

Message Text

PAGE 01 MONTEV 03712 271224Z

13

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 EB-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /131 W

----- 100220

R 261957Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5759

INFO USCINCSO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MONTEVIDEO 3712

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, MASS, UY

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT BORDABERRY

1. PRESIDENT BORDABERRY RECEIVED ME THIS MORNING FOR A HALF HOUR COURTESY CALL PRIOR TO MY DEPARTURE ON LEAVE. HE SEEMED TO ME TO BE RELAXED, IN GOOD HEALTH AND TO EXUDE AN AIR OF CONFIDENCE.

2. DURING OUR CONVERSATION I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD MADE AN INTENSIVE EFFORT IN MY THREE MONTHS HERE TO LEARN AS MUCH AS I COULD ABOUT URUGUAY, TO MEET AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE AND TO INITIATE A PROGRAM OF VISITS TO THE INTERIOR. I SAID THAT I HAD BEEN VERY FAVORABLY IMPRESSED BY THE COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE AND BY THE WARMTH, FRIENDLINESS AND HOSPITALITY WITH WHICH I HAD EVERYWHERE BEEN GREETED AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES. I SAID ALSO THAT I, TOGETHER WITH MY COLLABORATORS IN THE EMBASSY, HAVE NOTED IN THIS TIME A CLEAR AND WIDESPREAD SENSE OF OPTIMISM, BASED APPARENTLY ON THE HOPE AND EXPECTATION THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAMS WILL BE EFFECTIVE IN SOLVING SOME OF THE LONG-STANDING, ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN THE CONTRY. HOWEVER, I SAID, I WOULD BE LESS THAN FRANK IF I DID NOT NOTE AT THE SAME TIME THAT I HAD DETECTED ALSO A CERTAIN SADNESS THAT URUGUAY'S CHERISHED DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS HAD BEEN TO SOME EXTENT SACRIFICED OR LIMITED AS A PRICE FOR THE UNDERTAKINGS WHICH WERE THE SOURCE OF OPTIMISM. I

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 MONTEV 03712 271224Z

SAID THAT WE HAD BEEN STUDYING THESE DEVELOPMENTS MOST CAREFULLY AND THAT IT WAS MY HOPE THAT WE WOULD BE JUSTIFIED IN PROVIDING AT LEAST SOME PROGRAMS OF ASSISTANCE FOR URUGUAY. IN THIS REGARD I SAID IT WAS MY INTENTION, WHILE IN WASHINGTON, TO SUPPORT A CAPITAL

IMPORTS LOAN WHICH IS NOW BEING DEVELOPED BY THE AID MISSION WITH THE PRESIDENT'S ECONOMIC COLLABORATORS. I SAID I THOUGHT, HOWEVER, THAT THE ENCOURAGEMENT WHICH HAS BEEN GENERATED BY DECISIONS REACHED AT SAN MIGUEL AND NIRVANA COULD EASILY BE DISSIPATED IF FOLLOW-ON PERFORMANCE DID NOT PRODUCE RESULTS WITHIN A REASONABLE TIMEFRAME. IN ADDITION, I SAID, DISAPPOINTMENT IF RESULTS WERE NOT ACHIEVED COULD LEAD TO REPERCUSSIONS OF A POLITICAL NATURE. THIS I OBSERVED, WAS CAUSE FOR SOME CONCERN BECAUSE IF SUCH DEVELOPMENTS WERE IN TURN TO LEAD TO REPRESSIVE ACTS LTHIS COULD CLEARLY LIMIT THE ABILITY OF THE USG TO COLLABORATE WITH URUGUAY. I MENTIONED IN THIS REGARD ESPECIALLY THE SENSITIVITY IN THE US CONGRESS ON THE QUESTION OF INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY AND DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS, A SENSITIVITY WHICH, I SAID, WAS EVEN GREATER AFTER THE EVENTS OF CHILE AND ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT BECAUSE O OUR LONG-STANDING ADMIRATION FOR URUGUAY'S SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTION

3. PRESIDENT INTERRUPTED ME AT THIS POINT TO THANK ME FOR THE FRANKNESS OF MY REMARKS. HE WENT ON TO RECALL THAT WHEN I HAD PRESENTED CREDENTIALS HE HAD MADE A PARTICULAR POINT OF ASKING, MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, FOR UNDERSTANDING ("COMPRENSION") ON OUR PART OF WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN URUGUAY. HE SAID HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A GREAT MISTAKE IF AMERICANS WERE TO INTERPRET DEVELOPMENTS HERE IN ANY WAY AS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MILITARY REGIME IN URUGUAY. IF THE MILITARY HAD WANTED TO TAKE POWER, HE SAID, THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN NOTHING TO PREVENT THEIR DOING SO. THE FACT IS, HE SAID, THAT THE MLITARY DID NOT WANT TO TAKE POWER, BUT RATHER TO DEVELOP A STRONGER LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT BY PROVIDING THE CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT WITH THE NECESSARY AUTHORITY TO HAVE A CHANCE OF SOLVING THE OBVIOUS PROBLEMS WHICH HAD BEEN PLAGUING THE COUNTRY FOR SUCH A LONG TIME AND WHICH, IN TURN, HAD PRODUCED SUCH GRIEVOUS EPISODES AS THAT OF THE TUPAMAROS. AS FOR THE DISSOLUTION OF THE CONGRESS, HE SAID, IT SHOULD BE RECALLED THAT THIS IS NOT PRECEDENT SETTING SINCE IT IS THE THIRD TIME IN THIS CENTURY THAT IT HAS HAPPENED IN URUGUAY. AFTER THE DEFEAT OF THE TUPAMAROS, HE SAID, THE MILITARY FELT A SENSE OF ENCOURAGEMENT AS WELL AS A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 MONTEV 03712 271224Z

GREATER RESPONSIBILITY FOR A CONTINUING EFFECTIVE ROLE IN NATIONAL AFFAIRS. HE SAID THEY HAD BACKED HIM IN HIS EFFORTS TO CONSULT EXTENSIVELY WITH THE VARIOUS POLITICAL LEADERS AND PARTIES IN THE COUNTRY (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE COMMUNISTS) IN AN EFFORT TO ATTACK THE COUNTRY'S PROBLEMS. BUT THE EFFORT, HE SAID, HAD BEEN TOTALLY UNPRODUCTIVE AND FRUSTRATING AS THE POLITICIANS SIMPLY WANTED TO GO ON PLAYING THEIR PERSONAL FORM OF POLITICS AS USUAL AND IGNORING THE COUNTRY'S REAL NEEDS. HE SAID THE SITUATION HAD TRULY ARRIVED AT THE BORDER OF CHAOS AND THAT HAD DRASTIC ACTION NOT BEEN TAKEN THE COUNTRY WOULD EVENTUALLY HAVE BEEN FACED WITH ACCEPTANCE OF CHRONIC ANARCHY OR A TRULY MILITARY TAKEOVER AS ALTERNATIVE. HE HOPED FERVENTLY, HE SAID, THAT THE US WOULD UNDER-

STAND THE CHOICES THAT HE AND HIS COLLABORATORS HAD BEEN CONFRONTED WITH AND WOULD VIEW WITH SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE THEIR EFFORTS TO SAVE URUGUAY FROM DESTROYING ITSELF. IN THE LONG RUN, HE SAID, EVERYTHING THEY HAVE DONE HAS REALLY BEEN AN EFFORT TO END THE STAGNATION OF MORE THAN TWO DECADES AND TO SAVE URUGUAY'S DEMOCRATIC TRADITIONS AND INSTITUTIONS RATHER THAN DO VIOLENCE TO THEM. IN A SENSE, HE SAID, THESE INSTITUTIONS, AS THEY OPERATED, WERE THEMSELVES THE REAL THREAT TO DEMOCRACY IN URUGUAY.

4. THE PRESIDENT THEN WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE HOPED WE WOULD BE ABLE TO COLLABORATE NOT ONLY IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD BUT IN THE MILITARY FIELD AS WELL. I NOTED AT THIS POINT THAT WE HAD RECENTLY DONE THINGS OF A POSITIVE NATURE SUCH AS PROVIDING A MORATORIUM AND AN EXTENSION OF AMORTIZATION TIME ON CERTAIN MILITARY CREDITS, ASSISTING THE URUGUAYAN RAILWAY IN A VERY PROMISING POSSIBILITY OF REHABILITATING ROLLING STOCK FROM MILITARY SOURCES AT A MINIMUM OF COST AND IN CARRYING OUT CERTAIN PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES SUCH AS THE UNITAS FLEET VISIT, THE VISIT OF THE THUNDERBIRDS AND THE USAFSO PARACHUTE TEAM, WITH THE VISIT OF RANKING OFFICERS FROM SOUTHCOM. ON A CONTINUING BASIS, I SAID, WE HAVE BEEN HELPING THE URUGUAYAN MILITARY EFFECTIVELY THROUGH THE MIMEX PROGRAM AND THAT I EXPECTED MOMENTARILY TO RECEIVE A REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE FOR THE AIR FORCE'S PLANNED ACQUISITION OF A-37 JETS. THE PRESIDENT SAID HE APPRECIATED THESE STEPS AND HOPED THAT THE US WOULD UNDERSTAND THE VERY CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE BEING PLAYED BY THE URUGUAYAN MILITARY TODAY. HE ASKED THAT WE LOOK WITH UNDERSTANDING ON THEIR EFFORTS TO PROVIDE AT LEAST A MINIMUM AMOUNT OF EQUIPMENT NECESSARY TO MODERNIZE FORCES SUFFICIENTLY TO PERMIT THEIR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 MONTEV 03712 271224Z

CARRYING OUT THEIR ESSENTIAL ROLE IN URUGUAYAN SOCIETY.

5. I TOLD THE PRESIDENT THAT AS I HAD SAID IN THE BEGINNING OUR APPROACH IS ONE OF SYMPATHETIC UNDERSTANDING AND THAT THIS INCLUDES THE NECESSITY FOR THE MILITARY TO PARTICIPATE CONSTRUCTIVELY AND APPROPRIATELY IN THE GOVERNMENT. I SAID THAT MY COMMENTS WITH RESPECT TO ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE TAKEN AS INDICATION OF OUR ATTITUDE UP TO NOW--LEAVING IT TO THE URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT TO DECIDE FOR ITSELF THE LIMITS OF WHAT IS ACCEPTED AS AN INTERNAL MATTER. I ADDED FINALLY THAT I HAD THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, TO BRING TO THE PRESIDENT'S ATTENTION, THAT THIS COULD UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES BECOME A DELICATE MATTER FOR THE US. THE PRESIDENT REPLIED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD PERFECTLY AND HOPED THAT THE US OFFICIALS AND PRESS WOULD BE AS UNDERSTANDING AS WELL.

6. IN TERMINATING OUR CONVERSATION THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE THOUGHT 1973 HAD SURELY BEEN THE MOST DIFFICULT YEAR HE WOULD FACE IN HIS PRESIDENCY. HE SAID HE LOOKED FORWARD TO 1974 AS BEING A YEAR OF ACHIEVEMENT AND ONE WHICH WOULD NOT PRESENT HIM WITH THE SAME KINDS OF PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULT DECISIONS WHICH HAD CHARACTERIZED

1973.

SIRACUSA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 10 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY EQUIPMENT, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, POLITICAL REPRESSION, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, MORATORIUM, MEETINGS, VISITS, LEGISLATIVE RELATIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION, POLITICAL LEADERS, ROLLING STOCK
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973MONTEV03712
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: MONTEVIDEO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731256/abqcefyz.tel
Line Count: 167
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24-Jan-2002 by collinp0>; APPROVED <14 FEB 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT BORDABERRY
TAGS: PINT, MASS, ECON, UY
To: STATE INFO USCINCSO
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005