

7/8/76

**SECRET**

TELETYPE

PRIORITY-URGENT

*5-4-81*  
CLASSIFIED BY 39063ELW/ACE/PG  
REASON: 1.5 (C, D)  
DECLASSIFY ON: X, Y, Z

TO: DIRECTOR NR. -08  
FROM: LEGAT, BUENOS AIRES (109-2) (109-103)

*Argentinian Project  
UTL Bu. Original*

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FOREIGN POLITICAL MATTERS-ARGENTINA; IS-ARGENTINA; ARGENTINE  
TERRORIST ACTIVITIES; FPM-ARGENTINA.

DURING THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF JULY 4, 1976, THREE  
ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTS AND TWO SEMINARIANS WERE BRUTALLY  
MURDERED IN THE RECTORY OF ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH IN BELGRANO,  
BUENOS AIRES FEDERAL CAPITAL. INITIAL REPORTS INDICATED  
THAT A MESSAGE HAD BEEN SCRAWLED ON A DOOR IN CHALK TO  
THE EFFECT THAT THE CLERGYMEN HAD BEEN ASSASSINATED IN  
RETRALIATION FOR THE TERRORIST BOMB ATTACK AGAINST THE  
FEDERAL POLICE OF ARGENTINA (FPA) DEPARTMENT OF FEDERAL  
SECURITY (DFS) HEADQUARTERS ON JULY 2, 1976, WHICH AS OF  
JULY 8, 1976, CLAIMED 21 LIVES. THERE WAS WIDESPREAD  
SPECULATION THAT THE AUTHORS OF THE ASSASSINATION OF THE  
CLERGYMEN MAY HAVE BEEN MEMBERS OF THE ARGENTINE SECURITY  
FORCES CARRYING OUT RETALIATION FOR THE JULY 2, 1976 FPA DFS

3 - Bue (109-2)  
(109-103)  
(80-217 [Marcote]) (S) (U)

RWS:gjk  
(3)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT  
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

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*Russ*  
109-103-452

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BUE 109-2; 109-103 PAGE TWO ~~SECRET~~

HEADQUARTERS BOMBING OR LEFTIST TERRORISTS WHO ASSASSINATED THE CLERGYMEN IN ORDER TO MAKE IT APPEAR THAT THE ARGENTINE MILITARY GOVERNMENT WAS RESPONSIBLE, THEREBY DISCREDITING THE GOVERNMENT. (S) (U)

ON JULY 7, 1976, INFORMATION WAS PASSED TO THE U. S. EMBASSY, BUENOS AIRES FROM AN EXTREMELY SENSITIVE SOURCE WHICH INDICATED THAT THE FIVE CLERGYMEN HAD BEEN ASSASSINATED BY A UNIT OF THE ARGENTINE ARMY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE (AAIS) WHO DISCOVERED THAT THE CLERGYMEN HAD BEEN HARBORING MONTONERO GUERRILLA LEADER MARIO EDUARDO FIRMENICH. INFORMATION WAS ALSO PASSED TO THE U. S. EMBASSY BY THIS SAME SOURCE INDICATING THAT THE AAIS HAD ALSO MURDERED THREE ROMAN CATHOLIC NUNS WHO HAD FACILITATED FIRMENICH'S ESCAPE FROM ST. PATRICK'S ON JULY 4, 1976. (S) (U)

ON JULY 7, 1976, A CONFIDENTIAL SOURCE ABROAD WHO IS A RANKING OFFICER OF THE FPA DFS, PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: (S) (U)

AFTER THE JULY 2, 1976 MONTONERO GUERRILLA ORGANIZATION BOMBING OF FPA DFS HEADQUARTERS, NUMEROUS FPA OFFICERS EMBARKED UPON ACTIVITIES TO RETALIATE AGAINST THE TERRORIST (S) (U)

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BUE 109-2; 109-103 PAGE THREE ~~SECRET~~

TARGET FOR THE JULY 2, 1976 BOMBING WHEREIN MANY OF THEIR FRIENDS WERE KILLED AND MAIMED. A GROUP OF SIX FPA NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS HAD INFORMATION INDICATING THAT TWO SEMINARIANS ATTACHED TO ST. PATRICK'S PARISH IN BELGRANO WERE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN PROPAGANDA ACTIVITIES AT THE OFFICE OF THE THIRD WORLD MOVEMENT LOCATED A FEW BLOCKS FROM ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH ~~(S)~~ (U)

THE THIRD WORLD MOVEMENT IS CONSIDERED BY MANY TO BE MARXIST-ORIENTED.

THESE SIX FPA NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS, WITHOUT ANY HIGHER AUTHORITY, DECIDED TO CARRY OUT A RETALIATORY ATTACK AGAINST THE TWO SEMINARIANS, WHICH RESULTED IN THE JULY 4, 1976 MURDER OF THE THREE PRIESTS AND TWO SEMINARIANS. IT WAS EMPHASIZED THAT THE ASSASSINATION OF THE CLERGYMEN WAS CARRIED OUT WITHOUT ANY SANCTION OR AUTHORITY OF FPA SUPERIOR OFFICERS OR ANY ENTITY OF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT. ~~(S)~~ (U)

INFORMATION CONCERNING THE ASSASSINATION OF THREE NUNS PROVIDED TO THE U. S. EMBASSY ON JULY 7, 1976, AS NOTED ABOVE, IS COMPLETELY ERRONEOUS, IT BEING NOTED THAT NO CATHOLIC NUNS WERE ASSASSINATED OR MISSING DURING THE PERTINENT PERIOD. ~~(S)~~ (U)

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BUE 109-2; 109-103 PAGE FOUR ~~SECRET~~

THE SOURCE OFFERED HIS PERSONAL OPINION THAT INFORMATION PASSED TO THE U. S. EMBASSY ON JULY 7, 1976 WAS PROBABLY A MISGUIDED EFFORT TO MISINFORM U. S. EMBASSY REGARDING THE ALLEGED PRESENCE OF A RANKING TERRORIST LEADER AT ST. PATRICK'S PARISH IN ORDER TO GET SOME JUSTIFICATION TO THE ATROCIOUS MURDER OF THE FIVE CLERGYMEN ON JULY 4, 1976. ~~(S)~~ (U)

~~CLASSIFIED BY 5931 XGDS-2.~~

ADMINISTRATIVE.. ~~KIRKX~~ THE SOURCE IS COMISARIO MAYOR CARLOS VICENTE MARCOTE, ACTING DIRECTOR, FPA DFS. ~~(S)~~ (U)  
COORDINATED LOCALLY.

THE FOREGOING INFORMATION WAS PERSONALLY DISCUSSED WITH THE AMBASSADOR HILL, WHO WAS DEEPLY DISTURBED AT ITS CONTENT. INFORMATION PROVIDED TO THE U.S. EMBASSY DURING THE MORNING OF JULY 7, 1976, REFERRED TO ABOVE, WAS ALLEGEDLY MADE AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY'S SECURITY OFFICER BY A MEMBER OF PRESIDENT VIDELA'S PRESS OFFICE. DURING THE MORNING OF JULY 8, 1976, THE AMBASSADOR ADVISED ME THAT HE WAS VISITED BY THE PAPAL NUNCIO, WHO CONFIRMED THAT THE STORY CONCERNING THE THREE NUNS HAVING BEEN ASSASSINATED IS COMPLETELY WITHOUT ~~(S)~~ (U)

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FOUNDATION, AS WELL AS THE ALLEGATION THAT MARIO FIRME-  
NICH WAS BEING HARBORED AT ST. PATRICK'S PARISH. THE PAPAL NUNCIO  
TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT ONE OF THE TWO ASSASSINATED SEMINARIANS  
DEFINITELY HAD QUESTIONABLE CONNECTIONS AND THAT THE ROMAN  
CATHOLIC HIERARCHY IN ARGENTINA, INCLUDING CARDINAL ARAMBURU,  
WERE CONVINCED THAT THE MOTIVATION FOR THE ASSASSINATION OF  
THE FIVE CLERGYMEN ON JULY 4, 1976 WAS POLICE RETALIATION  
FOR THE JULY 2, 1976 FPA DFS BOMBING. ~~(S)~~ (U)

INFORMATION CONCERNING THE ALLEGED HARBORING OF MARIO  
FIRME- NICH BY THE ASSASSINATED CLERGYMEN AT ST. PATRICK'S PARISH  
AND ERRONEOUS INFORMATION CONCERNING THE MURDER OF THREE  
CATHOLIC NUNS WAS REPORTED BY THE U. S. EMBASSY IN BUENOS  
AIRES IN A U. S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE TELEGRAM ON JULY 7, 1976.  
THIS U. S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE TELEGRAM WAS HIGHLY CLASSIFIED AND  
WAS RESTRICTED FROM NORMAL DISTRIBUTION AND DISSEMINATION. ~~(S)~~ (U)

END

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