

MEMORANDUM

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

#34

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

6275

CONFIDENTIAL

SIGNED

ACTION

November 2, 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI *[Signature]*

SUBJECT:

Jacobo Timerman (U)

Jacobo Timerman, the Argentine newspaper editor and publisher, who was recently released from house arrest and expelled from Argentina, has asked to see you. He has been in New York since October 29 to receive the Hubert Humphrey Freedom Award from B'nai B'rith. In light of your personal intervention with President Videla on behalf of Mr. Timerman, the Department of State believes you should meet with him. (C)

Timerman last week told our Press Attache in Tel Aviv that he is now reluctant to write about his experiences in Argentina because he fears reprisals by the military against friends still in Argentina. For a similar reason, I believe a meeting could be counterproductive to our efforts to encourage human rights improvements in Argentina. Timerman's release was the culmination of such a vicious struggle between moderates and hardliners in the Argentine military that it provoked a coup (which was unsuccessful) by the hardliners. I believe that the moderates would consider your meeting with him as an unfriendly (rather than an appreciative) gesture, and they would be less likely to be accommodating to future cases. (C)

RECOMMENDATION:

That in lieu of a meeting, you sign the attached letter to Timerman conveying your congratulations.

Approve _____ Disapprove _____

The letter has been cleared by the speechwriters.

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Review 10/30/85

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

Change to _____
() Release () Excise () Deny () Declassify
Exemptions b () () E.O. 13526 25x () ()
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Date 12-2-16

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Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

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ACTION NEA-11

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INFO OCT-01 ARA-11. RDS-00 HA-05 PM-06 MSC-05 SP-02
SS-15 CIAE-00 DODE-00 IHR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 /067 W
-----860438 280425Z /23

R 251510Z OCT 79
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4307
INFO USICA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 22928

STATE FOR NEA/ARA VAKY; HA FOR DERIAN
USICA FOR AR

E.O. 12065: RDS 18/25/99 (DIETERICH, W.J.) OR-0
TAGS: PEPR, PINR, PIHT, IS, AR
SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH ARGENTINE EXILE JACORO TIMERMAN
1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. IN CONVERSATION WITH PRESS ATTACHE DIETERICH, WHO
KNEW HIM IN ARGENTINA DURING A 1972-74 TOUR THERE,
TIMERMAN DISCUSSED INTER ALIA HIS INTERROGATION BY
POLICE AUTHORITIES IN ARGENTINA, ANTI-SEMITISM ON THE
ARGENTINA MILITARY RIGHT, HIS PERSONAL DILEMMA AS TO
WHETHER TO WRITE ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCES, AND THE
FUTURE OF ARGENTINE POLITICS. TIMERMAN WILL BE IN THE
UNITED STATES TO RECEIVE AN AWARD FROM THE AMERICAN
JEWISH COMMITTEE ON SATURDAY, OCT. 27. AFTER THAT HE
PLANS TO TRAVEL TO NEW YORK WHERE HE EXPECTS TO SEE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY DERIAN. THEN HE WILL GO TO WASH-
INGTON FOR VARIOUS MEETINGS ON THE HILL, AT THE DEPARTMENT,
AND AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

3. TIMERMAN SAID THAT THE MAIN FOCUS OF QUESTIONING
DURING HIS IMPRISONMENT WAS HIS ROLE AS THE ARGENTINE
"LEADER" OF AN ALLEGED WORLD ZIONIST CONSPIRACY; AND
THAT THERE WAS VERY LITTLE EMPHASIS ON ANY LEFTIST OR
TERRORIST CONNECTIONS. HE WAS ONCE TORTURED IN LA
PLATA IN A ROOM WITH AN ORGANIZATION CHART WHICH SHOWED
ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI AS THE LEADER OF THE CONSPIRACY. ON
ANOTHER OCCASION HE WAS TOLD THAT HE WAS BEING BEATEN
BECAUSE HE HAD DARED TO USE THE TERM LEFTIST-FASCISTS
IN A CONVERSATION WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY DERIAN, THE
OBJECTION APPARENTLY BEING THAT HE HAD SLANDERED FASCISM.
HE WAS ALSO QUESTIONED CONCERNING SUPPOSED CONTACTS
BETWEEN MENACHEM BEGIN AND THE MONTONERO GUERRILLAS
DURING A BEGIN VISIT TO ARGENTINA IN 1975. TIMERMAN
BELIEVED THESE QUESTIONS STEMMED FROM THE FACT THAT
BEGIN'S BOOK "WAR IN THE HOLY LAND" HAD BEEN FOUND AMONG
MATERIALS USED BY THE MONTONEROS. TIMERMAN WAS BROUGHT
FROM PRISON TO AN INTERVIEW WITH GEN. HARGUINDEGUY IN
THE CASA ROSADA PRIOR TO A DERIAN VISIT. THE GENERAL
INFORMED HIM THAT THE ARGENTINA GOVERNMENT WAS AWARE
THAT PATT DERIAN WAS INTERESTED IN HIS CASE BECAUSE SHE
WAS HIS COUSIN.

4. TIMERMAN ALSO REPORTS THAT HE BELIEVES LANUSSE'S EX-
PRESS SECRETARY EDGARDO SAJON DIED OF A HEART ATTACK
DURING TORTURE BY ELECTRIC SHOCK. SINCE HE WAS A
RELATIVELY YOUNG MAN, THE MILITARY DID NOT SUSPECT THAT
HE HAD A HEART CONDITION.

5. TIMERMAN IS NOW RELUCTANT TO WRITE ABOUT HIS EXPER-
IENCES IN ARGENTINA BECAUSE HE FEARS REPRISALS BY THE
MILITARY AGAINST FRIENDS STILL IN ARGENTINA. AS AN
EXAMPLE OF THIS HE MENTIONED THAT ROBERT COX, EDITOR OF
THE BUENOS AIRES HERALD, HAD SENT A MESSAGE TO HIM
THROUGH THE ISRAELI EMBASSY IN BUENOS AIRES ASKING HIM

NOT TO MENTION COX IN ANY ARTICLES.

6. TIMERMAN ALSO MENTIONED THAT HE BELIEVES THE RIGHT-
WING AND VERY ANTI-SEMITIC NEWSPAPER CABILDO IS FINANCED
BY DIANA DE MASSOT, PUBLISHER OF HUEVA PROVINCIA IN
BAHIA BLANCA. (NB: MRS. MASSOT WAS WELL-KNOWN TO THE
EMBASSY, AND IF MEMORY SERVES, RECEIVED A MARIA MOORS
CABOT OR IAPA AWARD IN 1973 OR 1974.)

7. AS TO THE FUTURE OF ARGENTINE POLITICS, TIMERMAN
SAYS HE SEES A SITUATION IN WHICH MODERATE AND RIGHT WING
ELEMENTS IN THE MILITARY WILL COMPETE FOR PERONIST
SUPPORT, WHICH MAY CREATE A SITUATION IN WHICH ISABEL PERON
WILL BE IN A POSITION TO DECIDE WHO RUNS ARGENTINA.

8. IN CONVERSATION WITH TIMERMAN ONE IS LEFT WITH A
CHILLING IMPRESSION THAT HE IS SIMPLY REPORTING
WHAT HE HAS EXPERIENCED AND BELIEVES. HE CHARACTERIZES
THE ARGENTINE MILITARY RIGHT AS CLASSICALLY TOTALITARIAN
AND ANTI-SEMITIC.

9. TIMERMAN IS NOW EMPLOYED BY THE IMPORTANT TEL AVIV
DAILY HAARIV AND SEEMS COMFORTABLE WITH THAT FACT,
ALTHOUGH HE SAID HE MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN SPENDING SOME
TIME AT AN ACADEMIC INSTITUTION IN THE US. HE SPECIFICALLY
MENTIONED COLUMBIA. THUS FAR HE HAS WRITTEN ONLY ON
LATIN AMERICAN MATTERS, BUT IT IS TO BE EXPECTED THAT HE
WILL BRANCH INTO BROADER DISCUSSION OF INTERNATIONAL
POLITICAL MATTERS. HE SAID THAT THE THEME OF A SPEECH
HE WILL GIVE IN THE UNITED STATES WILL BE HUMAN RIGHTS
AS THE IDEOLOGY OF THE EIGHTIES, AND ADDED THAT THE US

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Date 17-10-79 (6)~~

*Seems like
good reason for
Coxn not to see
him*

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Department of State

INCOMING
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PAGE 01
ACTION NEA-11

TEL AV 22920 02 OF 02 280404Z

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INFO OCT-01 ARA-11 ADS-00 PM-06 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 HA-05 /067 W
-----060441 280424Z /23

R 251510Z OCT 79
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4308
INFO USICA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 02 OF 02 TEL AVIV 22920

WILL BE REAPING THE BENEFITS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY FOR YEARS TO COME. TIMERMAN STRESSES THAT IN HIS PUBLIC APPEARANCES HE WILL BE DISCUSSING HUMAN RIGHTS IN GENERAL AND WILL AVOID SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON POLITICAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS IN ARGENTINA. HE IS ANXIOUS TO EXPRESS HIS GRATITUDE TO SENIOR OFFICIALS AT THE DEPARTMENT AND THE WHITE HOUSE LEWIS

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