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E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PGOV, CI
SUBJ: CONGRESSMAN MCCAIN'S DISCUSSIONS WITH PINOCHET
AND MERINO

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT
2. CONGRESSMAN JOHN MCCAIN, PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE
FROM CHILE ON JANUARY 2, BRIEFLY LABATT ON THE
RESULTS OF HIS DECEMBER 20 MEETINGS WITH
PRESIDENT PINOCHET AND JUNTA MEMBER ADMIRAL
MERINO. AS A MEMBER MEETING WITH THE
PRESIDENT, AT WHICH FOREIGN MINISTER DEL VALLE AND
A MINISTRY STAFF MEMBER WERE PRESENT, HAD BEEN
SPENT IN DISCUSSING THE DANGERS OF COMMUNISM, A SUBJECT
ABOUT WHICH THE PRESIDENT'S SEEMS OBSESSED. THE
PRESIDENT DESCRIBED CHILE'S RECENT HISTORY IN THE
FIGHT AGAINST COMMUNISM, AND DISPLAYED CONSIDERABLE
PRIDE IN THE FACT THAT THE COMMUNIST MENACE HAD
BEEN DEFEATED IN CHILE. THE PRESIDENT STRESSED
THAT CHILE HAD STOOD ALONE IN THIS BATTLE, AND
COMPLAINED THAT UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY HAD
LEFT THEM STRANDED. THE CONGRESSMAN ADDED THAT
TALKING TO PINOCHET WAS SOMEWHAT SIMILAR TO TALKING
WITH THE HEAD OF THE JOHN BIRCH SOCIETY. PINOCHET
ALSO TOLD THE CONGRESSMAN THAT HE WAS PERSONALLY
UPSET WITH THE ACTIVITIES OF THE AMBASSADOR
ADDING THAT HE DID NOT MIND THE AMBASSADOR'S CALLS
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ON THE OPPOSITION POLITICAL GROUPS, BUT HE DID

UNCLASSIFIED
RESENT THE PUBLICITY GIVEN TO THESE CALLS. HE THOUGHT THAT SUCH CALLS SHOULD BE DONE QUIETLY. ANOTHER SUBJECT TOUCHED ON BY THE PRESIDENT WAS THE NEED FOR CHILE TO HAVE ACCESS TO AMERICAN TECHNOLOGY. A SUBJECT HE ALSO EMPHASIZED IN HIS NEW YEAR'S SPEECH TO THE NATION. CONGRESSMAN MCCAIN DESCRIBED THE MEETING AS FRIENDLY AND AT TIMES WARM, BUT NOTED THAT PINOCHET DOES SEEM OBSESSSED WITH THE THREAT OF COMMUNISM.

3. DURING THE MEETING DEL VALLE WAS QUIET EXCEPT WHEN THE SUBJECT OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY WAS TOUCHED UPON, AT WHICH POINT HE MADE RATHER HEATED REMARKS ABOUT THE INABILITY OF THE USG TO UNDERSTAND THE CHILEAN SITUATION, AND OUR FAILURE TO SUPPORT CHILE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COMMUNIST EXPANSION.

THE AMBASSADOR'S ACTIVITIES, BUT MORE IN THE SENSE THAT THIS NEW STYLE OF DIPLOMACY WAS SURPRISING AND THEREFORE UPSETTING.