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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford Amb. Arnaldo T. Musich, Argentine Republic Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Amb. Harry W. Schlaudeman, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Hampton Davis, Assistant Chief of Protocol

DATE AND TIME: Monday, July 19, 1976 2:35 p.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office

SUBJECT: Presentation of Credentials

[The press entered for photos.]

<u>President:</u> I hope you will join us tomorrow night at the White House reception.

Musich: I hope to, with my wife.

President: You were assigned to Washington before.

Musich: That is right.

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[The press departed.]

President: Are you a skier?

Musich: No, unfortunately. I am a jogger and a biker.

President: I hear you have as good snow as Chile.

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Musich: Not really. It is softer on our side.

<u>President:</u> We are happy to have you here. I would be interested in hearing your evaluation of the current situation in Argentina.

<u>Musich:</u> First, Mr. President, may I convey the greetings of my President and the government leadership.

We appreciate the firmness with which you have led the fight to reactivate the economy. It is important not only for the United States but for the world.

Let me point out the specific character of the guerrilla in Argentina. These are not local people. They are well organized, and they have foreign support.

President: From where?

<u>Musich:</u> From Cuba and elsewhere, like Chile. So I would hope that if circumstances demand, we could have direct contact, without, of course, prejudice to regular diplomatic channels.

President: Are they coordinated or separate?

Musich: We think they are coordinated at the top, at least.

President: They don't seem to be as active.

<u>Musich:</u> They are active on an individual basis now rather than by group action as earlier.

President: Why are they more visible in Argentina?

<u>Musich</u>: That is a difficult question. I think it happened earlier in Chile and Brazil. There they were encouraged earlier to come to the area.

President: How is your economy coming?

<u>Musich:</u> We are right now in a recession but we expect a good recovery later on.

We hope for a good wheat crop.

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President: How about the drought?

Musich: It was not enough to damage the crops.

<u>President:</u> It is nice to have you here and I'm looking forward to seeing you tomorrow evening [at the White House reception for the Diplomatic Corps].



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