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8/20/46

The following is a paraphrase of a top secret telegram, No. 1095 of August 20, 1946, 4:00 P.M. received from the Department:

The Department states that it is gratified to have the Ambassador's opinion to the effect that the Argentine government will comply with the agreements it has undertaken relative to the repatriation of inimical persons and also with respect to the elimination of undesirable ownership in Axis spearhead enterprises.

The Department states that the press of that morning contains accounts of the Senate ratification in the Argentine of the Mexico City agreements and that this is an encouraging indication of the intention of the Argentine government to comply with its commitments.

The Department states that we should not expect perfect performance. With respect to property, the Department states that the level of performance by other American republics, particularly such as Brazil, Chile, and Mexico, which have faced problems comparable to the ones in the Argentine, would be a factor. With respect to persons, the Department states that the measure of performance of the other American republics is pertinent, but that it is of the opinion that regard must be paid to the fact that few, if any, counterparts to the worst Nazis in the Argentine were found in the other American republics.

The Department further states that while the attitude of our government and its position must be reasonable, it believes that the Ambassador will agree that regard must be paid to the quality as well as to the quantity of persons and firms which are to be dealt with, as well as to the point of progress actually reached by Argentina in accomplishing the objectives of both programs.

The Department further states that it is difficult on a hypothetical basis to determine now whether there would be substantial over-all compliance if no measures were taken against certain prominent individuals such as Freude or certain enterprises. It states that these considerations can better be decided in the light of current circumstances and performance in other respects. The Department states, therefore that it is its feeling that we should not at this stage attempt to blueprint the precise point of progress which we would regard as constituting deeds rather than promises.

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The Department goes on to state that the foregoing is a very general statement of some considerations which it had in mind in suggesting in its telegram No. 1082 of August 15 that clearance with the President and the Secretary is indicated. It goes on to state that it is in progress of further defining the views of the Department on these points, and upon receipt of my despatches 561, 565, and 583, it will transmit instructions by air mail which it is believed will show little if any disagreement between the Department and the Embassy on these important points. The Department further states that it will continue to make every effort to assure that the President and the Secretary have direct knowledge of the views which I may express which, as always, will have careful consideration.

The Department also states that it agrees that it is not within the province of our government to lay down to the Argentine a blueprint of what must be done. It states that precise names of persons and individuals have so often been discussed that the Argentine government already has a general knowledge of what we consider to be adequate performance.

The telegram states that at the same time our government cannot escape the responsibility of deciding for itself whether there has been compliance with an agreement to which it is a party, and particularly since our decision will determine whether we will enter into a military pact with the Argentine. The Department states that this is the essence of the Secretary's statement of April 8 and of the President's directive.

The Department further goes on to agree that the Department should continue, as it has since my arrival in Buenos Aires, to refrain from making any statements impugning the good faith or motives of the Argentine government, and expresses agreement that this would only make my task more difficult. Nevertheless the Department states that there have been instances when direct questions from the press have required a response--and that these were almost all cases of stories emanating from Buenos Aires. In these cases it has been necessary to state that there has been no change in our April 8 policy. As an example of the foregoing, the Department cites a United Press and Kluckhohn dispatch from Buenos Aires

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in which it was alleged that a composition of the situation had been reached already under the terms of which the United States agreed to deliver arms to Argentina. The Department refers to the New York Times editorial, stating that it has no record of the New York Daily Post editorial which are referred to in my No. 2030 of August 17 and to other editorials to the same effect which were spontaneous reactions to statements attributed by the press in Buenos Aires to Argentine officials. The Department states it cannot give full comment on these newspaper accounts until it has a full report from the Embassy.