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ACTION ARA-10

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E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS SHUM, AR
SUBJECT ABDUCTED HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS, TIMERMAN AND OTHER CASES

REF: BUENOS AIRES 9523; STATE 299176

1. SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF ADMIRAL MASSERA AND IN RESPONSE TO HUMAN RIGHTS REPRESENTATIONS MADE BY THE AMBASSADOR, NAVY SECRETARY GENERAL ADMIRAL FRACASSI HAS PASSED ON TO THE EMBASSY THE NAVYS VERSION OF THE STATE OF PLAY WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT OF SOME OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS CASES WHICH ARE OF PRIORITY INTEREST TO US.

2. WITH RESPECT TO THE RECENTLY ABDUCTED HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVITISTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE MOTHERS OF THE PLAZA DE MAYO, FRACASSI STATED THAT THIS MATTER WAS BEING VIEWED WITH GROWING CONCERN AT THE UPPER LEVELS OF THE GOVERNMENT. THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR HAD QUERIED ARMY I CORPS AND OTHER JURISDICTIONS ABOUT THIS MATTER AND THE REPLIES RECEIVED THUS FAR HAVE ALL BEEN NEGATIVE. INTERIOR MINISTER HARGUINDEGUY FULLY REALIZED THE SERIOUSNESS OF THIS LATEST DEVELOPMENT AND HAS NOW ISSUED AN INSTRUCTION TO ALL THE MILITARY COMMANDS REQUESTING ALL INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON AN URGENT BASIS. IT WAS IMPLIED IN FRACASSIS COMMENT THAT THE

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NAVY BORE NO RESPONSIBILITY AND HAD NO INFORMATION WHICH WOULD SHED ANY LIGHT ON THIS CASE, BUT THAT HARGUIDEGUY WAS APPLYING PRESSURE WHERE IT PROBABLY WAS MOST NEEDED, I.E. IN THE ARMY. (WHILE WE THUS HAVE HIGH RANKING NAVY AND ARMY SOURCES CASTING

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SUSPICION ON EACH OTHER, WE CONCLUDE FROM OUR CONVERSATIONS THUS FAR THAT THERE IS GENUINE CONCERN ABOUT THIS MATTER IN THE TOP LEVEL OF THE ARMED FORCES.)

3. FRACASSI FURTHER STATED THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD COMPILED AND PASSED TO THE THREE ARMED SERVICES A LIST OF 15 CASES WHICH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY BELIEVED WERE OF THE HIGHEST PRIORITY INTEREST OF THE US GOVERNMENT, WITH A VIEW TO DETERMINING WHAT AMELIORATIVE ACTION COULD BE TAKEN ON POLITICAL GROUNDS. TIMERMAN, VOGLER AND DEUTSCH HEADED THE LIST. OTHER FAMILIAR NAMES ON THE LIST WHICH WE WERE ABLE TO SPOT IN A MOMENT'S GLANCE WERE CHARLES EISENHOWER, GRUTSKY AND PIAZZA. FRACASSI SAID THAT THERE WAS A PRELIMINARY AGREEMENT AMONG THE SECRETARIES GENERAL OF THE THREE ARMED SERVICES (I.E., FRACASSI, ARMY GENERAL BRIGNONE AND AIR FORCE BRIGADIER LAMI DOZO) THAT, ALTHOUGH THEY WERE CONVINCED THAT TIMERMAN HAD HAD SUBVERSIVE CONNECTIONS AND HAD HELPED TO PROMOTE THE TERRORISTS CAUSE IN THE COUNTRY, TIMERMAN SHOULD BE SET FREE BECAUSE OF POLITICAL PRESSURES FROM ABROAD AND WITHIN ARGENTINA. IN THE LATTER CASE WE ASSUME HE WAS REFERRING TO THE ARGENTINE JEWISH COMMUNITY. FRACASSI EMPHASIZED THAT AGREEMENT HAD NOT BEEN REACHED AT THE JUNTA LEVEL WITH REGARD TO THE TIMERMAN MATTER, BUT ADMIRAL MASSERA INTENDED TO RAISE THE ISSUE AT THE NEXT JUNTA MEETING, AT WHICH HE WOULD MAKE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSAL: THAT TIMERMAN BE RELEASED FROM MAGDALENA PRISON AND RETURN TO HIS COMICILE IN BUENOS AIRES WHERE HE WOULD REMAIN UNDER HOUSE ARREST PENDING THE DECISION OF THE SPECIAL REVIEW BOARD CREATED UNDER THE TERMS OF THE ACT

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OF INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY WHETHER TIMERMAN HAD ACQUIRED HIS PROPERTY LEGITIMATELY. FOLLOWING THIS DETERMINATION, TIMERMAN WOULD BE "ALLOWED" (I.E., REQUIRED) TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY. FRACASSI CAUTIONED US THAT THERE WAS NO GUARANTEE THAT THE OTHER TWO JUNTA MEMBERS WOULD ACCEPT THE NAVY'S PLAN OR IN WHAT TIME FRAME THIS MIGHT BE ACCOMPLISHED, STATING FURTHER THAT IT WOULD NOT BE EASY TO CONVINCE THE LINE OFFICERS WHO HAD BORNE THE BRUNT OF THE FIGHT AGAINST SUBVERSION THAT THIS ACTION WAS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST ON POLITICAL GROUNDS.

4. FRACASSI SAID THAT THE OTHER CASES ON THE LIST WERE BEING STUDIED BY THE THREE SECRETARIES GENERAL, LIMITING HIMSELF TO THE COMMENT THAT THERE WERE SERIOUS PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN REACHING A RESOLUTION OF THE DEUTSCH

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CASE, WHICH HE DID NOT EXPLAIN FURTHER.

5. FRACASSI DID NOT REFER DIRECTLY TO GENERAL HARGUINDEGUYS REPORTED STATEMENT (STATE REFTEL) CONCERNING WHICH PRISONERS MAY BE RELEASED AROUND CHRISTMAS TIME; WHOEVER, THE ADMIRAL STRONGLY CRITICIZED IN GENERAL THE INTERIOR MINISTERS LATEST ROUND OF SPEECHMAKING AS FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT HARGUINDEGUY DOESNT KNOW WHAT HE IS TALKING ABOUT AND THAT HE DOESNT COORDINATE HIS STATEMENTS WITH PRESIDENT VIDELA. FRACASSI WAS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF VIDELAS INABILITY TO KEEP HARGUINDEGUYS SPEECHMAKING IN LINE.

6. FRACASSIS COMMENTS CONCERNING THE ALLEGED CURRENT STATUS OF HIGH LEVEL DELIBERATIONS WITHING THE GOVERNMENT ABOUT THE DISPOSITION OF SELECTED HUMAN RIGHTS CASES HAVE BEEN REPORTED HEREWITH FYI ONLY. REQUEST THIS INFORMATION NOT BE PASSED TO INTERESTED FAMILIES, AS NO ASSURANCES HAVE BEEN GIVEN WITH REGARD TO THE FINAL DISPOSITION OF THESE CASES.

OUR OWN ASSESSMENT OF HARGUINDEGUYS DECEMBER 13

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STATEMENT (WIDELY REPORTED IN THE PRESS HERE) WAS NOT THAT HE RULED OUT SOME KIND OF AN AMNESTY LIST, BUT THAT HE WAS COVERING THE GOVERNMENTS FLANKS WELL IN ADVANCE OF ANY ACTION OF THIS KIND BY ASSURING THAT NO HARD CORE AND UNREDEEMED SUBVERSIVES WOULD BE AMONG THE NUMBER. WE NEVER THOUGHT THERE WOULD BE.
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