

Argentina 20
115

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

November 18, 1980

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INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR: ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI
FROM: THOMAS THORNTON
SUBJECT: M-B-B Lunch -- Argentina and Chile (U)

Argentina

As you will remember, there was an exchange of memos between Muskie and Brown -- the former wanting to leave our relations with Argentina essentially on ice, the latter wanting to proceed with some military cooperation gestures (see attached package). An IG was held last week to confirm the State position, with the understanding that Brown could appeal if he wants to. He apparently does. (C)

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The issue is whether we should show willingness to move ahead with various minor military cooperation matters (e.g. joint talks, inviting an Argentine instructor to our school in Panama) despite the Argentine position on grain and their actions in Bolivia. Nobody sees the possibility of taking any major steps (e.g. the repeal of Kennedy-Humphrey) even if we wanted to. (S)

RECOMMENDATION: Support State's position that there should be no further moves made towards Argentina by this Administration, on the following grounds:

- They have behaved very poorly towards us.
- There is no time urgency to any of the issues at stake.
- The Argentines are unlikely even to respond to feelers from this Administration, preferring to wait for the Republicans.
- To the extent that we have cards to play, let's leave them for the next administration, who might get something in return for them. The Carter Administration certainly won't. (S)

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Review on Nov. 18, 1986

~~Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP~~
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Omitted here is material unrelated to Argentina.

Chile

A year has passed since the Letelier sanctions were imposed and we had agreed among ourselves to review policy towards Chile about now. State had, in fact, begun to do so, when Christopher put a stop to it. I asked to have this item put on the agenda so that we could get a determination whether or not we want to go through with the policy review or simply leave matters for the next administration to deal with. It is a fairly close call:

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- There are no pressing issues at stake for the next several months.
- The Chilean Government remains fairly odious and has recently perpetrated a mockery of the democratic process, perpetuating the rule of Pinochet. It may also be retrogressing on human rights.
- By leaving changes to the next administration, we give them some cards to play.

Pro

- The Letelier sanctions have had no effect, were never intended to be kept on permanently, and are now counterproductive to our own interests (e.g. the UNITAS issue).
- Despite some recent setbacks, Chilean human rights performance with regard to violation of the person has improved greatly and in the course of events this should have been recognized. The Letelier sanctions have overlaid this, however, with the result that we are much tougher on Chile than on Argentina where Basket I violations are much worse. This is anomalous and discredits our human rights policy. It also leaves us badly out of balance as between these two Beagle Channel contestants.
- Since we said that we would review our policy, let's do it. We are still the Government. (S)

RECOMMENDATION: I think we should go ahead with the review on two grounds:

- Let's leave a credible policy behind, and

Omitted here is material unrelated to Argentina.

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-- If we don't sort things out better, we will be inviting the next administration to throw the baby out with the bathwater, for we should continue considerable restraint in our relationships. (S)

I am not disturbed by the idea that there may be no specific actions that this Administration will be taking towards Chile; what I am concerned about is leaving behind appropriate guidelines (e.g. reaffirming the President's decision on 1981 UNITAS participation; how to vote on IFI loans to Chile). (S)

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