

3/11/83

(CW057)

ADELLA GARRE CHECKED WITH HER SOURCES AT FON MIN IN PERSON ON MARCH 11 TO FIND OUT INFO FOR JK ON GOA MAKING PUBLIC LIST OF DIS.

SHE SAID SHE WAS TOLD THE REPORT (DUE TO BE RELEASED IN LATE MARCH) WOULD CONTAIN PROBABLY 2300 TO 2700 NAMES AND THAT SHE WAS TOLD BY FONMIN THAT APPROX 4,500 CASES WERE RECORDED WITH THEM. SHE SAID THESE FIGURES MAY CHANGE DEPENDING ON THE FINAL POL|MIL CHECKS, ETC. BUT AS OF MAR 11 THATS WHAT THEY WR.

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 _____

87F123
178/293

PER POLLY PITTMAN OF CELS, MARCH 11, 1983

IN OCTOBER 19, 1982 CLARIN: Official spokesman says re; disappeared "until the present the MinInt has received around 6000 requests for information on disappeared persons of which more than 1,000 cases the information was given to families who had requested data. (information given) that the person either died or they had found the body or they were detained or outside of the country.'

Lists

In January, a new list of names of persons disappeared in Argentina was published, which includes 7291 persons, plus 494 persons who and held temporarily in concentration camps or clandestine places of detenti. The list, which was published by CLAMOR (Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in the Southern Cone) in Sao Paulo, Brazil, is the longest yet published. The APDH (Permanent Assembly for Human Rights) in Buenos Aires has a list of 5,566 cases of disappeared persons, with the testimonies of relatives documented in each case. To this they have added a list of 1,164 persons whose disappearance was denounced, but complete information was lacking.

Because of the fear of relatives to speak out at the time, and because of the difficulties for those in the interior of the country in learning of the human rights groups, much less visiting them, it is estimated by Amne International that approximately one in every three disappearances that occurred in Argentina since 1975 were reported to human rights organizations. In the last six months, over one hundred persons have showed up in human rights offices to report disappearances that occurred from three to seven years ago. Many of these relatives had never presented a habeas corpus on the missing person's behalf.

In recent months, the military government has declared on several occasions that it has informed some 1,348 families of the fate of their disappeared son or daughter. No such list has ever been made public, and, according to Emilio Mignone of CELS, there are not more than a handful of cases in which relatives of missing persons have been informed of the fate of their loved ones. In those instances in which families have been informed (see cemetery cases), it was reported that the victim died in a military clash, despite the fact that autopsy reports indicated that the bodies showed signs of having been tortured and that the cause of death was a bullet wound received at less than two inches from the head.

Camps' Statements

In the wake of heightened press attention given to certain key cases of disappeared persons under investigation by the judicial branch, General Ramon Camps, former head of the Buenos Aires Police Force, declared that "there are no disappeared alive". In an interview with the Spanish newspaper, Pueblo, published January 27, Camps said "I assume all the responsibility and that of the 30,000 men I directed in the struggle (against subversion)."

Camps came to the attention of the world as a result of Jacobo Timerman's book, in which he recounts torture sessions directed by the former police chief. Camps responded to Timerman with a book of his own, called El caso Timerman: El punto final, in which he accuses the former newspaper editor of being at the center of the subversive conspiracy.

The Spanish journalist reports Camps as asserting that, "the government ought to present itself as proud and publicly assume responsibility for all

NN burials: those not identified & those where identity is learned but because family does not show up to claim after being notified, are buried as NN, but cemetery or morgue records should show names.

BAH 11/5/82: re: bodies found in Lomas de Zamora cemetery - according to sources unidentified bodies are usually transferred to mass graves 5 years after their burial (in single grave) if no relatives show up in the meantime to identify the remains. Unidentified people who died in medical centers are among bodies buried as NN.

La Prensa 10/26/82: When the police have a NN body they take it to the morgue where a forensic doctor certifies cause of death, and a certificate is made up; then body is buried w/information written down in ledger. Police even bury the very poor, etc. who die and families cannot afford burial, in this manner, with NN grave but record of name in ledger.

Clarín 11/3/82 Family of young girl who died in shootout in 1977 was notified Aug. 25, 1978 that she had died and would be buried in a NN grave if parents did not show up to claim body.

Of the 400 NN in Grand Bourg, according to Judge: 156 burials are NN (unidentified) with 31 of these being military confrontations.

All NN were not politically or those who had confrontations - the police procedure in Argentina is to also bury vagrants, the very poor, etc. in these graves when the families of those cannot afford burial or when families cannot be found. Although the grave is marked NN the register has those names of those who could be identified. And after 5 years these individual graves are transferred to mass graves such as that found in GB.

There have been cases of people who temporarily were missing and whose families immediately contacted CELS who in some cases filed habeas corpus. All these temporary cases also went on the list of missing and may still be on them. Anyone missing for any period is on the lists.

EXAMPLES: Miguel Sarangelo, arrested 1981 (July). On not hearing news, family filed habeas corpus and made public statements that appeared in newspapers on July 24. On July 28 federal police said he had been detained in precinct for possession of drugs. Since this arrest was not disclosed for 11 days CELS declared it a case of disappearance.

Isabel Angel. On July 30, 1981 the PAHR announced her disappearance in Cordoba based on information provided by her family. She was a leftist. A few days later the 3rd Army Corps said she had been at house of a friend without telling her parents. PAHR subsequently received info that she had suffered a sudden illness and had been admitted to a hospital without disclosing her identity to authorities and without telling her family where she was. Since a habeas corpus had been filed, she is on the list of missing.

Dentist who showed up a few days late from trip ended up on list.

ANYTIME someone was missing for whatever reason and for whatever period, they were added to lists, especially if habeas corpus had been filed, even tho some of these people were arrested for common crimes.

CEMETERIES

Following the launching of the "Grand Bourg" case last October, in which human rights groups demanded the identification of over 400 cadavers buried as "N.N." in the Grand Bourg Cemetery, similar investigations have been initiated in the case of twelve other cemeteries around the country. Nationally and internationally → the repercussions of these cases have been considerable, setting off a wave of new interest in the disappeared among sectors of the country, and among foreign governments, that had up to now taken little or no interest.

The Argentine military authorities have attempted to avoid the grave implications of these cases by asserting in conversations with politicians, foreign diplomats and journalists, that the "N.N." tombs issue is simply one more indication of the politicization of the human rights movement. These officials point to the fact that many people had known of the existence of these unmarked graves, and say that the information was guarded, to be released at a politically opportune moment.

In fact, the background to the Grand Bourg case is worth noting as it clearly demonstrates the dynamics of how information surfaces and is carried forward by the human rights groups in this period, frequently referred to in the press as the "destape" or the "unplugging" of what has for years been hidden from the public eye.

The existence of the unmarked graves containing the bodies of disappeared persons was first publicized in the O.A.S. 1979 report on human rights in Argentina. Photographs appeared in Time magazine a year or so afterwards, showing the "N.N." tombs, accompanied by an article on human rights in Argentina. At that point, no effort was made by human rights lawyers to demand investigations and identification of the cadavers, as no concrete proofs were available. In addition, many relatives of disappeared persons were against denouncing the existence of the graves, as it implied an implicit recognition of the death of many of the disappeared.

The case of Miguel Angel Sosa, who was kidnapped on May 25, 1976, arose through a series of chance circumstances, and finally provided the irrefutable documentation of the illegal burial of persons by the armed forces.

In February, 1981, the Ministry of the Interior informed the Sosa family that their son was buried in Grand Bourg cemetery in N.N grave number one. The family had in the previous five years presented numerous habeas corpus that were rejected by the court. According to the government notification, Sosa was found dead two days after his disappearance.

→ Emilio Mignone, ~~who had been~~ the lawyer handling the habeas corpus ~~up to that point~~, and Sosa's brother, also a lawyer, went to examine the court files. They found not only an autopsy report which revealed that the victim had been tortured and then shot in the head at short