

4/17/79

INCOMING TELEGRAM

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ACTION ARA-15

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BUENOS 03032 172209Z

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
EB-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 SIL-01 LABE-00 HA-05 /884-W
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R 172022Z APR 79
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 273
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

BUENOS AIRES 3032

E.O. 12065: GDS 4/16/85 (HALLMAN, WILLIAM H.) OR-P
TAGS: PINT, PINS, PGOV
SUBJECT: POLITICS AND ADMIRAL MASSERA

1. - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. DURING A PRIVATE APRIL 13 CONVERSATION BETWEEN ADMIRAL MASSERA AND AMBASSADOR CASTRO, THE FORMER NAVY COMMANDER AND JUNTA MEMBER HAD THESE COMMENTS:

A. HE IS A CANDIDATE. ADMIRAL MASSERA LOOKS TOWARD BECOMING ARGENTINA'S PRESIDENT IN THE 1980-81 TIME FRAME, AND HE EXPECTS TO FORM A NEW PARTY TO IMPROVE HIS CANDIDACY. THE ADMIRAL TOLD AMBASSADOR CASTRO THAT HE IS RECEIVING AMPLE POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS, MOSTLY FROM ARGENTINE ENTREPRENEURS. HE MENTIONED AS AN EXAMPLE THE NAME BRAUN-MENENDEZ, PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (AND BY EMBASSY ESTIMATE A STAUNCH MARTINEZ DE HOZ SUPPORTER). MASSERA ACCOUNTED FOR THESE CONTRIBUTIONS AS DEMONSTRATIONS OF DISLIKE FOR MARTINEZ DE HOZ AND HIS POLICIES AMONG TOP BUSINESSMEN. THE CONTRIBUTIONS ALSO PROVE, ASSERTED MASSERA, THAT HE IS NOT "WRAPPED UP IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT."

B. HELP FROM OLD COLLEAGUES. MASSERA SAID THAT FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER (ADMIRAL) MONTES IS A MEMBER OF HIS POLITICAL OFFICE STAFF, AND ALSO FORMER DEPUTY COAST GUARD COMMANDER MANCINELLI. ACCORDING TO MASSERA, ADMIRAL MONTES REMAINS HURT OVER TREATMENT HE RECEIVED LAST OCTOBER, WHEN DAILY RUMORS OF HIS REPLACEMENT LED HIM TO RESIGN. MONTES BLAMES ADMIRAL LAMBRUSCHINI AT LEAST IN PART FOR HIS TROUBLES AND, AGAIN ACCORDING TO ADMIRAL MASSERA, FORMER DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER (CAPTAIN) GUALTER ALLARA IS ALSO ANGRY AT THE WAY IN WHICH HE WAS LET OUT OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.

C. CHANGES AT CNER? MASSERA ASSERTED THAT HIS SUCCESSOR AS NAVY COMMANDER HAD AT LEAST "GOTTEN WISE" TO ADMIRAL CASTRO MADERO, WHO HEADS ARGENTINA'S NUCLEAR COMMISSION. MASSERA BELIEVES THAT CASTRO MADERO'S ANTI-AMERICANISM IS HURTING ARGENTINA AND THAT THIS POINT IS FINALLY COMING ACROSS TO LAMBRUSCHINI.

D. MASSERA AND THE UNITED STATES. THE ADMIRAL PLANS A TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES NEXT MONTH, WHERE HIS GENERAL INTENTION SEEMS TO BE TO SOLICIT SYMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING FOR HIS POLITICAL AMBITIONS. "THE US IS THE COUNTRY WE MUST DO BUSINESS WITH. WE NEED A CONSTANT DIALOGUE." ASIDE FROM MENTIONING SPECIFICALLY SENATOR DECONCINI FROM ARIZONA, MASSERA DID NOT ELABORATE ON HIS PLANS. MASSERA MENTIONED THAT IN GERMANY HE WANTS CLOSER TIES WITH CHRISTIAN

DEMOCRATS.

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E. OBSERVATIONS ON CURRENT LEADERSHIP. MASSERA WAS UNSPARING IN HIS CRITICISM OF PRESIDENT VIDELA. "I'D LIKE TO TAKE YOU TO TALK WITH JUNIOR MILITARY OFFICERS SO YOU COULD UNDERSTAND HOW CONTEMPTUOUS THEY ARE OF VIDELA." MASSERA CITED JACOBO TIMBERMAN'S NON-RELEASE AS JUST ONE MORE PIECE OF EVIDENCE "THAT NO ONE IS IN CHARGE OF RUNNING THE COUNTRY." BY CONTRAST MASSERA SHOWED RESPECT FOR GENERAL VIOLA--" A POLITICAL SHERM BUT WITH LOTS OF APTITUDE." MASSERA LIKES GENERAL SUAREZ MASON" FOR WHOM HE USED THE TERMS SHREWD, ABLE AND POTENT-- BUT DISCLAIMED THE POSSIBILITY THAT SUAREZ MASON HAS ANY AMBITION TO BE PRESIDENT. CITING A RUMOR THAT GENERAL GALTIERI MIGHT BE ON THE RISE, MASSERA SAID THIS WOULD BE A BLESSING, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT SUAREZ MASON WILL NOT ENTER THE POLITICAL ARENA. GENERAL MENENDEZ, SAID MASSERA, IS A TOUGH SOLDIER--BUT DISILLUSIONED WITH VIDELA AND VIOLA LEADERSHIP.

F. THE AIR FORCE. MASSERA CITED THE ARGENTINE AIR FORCE AS A "FACIST" ORGANIZATION, STRONGLY ANTI-US.

G. ELENA HOLMBERG. MASSERA NOTLY DENIED THAT THERE WAS ANY NAVY INVOLVEMENT IN ELENA HOLMBERG'S MURDER. HE HINTED THAT HER DEATH MIGHT HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY COMPLICATIONS IN HER PERSONAL LIFE AND SPOKE OF A SUSPICION THAT THERE WAS ALIAISON BETWEEN MISS HOLMBERG AND AMBASSADOR ANCHORENA. IN THE SAME VEIN MASSERA SPECULATED THAT THE AUDACIOUS MURDER OF RUBEN VALDEZ EARLIER IN THE WEEK HAD BEEN THE WORK OF "PEOPLE CLOSE THE THE CASA ROSADA." (EMBASSY COMMENT: VALDEZ, WHO WAS GUNNED DOWN IN BROAD DAYLIGHT AT A DOWNTOWN INTERSECTION, WAS A PERSON OF DUBIOUS REPUTATION AND APPARENTLY HAD NUMEROUS ENEMIES BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF GOVERNMENT. VALDEZ ALSO HAD THE REPUTATION OF BEING POLICE INFORMER.)

H. TROZZO BANK. MASSERA CLAIMED TO KNOW "BANCO DE INTERCAMBIO REGIONAL" PRESIDENT TROZZO ONLY SLIGHTLY. HE SPECULATED THAT TROZZO'S TROUBLES (SEE BUENOS AIRES 2790) COULD STEN FROM HOSTILITY FROM MARTINEZ DE HOZ AND THE BANKER'S ESTABLISHMENT PLOTTING AGAINST AN OUTSIDER.

I. LABOR PROBLEMS. MASSERA PREDICTED SEVERE LABOR PROBLEMS PERHAPS CULMINATING IN A GENERAL STRIKE ON APRIL 25.
CHAPLIN

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: () In Part (X) In Full

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

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