way and with much more tact and understanding. Dr. Padilla said that he contented himself by saying to the British Ambassador that he himself did not see any parallel between the Irish problem and that created by the present regime in the Argentine.

Padilla remarked to me that while the British Ambassador had assured him that the British residents in the Argentine and the British Government were collaborating with the United States and the other American Republics in their attitude on the Farrel regime and its practices, his later remark with regard to Ireland and our lack of tact in handling the situation seemed to him more characteristic of what the real British attitude undoubtedly was.

In my telegram No. 1407 of this morning I take occasion at the close to say that I have not had any word whatever from the Department since I arrived here on November 5 but there are all sorts of articles which are appearing in the daily press here and which come from our news agencies in Washington and which undoubtedly appear in all of the American capitals. These articles all are highly speculative but they at least pretend to give the reactions of Latin American diplomats in Washington and in several dispatches this morning pretend to give alleged statements made by officers of the Department or attributed to them with regard to a meeting. I think it would be much better for us all, if, so far as these diplomats in Washington are concerned, they would refrain

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from any comment except to say that this meeting is having the earnest consideration of all of us for anything which is said beyond that only gives rise to confusion and all kinds of speculation and does not help the situation. I think any comment which we make at this time will not help the Padilla initiative, which is now before all of the American Governments except the Argentine and which in my opinion will have not only a favorable but in most cases an enthusiastic reception by them. I think we might as well recognize this and go along with it for my own personal opinion is that the procedure offers more hope of a successful and adequate solution than anything proposed up to now. Now that the Padilla procedure is in the works I think we should stay in the background for the more we stay in the background with respect to the proposal except to give it our support the more prospect it has of success and that is what we are after.

With all good wishes,

Cordially and faithfully yours,

G. S. Messersmith

Enclosure