

we prefer to call it—foreign debt of Venezuela should not exceed \$15 billion; that is, some 50% or perhaps 40%, or not more than 60% of what is today said to be the amount of

Venezuela's foreign debt. And of course, another aspect of this that clamors for attention is the fact that these debts, instead of diminishing as they are paid, keep growing be-

The real message of the November coup bid

On Nov. 27, 1992 a videotaped message was supposed to be shown on Venezuelan television, from the leaders of the coup attempt. Instead, a phony message was shown, which purported to be from leaders of the action, but which in fact had nothing to do with them. We excerpt here from the real message.

Adm. Hernán Grüber Odremán

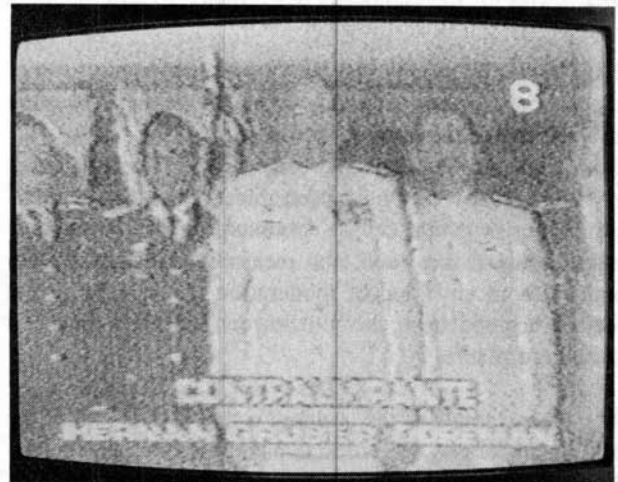
At this the Republic's vital hour, the Navy, Army, Air Force, and National Guard send out the following message: Events occurring throughout the national territory at this time are the epilogue to a regrettable situation, in which the Armed Forces accept the people's call to overthrow a government which betrayed the sacred commitment to serve the nation which placed it in power.

Men and women in uniform have sworn to defend the National Constitution, and by that, obedience to the government is tacit and understood to be our duty. But when that government violates the most elementary principles of coexistence, when it turns its back on the popular cry for peace within society, then, dear compatriots, there is no reason to continue obeying it. Because the conduct of the citizen and the soldier has as its supreme goal the protection of the republic's Constitution, which for the last several years has been trampled on by unscrupulous individuals who are unconcerned about the flagrant degradation of the republic's moral and material patrimony.

The government has ignored, in an insulting manner, the dialogue organized by immense sectors of national life to seek a peaceful solution to the crisis. . . . Perhaps they thought they were safe, because they had the support of the national Armed Forces; unfortunately, in many cases, they did, to the great dishonor of the Venezuelan soldier.

Yet we all know that this was possible thanks to the Machiavellian corruption of the military institution, placing in the highest positions officials who, with few exceptions, lacked the necessary qualities prescribed by law, and saw in this diabolical complicity the only way to attain higher rank. . . .

People of Venezuela, we are here at your side, answering your call; go out on the streets and show your support peacefully; this will be a civil-military government which



Admiral Hernán Grüber and other coup leaders in an image from the suppressed TV video.

will be presided over by civilians of recognized honesty and commitment to your dearest interests. We, the Armed Forces, are only here as a genuine expression of your will, to support you with the force of arms. Believe in us. . . .

People of Venezuela, how many tears are shed daily, and how much anguish is felt as you see the care of your family and your children's future slip from your grasp, while those who loot the national Treasury flaunt their luxury and openly try your patience. Therefore, compatriots, let the immortal words of our National Anthem resound in our breasts. . . . Long Live true democracy for which we fight today! People of Venezuela, go out on the streets and peacefully show your support for the new government. Viva Venezuela! Viva the July 5 Civil-Military Movement to save democracy! . . .

Brig. Gen. Francisco Visconti

The planes you see and hear in the skies of the Fatherland, the skies of Caracas, are the planes of Venezuelans, of our Air Force, which today are at the service of the rescue of Venezuela's true democracy. . . .

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