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ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 HA-05 PM-06 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15  
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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2602

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E.O. 12065: XDS-1 9/28/08 (CHAPLIN, MAXWELL) OR-M  
TAGS: SHUM,AR  
SUBJECT: (U) AMBASSADOR'S CONVERSATION WITH VIOLA: HUMAN  
RIGHTS TOPICS

REF: BUENOS AIRES 7962 AND 7963

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. DURING THE AMBASSADOR'S SEPTEMBER 25 CONVERSATION  
WITH GENERAL VIOLA THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL TOPICS  
RELATED TO HUMAN RIGHTS CAME UP:

3. THE COMMISSION'S VISIT. VIOLA EMPHASIZED THAT HE  
BELIEVED THAT THE VISIT WAS A POSITIVE EVENT ALTHOUGH  
A GREAT MANY MILITARY OFFICERS DISAGREED WITH HIM. HE  
HAD KIND WORDS FOR THE COMMISSION PRESIDENT, AND  
DESCRIBED HIS MEETING WITH AGUILAR IN DETAIL: AGUILAR  
GAVE HIM A LIST OF UNSIGNED RECOMMENDATIONS, MEANT  
FOR THE ENTIRE JUNTA, IN WHICH HE SET OUT THE PROBLEM  
OF PRISONERS HELD WITHOUT CHARGE, THE LENGTH OF THE  
PEN LIST AND THE DISAPPEARED AS PRICIPAL CONCERNS.  
AGUILAR ADMITTED THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT ALREADY  
HAD MOVED TO RESOLVE THE FIRST TWO CONCERNS. WHEN  
AGUILAR ASKED FOR AN ACCOUNTING FOR THE DISAPPEARED,  
VIOLA THREW UP HIS HANDS AND SAID THAT IT WAS VIRTUALLY

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IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO RESPOND. IF IT WERE  
A MATTER OF COPING WITH SEVERAL HUNDRED THAT WOULD BE  
ONE THING -- BUT THE GOVERNMENT IS INCAPABLE OF OFFERING  
INFORMATION "ON SOME FOUR THOUSAND PEOPLE," VIOLA SAID.

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

Change to  
 Release  Excise  Deny  Declassify  
Exemptions b ( ) ( ) E.O. 13526 25x ( ) ( )

Declassify after  
With concurrence of:            obtained            Ret.obt.           

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VIOLA SAID AGUILAR WAS FAIR AND DISPLAYED NO HOSTILITY TO THE GOA. VIOLA DID NOT BELIEVE THE COMMISSION REPORT WOULD BE FAVORABLE TO THE GOA, BUT WOULD RECOGNIZE THAT CONDITIONS ARE IMPROVING HERE.

4. DISAPPEARANCES. THE AMBASSADOR TACKLED VIOLA ON THE REMARKABLE NUMBER OF DISAPPEARANCES IN THE PAST SIX WEEKS. VIOLA RESPONDED DIRECTLY TO ONLY THREE CASES. MENDIZABAL AND CROATTA WERE TERRORISTS, HE SAID, WHO WERE ELIMINATED -- "WITH MY AUTHORIZATION," VIOLA ADDED -- IN THE COURSE OF THEIR ATTEMPTS TO CARRY OUT TEN ASSASSINATIONS IN ARGENTINA. OTHERS OF THIS ILK COULD EXPECT THE SAME TREATMENT. MRS. GONZALEZ WAS DETAINED TO PREVENT HER FROM TIPPING OFF THE TWO MENDIZABAL AND CROATTA TERRORISTS, WHO HAD BEEN IN THE COUNTRY TWO MONTHS. VIOLA DENIED ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THE WHEREABOUTS OF MRS. GONZALEZ'S HUSBAND. VIOLA WAS NONCOMMITTAL ABOUT THE OTHER AUGUST-SEPTEMBER DISAPPEARANCES. PROFESSING TO HAVE NO INFORMATION, HE SPECULATED THAT SOME OF THEM MIGHT SURFACE AND OTHERS MIGHT NOT.

5. VIOLA WAS UNCHARACTERISTICALLY EMPHATIC IN ASSERTING THAT THE PERIOD OF DISAPPEARANCES IS NOW AT AN END, ALTHOUGH ACTIVE TERRORISTS CAN STILL EXPECT SUMMARY TREATMENT. HE ASSERTED THAT THOSE WHOSE CRIMES WERE MERELY PAST ASSOCIATION, EVEN DIRECT, WITH SUBVERSIVE ORGANIZATIONS WILL NO LONGER BE PICKED UP. HE MADE A FLAT COMMITMENT TO

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THE AMBASSADOR IMMEDIATELY TO INVESTIGATE AND PRODUCE ANY "INNOCENT" PERSON WHOM THE AMBASSADOR SUSPECTED MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABDUCTED BY GOVERNMENT FORCES. "ANY TIME YOU HEAR OF A DISAPPEARANCE, COME TO ME."  
(COMMENT: WE HAVE BEE, FOR SOME TIME.)

6. CAMPORA. VIOLA SAID THE CAMPORA MATTER WAS VERY SERIOUS. CAMPORA MAY INDEED BE ILL BUT ALL THE EVIDENCE WAS NOT IN YET. AN EVEN LARGER NUMBER OF MILITARY MEN WILL GAG ON CAMPORA'S RELEASE THAN THEY DID IN THE CASE OF TIMERMAN. VIOLA WAS ANXIOUS AND PESSIMISTIC.  
CASTRO

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