

# TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the  
United States of America

INCOMING

AMEMBASSY RIO

IPS

ACTION: USAID 6

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Classification

Control: 7421

Recd: AUG 12, 1970  
2319

INFO: R 122100Z AUG 70

CHARGE FM SECSTATE WASHDC

AIDE TO RUESUA/AMEMBASSY RIO DE JANEIRO 0763

MINECON INFO RUESUZ/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0754

POL BT

POL/R ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ STATE 130663

USIS

DAO 3 JOINT STATE/AID

MILGR 2

ECON SUBJ: ERLANDSON STORY ON TORTURES

SCI

FILES REF: RIO 5434; STATE 059652.

1. WE HAVE PROBLEMS WITH APPROACH ADOPTED WITH SUN REPORTER ERLANDSON AND ESPECIALLY WITH BACKGROUND COMMENT IN PARA FOUR RIO 5434 THAT STORIES ON TORTURE "CAME FROM ELEMENTS WHOSE PURPOSE IN BRAZIL HAS BEEN TO EMBARRASS AND ALIENATE GOB FROM WORLD COMMUNITY OR OVERTHROW GOVT AND WHO RECOGNIZED DISSEMINATION OF TORTURE STORIES ABROAD SERVED THIS PURPOSE". THIS CAN BE MISLEADING AND MIGHT GIVE TOTALLY ERRONEOUS IMPRESSION THAT WE BELIEVE THAT THERE IS NO VALIDITY TO TORTURE CHARGES AND THAT EVERYONE LOOKING INTO THEM IS EITHER BEING HOODWINKED OR LENDING HIMSELF TO A CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE GOB. FOR EXAMPLE IN THE SUN'S AUGUST 4 STORY ON THIS SUBJECT THE DISTURBING STATEMENT IS MADE THAT "SOME AMERICAN OFFICIALS ECHO THE BRAZILIAN GOVT LINE THAT THE TORTURE ALLEGATIONS ARE SIMPLY AN OPPOSITION EFFORT TO DISRUPT BRAZILIAN RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES."

2. WE ARE FULLY AWARE OF EVIDENCE THAT CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT GOB EXISTS AND THAT TORTURE ISSUE AS PART OF THIS CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN EXAGGERATED AND DISTORTED. WE ALSO FULLY AWARE, AS IS EMBASSY, OF EVIDENCE THAT TORTURE HAS BEEN DELIBERATELY USED BY GOB SECURITY FORCES IN CERTAIN INSTANCES. AS A RESULT, WE CANNOT APPEAR TO BE IN ANY WAY CONDONING OR JUSTIFYING OR EXPLAINING AWAY ACTIONS WHICH ARE REPUGNANT. TO GIVE SUCH A FALSE IMPRESSION IN THE FACE OF THE FACTS CAN ONLY REFLECT ADVERSELY ON US AND BE EXPLOITED BY THOSE HOSTILE TO US.

3. AS EMBASSY KNOWS, WE HAVE REGULARLY TOLD U.S. PRESS, CONGRESSMEN AND INTERESTED CITIZENS THAT REPORTS OF THE USE OF TORTURE BY SECURITY FORCES IN BRAZIL DO CONCERN US AND HAVE PROMPTED PUBLIC AND PRIVATE OFFICIAL EXPRESSIONS

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CN 7421

OF CONCERN BY THE USG. AS YOU KNOW FROM STATE 059652, DEPT SPOKESMAN SAID FOR RECORD ON APRIL 21 THAT WE WERE CONCERNED ABOUT ALLEGATIONS AND REPORTS OF TORTURE; THAT WE HAD DISCUSSED SUBJECT WITH HIGH-LEVEL GOB OFFICIALS, WHO ASSURED US GOB DID NOT CONDONE TORTURE; THAT THESE DISCUSSIONS HAD TAKEN PLACE IN BOTH WASHINGTON AND RIO; AND THAT WE WOULD CONTINUE TO SEEK FURTHER INFORMATION AND BRING OUR CONCERN TO GOB. THIS STATEMENT WAS REPEATED ON JULY 23 FOLLOWING RELEASE OF INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS' REPORT. IN ADDITION, IN OUR RECENT LETTERS TO CONGRESSMEN AND TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC WHO HAVE INQUIRED INTO MATTER, WE HAVE POINTED OUT BRAZILIAN CONCERN OVER TORTURE ISSUE, AS SHOWN BY DEBATE IN CONGRESS, DISCUSSION IN BRAZILIAN PRESS, PASTORAL LETTER, HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION HEARINGS AND OTHER INDICATIONS THAT THE MATTER IS BEING WIDELY AIRED IN BRAZIL AND THAT THE GOB IS EVIDENTLY MAKING EFFORT TO DEAL WITH QUESTION.

4. ABOVE POINTS REMAIN BASIS OF OUR OFFICIAL PUBLIC POSITION. THEY ARE TO BE REFLECTED IN EMBASSY'S TREATMENT OF SUBJECT IN BRAZIL AS THEY WILL BE HERE. IF EMBASSY HAS ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE TRANSMIT THEM.

ROGERS

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Cont'd 5434

July 31 - 1970  
2015

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ACTION: SECSTATE WASHDC 6202

INFO: AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 6511

RIO DE JANEIRO 5454

AIDAC

SUBJECT: BALTIMORE SUN CORRESPONDENT QUERIES RE USAID  
PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM

1. AT REQUEST OF ERLANDSON, BALTIMORE SUN CORRESPONDENT RIO,  
AND WITH PRIOR APPROVAL EMBASSY, USAID ACTING DIRECTOR  
BALLANTYNE, PUBLIC SAFETY CHIEF BROWN, PSA BARNES AND  
USIS MCKIERNAN MET TO DISCUSS PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM.  
ERLANDSON WISHED TO PURSUE STATEMENT IN RECENT ICJ REPORT  
ON TORTURE IN BRAZIL WHICH IMPLICATED U.S. EXPERTS  
(MILITARY) AS INSTRUCTING BRAZILIANS IN TORTURE  
TECHNIQUES.

ERLANDSON'S  
2. IN RESPONSE ~~ERLANDSON'S~~ QUESTION BALLANTYNE DENIED  
PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM AND U.S. MILITARY INVOLVED IN  
SUCH TRAINING AND STATED FURTHER THAT HE COULD NOT  
UNDERSTAND HOW ICJ COULD HAVE MADE SUCH STATEMENT

DRAFTED BY: Robert J. Ballantyne, A/DOM

DRAFTING DATE: 7-31-70

TEL. EXT.

APPROVED BY: Robert J. Ballantyne, A/DOM

## CLEARANCES:

TBrown, PSO (in draft)  
RMckiernan, USIS (in draft)  
JMowinkel, DAO (in substance)

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ACTION:

UNLESS IT UNCRITICALLY ACCEPTED AT FACE VALUE ANY  
INFORMATION IT HAD RECEIVED REGARDING BRAZIL SITUATION.

3. QUERIED ON NATURE OF PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM WE  
DESCRIBED IT AS FOCUSSED ON INSTITUTION BUILDING OF  
NATIONAL POLICE ACADEMY IN BRASILIA TO BETTER  
ENABLE ACADEMY TO TRAIN BRAZILIAN FEDERAL POLICE  
AND UPGRADE STATE POLICE. PROGRAM DID NOT ~~SEE~~ PUT  
PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH BRAZILIAN  
SECURITY POLICE (DOPS) AT STATE LEVEL. AS WE WERE  
DEALING WITH FEDERAL POLICE WE DID OF COURSE HAVE SOME  
CONTACT WITH FEDERAL DOPS.

4. CLEAR BY AGGRESSIVE NATURE OF ERLANDSON'S QUESTION-  
ING THAT HE WISHED TO GET STATEMENT OUT OF USAID AS TO  
WHETHER IT WOULD CONFIRM OR DENY THAT TORTURE EXISTED  
IN BRAZIL. BALLANTYNE STATED ON BASIS OF KNOWLEDGE  
WE COULD NOT CONFIRM OR DENY TORTURE DID EXIST. ON  
BACKGROUND BASIS HE ADDED HE HAD READ SAME STORIES  
ERLANDSON HAD REGARDING TORTURE AND NOTED THEY

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ACTION:

CAME FROM ELEMENTS WHOSE PURPOSE IN BRAZIL HAD BEEN  
AND ALIENATE GOB FROM WORLD COMMUNITY  
TO EMBARRASS /~~OR OVERTHROW GOVERNMENT AND WHO~~ AND WHO  
RECOGNIZED DISSEMINATION OF TORTURE STORIES ABROAD  
SERVED THIS PURPOSE.

5. ERLANDSON ASKED IF USAID HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED  
BY WASHINGTON TO HAVE ITS PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICE  
INVESTIGATE STORIES OF TORTURE SO AS TO BE ABLE  
TO CONFIRM OR DENY. ACTING DIRECTOR REPLIED  
NEGATIVELY. TO QUESTION WHETHER WE HAD NOT SEEN  
FIT TO MAKE INQUIRY OF OUR OWN, BALLANTYNE STATED  
USAID WAS A U.S. DEVELOPMENT AGENCY ENGAGED IN  
SUPPORT OF BRAZILIAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

6. COMMENT: IN THIS INTERVIEW ERLANDSON ADOPTED  
POSTURE OF CRUSADING JOURNALIST DETERMINED TO  
FIND BASIS FOR HIS STATED BELIEF GAINED THROUGH  
FIVE YEARS AS POLICE REPORTER IN U.S. THAT  
BRUTAL METHODS NORMAL TO ALL POLICE FORCES.  
AND CERTAINLY EXISTED HERE. HE

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ACTION:

OBVIOUSLY FELT USAID HAD RESPONSIBILITY TO INVOLVE  
PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM IN INVESTIGATION OF THIS  
DEEPLY MORAL, HUMANITARIAN ISSUE. QUITE POSSIBLE  
HE WILL FILE TENDENTIOUS STORY WHICH VERY LIKELY  
TO GAIN PLAY IN SUN AND ELSEWHERE.

BOONSTRA

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