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Authority: EO 13526

Originator: SOUTHCOM

Date: 6 March 2018

FROM: USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

TO: JCS WASH DC

INFO: AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES ARGENTINA

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PERSONAL FOR GEN JONES, ACTING CJCS; INFO TO
AMBASSADOR CASTRO, FROM LT GEN MCAULIFFE. DELIVER
DURING DUTY HOURS.

SUBJ: USCINCSO Visit to Argentina (U)

1. ~~(C)~~ Summary. My visit to Argentina, the first by a senior U.S.
military officer (other than the IADB) since the Junta assumed power
in March 1976, was taken as a gesture of goodwill and friendship and,
as such, it received high-level attention, but it was played low key in
the press. It proved an excellent vehicle for me to convey the impor-
tance we attach to the protection of human rights and the effect of
Argentina's performance in this matter on the military relationship
with the U.S. that they want to maintain. It is clearly my impression
that General Videla is trying to shift the attitude and emphasis of the

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D. L. SOUDER, LTC, USAF, SCSSA, 3015, 12 Apr 78		RECEIVED UNCLASSIFIED BY AUTHORITY OF DOD DIR 5200.1 ON 2/2/90	
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JAMES K. SWEENEY, LTC, USAF		(13)	
SIGNATURE <i>Jones</i>		SECURITY CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENTIAL	

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FROM:

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armed forces from combatting terrorism to safeguarding individual rights, but he is encountering resistance and skepticism in the officer corps--and even those who support him caution against his making the transition too rapidly. In my judgment, we have put our money on the right horse. We should continue to encourage GEN Videla and at appropriate times demonstrate to him, as well as his critics, that we agree with what he is doing. The current Argentine request for military training (which they would pay for) offers that kind of opportunity; on the other hand, to deny that request now might untrack Videla's efforts.

2. ~~(C)~~ My visit to Argentina concluded with a call on the President and Army CINC, General Jorge Videla, on 10 Apr. Ambassador Castro and I were the only ones in the room with the President throughout the 30-40 minute meeting. GEN Videla was most gracious and forthcoming in his conversation; he looked physically fit and in good

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<p style="text-align: center;">FROM: 7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TO:</p> <p>health.</p> <p>a. In our discussion, I developed the following points (which AMB Castro and I had discussed earlier):</p> <p>(1) That since my last visit over two years ago, Argentina has made a major turnaround under GEN Videla in the economy (which was chaotic then), in the welfare of the people, and in public security (the terrorist threat which was then of high intensity is now almost eliminated):</p> <p>(2) That I had perceived a strong desire on the part of Argentine military leaders to maintain the friendship of the U.S.</p> <p>(3) That the restoration of a beneficial military relationship is dependent upon the Argentine government's performance with respect to human rights.</p> <p>(4) And that some significant steps have been recently taken by the Argentine government toward the protection of</p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>Declassified in Full</p> <p>Authority: EO 13526</p> <p>Originator: SOUTHCOM</p> <p>Date: 6 March 2018</p> </div>										
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human rights, but that additional measures and continued progress are needed in order to fully restore Argentine-U.S. relationships.

b. GEN Videla responded affirmatively to all of these points. He acknowledged that his task has been a most difficult one and that, with the support of the people, some success has been achieved. He said that the war (the fight against guerrillas/terrorists) left many scars that will take a long time to heal, with many individuals dead, seriously wounded, and jailed; but that his government is giving increasing attention to the protection of human rights, and that this has required a shifting of attitudes from combatting terrorism. He expressed his intention to continue the progress of his government with respect to human rights.

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<p>3. (G) I also called upon MGEN Jose Maria Klix, Minister of Defense; MGEN Roberto Eduardo Viola, Army Chief of Staff; VADM Armando Lambruschini, Chief of the Navy General Staff; and BGEN Omar Domingo Ruben Graffigna, Chief of the Air Force General Staff. (AMB Massera, Navy CINC; and LTGEN Agosti, Air Force CINC were out of the country at the time, although I did briefly see GEN Agosti when he traveled through the Canal Zone enroute to the U.S.). During these discussions, I developed essentially the theme outlined above, and received a generally favorable reaction. Additional topics of interest included:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">a. Both the Navy and Air Force mentioned their pressing need for spare parts, and the MOD, Army, and Navy expressed their strong desire to purchase military training at U.S. service schools. My response was that these issues were under con-</p>									
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<p style="text-align: center;">FROM:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TO:</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; opacity: 0.5;">UNCLASSIFIED</p> <p>sideration by the U.S. Government, that we understood the need and value, but that the outcome would be determined on the basis of their government's progress on human rights,</p> <p>b. Individually, several of the senior officers admitted to me (in a few cases with a tinge of reluctance) that their government is now turning in the direction of human rights, and that this has some popular support. But within the military there is a fear that if the government should move too fast in lifting the "seige", there will be a recurrence of terrorism. They also expressed some concern over a possible outbreak of terrorism during the upcoming World Cup soccer series (June).</p> <p>c. Most of the senior officers question whether the U.S. appreciates the difficult transition the country is making from fighting terrorism to protecting human rights, or the positive</p>											
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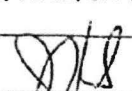
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<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 20px;"> FROM: TO: </div> <div style="text-align: right; font-size: 2em; opacity: 0.5; margin-bottom: 20px;">UNCLASSIFIED</div> <p>measures that their government has taken (at the urging of the U.S.). They are clearly looking for some recognition of their efforts now, particularly in the U.S. response to the requests mentioned in subparagraph a. above. Members of my staff noted this same feeling that "the U.S. does not understand" among junior officers at the 0-4/0-5 level (my staff also strived to explain our policy and the support of the U.S. military for that policy).</p> <p>d. Both Navy and Air Force officers mentioned the strategic importance of Argentina in the South Atlantic and in the Straits (with which I agree). They noted that in a future conflict against the "common enemy, Communism", the U.S. might well need Argentine assistance and support, and would receive it despite our current differences.</p> <p>e. On the Beagle Channel issue, the feeling in the Navy and MOD is that Chilean demands for Atlantic waters are</p>										
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<p style="text-align: center;">FROM: 7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TO:</p> <p>unreasonable but their position on the islands can probably be accommodated.</p> <p>4. (C) It is apparent that the GOA has made positive steps on human rights, although there have been reverses also. Some progress has been made in the Deutsch and Vogler cases, and it was announced in the press during our stay that Jacobo Timerman would be released and held under house arrest. Lists of individuals detained are released with some regularity, and one reads in the newspapers of "political" prisoners being released. The atmosphere in the city and the country has drastically changed since my last visit. For example, my wife and I walked in the park across from the residence one Saturday afternoon without security guards or escort--this would have been unthinkable in 1975 or 1976. Our party moved freely throughout the city and countryside, and noted no signs of repressive security</p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;"> <p>Declassified in Full Authority: EO 13526 Originator: SOUTHCOM Date: 6 March 2018</p> </div>									
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<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 20px;"> FROM: TO: </div> <p>measures. On the other hand, I perceived a kind of "Wild West" atmosphere among the people, especially the younger ones, that could be a factor in some of the shootings that still occur (and that might be listed as human rights violations).</p> <p>5. (C) My senior Marine officer, COL Donald Wilson, accompanied me as a representative of CMC as well as USSOUTHCOM. He visited Marine installations in both Buenos Aires and Puerto Belgrano, and was received with courtesy and genuine enthusiasm. He noted that the Argentine Marine Corps primarily utilize U.S. equipment and USMC doctrine. As a result, they have a pressing need for spare parts (particularly for their amphibious vehicles) and current training manuals, and strongly desire to purchase training in the U.S. They also expressed great interest in expanding the personnel exchange program. It was apparent that there exists a great</p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;"> Declassified in Full Authority: EO 13526 Originator: SOUTHCOM Date: 6 March 2018 </div>									
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reservoir of goodwill towards our Marine Corps in theirs, and that modest steps can reap large dividends in our overall relations.

6. (U) Request that copies of my report be provided to each of the Chiefs, DJS, and the ASD (ISA). Warm regards.

~~CDS-04~~

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