

6/3/76

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

AN: D760214-0081

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PH-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05  
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 DHA-02 SCCT-01 FBIE-00 IO-13

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0 031459Z JUN 76  
FM ANEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5885  
INFO ANEMBASSY LA PAZ IMMEDIATE  
USMISSION USUN IMMEDIATE

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

Release  Excise  Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify:  In Part  In Full

Classify as  Extend as  Downgrade to

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Declassify on \_\_\_\_\_ Reason \_\_\_\_\_

BUENOS AIRES 3664

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: SHUM, PFOR, PINS, AR, BL

SUBJECT: BODY OF EX-BOLIVIAN PRESIDENT TORRES FOUND

REF: A) USUN 2357, B) BUENOS AIRES 3641

1. MEDIA CARRYING STORY THAT BODY TENTATIVELY IDENTIFIED AS THAT OF FORMER PRESIDENT OF BOLIVIA GEN. JUAN JOSE TORRES WAS FOUND JUNE 2 IN SAN ANDRES DE GILES, BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE; ABOUT 120 KILOMETERS FROM BUENOS AIRES. POLICE HAVE NOT YET ISSUED REPORT.
  2. COMMENT: PRELIMINARY EMBASSY CHECKS WITH LOCAL SECURITY SOURCES CONFIRM THAT BODY IS THAT OF TORRES. WE WILL FOLLOW UP WITH DETAILS AS AVAILABLE.
  3. SEPTEL IN PREPARATION ON MIN INTERIOR PRESS CONFERENCE JUNE 2 ON TORRES' DISAPPEARANCE, AND WE WILL INCLUDE ANY IMMEDIATE GOA REACTION TO FINDING OF BODY.
  4. PENDING FURTHER INFORMATION, WE WILL HAVE TO RESERVE JUDGMENT ON WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TORRES' MURDER. THERE IS
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NO QUESTION, HOWEVER, THAT IT WILL BE WIDELY ASSUMED IN ARGENTINA AND ABROAD THAT THE KILLING WAS WORK OF GOA SECURITY FORCES ACTING OFFICIALLY, OR AT LEAST THAT OF SEMI-OFFICIAL "DEATH SQUAD" WHICH HAS TACIT APPROVAL OF GOA. COMING ON HEELS OF MURDERS OF THE URUGUAYAN EXILES MICHELINI AND GUTIERREZ, IT WILL BE TAKEN AS INDICATION OF CAMPAIGN TO ELIMINATE LEFTIST EXILE LEADERSHIP IN ARGENTINA AND PROBABLY TO INTIMIDATE EXILE COMMUNITIES HERE. IT MAY WELL PROVOKE ALREADY NERVOUS EXILES INTO RUN FOR SAFETY ABROAD, DIRECTLY OR INTO EMBASSIES IN BUENOS AIRES.

5. ON OTHER HAND, MINISTER ECONOMY MARTINEZ DE HOZ CALLED ME AND STATED THAT GOA HAD NO REPEAT NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR MURDER TORRES. HE CONSIDERED THAT KILLING WAS WORK OF LEFTIST EXTREMISTS KILLING "ONE OF THEIR OWN" AND HAVING BLAME FALL ON GOA.  
HILL

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[REDACTED]