

Memorandum About the Events of Friday and Saturday, June 12 and 13, 1970

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I returned to the apartment in Arpoador, Rua Francisco Octaviano, 185, apt. 21, at about 6:15 p.m., Friday evening, June 12. Entering by the back entrance, through the kitchen, I confronted a group of armed men with drawn guns - approximately eight to ten men - in sports clothes, against a background of total disorder in the apartment. After searching me, examining my wallet, they directed me to sit down in the living room where I found Professor Werner Baer who had entered the apartment sometime earlier.

The leader of the group demanded to know who "Carlos" was. At the moment I couldn't recollect knowing anyone named Carlos. He asked me if I knew a "Carmen". I replied that I did not. The next question dealt with Santa Teresa and if I knew a woman with four children who lived there. I replied no, that the only friends I had who lived in Santa Teresa were North Americans and long-time residents of Rio de Janeiro.

Again, they asked me who Carlos was. At this point the maid in the apartment entered the conversation and volunteered the information that the name of the son of the owner of the apartment was Carlos. Suddenly I recollected that his mother's name was Carmen. I explained to the group leader that, yes, I did know a "Carmen" the owner of the apartment with whom I had spoken 3 or 4 times in looking for the apartment to rent and that I had spoken with her son but did not know his name. I told them he was a dentist living in Ribeirão Preto, São Paulo. The leader of the group then asked me who "Carlos Pelaez" was. I responded that he was a university colleague, a member of the Department of Economics, in Brazil on a USAID contract and engaged in economic research. They asked me if I knew where he lived. I said yes. The address, I told them, was in an address book I had left in my bedroom when I left the apartment that afternoon. They sent me to get the book. I found my bedroom in total disorder and after some searching found the book.

The address in the book seemed to confirm the address they had for Professor Pelaez which seemed to be written on a piece of paper held by the leader of the group.

During this time the requests of Professor Baer and myself to be allowed to notify the American Embassy were denied. The group also denied our request for them to identify themselves or for an explanation of their forced entry into our apartment. By now it had become obvious that the apartment had been ransacked and all our papers and documents and books had been examined. Only later would I discover that the men had stolen a considerable amount of personal effects from my room; a list of the missing items is attached to this memorandum.

The leader of the group announced that I was to accompany them to the apartment of Professor Pelaez in Ipanema. They told me to take a sweater because it might become cold later in the evening. When I said that I preferred not to take a sweater, they insisted. At gunpoint, we left the apartment. My briefcase, filled with an assortment of my books dealing with history and political science, as well as documents, letters and personal papers, accompanied us. Under gunpoint I was put into the back seat of a jeep. We drove to Ipanema along the beach from Arpoador. There were three men in the jeep in addition to myself; one of these three was the apparent leader of the group who had forced their way into the apartment. The jeep had to stop a number of times to ask directions to Rua Farne de Amoedo where the Pelaez apartment is located. When we drove up in front of the apartment, I entered the elevator of the building with a gun in my back with the three occupants of the jeep. We rode one floor to the Pelaez apartment; Mrs. Pelaez opened the door and when she saw me invited us in. Professor Pelaez appeared almost immediately from the rear of the apartment dressed in bermuda shorts. After greeting me, he looked with surprise at the armed men and asked what they wanted. They told him that he was to come with them for questioning. After a request for identification by Professor Pelaez was denied, his wife intervened and repeated the request. They told her not to

to become nervous. As both Professor Pelaez and his wife were becoming progressively nervous, I was taken, at gun point, downstairs to the jeep. After ten minutes the three men returned to the jeep and we drove two or three blocks; the jeep stopped at the corner of Rua Montenegro and Visconde de Pirajá and a conversation of about ten minutes followed between the three men in the jeep and members of the original group who were having a *cafézinho* at a corner *café*. They openly showed their revolvers and were seemingly long-time visitors to the *café*.

After this stop we proceeded without stopping again to the headquarters of the group. This trip lasted about 30 minutes. I was blindfolded during the last ten minutes. Our conversation during the trip revolved around terrorist groups in Latin America and in Brazil particularly. They wanted to know my opinion of the kidnapping of the German Ambassador. I told them that I regarded kidnapping as a desperate tactic of the revolutionary left, an attempt to question the legitimacy and credibility of the incumbent Brazilian regime. They wanted to know what else I knew about terrorist and revolutionary groups and I briefly discussed and identified other groups operating in Latin America and in Brazil. I briefly commented on the political problems confronting the Brazilian government in dealing with the kidnapping of the Ambassador. I speculated as to why two German Ambassadors had been kidnapped within a relatively short period of time. These questions have been of interest to me for many years. Political issues, particularly Brazilian issues, have been the subject of my academic research both in Brazil and in the United States and one of the major emphases in my university teaching. Unfortunately, my response to their questions about terrorism seemed to whet their appetite for more conversation and they seemed "impressed" with the rather public knowledge I related to them about revolutionary-terrorist groups operating in Latin America.

We briefly discussed the major problems confronting the United States, in their opinion. These issues are inflation, race, and a lack of political

leadership. They asked me my opinion of John F. Kennedy, Stokeley Carmichael, and Martin Luther King. The present activism of the American university students interested them and when I said that the Brazilian universities seemed quiet in contrast to North American campuses, they laughed.

When we arrived at their headquarters, I was led blindfolded through a courtyard, up a set of stairs, into a small room where my blindfold was removed. Professor Baer was sitting in the room. I was told to sit next to him but not to attempt to converse with him. The chief guard in the room was a young man of about 20 holding a pistol; he was not a member of the original band at the apartment. The room was freshly painted grey, with old office furniture arranged haphazardly. It had a plain wooden floor. Shortly thereafter, Professor Pelaez came in, blindfolded, and told to sit down. Within about thirty minutes I was told to go into an adjoining room and wait. At gunpoint I made the transfer; I was guarded by one man in the second room which had one set of windows, two doors, old office furniture, and had been freshly painted. The sound of passing traffic was quite audible. The guard in the room, not of the original group, was cordial. He warned me that I had best cooperate with my examiners. He told me that they would just as soon return home that evening and take off their shirts clean but that if I did not cooperate they, the examiners, would return home with bloody shirts and leave me on the floor. I told him I would cooperate if I knew the subject to be discussed. All during this time he held a gun in his hand. The time was approximately 10:00 p.m.

At about 10:30 p.m. the leader of the group which had taken us into custody in the Arpoador apartment came into the room. He was accompanied by three or four other men from the apartment group. He said that he wanted to explain a few things to me and that he would return to question me shortly thereafter. He proceeded to say that if I did not answer his questions they would have no qualms about pulling out my teeth, one by one,

and breaking my arms and legs. He told me to put on my thinking cap and seriously consider the situation I found myself in. I told him that I would cooperate if I knew the topics he wanted to investigate. He said that the topics would be revealed to me later. He again advised me to cooperate because, he said, "já sabemos que você sabe". I again requested that they identify the areas of questioning they wanted to pursue; he replied that he would tell me later. He again refused to identify his purpose or the group. I was then left alone for about one hour.

At about 11:30 p.m. the leader of the original apartment group re-appeared with three or four men. Some were from the original group; two men were not. One of the latter two was deferred to and I gathered from conversation that he was a superior member of the group for whom the others had been waiting before the interrogation began. This man conducted most of the questioning with occasional queries from the man who led the group in the apartment. The first question dealt with my understanding of the "esquerda" in Brazil and what I thought of their strength and chances of success. Succeeding questions focused on the use of terror and violence in politics, kidnapping, the influence of Communism, etc.

The presence of a tourist map of Rio de Janeiro in my briefcase, opened to Santa Teresa, gave them cause to briefly speculate that I might have been planning to escape route of the kidnappers of the German Ambassador. I denied this. They asked me when I had first predicted the kidnapping of the Ambassador, with whom I had discussed the topic, and why I was sure he would be kidnapped. I replied that my conversations about kidnapping were always theoretical and academic. These conversations were held with friends who often asked my personal opinion about political events. I have often discussed kidnapping as one of many political tactics terrorist groups use and have used in Latin America. I provided examples of other prominent kidnap victims to illustrate my point. I attempted to explain that my conversations about kidnapping and terrorism were academic and theoretical explorations of a topic of intellectual interest to me.

My knowledge of terrorism and terrorist activities in Latin America grew out of my political research and study.

I mentioned to them that my own political convictions were not of a leftist nature in my own country and that I had refused to sign a petition circulated among North American professors criticizing the arrest of Professor Caio Prado Junior and also generally condemning the tactics of the incumbent military regime. For personal and professional reasons, I said, I would not generally support this sort of activity. Certainly if I would not endorse this form of protest, it was unlikely I would support more active terrorist tactics. They were interested in the petition and asked me to summarize it briefly which I did.

After about 45 minutes or an hour of questioning - at about 0:15 or 0.30 a.m.- I was dismissed and taken into the room where I originally had been unblindfolded. Professor Baer was sitting there. After about ten minutes Professor Pelaez was led in and told to sit next to me on top of one of the dusty desks in the room. We were guarded by the young man mentioned previously who held a gun on us for the entire time. Professor Pelaez was then called into the room in which I had been questioned. His questioning lasted about ten or fifteen minutes. It was about 1:00 or 1:10 a.m. when he emerged and I was again called back to be questioned again by the same people.

The petition signed by North American professors against the Brazilian government occupied a good part of the questioning. They demanded to know what I had done with the copy of the petition I had received through the international mails from a colleague. To the best of my recollection, I said, I had destroyed it. They did not seem to believe this from the expression of their faces. The leader of the original group in the apartment asked me about my professional activities. He asked me what were the qualities a good researcher required and I said one of them was a good memory - he told me if that was true I should be able to tell them more than I had and I replied that I had little else of relevance to relate to them.

It was during this second time period that the atmosphere changed markedly between my interrogators and myself. The men in the room with me became increasingly friendly. I was asked to summarize in writing the petition of North American professors. A copy of my own Curriculum Vitae was taken from my briefcase and I was directed, first, to print my name in full, my age, occupation, and institutional affiliation. This I did on the top half of the back of the Vitae sheet. On the bottom half of the back of the Vitae sheet I wrote, in Portuguese, a factual summary of the petition, reconstructed to the best of my memory. While I wrote these both out, a member of the original group in the apartment guarded me. We entered into a long political conversation. A young man of about 30 or 35, he said that it was necessary to root out the old politicians and corrupt bureaucrats from the government. He said that his generation would have to sacrifice itself so that the next generation would benefit. The government had to be purged and reorganized and that was the goal of the military regime.

At this point I had finished the summary which he delivered to his superiors. I asked if I should take with me my briefcase and the books and documents contained therein which sat on one of the desks in the room. After checking with someone in another part of the house, he said that I could.

Professors Baer and Pelaez came into the room at this time. The atmosphere was quite informal and even jocular. After some comments about how scared we were, we were informed that we would be taken blindfolded to a car and returned to the city. Again I asked if they would identify themselves. I asked if they belonged to SNI. Laughing, the man who had led the questioning said that I had been right about a number of things that evening but that was not one of them.

I collected my briefcase and was blindfolded and carefully led downstairs. Professors Baer and Pelaez followed. The car- Professor Baer's

car from the Ford Foundation - was driven by one of the men from the apartment accompanied by another of that group. It was about 1:30 a.m. After driving about twenty minutes we were told to take off our blind-folds. We were on Avenida Presidente Vargas. The two men got out of the car, said good night, asked us to excuse anything they had done wrong. We drove off, returned Professor Pelaez to his apartment in Ipanema, and proceeded to notify the Ford Foundation Acting Representative, Stanley Nicholson, and the American Embassy.

Rodou Roett

Rio de Janeiro, 15 June 1970.