

CN 7288

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SAT

# TELEGRAM

051544Z SEP 79

INDICATE  
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 CHARGE TO

TBF  
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(4)(a)

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|  | FROM<br>AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES | CLASSIFICATION<br>CONFIDENTIAL | Turnman |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|

12065  
E.O. ~~XXXXXX~~  
TAGS:  
SUBJECT:

GDS 9/5/85 (FRIEDMAN, TOWNSEND B.) OR-P  
OVIP SHUM AR US  
(U) WIESEL DOES NOT SEE TIMERMAN

7

ACTION:

SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMB  
DCM  
POL 3  
ECOM  
POL/R  
DAO  
ICA  
CHRON

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES ~~728~~ 7288

REF: BUENOS AIRES 7262

1. C - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. ELI WIESEL LEFT BUENOS AIRES WITHOUT SEEING JACOBO

TIMERMAN, DESPITE ARMY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF GENERAL

VIOLA'S AUTHORIZATION TO THE AMBASSADOR OF SUCH A VISIT

(REFTEL). GENERAL VIOLA'S AUTHORIZATION WAS FOLLOWED

BY A PHONE CALL TO THE AMBASSADOR FROM ARMY SECRETARY GENERAL

BIGNONE, WHO PARTICIPATED IN <sup>PART OF</sup> THE MEETING BETWEEN VIOLA

AND THE AMBASSADOR, STATING THAT THE VISIT HAD BEEN

SET UP AND ALL THE EMBASSY HAD TO DO WAS TO CONTACT THE

INTERIOR MINISTRY TO MAKE FINAL ARRANGEMENTS. (TIMERMAN'S

HOUSE ARREST IS SUPERVISED BY THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR.)

THE EMBASSY TRIED REPEATEDLY TO CONTACT COL. RUIZ PALACIOS,

DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERIOR, WHOSE SECRETARY INFORMED

HIM OF THE PURPOSE OF OUR CALL. COL. PALACIOS WAS "OUT"

|                                 |                         |                |   |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|---|
| DRAFTED BY<br>POL:TBFRIEDMAN:SZ | DRAFTING DATE<br>9/5/79 | TEL EXT<br>278 | CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION APPROVED BY<br>POLCOUNS:WHHALLMAN |
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DCM:MCHAPLIN

USICA-JSCOTT

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CLASSIFICATION

OPTIONAL FORM 183  
(Formerly FS-413)  
January 1975  
Dept of State

50153-101

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~~XXXXXX~~:  
~~TAGG~~:  
~~SUBJECT~~:  
 ACTIONX

OR "IN A MEETING" AND NEVER RETURNED OUR CALLS. SIMILARLY 7  
 WE ATTEMPTED TO SPEAK WITH COL. SAN ROMAN, A FREQUENT  
 INTERIOR MINISTRY CONTACT AND MEMBER OF RUIZ PALACIOS'  
 STAFF. SAN ROMAN WAS ALSO OUT AND NEVER RETURNED OUR  
 PHONE CALLS. FINALLY, WE TRIED TO SPEAK WITH INTERIOR  
 MINISTER HARGUINDEGUY WHO WAS OUT OF TOWN. WHEN IT  
 APPEARED THAT WE WERE GOING TO HAVE TROUBLE COMPLETING  
 ARRANGEMENTS WE AGAIN CONTACTED GENERAL BIGNONE AND  
 WERE TOLD ONCE AGAIN ALL HAD BEEN ARRANGED AND ALL WE  
 HAD TO DO WAS CONTACT THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR. IN  
 THE END WIESEL, WHO WAS AWARE OF OUR EFFORTS IN HIS  
 BEHALF, LEFT TOWN DISAPPOINTED AND ANGERED BY THIS  
 DEVELOPMENT.

3. COMMENT: THERE ARE THREE POSSIBLE BROAD EXPLANATIONS  
 OF THIS PERFORMANCE BY THE GOA:

(A) A BUREAUCRATIC SNAFU;  
 (B) MINISTER HARGUINDEGUY, WHO ORIGINALLY DENIED WIESEL'S  
 REQUEST TO VISIT TIMERMAN, OBSTRUCTED VIOLA'S ATTEMPT  
 TO OVERRULE HIM;

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OPTIONAL FORM 153  
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 January 1975  
 Dept of State

# TELEGRAM

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(C) THERE WAS SOME SORT OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN VIOLA AND HARGUINDEGUY WHICH AUTHORIZED THE MINISTER AND HIS SUBORDINATES TO PROCEED EXACTLY AS THEY DID. 7

THE FIRST EXPLANATION SEEMS TO US ~~TO BE THE MOST PROBABLE~~ IMPLAUSIBLE IN THIS CASE, THOUGH IT MAY BE THE ONE EVENTUALLY HEARD FROM THE GOA. THE OTHER TWO SCENARIOS ARE PLAUSIBLE BUT IT WOULD SIMPLY BE GUESS-WORK TO SAY WHICH MORE CLOSELY CORRESPONDS TO THE EVENTS.

~~THE TRANSCRIPT~~

4. WIESEL TOLD THE PRESS ON DEPARTING BUENOS AIRES THAT HE WOULD BE MAKING A FULL STATEMENT ABOUT THIS ABORTED INTERVIEW IN NEW YORK. IF THE DEPARTMENT IS QUERIED ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENTS OUTLINED ABOVE RECOMMEND THAT IT CONFIRM THE EMBASSY EFFORTS TO ARRANGE THE WIESEL/TIMERMAN INTERVIEW BUT NOT SPECULATE ON THE REASON WHY THE MEETING NEVER CAME OFF, LIMITING ITSELF TO STATE THAT WE WERE UNABLE TO COMPLETE FINAL ARRANGEMENTS.

CASTRO *me*

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Dept of State

File  
50c-17(6) -

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~~FOR~~ - ~~WJH~~  
for yr records  
- possible reply?

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(U) Elie Weisel (pronounced why-LELL, Chairman of the President's Commission on the Holocaust) has expressed his intention of visiting Argentina in late August to raise the Timmer case with GOA officials. The Commission on the Holocaust was established in 1978 for the purpose of advising the President or establishing an appropriate memorial in the United States to the victims of the Holocaust. The Commission will soon fare its recommendations and they will include the establishment of a museum display, an educational center with computer link-ups to other centers concerned with the Holocaust, and the creation of a Committee of Conscience of apolitical and respected public figures to advise the President and Congress on situations of potential genocide in the future (such as the plight of the "boat people" in Southeast Asia).

(U) Elie Weisel is an Andrew Mellon Professor of Humanities at Boston University. He is a survivor of the holocaust (interned at Auschwitz) and became an American citizen in 1958. He has written 19 books on philosophical subjects.

(LOU) Weisel shares the concern of many Americans over the detention of Jacobo Timerman. He would like to intervene with GOA officials and press for Timerman's release and would plan to visit in late August. S/S originally called us about this visit and urged that we be as helpful as possible to Weisel. While we all agree on the importance of the Timerman case, and its political sensitivities, John Bushnell has expressed his concern, however, that we may be pressing these approaches to the GOA on Timerman to the point where they adversely affect our ability to get Argentine action on other high-interest cases. John felt that Weisel could properly visit Argentina on the Timerman case, but that he should not travel in a GOA-official status as Chairman of the Commission on the Holocaust but rather as a respected American citizen. John also suggested that the Jewish community in Argentina might be encouraged to take a hand in arranging calls on the GOA and other key contacts. We will approach the visit from this point of view here in the Department, down-playing a direct U.S. role, but would appreciate at the same time your views on the Weisel visit.

STBC  
hand from me  
of future meeting  
letter to the Arg  
December the  
Recommending  
and response  
U.S.

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MARSHALL  
with can visit when  
in the cabinet on  
a  
Staten Is  
visit  
6 Aug 79