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PAGE 1 OF 4 PAGES

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COUNTRY CHILE/VENEZUELA

21-22 OCTOBER 1976

VISIT OF AN EMISSARY OF VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES

PEREZ TO EXPLAIN LATTER'S MOTIVES IN ATTENDING FUNERAL

ORLANDO LETELIER

ACQ CHILE, SANTIAGO (5 NOVEMBER 1976) FIELD NO.

SOURCE A RETIRED MILITARY OFFICER WITH GOOD CONNECTIONS THROUGHOUT

MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. HE IS A FAIRLY RELIABLE REPORTER.

NOV 19 1976

ON 21 OCTOBER 1976, ENRIQUE

IDENTIFIED AS A PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT ARRIVED IN CHILE AND REQUESTED A CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ,

MEETING WITH GENERAL GUSTAVO XL E I G H, AIR FORCE MEMBER OF THE

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IN 93225

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PAGE 2 OF 4 PAGES

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JUNTA. THE FOLLOWING DAY, RIVAS MET LEIGH AND TOLD HIM THAT HE HAD BEEN SENT BY PRESIDENT PEREZ TO EXPLAIN THE LATTER'S INTENTIONS IN PERSONALLY ATTENDING THE FUNERAL OF ORLANDO L E T E L I E R. FORMER CHILEAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES WHO WAS ASSASSINATED IN WASHINGTON, D.C. ON 21 SEPTEMBER 1976 AND BURIED IN CARACAS.

- RIVAS TOLD LEIGH THAT PRESIDENT PEREZ DID NOT MEAN TO AFFRONT THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT BY HIS ACTION, BUT RATHER THAT HE ATTENDED THE FUNERAL TO SHOW HIS RESPECT FOR VENEZUELA'S RIVAS SAID THAT PRESIDENT PEREZ HOPED HIS DEMOCRATIC TRADITIONS. ACTION HAD NOT BEEN MISINTERPRETED BY THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT AND THAT THERE WOULD BE NO HARD FEELINGS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS OVER THE MATTER.
- GENERAL LEIGH SAID THAT PRESIDENT PEREZ' ACTION HAD BEEN BADLY RECEIVED IN CHILE AND THAT HE PERSONALLY FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND THE PRESIDENT'S MOTIVES. LEIGH SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD PEREZ RESPECT FOR DEMOCRACY, BUT HE FELT THAT IN LETELIER'S CASE, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT TO SEND A

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NW 50953 DocId:32306902 Page 3

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IN 093225

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PAGE 3 OF A PAGES

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REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE. THE **D**ECISION TO PERSONALLY ATTEND THE FUNERAL HAS BEEN USED BY CHILE'S ENEMIES TO EMBARRASS THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT.

- 4. WHEN QUERIED ABOUT THE VENEZUELAN INVESTIGATION INTO THE LETELIER ASSASSINATION, RIVAS SAID THAT VENEZUELAN AUTHORITIES WAD GONE ABOUT AS FAR AS THEY WANTED TO GO IN QUESTIONING ORLANDO B O S C_H, CUBAN EXILE LEADER, REGARDING HIS POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT. RIVAS POINTED OUT THAT BOSCH HAD POWERFUL FRIENDS CLOSE TO THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT AND THAT PRESSURE WAS BEING APPLIED ON BOSCH'S BEHALF. HE EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT ANY MORE INFORMATION WOULD BE REVEALED BECAUSE OF THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT'S RELUCTANCE TO PRESS THE MATTER TOO FAR.
 - THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF RIVAS' TRIP WAS 5. TO EXPLORE THE CHILEAN ATTITUDE TOWARD A PROPOSAL BY PRESIDENT PEREZ TO HOLD A MEETING OF PRESIDENTS OF THE ANDEAN PACT COUNTRIES TO TRY TO RESOLVE THE IMPASSE BETWEEN CHILE AND THE OTHER PACT MEMBERS OVER IMPORT DUTIES AND FOREIGN INVESTMENT. VENEZUELA DID NOT PLAN TO APPROACH ANY OTHER COUNTRIES UNTIL THE CHILEANS AGREED TO THE IDEA; HOWEVER, THIS MATTER WAS OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS WITH

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PAGE 4 OF A PAGES

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CHILE'S FORMAL WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PACT ON 30 OCTOBER.)

- 6. IN REQUESTING HIS MEETING WITH LEIGH, RIVAS ASKED
 THAT HIS PRESENCE IN CHILE NOT BE MADE A MATTER OF PUBLIC
 KNOWLEDGE. FOR THIS REASON, THE MEETING WAS ARRANGED TO TAKE
 PLACE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE RATHER THAN AT DIEGO PORTALES
 GOVERNMENT HOUSE, WHERE THERE IS A GREATER RISK OF DISCOVERY BY
 REPORTERS.
- 7. (HEADQUARTERS COMMENT: A REPRESENTATIVE OF THIS AGENCY

 COMMENTED THAT ALTHOUGH RIVAS HAS, ON OCCASION, HANDLED

 SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE PEREZ ADMINISTRATION, SUCH AN

 ASSIGNMENT AS DESCRIBED IN THIS REPORT IS UNUSUAL. IT IS OUT OF

 CHARACTER FOR PEREZ TO EXPLAIN OR APOLOGIZE FOR HIS ACTIONS AND

 IT APPEARS STRANGE THAT A PEREZ REPRESENTATIVE WOULD ADMIT THAT

 BOSCH HAS POWERFUL FRIENDS IN THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT WHEN THE

 GOVERNMENT HAS GONE TO GREAT LENGTHS TO ATTEMPT TO HIDE THIS FACT.)
 - 8. FIELD DISSEM: EMBASSY AT SANTIAGO; SENT TO CARACAS.

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