

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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September 1, 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE VICE PRESIDENT

FROM: ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI

SUBJECT: Your Meeting with Argentine President Videla

U.S.-Argentine relations have reached an extremely difficult stage. We have been withholding the sale of military and commercial equipment (those which require licenses) and deferring decisions on Export-Import Bank loans <sup>2</sup> for human rights reasons for so long that they have accumulated to a point where they represent almost a trade embargo. Cy, Harold, and I believe that the time has come for us to make clear to the Argentines that we value good relations and that we are prepared to explore ways to move our relationship forward. In effect, what that means is that we will take a series of significant steps releasing some loans, commercial sales, military equipment, etc. if they can take a few steps forward in the human rights field, such as reaching agreement for a visit by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, charging and perhaps releasing political prisoners, punishing torturers, etc.

Your meeting with Videla presents the perfect opportunity to do that. We do not believe that it would be appropriate for you to get into the details of the steps we will take as well as those we expect. But we hope that your meeting will "clear the air" and permit Videla or his selected representative to be sufficiently confident to express interest in receiving Assistant Secretary of State Pete Vaky in Buenos Aires to discuss these details. Alternatively, we could receive Videla's representative in Washington.

In summary, let me suggest the following direction for your remarks:

-- The President and I enjoyed our meeting one year ago in Washington during the Canal signing ceremony, but we are very concerned that the relationship between our two governments has become strained in recent months.

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-- Let me reaffirm the great importance we attach to good relations between our two countries, and our desire that we take steps to improve those relations. As a gesture on our part, we have recently granted licenses for the sale of Boeing Chinook helicopters. ✓

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-- We are prepared and indeed eager to move on a wide range of decisions as there is improvement in the human rights situation in Argentina and as agreement is reached for a visit by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

-- We were encouraged to hear you say that the "war on terrorism" is over in Argentina and that your position is the junta is strengthened. ✓

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-- We are deeply interested in developing in greater detail an approach which would permit us to put our relationship on a footing more appropriate to our two countries. If it could be helpful, the President would instruct Assistant Secretary of State Pete Vaky to go to Buenos Aires to meet with you or your representative to discuss this in greater detail.

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Agency of primary interest.**

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VP ~~visit~~ visit to Rome + Vatican, 9/2/78-9/4/78: ~~Schedule~~  
Schedule

Meeting w Pres Videla of Argentina