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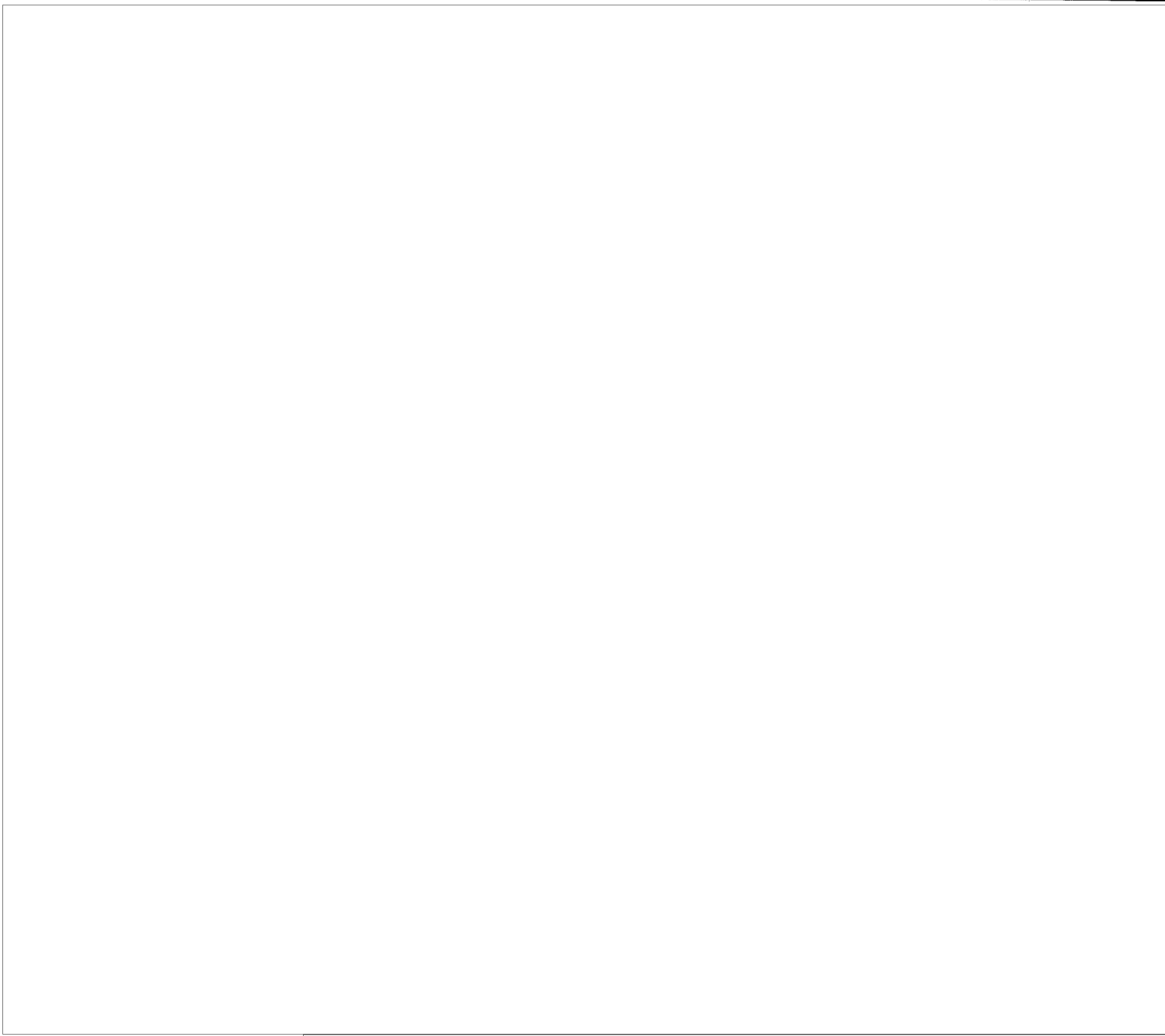
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ARGENTINA: Minister of Social Welfare Lopez Rega is to head a reorganized presidential secretariat that will "coordinate" all of President Peron's audiences with ministers and state secretaries. The increase in his power is certain to alarm leaders of the military, opposition parties, and even the Peronist movement. [redacted] (Page 4)

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Increase in Lopez Rega's Power Will Alarm Officials in Argentina

The recent increase in the power of Lopez Rega, the controversial Argentine minister of social welfare, is certain to alarm leaders of the military, opposition parties, and even the Peronist movement. Lopez Rega has served as a special adviser to President Maria Estela Peron since she took office.

Now, the ambitious Lopez Rega will head a reorganized presidential secretariat that will "coordinate" all of President Peron's audiences with ministers and state secretaries. In addition, the head of the President's personal military staff and several of his aides have been replaced by officers presumed by Lopez Rega to be less eager to undercut his influence on the President.

Cabinet ministers who in the past have voiced resentment over Lopez Rega's interference are likely to see these changes as a blatant maneuver to isolate the President and control governmental decision-making. The military high command can be expected to react negatively and possibly step up pressure for Lopez Rega's removal.

There are signs that army leaders want him eased out. They are apparently uncertain about how to proceed, however, since any move against Lopez Rega might cause President Peron to resign. The military have been discussing possible courses of action with Peronist labor union chiefs.

[redacted] the President [redacted] is completely under the domination of Lopez Rega." If he continues to tighten his hold, political contention will increase and serious plotting to effect his removal could follow. [redacted]

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