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Enclosure No 2
Missing

CONFIDENTIAL

México, D.F.,
November 13, 1944.

No. 21,401

SUBJECT: Delivery to the Minister of Foreign Relations of the Memorandum on the Argentine Matter, the Text of which Was Submitted in the Department's Telegram No. 2006 of November 12, 11 a.m.

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

Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department that its circular telegram No. 2006 of November 12, 11 a.m., containing the text of a memorandum to be delivered to the Minister of Foreign Relations giving our thoughts with regard to Dr. Padilla's memorandum and the Argentine request for a meeting of Foreign Ministers to consider the Argentine case, was received in the Embassy about midnight Sunday and an appropriate memorandum giving the text of the telegram was prepared for presentation to the Minister on his return to Mexico City today.

I also have to refer to the various telephone conversations between the Department and me and particularly to Mr. Spaeth's conversation with me at 10:30 this morning, giving me the Department's latest thoughts on Dr. Padilla's memorandum and procedure and which conversation was most helpful to me. I have prepared a memorandum giving the substance of the conversation with Dr. Spaeth, which is transmitted herewith (enclosure No. 1). In my conversation with Dr. Padilla today when presenting the memorandum I also had in mind the Department's circular telegram of November 12, 4 p.m. with regard to the Padilla memorandum and Mr. Armour's telegram to me, No. 2008 of November 12, 3 p.m.

I called on Dr. Padilla early this afternoon to present the memorandum contained in the Department's circular telegram No. 2006 of November 12, 11 a.m. I opened the conversation by saying that the Department had been giving his memorandum of November 6, furnished me after my conversation with him on the evening of November 5, careful study when I informed the Department with respect to the memorandum which he had delivered to the Chiefs of Mission of the American Republics in Mexico City for the information of their Governments and that this memorandum had taken the Department somewhat by surprise. I said that as the Department was receiving inquiries from other

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Governments and from our Chiefs of Mission in others of the American Republics, and under all the circumstances, it had thought it desirable to convey our point of view to all our Chiefs of Mission in the American Republics on November 12, with respect to the memorandum Dr. Padilla had transmitted and also with respect to the request of the Argentine regime for a meeting to consider its case. I said that we would have been happy to withhold the sending of this telegram to our Chiefs of Mission giving our point of view until we had had an opportunity to consult further with him but that in view of the fact that his memorandum had by this time reached all of the Foreign Ministries of the other American Republics with the exception of the Argentine, we considered it advisable not to delay sending our point of view.

At this juncture of our conversation I gave the Minister the memorandum in which is conveyed the text of the Department's telegram No. 2006 of November 12, 11 a.m. and for the purpose of the record a copy of this memorandum is appended to this despatch (Enclosure No. 2). The Minister's immediate reaction was a few words to the effect that it was a clear, well prepared and strong document. We were then able to proceed to a discussion of the whole matter.

I called the Minister's attention to the fact that the memorandum, which I had just handed him, showed that my Government was in very close accord with the ideas which the Minister had expressed in his memorandum with the exception of the reserves which we had expressed in section II of our memorandum. I remarked that the Minister would not fail to note that in certain of the Foreign Ministries his approach in his memorandum might be misunderstood as a means of finding a formula for recognition of the Argentine regime before adequate guarantees and security, which were satisfactory, had been offered. I ventured at this point to say to the Minister that my Government had made it clear to me that we did not wish to go to the point of approaching the Argentine Government with any proposal which would appear to be preliminary to recognition and that we did not wish to be put into the position of approaching the Argentine regime with a formula which would have the appearance of a promise of recognition.

The Minister said that he had noted that we had made this point very strong in our memorandum, which I had just handed him and which he had just read, and he was very happy that we had done so for he did not intend in his memorandum to seek any formula to make recognition possible but rather to provide for the finding of a constructive procedure through which the Argentine could attend a meeting of Foreign Ministers and a situation and procedure through which she could be permitted to participate in such a meeting. He said that recognition in his opinion was a secondary and probable later consideration and that I would note that in his memorandum he had not in any way raised the question of recognition.

After a very full discussion of all phases of the matter and of his own memorandum and that of the Department, which I

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had just handed him, Dr. Padilla agreed that I could say the following to the Department.

1. He asked me to say to the Department that he considered our memorandum a very constructive contribution to this problem as it so clearly expressed the thought and attitude of our Government. He added that it was in his opinion a very well worded, strong and effective document. I may say that several times during the course of our conversation the Minister referred to the memorandum as being a very well prepared and clear document and repeated his satisfaction that the attitude of the Department was so clearly defined and definite.

2. The Minister asked that I make it very clear to the Department that in his opinion the matter of recognition was not and is not a primary purpose of his memorandum which he delivered to the Chiefs of Mission of the American Republics here and also to make it particularly clear that he was not looking for a formula of any kind. He said that what he was seeking was a substantial definition of the Argentine position in the clearest possible terms and there was in his opinion no better way of defining it than by the Argentine regime providing for elections under constitutional processes in the Argentine and therefore get an expression of the real will of the Argentine people. He emphasized that he did not consider that there was any essential difference between the Department and himself either as to principle or as to procedure.

3. The Minister asked me to say to the Department that as the situation stood today there were two principal points which were in the way of a solution. The first of these being the obvious reluctance and so far such considerable abstinence to carry through the commitments undertaken at Rio de Janeiro by the Argentine; and second, the lack of confidence which we all felt in the Argentine regime which was in no way expressing the will of the Argentine people, which in no way represented the Argentine people, and which is purely an arbitrary military regime which has fastened itself on the people. He further said that he had purposely couched his memorandum in such a way as to find a way to constructively overcome these two obstacles.

4. He further asked me to say that in his opinion there was very definite need to follow out consultation among and with the other American Republics with the exception of the Argentine in a definite and continuous manner. He said that in his opinion his memorandum and the Department's excellent memorandum he had just received had adequately defined the situation and provided for further consultation on an adequate basis which was necessary.

He further said that I was to express his opinion that it was necessary and desirable to proceed with energetic, continuous and as rapid action as possible before every Ministry of the American Republics. He considered this necessary so as to put an end to any misinterpretation of

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any aspect of the Argentine situation and of the common attitudes and to overcome any attitude of weakness in some of these Ministries which were inclined to show a certain weakness in their attitude with respect to the Argentine. The Minister indicated that through this consultation he had in mind it was necessary to find a way to reconstruct American unity which was the primary objective which we were all seeking but he was entirely in accord with us that no face saving procedure was possible and in his opinion any such face saving procedure would be dangerous. He emphasized that he was against any face saving procedure as much as he knew we were.

The Minister then went on to say that he was now in the position to prepare a further memorandum which he would present to the other American Chiefs of Mission and to me. He said that he hoped to be able to have this ready for tomorrow for delivery to me and to the others. He indicated that in the preparation of this memorandum he would be able to proceed on the basis of his own original memorandum and our reply, which was the first he had received and the helpfulness of which he again emphasized and which helpfulness he said he would emphasize in his conversation with the other Chiefs of Mission here.

The Minister said that he now had the certainty that his memorandum and ours, which he had just received, eliminated any possibility of a meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Relations of the American states to discuss the Argentine case, as had been proposed by the Argentine regime. This, he said, he thought was a great step forward.

The Minister asked me to reiterate to my Government his conviction that a meeting of Foreign Ministers to discuss postwar problems was of the utmost importance and to say that in his opinion all of the other American Republics felt this very strongly. He said the way would therefore have to be found to hold such a meeting and that if the Argentine took appropriate steps she could be at such a meeting and that if she did not take these steps she could not be there. The Minister said that in putting forward the possible date of February 1 for the meeting he had had definitely in mind the providing for ample time for adequate developments to occur to make such Argentine participation possible. He added that he was sure that we were just as anxious to have the Argentine participate in such a meeting when held as he was but he wanted us also to be equally sure of his position that the Argentine participation was not possible until certain definite steps had been taken in the Argentine and by the Argentine.

In this respect the Minister said that he had always been concerned by this thought, which was being so actively put forward in some of the other American Republics and of course by the Argentine regime, that our Government was not really interested in getting the Argentine fully back into the American picture. He said that there were those who were propagating the idea that we were more interested in punishing the Argentine than in getting her collaboration

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in the American picture. I told the Minister, as I had told him before in our conversations, that there was no doubt about our own desires in this connection and that we recognized not only the desirability but the necessity for the near and the long range of having the Argentine a fully cooperating member of the American community. The Minister said that he was convinced of this and in that case the question which confronted the United States and Mexico and the other American Republics collaborating in the war and in inter-American affairs in a loyal manner was to find a procedure by which this reintegration of the Argentine into the American picture could be accomplished. He said that he thought the consultations which could now take place by him and by us with the other American Republics would bring understanding and agreement among us and adequate pressures on the Argentine. He repeated what he had said before that, on the basis of his memorandum delivered last week to the Chiefs of Mission and of our memorandum which we had just transmitted, adequate pressures could be brought on the Argentine and a situation created through which with dignity she could be brought into a meeting of Foreign Ministers and into complete collaboration with the other American states. This could not and would not involve any compromise with principle and involve the fullest performance by the Argentine.

The Minister stated that he hoped that there would be the fullest consultation and constant communication between him and us as he wished to work in the closest harmony with us, particularly as he was confident that there was no difference between our fundamental point of view and that therefore there could be no fundamental difference in our views as to procedure. He emphasized, however, the importance of our keeping each other fully informed, which he said he was most happy to do for his part.

Towards the close of the conversation, as I said at the beginning, I made reference to my conversation this morning with Dr. Spaeth, in which Dr. Spaeth emphasized the points of agreement which we had with the Minister and that the principal difference between Dr. Padilla's memorandum and our own, if not the only real one, lay in section II. The Minister was particularly pleased that we were sending a telegram to our Chiefs of Mission in the other American Republics to this effect. He reiterated that in his opinion there was very little difference between our point of view and that we appeared to have assumed that he was seeking a face saving formula which was far from his thoughts and intention. He said that we were faced by a specific problem to which we had to find a solution and in order to find that solution we had to find a constructive procedure which would not in any sense involve any face saving procedure.

In accord with the conversation with Dr. Spaeth this morning I said to the Minister that there was no reason why the consultation which the Minister had initiated should not go forward but that we expressed the hope that he would keep in touch with us. He said that he would be very happy to proceed with our consultations and he assumed that we would do the same and this involved the closest contact

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and collaboration between us. He for his part wished to keep in close touch with us and he would take the next step, he hoped, tomorrow when he would present a further memorandum to the American Chiefs of Mission here, of which, of course, he would immediately give me a copy.

He said that in presenting this memorandum he would make it clear that no face saving procedure for the Argentine was in question and that in his opinion before the Argentine could participate in a meeting of Foreign Ministers it was essential for her to fulfill the obligations which she had undertaken at Rio and to provide for elections under the constitutional procedure in the Argentine. He said that he did not know whether the Argentine even when presented by such a procedure by all the other American Republics could agree thereto but that such procedure and such compliance was essential if the Argentine was to be at a meeting.

The Minister had in mind the Bolivian procedure where he said we recognized the regime there before the elections were held. While he thought the Bolivian procedure could apply, he did not think that recognition of the Argentine regime was essential before she could participate in a meeting of Foreign Ministers. He had not and was not raising the question of recognition, which he considered secondary, and which could come later. He said that if the Argentine fulfilled completely her obligations under the agreements at Rio de Janeiro, showed that she was complying fully with her inter-American obligations and loyally wished to collaborate in the war effort and in the American picture, and called elections for a specific date in advance under constitutional procedure in the Argentine, he could conceive the possibility of the Argentine Foreign Minister participating in a meeting of Foreign Ministers without any question of recognition being raised and without the American Governments having proceeded to recognize the present regime. He said that that recognition could follow the elections after they had been duly and properly held.

I said to the Minister that this involved the fundamental consideration which we all had in mind that no confidence could be placed in this present regime and that there was always a question whether elections even if called for would be held under proper circumstances to give an expression to the will of the Argentine people. He said that this was always a risk but that he had the definite opinion that if the Argentine went so far as to fulfill all of her obligations under Rio, showed that she intended to fully cooperate in the American picture, and called elections, a situation would be created under which the Argentine regime would have to permit the conduct of elections which would really express the will of the Argentine people and that recognition could then follow. He said that this was one of the questions to be explored through consultation. He saw this as the only way through which the Argentine could be brought into the American picture. He saw it as the only way through which the Argentine people would have an opportunity to express themselves and to establish a

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representative Government and eliminate this arbitrary military regime in which no one could have confidence. On the other hand, he said that if before the holding of a meeting the Argentine had loyally carried through her commitments and called these elections, he could see no reason why the Argentine Foreign Minister could not participate in a meeting even though the Argentine regime as such, if it still existed, had not been recognized by the rest of us.

The Minister's thought has some difficult features but I think we cannot discard it without due consideration and without consultation with the other American Republics for, as the Minister states, the primary objective must be the bringing back of a decent Government in the Argentine so that the Argentine people can collaborate in the American picture and to this end we cannot be completely negative but we must seek a constructive approach.

Whatever may be the Department's thoughts with regard to the last paragraphs of this despatch I wish only to emphasize that the approach of the Minister is a completely sincere and in his opinion a constructive one. He has no preconceived notions as to procedure but believes that this should be a matter of consultation, having it specifically understood that no face saving formula is in mind by anyone and that there is no intention of dealing with the present Argentine regime and present Argentine practices except in the most firm, energetic and consistent manner. I think in this respect the Minister feels as strongly as we do for he realizes the danger to some of the other states to the continuance of the present regime and its practices.

In view of the fact that the Minister has expressed this desire for the most active consultation between us and wishes to know our thoughts, I would appreciate the Department keeping me as currently and as quickly informed of its thoughts as possible in order that I may convey them to the Minister. He in the meantime will carry on his conversations as he has indicated and he understands that this does not preclude our continuing with any consultations we see fit to carry forward. On the other hand, I wish to repeat the observation which I have made in some of my recent despatches that so far as possible we should let him carry forward and be as much in the background for the present as possible. I am sure that this procedure will carry the greatest hope of success in bringing the other American Republics to a common point of view which will be acceptable to all and which will prove effective in bringing about an adequate and satisfactory solution of this problem which is of so much concern in every one of the American Republics.

Respectfully yours,

Enclosures:

1. Memorandum of conversation.
 2. Memorandum handed to Foreign Minister.
- To Department in quintuplicate
File No. 800 Argentina
GSM:NA