

UNCLASSIFIED
Department of State

4/24/80

OUTGOING
TELEGRAM

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E.O. 12065: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, AR

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE

1. FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE WAS PREPARED, BUT NOT USED,
ON RELEASE OF IAHRG REPORT ON ARGENTINA:

Q. DO YOU HAVE A COMMENT ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT
ON ARGENTINA JUST ISSUED BY THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN
RIGHTS COMMISSION OF THE OAS?

A. THIS IS AN IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT BY AN IMPARTIAL
AND HIGHLY RESPECTED INTERNATIONAL BODY OF EXPERTS.
WE HAVE BEEN DEEPLY CONCERNED BY HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
IN ARGENTINA AND HAVE REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED THESE CONCERNS
TO THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT. THE COMMISSION'S REPORT,
WHICH IS BASED ON THEIR EXTENSIVE VISIT TO ARGENTINA
LAST SEPTEMBER AND ON OTHER INFORMATION SUBMITTED TO
THEM, DESCRIBES MANY OF THESE PROBLEMS. THE COMMISSION
HAS MADE A NUMBER OF CONSTRUCTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS, AND
WE BELIEVE THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT WILL WANT TO CONSIDER
THESE RECOMMENDATIONS CAREFULLY.

Q. CAN YOU TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION
WHICH PREPARED THE REPORT?

A. THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION CONSISTS
OF SEVEN EXPERTS ELECTED BY THE OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS OBSERVANCES IN THE
HEMISPHERE. THE COMMISSIONERS SERVE IN THEIR INDIVIDUAL
CAPACITIES, THAT IS, NOT AS GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES.
ONE OF THEIR PRINCIPAL FUNCTIONS IS TO PREPARE REPORTS
ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES, AND THEY OFTEN CONDUCT ON-SITE
STUDY VISITS FOR THIS PURPOSE. THE COMMISSION VISITED
ARGENTINA LAST SEPTEMBER FOR TWO WEEKS AT THE INVITATION
OF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT.

Q. DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT ENDORSE THE COMMISSION'S
FINDINGS?

A. AS I SAID, THIS IS AN IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT BY AN
IMPARTIAL AND HIGHLY RESPECTED INTERNATIONAL BODY OF
EXPERTS. IT IS 266 PAGES LONG, AND WE WOULD NEED TO
STUDY IT MORE THOROUGHLY BEFORE COMMENTING ON IT IN
DETAIL. OUR VIEW OF THE 1979 HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION
IS CONTAINED IN THE REPORT WE SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS
AT THE END OF JANUARY.

Q. IS THE OAS REPORT MORE CRITICAL THAN THE STATE
DEPARTMENT'S REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ARGENTINA?

A. AT THIS STAGE, I WOULD URGE OBSERVERS TO READ BOTH
REPORTS AND DRAW THEIR OWN CONCLUSIONS. AS THE TWO
REPORTS WERE PREPARED INDEPENDENTLY, SOME DIFFERENCES
WOULD NOT BE SURPRISING. I MIGHT ADD THAT, ALTHOUGH

BOTH DOCUMENTS CONCERN HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES, THEY
DIFFER CONSIDERABLY IN TIME PERIOD COVERED AND DETAIL.

Q. DID THE U.S. GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATE IN THE PREPARATION
OF THE COMMISSION'S REPORT?

A. NO. THE COMMISSION IS A BODY OF SEVEN EXPERTS ELECTED
BY THE OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO SERVE IN THEIR INDIVIDUAL
CAPACITIES, NOT AS GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES. THE
COMMISSION PREPARES ITS REPORTS INDEPENDENTLY, AND WE
RESPECT THIS PROCESS. THIS SITUATION IS UNLIKE THE
U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, WHICH CONSISTS OF OFFICIAL
REPRESENTATIVES, WHO ACT ON BEHALF OF THEIR GOVERNMENTS.

Q. DID THE U.S. GOVERNMENT SEE THE REPORT IN ADVANCE
OF NORMAL GOVERNMENT DISTRIBUTION?

A. NO. WE SAW IT ON SATURDAY, WHEN ALL MEMBER STATES
RECEIVED COPIES.

Q. WELL WHAT HAPPENS NOW? WILL THE U.S. FORMALLY ENDORSE
THE OAS FINDINGS OR WHAT?

A. THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION REPORT
WILL BE CONSIDERED BY THE OAS AT ITS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
THIS FALL. WE ARE STRONGLY SUPPORTIVE OF IAHRG ACTIVITIES
BECAUSE WE REGARD THE IAHRG AS A VERY IMPORTANT AND
EFFECTIVE ACTOR IN THE RECENT TREND IN THE HEMISPHERE
TOWARD AN IMPROVED HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION. WE CONTINUE
TO BELIEVE THAT THE BEST REMEDY TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS
PROBLEMS OF ARGENTINA IS VIGOROUS AND GENUINE EFFORTS
BY THE GOA TO END VIOLATIONS. VANCE

Handwritten signature and "Argentina" written below it.

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

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

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: () In Part () In Full

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

Date Declassify on Reason

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