E.O. 11662: GOS

SUBJECT: ABDUCTION AND MURDER OF URUGUAYAN REFUGEES MICHELINI AND GUTIERREZ; STATUS OF FERREIRA

REF: A. STATE 127301, B. STATE 125347, C. BUENOS AIRES 3390, D. STATE 125309

1. BODIES OF MICHELINI AND GUTIERREZ WERE FOUND EVENING OF MAY 21 (NOT MAY 22) IN CAR IN BUENOS AIRES. ALONG WITH BODIES IDENTIFY AS WILLIAM WHITELAW BLANCO AND MRS. ROSARIO DEL CARMEN BARBERO. WE HAVE NO FURTHER INFORMATION CONCERNING LATTER TWO. EXCEPT THAT THEY WERE REPORTED BY PRESS TO HAVE BEEN LIVING TOGETHER AND TO HAVE BEEN ABducted AT SAME TIME. ALL BODIES SHOT NUMEROUS TIMES, IN MANNER REFLECTED TO BY PRESS AS TYPICAL OF "TERRORIST" OPERATIONS SO COMMON DURING LAST REGIME. POLICE REPORTED THAT A "REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION" CLAIMED CREDIT FOR KILLINGS IN PAMPHLETS LEFT IN CAR.

2. BODIES OF MICHELINI AND GUTIERREZ RUZI HANDED OVER TO RELATIVES MAY 23. WE NOTE JP REPORT FROM MONTEVIDEO THAT MICHELINI TO REemble THERE MAY 281 BODY IS APPARENTLY ALREADY ON WAY TO MONTEVIDEO.

3. GOV HAS SO FAR MADE NO PUBLIC STATEMENT ABOUT MURDERS OTHER THAN POLICE ANNOUNCEMENT OF FINDING OF BODIES. LA
OPINION, THE NEWSPAPER WHICH HAS TAKEN LEAD IN RAISING QUESTIONS ABOUT ABDUCTIONS AND DEATHS, HAS HAD CALLS FROM SEVERAL HIGH OFFICIALS OF DGA, INCLUDING FROM OFFICE OF PRESIDENT VIDELA, EXPRESSING DEEP SORROW AND REGRET OVER DEATH OF MICHELINI, WHO HAD BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH PAPER.

LA OPINION ON MAY 29 CARRIED LETTER WRITTEN BEFORE ABDUCTION BY MICHELINI TO COLLEAGUE ON PAPER IN WHICH MICHELINI STATED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED SEVERAL EARNINGS THAT HE WOULD BE ATTACKED AND TAKEN TO URUGUAY BY FORCE. PURPOSE OF LETTER WAS TO ESTABLISH THAT ANY LATER CLAIM THAT HE HAD RETURNED TO URUGUAY VOLUNTARILY WAS FALSE. BUENOS AIRES PRESS TREATMENT OF MURDERS HAS BEEN MITTED, AND LIMITED TO COMMENT ABOUT DAMAGE INCIDENT WOULD DO TO ARGENTINE IMAGE.

4. UNHCR REPS WHO CALLED ON AMBASSADOR MAY 24 (SEPTEL) REPORTED GRAVE CONCERN IN URUGUAYAN EXILE COMMUNITY, AND SAID MAY URUGUAYANS ARE NOW ANXIOUS TO LEAVE ARGENTINA FOR SAFER REFUGE. THERE ARE REPORTS THIS MORNING THAT SEVERAL URUGUAYANS NOW SEEKING ASYLUM IN EMBASSIES HERE.

7. IN RESPONSE TO INSTRUCTION IN STATE 125309 NOTA (RE HARDY), WE ASSURE DEPT THAT WE HAVE REPEATEDLY WARNED...
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PRESENT DIA LEADERS AT HIGHEST LEVEL SINCE AT LEAST LAST JANUARY, BEFORE THEY TOOK POWER, OF EFFECTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES ON U.S. OPINION-HOLDERS.

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