



THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

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Office of the Secretary of Defense
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Reason: _____
MDR: 17 -M- 2318

SUBJECT: U.S. Policy Toward Argentina (U)

(S) In July, the PRC recommended improving our relations with Argentina, and your reaction was that you were "inclined to move faster" than the PRC had recommended. Secretary Muskie has now proposed cutting back on our initiatives because of the Argentine support for the coup in Bolivia and the lack of Argentine cooperation on grains export restrictions to the Soviet Union. This approach strikes me as counter-productive.

(S) We have long known that the Argentines did not support the grain embargo. Indeed, one of the factual predicates for the PRC recommendation was our inability to influence the Argentines to join in the embargo. That lack of influence demonstrated the need to improve relations. The Argentine support for the Bolivian coup is regrettable, to say the least, but again we are not likely to improve our ability to influence their actions by limiting our opportunities to talk to them.

(S) Such limitations, however, are, in effect, what the State Department memorandum proposes. Leaving aside the signature of the Agricultural Cooperation Agreement, which is outside the national security area, the other proposed actions are

- to avoid talks on security and hemispheric policy issues,
- not to extend invitations to Argentine military officers, and
- not to send a high level U.S. military delegation on a visit to Argentina.

(S) General Goodpaster's earlier visit demonstrated the important positive effects which can be achieved by high level personal contact between U.S. military officers and the Argentine government. The Argentines have a military government. If we

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are to bring Argentina closer to our views, the best chance rests in talking to that government and using military to military channels as appropriate conduits for our messages and views.

I therefore strongly oppose the proposed postponements of military-related initiatives recommended by Secretary Muskie.

W. Graham Claytor, Jr.

W. Graham Claytor, Jr.
Deputy Secretary of Defense

Copy to:
Secretary of State

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