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U.S. - ARGENTINE BILATERAL RELATIONS

The purpose of your mission to Argentina is to try to effect a change in the U.S. relations with Argentina, at a time when our ties are strained seriously and may deteriorate further.

Talking Points

-- My mission to Argentina is a manifestation of the desire of the U.S. Government to have normal relations with your government.

-- I appreciate your receiving me and all that you have done personally to facilitate understanding and communication between our two countries.

-- Your Foreign Ministry's upcoming announcement at the Special Session on Disarmament, that Argentina is ratifying the Treaty of Tlatelolco, demonstrates your government's dedication to principles.

-- President Carter and Secretary Vance are heartened by this ratification, which we believe will contribute measurably to a saner, more peaceful world.

-- My government also appreciates the actions you have taken to promote positive relations with the U.S.

-- Nearly all investment disputes have been settled amicably.

-- For the first time in 30 years our civil aviation relations are on a sound basis as a result of the signing last year of a new bilateral agreement.

-- We are acutely aware of the enormous difficulties which Argentina confronted in March 1976, and of the progress made in restoring Argentina's economic health and internal tranquility.

-- However, we are troubled by the very high price that has been paid to control terrorism.

-- The problem of violence and human rights has made it difficult legally and politically for my country to cooperate with Argentina in the economic and military spheres, as we very much want to

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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 ___

-- We recognize that your government is making serious efforts to control abuses, that the names of executive detainees have been acknowledged, and that regular prison visits are being made by the Red Cross. Disturbing reports of disappearances continue, however. These actions tie our hands in the U.S.

-- Prior to coming on this mission, I have read reports of the previous conversations that you have had with President Carter, Secretary of State, Assistant Secretaries Todman and Derian and others. They have echoed the strong feelings of the American people, expressed through the laws of Congress and the commitment of our President, that we take into account the attitudes of other governments towards their peoples when we formulate our foreign policy. We seek to do so with full respect for the sovereignty and special problems of other peoples.

-- I came also mindful that many of the matters which we will be discussing relate to your own internal affairs. It is not my purpose, or that of my government, to intervene in the sensitive aspects of another government's internal policy. It is my purpose to describe how certain of your internal actions are perceived in the United States and the effect of that perception on our bilateral relations.

-- I repeat that our basic objective is to have good bilateral relations with Argentina. Yours is an important country. We have in many ways common heritages and common concerns. We will have much to bind us together in cooperation if the present difficulties can be resolved.

-- It is my hope that, with a clear understanding of the problem on the table, we can then learn from you what we can realistically expect in future Argentine policies, as well as those military and economic requests currently pending with us to which you attach the highest priorities. I do not intend to suggest what your government should do. The decision is yours.

-- Our desire for change is most serious and I would like to ask what can we expect to happen in Argentina which would allows us to respond positively?

-- My purpose today is to set before you those elements of your policies and actions as seen in the United States which, in the face of our own executive and legislative requirements, prevent us from proceeding with normal military and commercial programs. I come to talk about the future, not the past.

-- These are the types of problems which concern us:

1. Irregular detention procedures, i.e. the practice of secret arrests or disappearances and executions;

2. Large numbers of prisoners under prolonged detention without charge or recourse to due process;

3. The absence of legal remedies and the intimidation of lawyers who defend political prisoners;

4. Frequent allegations of mistreatment of prisoners;

5. And a variety of restrictions on religious, political, press and labor activities.

6. On the basis of the results of these discussions with you, as well as my consultations with Ambassador Castro, I will then make recommendations to Washington on actions we might take in recognition of movement on your part. It is possible that, if our discussions go well, we would convey through Ambassador Castro, word of an early resumption of cooperation in some fields.

7. We recognize, that in the next few weeks, you face some extraordinary security problems. While it would be in our common interest to have early and demonstrable results in our conversations, we recognize that such results may need to await the end of your World Cup matches. The more quickly that positive actions can be demonstrated, of course, the more quickly can we support and justify reciprocal actions on our part. We recognize that there are those who may seek to prevent a fully satisfactory outcome of our conversations. We hope they will not be permitted to provoke actions which will defeat our efforts.

8. As you make forward motion in human rights, it would greatly strengthen your image internationally if an organization such as the OAS Human Rights Commission might be invited to Argentina to bear witness to such progress.

- (If asked) The following are examples of the kinds of actions which we feel would contribute tangibly to an improved atmoshpere for government-to-government relations:

1. A promise to curtail the irregular detention and abduction practices of the security forces.

2. An end to torture and mistreatment of prisoners.

3. The establishment of a timetable for promptly charging and fairly trying (preferably in civilian courts) or releasing those held under executive authority, in particular those not suspected of violence.

4. The establishment of numerical goals by the Argentine Military Review Board for right-of-option for the release each month of a significant number of persons from executive custody.

5. The actual release of a considerable number of prisoners from executive custody--either freed or remanded to civilian or military courts--by August 1. We have in mind action on perhaps 500 cases.

6. The release of another tangible number of prisoners (for example, 500 additional cases) by September 15.

7. The undertaking to continue this process so that during 1979 the Argentine Government will release, grant right-of-option to, fairly try, or schedule for trial, in civilian or military courts, all remaining executive prisoners.

8. The enforcement of procedures to investigate at a high level allegations of security personnel involvement in future disappearances and torture, to try those who engage in, or are otherwise responsible for, such practices, and to punish those found guilty.

-- We will respond in a calibrated, sequential fashion to any steps which you may take.

-- Our response will be both military and economic, including action on requests for military training, arms sales as well as Export-Import Bank credits and support for Argentina in the international financial institutions.

-- I can assure you that our response to your actions will be prompt.

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