



UNCLASSIFIED

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Quito, Ecuador

(R002)

R

October 17, 1973

Chile Project (#S199900030)
U.S. Department of State
Release Excise _____ Deny _____
Declassify: In Part _____ In Full
Exemption(s) _____

UNCLASSIFIED
OFFICIAL INFORMATION

Arnold Isaacs, Esquire
Chief, Chilean Political Affairs
ARA-LA/EC
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Arnie:

I had very much wanted to drop in on you when I was in the Department in early October, but time simply ran out. Among other things, I wanted to pass on highlights of a conversation with Mike Townley, whom I visited in Miami. After I left Chile, Mike became deeply involved in Patria y Libertad, particularly as an electronics technician. As you probably recall, Mike left Chile last Spring while being sought by the police for his involvement in an attempt to knock out a Servios Electricos jamming device in Concepcion which resulted in the death of a "caretaker".

There were a number of things he said that may be of some interest. First of all, his information is that Allende did not commit suicide. The original source is the El Mercurio Editor (Mera?; Nora?) brought to the Moneda by the military to confirm Allende's death. He was shown Allende's body covered by a blanket so that only the head wounds were visible. After being taken to other parts of the Moneda, however, by chance he saw the body uncovered as it was being removed from the building and observed what

UNCLASSIFIED
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

must have been fatal wounds in the chest and stomach. This would not mean that Allende was murdered; he might have suffered these wounds during the shelling of the Moneda.

Mike's contacts tell him that the coup had been in the planning stages for eleven months. The foray of the armored unit against the Defense Ministry and the Moneda last June was an integral part of coup preparations and successful in its objectives. The purpose was to test the loyalty of other units to the Allende government and the length of time for pro-government para-military organizations to move into action. As it turned out, these Marxist organizations were not able to mobilize until the evening, many hours after the armored unit had returned to its barracks.

Bits of information on Patria y Libertad: Mike finds that people that he knew to be active in or cooperating with Patria y Libertad are showing up as key officials or advisors throughout the new government. Many of his friends are not at all bothered by the term "Fascist". During the last year, many of his friends had been reading Primo de Rivera on political, industrial, and labor organization. One friend told Mike that he was no longer a Christian Democrat, rather a Palangista. Orlando Saenz was one of Patria y Libertad's chief sources of financing. After his capture, Roberto Thieme spilled all he knew without torture; hence he is now in trouble with his former comrades. Jaime Guzman amicably parted with Patria y Libertad in March, 1972 over ideological differences with Pablo Rodriguez.

As a footnote to history, Mike revealed that an assassination squad had been formed by Chilean exiles (I am not sure whether or not there was any connection with Patria y Libertad) to knock off up to 25 Marxist leaders. If there had been no intervening coup, they would have acted in October. The plan was for 6 or 8 people to enter Chile no more than 2 or 3 days before the target date and to pick off as many of their unbody-guarded targets as possible within a space of 3 or 4 hours.

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
UNCLASSIFIED

Mike's own activities may be of interest, since he will probably be in contact with the Embassy again (he knows Fred Purdy well) and he may someday be in trouble again. Mike's political activities were primarily with Patria y Libertad. He operated a clandestine radio station from his car for perhaps half a year in 1972 and 1973. He helped design the equipment which Patria y Libertad used to monitor private radio conversations of the President, the OAP, and government parties. You are probably aware of the tapes of some of President Allende's conversations that Patria y Libertad gave Pol/R. Mike says that Pol/R never reciprocated with information or other assistance; therefore Patria y Libertad turned down Pol/R's request for the frequencies of these broadcasts. Mike claims to have invented a form of Molotov cocktail that was eventually adopted by the MIR. The key ingredient was sawdust, which would stick to most surfaces and continue burning long after the gasoline had burned off. Mike participated in the Quimantu fire, which he said would have totally destroyed the building if a large number of Molotov cocktails thrown at the window had not hit the wall.

For the record, this is Mike's version of how the death occurred in the Concepcion Channel 5 case. Mike and two colleagues from Santiago intended to steal the jamming device used by Servicios Electricos to interfere with the Catholic University TV Station. They were operating out of the back room of a vacant building adjacent to Servicios Electricos. This room was used by an odd job painter to sleep off drunks once every several weeks. One of Mike's colleagues was staying in this room when the painter chanced to enter. The painter was tied up in a manner that would make escape nearly impossible, and Mike's group called the police when they had finished the theft to let them know that the painter was there. The painter died because in his struggle to free himself, the gag slipped lower and lower around the back of his neck and eventually cut off blood to the brain. Mike hid out in Santiago for a few weeks then escaped on foot to Argentina at his colleagues insistence.

Mike expects to return to Chile this week under his own name. His wife, Ines, has been there about a month and has succeeded in getting charges against him dropped on the condi-

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
UNCLASSIFIED

tion that he voluntarily report to the authorities when he returns. One of the first things he will do is to sail the boat he built last year up to Ecuador, where he thinks he has a buyer. He will then return to Chile permanently to establish an as yet undetermined small business.

I am not writing to the Embassy. Please pass on any of this that you think worth their while.

Regards,

David

David H. Stebbing
Second Secretary

UNCLASSIFIED