

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
Rafael Maximiano Vazquez, Argentina Ambassador
to the United States
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to
the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Monday, July 14, 1975
4:00 p. m. (Presentation of Credentials)

PLACE: The Oval Office
The White House

Vazquez: I am honored. We are happy to be with you. You have proved your friendship to Argentina on many occasions. [The press entered] We hope to support the United States and to make the Americas a solid bloc.

President: We welcome you here. I knew your predecessor well. [The press left the room.] We are looking forward to working with you and your country.

Vazquez: I was here before in New Orleans, two years in New York. I have two daughters born in America. One daughter is now in Georgetown. I won't take more of your time because I know you are busy.

President: Please give your President my regards. I know these are difficult times and hope you will wish her my best.

Vazquez: We are maturing. Before, whenever we had a crisis, we would think of changing governments. Now we are not.

CLASSIFIED BY [redacted] ON [redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.5

NSC MEMO, 11/24/98, STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES, State Review 3/10/04

WJH
MARA DATE 5/21/04



Rafael Maximiano VAZQUEZ (VAHS-kehs)

Appointed Ambassador of the Republic of Argentina

Ambassador Vazquez, age 55, is a career officer in the Argentine Foreign Service. He has spent nine years at posts in the United States during his career, including Washington as Minister-Counselor (1969-1971). Since January of 1974 he has served as Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany. Ambassador Vazquez is noted for his attractive personality and sense of humor. He is married and has five daughters. He speaks fluent English.

Argentina and U.S.-Argentine Relations

Argentina is an extraordinary anomaly. Rich in land, resources and population, and free from many of the social and racial problems that have afflicted other nations in this century, it has always appeared destined to join the ranks of countries like Canada and Australia, with which it has much in common. Yet, despite its natural advantages, Argentina has failed to reach its potential. At the root of its failure has been its inability to develop durable political institutions.

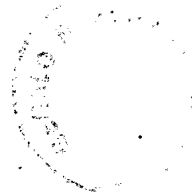
Argentina's latest experiment with democracy is in serious jeopardy. General Juan Peron was elected President in 1973 with 62 percent of the vote. On his death last July he was succeeded by his wife, then Vice President, who became the first woman President in this hemisphere's history. Her tenure as President is now precarious. The broadly based, ideologically heterogeneous Peronist movement which supported General Peron split asunder in the aftermath of his death, and power gravitated to Mrs. Peron's confidant and Social Welfare Minister, Jose Lopez Rega. For a variety of reasons Lopez Rega has aroused almost universal antipathy in Argentina. In addition, faulty economic policies created distortions and shortages which produced labor unrest and dried up new investment. Foreign reserves have fallen \$1 billion over the past year. Inflation is running at an annual rate of more than 100 percent, and the fiscal deficit is enormous. Acts of terrorism and counter-terrorism continue at a high level and accentuate both political and economic problems.

An effort by Mrs. Peron on June 28 to implement an austerity program by rolling back highly inflationary wage increases provoked a general strike against her government by the Peronist labor movement, coupled with demands for the removal of Lopez Rega. She was forced to back down to the demands of labor, restoring the wage increases and dismissing Lopez Rega from his formal positions. He may continue, however, to exercise influence over her.

Though U.S. interests in Argentina have been decreasing, our overall bilateral relations with Mrs. Peron's government have been cooperative and friendly. Her government has taken a constructive attitude towards U.S. positions in inter-American and world affairs. While some small investment and trade problems exist, there are no major bilateral issues between Argentina and the U.S. at the present time. We have been able to respond positively to Argentine Foreign Minister Vignes' requests for support for Ambassador Orfila's candidacy for Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS); for moral support for Argentine efforts to obtain large-scale financing from private U.S. banks; and for additional AID housing guarantee loans. Argentina, in turn, was helpful in arranging for the Cuba issue to be deferred for consideration at the upcoming conference in Costa Rica rather than at the OAS General Assembly in Washington.

Points You Might Raise

- I am pleased to welcome you to Washington, a city with which you are already familiar from your past diplomatic experience here. I hope you will find your stay here a both pleasant and productive one.
- We look forward to maintaining frank and friendly relations with Argentina and to continuing the open dialogue within the Hemisphere as we face mutual problems and opportunities in a spirit of cooperation and respect.
- Please convey my best wishes to your President and to the Argentine people.



✓ P / Argentine Amb. 4:00
14 July 75

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P We welcome you here. I have your
(Passant)

predecessor with we looking forward to working
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V I was here before in last 2 hours, 2 yrs in
N.Y. I have 2 daughters born in America.
One daughter now in Argentina
Don't take some of your time cause I have
you busy

P Please give your Pass my regards. I know these
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