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EXDIS

Case Number: S199900030

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9-2-88
JCOZ

Chile Project (#S199900030)

U.S. Department of State

Release Excise _____ Deny _____

Declassify: In Part _____ In Full

Exemption(s) _____

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ACTION SS-00

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 SSO-00 (AS-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSCE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8454

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 SANTIAGO 07135

EXDIS

DECAPTIONED

DELIVER ARA/ABRAMS FOR 11AM MEETING 01 OCT 88

EO 12356: DECL OADR

TAGS: PINS CI

SUBJ: IMMINENT POSSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT STAGED COUP

REF: BARNES/KOZAK TELCON 30 OCT 88

1. SUMMARY. COMMANDER OF SANTIAGO MILITARY FORCES GEN ZINKE HAS DESCRIBED ALLEGED COMMUNIST PLOT TO DISRUPT OCTOBER 5 PLEBISCITE COMMENCING WITH TERRORIST ACTS THIS WEEKEND AND WITH WIDESPREAD VIOLENCE ON THE DAY OF THE PLEBISCITE. THE ARMED FORCES APPARENTLY ARE NOT PREPARED TO TAKE ANY MEASURES AHEAD OF TIME DESPITE PREDICTIONS OF THE KILLINGS THAT WILL RESULT. THE PERSONS WITH WHOM ZINKE SPOKE ARE CONVINCED HE, FOR UNKNOWN REASONS, WAS WARNING THEM OF WHAT THE ARMY, AND NOT THE COMMUNISTS, WERE PLANNING TO DO TO DISRUPT THE PLEBISCITE. END SUMMARY.

2. I RECEIVED A SURPRISE VISIT LATE EVENING SEPTEMBER 30 FROM

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MONICA JIMENEZ, HEAD OF THE CIVITAS CIVIC EDUCATION CRUSADE WHO CAME TO ME AT THE URGING OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND COMMANDO FOR THE NO HEAD PATRICIO AYLWIN, WITH WHOM DCM AND I

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HAD BREAKFAST THAT MORNING. MANY OF US IN THE EMBASSY KNOW MONICA JIMENEZ VERY WELL AND HAVE GREAT CONFIDENCE IN HER; HENCE THE ACCOUNT SHE GAVE ME WE WOULD ACCEPT AS A COMPLETELY BELIEVABLE ONE OF WHAT SHE WAS TOLD BY BRIG GEN JORGE ZINKE, CHIEF OF THE SANTIAGO MILITARY ZONE AND THEREFORE COMMANDER OF ALL ARMED FORCES OF THE SANTIAGO METROPOLITAN REGION.

3. JIMENEZ HAD GONE TO SEE ZINKE AT THE SUGGESTION OF POLICE OFFICERS WHOSE HELP SHE SOUGHT IN PROVIDING ADEQUATE SECURITY FOR THE CIVIC EDUCATION HEADQUARTERS ON PLEBISCITE DAY. SHE ARRANGED THE APPOINTMENT THROUGH FAMILY CONNECTIONS AND ZINKE RECEIVED HERE AND THE CRUSADES LAWYER MID-AFTERNOON SEPTEMBER 30 WITH GREAT CORDIALITY. SUDDENLY SHE FOUND THAT ZINKE WAS TELLING THEM ABOUT A COMMUNIST PARTY PLOT TO DISRUPT THE OCTOBER 5 PLEBISCITE. ZINKE SAID THE PLOT WOULD UNFOLD THAT VERY AFTERNOON AND WOULD CONSIST OF VARIOUS TYPES OF TERRORIST INCIDENTS. WHAT WAS MORE, THE COMMUNISTS WOULD SEND IN GOON SQUADS ON PLEBISCITE DAY TO BREAK UP THE VOTING PROCESS. THEY WOULD ALSO DESTROY ALMOST ALL OF THE HIGH TENSION TOWERS, SO THAT ONLY LIMITED ELECTRICITY WOULD BE AVAILABLE AND THE ARMY WOULD NOT HAVE THE MANPOWER TO PROTECT THE POWER INSTALLATIONS. ZINKE SAID FURTHER THAT WHEN CROWDS SENT BY THE COMMUNISTS INTO THE STREETS DID NOT DISPERSE THEY WOULD BE WARNED BY MEGAPHONE, THEN BE SUBJECT TO TEAR GAS AND RUBBER BULLETS AND THEN BE FIRED ON. THERE WOULD BE WOMEN AND CHILDREN KILLED, BECAUSE THE COMMUNISTS CAME WELL SUPPLIED WITH ARMS THAT HAS BEEN SMUGGLED INTO THE COUNTRY SEVERAL YEARS AGO (THEY HAD AT LEAST 1200 RIFLES) AND JIMENEZ WOULD SEE THAT THOSE KILLED HAD NOT BEEN KILLED WITH BULLETS FIRED BY THE CHILEAN ARMY, BUT ONES FIRED BY THE COMMUNISTS WHO USED A DIFFERENT TYPE OF BULLET.

4. WHEN JIMENEZ AND HER COLLEAGUE EXPRESSED ASTONISHMENT AT THE RELATIVELY RELAXED ATTITUDE THAT ZINKE WAS TAKING IN THE FACE

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OF SUCH A THREAT, THE MOST HE WOULD SAY WAS THAT THE ARMY KNEW ALL ABOUT THE COMMUNISTS PLANS BUT WOULD NOT REACT SAVE AT THE APPROPRIATE TIMES. WHEN JIMENEZ SUGGESTED THAT AT LEAST THE CITIZENRY SHOULD BE WARNED, ZINKE SAID THAT HE AND THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR MIGHT SAY SOMETHING AT SOME POINT, PERHAPS ON OCTOBER 3. WHEN SHE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE INTERRUPTION OF THE VOTING PROCESS BY ELECTRIC OUTAGE, TO WHICH HE HAD ALLUDED, HIS RESPONSE WAS THAT NOBODY WOULD BE ALLOWED ON THE STREETS TO CELEBRATE OR DEMONSTRATE UNTIL AT LEAST MIDNIGHT (WHICH WOULD BE THE REQUIRED 4 HOURS AFTER THE LAST POLLING PLACE MIGHT HAVE CLOSED) AND THAT IF THE POWER FAILED THEN THE ARMY HAD CANDLES AND MATCHES TO HELP PROVIDE LIGHT SO THE ELECTION BOARDS COULD GO ON WITH THEIR WORK.

5. BOTH JIMENEZ AND THE LAWYER CAME AWAY FROM THE MEETING CONVINCED BY ZINKE'S CASUAL ATTITUDE ABOUT SOMETHING SO SERIOUS THAT EVERYTHING WAS ALL SET TO TAKE PLACE AS PLANNED AND THAT LITERALLY WHAT THEY WERE HEARING WAS WHAT THE ARMY PLANNED TO DO AND NOT THE COMMUNISTS, SAVE TO THE EXTENT THEY WITTINGLY OR UNWITTINGLY LENT THEMSELVES TO THE GOVERNMENT'S PLANS. HER CONCERNS ON THIS SCORE HAD BEEN REINFORCED BY A CONVERSATION EARLIER THAT DAY WITH A RETIRED ARMY OFFICER, WHO SERVES AS A SECURITY ADVISOR AND WHO COUNSELLED HER (BECAUSE HE KNEW THE ARMY'S PLANS) TO BE SURE ALL RECORDS OF THE CRUSADE WERE REMOVED BECAUSE THE BUILDING WOULD BE RAIDED IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS AND IN ADDITION SHE SHOULD NOT GO ABOUT ANY LONGER BY HERSELF.

6. SHE TOLD THIS ACCOUNT TO AYLWIN WHO IMMEDIATELY CONVOKED A MEETING OF HIS SENIOR LIEUTENANTS AND ASKED HER TO COME TELL ME, BECAUSE OF OUR CONVERSATION THAT MORNING IN WHICH WE SPECULATED ON WHAT PINOCHET MIGHT DO TO PREVENT A DEFEAT IN THE PLEBISCITE WHICH WAS BECOMING MORE AND MORE LIKELY. FOR HIS PART AYLWIN'S PRELIMINARY REACTION WAS TO TRY TO GET THROUGH TO AIR FORCE AND POLICE COMMANDERS MATTHEI AND STANGE TO SEE IF THE INFORMATION WAS ONLY ARMY PROPERTY AND ALSO TO USE SOCIALIST PARTY LINKS TO SEE WHETHER THERE WAS ANYTHING IN THE ALLEGATIONS ABOUT THE

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COMMUNIST PARTY PLANS.

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7. JIMENEZ IS TRYING TO REACH SERGIO MOLINA WHO ALSO SAW ZINKE A FEW DAYS EARLIER TO SEE IF MOLINA WAS GIVEN ANY OF THE SAME INFORMATION. WHEN SHE TRIED TO REACH MOLINA EARLIER IN THE EVENING SHE WAS TOLD BY MOLINA'S SECRETARY THAT MOLINA HAD RECEIVED A REPORT THAT THERE MIGHT BE AN ATTEMPT TO ASSASINATE SOME OF THE "NO" CAMPAIGN LEADERS DURING THE "NO" RALLY OF OCTOBER 1.

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8. COMMENT: AS OUR MOST RECENT SCENARIO CABLE PUT IT, A PINOCHET
ABORTION OF THE CONSTITUTIONALPROCESS COULD NOT BERULED OUT. WE
SHARE JIMENEZ'S VIEW THAT ZINKE'S STORY DOESN'T RINGTRUE, NOT SO
MUCH WITH REGARD TO POSSIBLE COMMUNIST PLITS (THOUGH OUR SENSE
IS THAT THE TIMETABLE WOULD START AFTER THE PLEBISCITE AND NOT
BEFORE OR WHILE IT IS STILL ON) AS TO THE IMPROBABLE NATURE OF
THE CHILEAN ARMY QUIETLY LETTING THINGS HAPPEN WHENTHE
PERPETRATORS ARE REALLY COMMUNISTS. WE WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH
AYLWIN AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE OCTOBER 1TO LEARN WHAT STEPS HE MAY
HAVE TAKEN OVERNIGHT. EVEN THOUGH NETIHERJIMENEZ NOR WECAN
FIGURE OUTZINKE'S MOTIVES FOR TELLING HER SO OPENLY WHAT HE
DID, WE TAKE THE INFORMATION EXTREMELY SERIOUSLY AND URGE THAT
WASHINGTON DO SO AS WELL.
BARNES

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