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The Honorable
Lawton Chiles
United States Senate
Department Sub com Affs On Investigations
Room 443
Russell Government Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Chiles:

I am of the opinion the subject I relate here-in should be inquired into by the Senate of the United States. The reason being to determine the bearing it could have on the intrigue which revolves around Michael Vernon Townley, a United States national. Has he actually been an agent of a foreign government, or an agent of a United States government agency, or others?

The situation I relate here-in took place in Guatemala C.A. and during a subsequent trip to the United States from Guatemala in the year of 1970.

A recount of the incident by Harry S. Gatchell:

During my stay in Guatemala I had occasion to go out in the evening to a bar which was also frequented by United States Marine Corps members, who are attached to the United States Embassy. On this occasion while standing at the bar next to a United States Marine (known to me) with whom I was engaged in conversation, another U.S. Marine entered in the company of a man dressed in what some refer to as "hippy dress". The appearance of this fashion of dress was alone enough to call my attention to them. At this time it was most unpopular for anyone to be dressed in this manner while in Guatemala. However, here was this person in the company of a U.S. Marine known to me from the U.S. Embassy. My question to the U.S. Marine with whom I was engaged in conversation was, "What in the world is he (the Marine) doing with him (the "hippy")?". The answer I received was one of surprise to me. I quote the U.S. Marine. "That character came into the Embassy today. He is from Chilo and he wanted to have somebody show him the city. When he came over to the house (Marine house) tonight, I was not interested in going out with him, and I told him (the other Marine with the "hippy") that he should stay away from that character. But here they are." My next statement and question was, "He is not a Chileno. Who is he?" The reply by the Marine was, "He is a U.S. national with very heavy (important) credentials." My next inquiry was, "If he is so

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important, that is he doing drugs. He'd looking like that?" At this point in time I was really surprised. The Marine next to me pointed over toward the "hippy" who quite openly had pockets of white powder in front of him and at this time was talking to a local man. The U.S. Marine who had come in with the "hippy" had stepped away. The U.S. Marine with whom I was talking said, "That is what it is all about. He is trying to sell dope, cocaine. I told him (the Marine) if he got caught with cocaine around either of them here in Guatemala, they would never get out of jail regardless of his (the "hippy") credentials." The "hippy" obviously was unable to sell his goods and subsequently he and the U.S. Marine left. The U.S. Marine with whom I had been talking stayed for a short time and then retired. I stayed for a short time talking with the people the "hippy" had been engaged with. It was related to me that the "hippy" indeed was trying to sell cocaine. I retired early with intentions of leaving Guatemala for the United States the next morning. I would like to state that I do not intend to infer the U.S. Marine was in any manner attempting to sell cocaine.

The following day I boarded a Pan Am flight for Miami. As the other passengers were being seated, I was standing in the aisle when a well-dressed, well-groomed man started toward the rear of the aircraft from approximately four to five seats forward from me. When face to face with this man who could easily pass for a New York banker or a Harvard man, I realized that he and the "hippy" who had been standing next to me at the bar last night were one and the same person. He did not continue, but turned and was seated next to the women with whom he had boarded. Later during the flight I inquired of the stewardess as to who the couple were. She had been talking to them and seemed to know them. She said that they had been on one of her flights bound north from Panama to Costa Rica a few days before, and that he was a North American and she was a Chilean. Upon arrival at Miami International Airport, the couple stayed seated while the rest of the passengers disembarked. However, my curiosity had been aroused and once in the building I lagged behind to see how this man would pass immigration and more important, how would he pass customs. However, this person never entered the customs area while all other inbound passengers cleared, and I believe I was the last to clear customs from this flight.

From the last time I saw this person in the aircraft until recently when I saw a picture of Michael Vernon Tomley in the Miami Herald newspaper, I had not seen this person.

In my opinion, Michael Vernon Tomley is one and the same person as the "hippy" with the important credentials and the well-dressed well-groomed person bound for Miami.

In conclusion, it is my thought that an indepth inquiry should be made into this matter. It would at this time seem to be of importance because of the intrigue and propaganda surrounding the assassination of Orlando Letelier.

It would also appear that the Miami Herald's William Hestelbano (Senior Correspondent) is informed about grand jury intentions.

I had always been led to believe these were of a confidential nature.

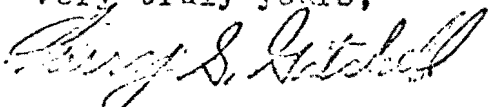
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Also it is difficult to understand why anyone would attempt to malign, or draw such conclusions as Mr. Montalano and other writers have done in this situation regarding the assassination of Orlando Letelier. It surely would appear that persons in Chile did not have to allow Mr. Letelier depart the country to assassinate him on Embassy Row in Washington. To anyone involved in, or interested in, foreign affairs this situation must smell rotten. One must remember that Chile sent the Cuban American bomber back to the United States and under the new ruling directors, has always appeared to have returned Chile to a country of law and order.

Now, based on the words of a man with many identities (Townley), the United States news media is able to even suggest that Chile's leader's political survival could hinge on this matter is difficult to understand. It is cause for concern that people foreign to the United States society believe that the Miami Herald and other major United States newspapers represent the feelings of the people of the United States, when in fact this is not true. When these newspapers call for a change in a foreign government, these people believe you and I are responsible, when in fact we, the people, are not responsible. One must think these news persons are not fools. Who is the fool?

It would appear the secrecy of the grand jury investigation has been violated. I enclose a copy of "The Miami Herald (William Montalano); U.S. Probe of Letelier's Death Is Shaking Up Regime in Chile".

Very truly yours,



Harry S. Gatchell

Copies to :

John McMullan
Exec. Editor - The Miami Herald

Senator Lawton Chiles
Lakeland, Fla.