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FROM

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SERIAL: (U) IIR (b)(3):10 USC 424

/***** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE *****/

BODY

COUNTRY: (U) **ARGENTINA (AR)**.

SUBJ: IIR (b)(3):10 USC 424 /AIR FORCE AND NAVY CHIEFS

SPEAK OUT ON MILITARY EXCESSES DURING DIRTY WAR (U)

WARNING: (U) THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT
FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE. REPORT CLASSIFIED

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- DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

DOI: (U) 950504.

REQS: (U) (b)(3):10 USC 424

SOURCE: A. (U) DAILY NEWSPAPER, "BUENOS AIRES
HERALD", BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA, 950425 (U) IN
ENGLISH. INDEPENDENT-LIBERAL NEWSPAPER WHICH HAS BEEN
A FIRM DEFENDER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREQUENT CRITIC OF
THE GOVERNMENT. CONSIDERED INFLUENTIAL WITH
POLICYMAKERS, POLITICIANS, MILITARY OFFICERS AND
BUSINESSMEN.

B. (U) DAILY NEWSPAPER, "PAGINA 12, BUENOS AIRES, .
ARGENTINA, 950504 (U) IN SPANISH. CENTER-LEFT
NEWSPAPER WHICH REPRESENTS LEFT-LIBERAL AND
INTELLECTUAL SECTORS OF ARGENTINE SOCIETY. OFTEN
CRITICAL OF THE ARMED FORCES AND THE MENEM
ADMINISTRATION AND EXPRESSES SOME OPPOSITION TO U.S.
FOREIGN AND ECONOMIC POLICY.

C. (U) DAILY NEWSPAPER, "LA NACION", BUENOS AIRES,
ARGENTINA, 950504 (U) IN SPANISH. INDEPENDENT-MODERATE
NEWSPAPER WHICH APPEALS TO THE UPPER CLASS AND

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INTELLECTUALS. TENDS TO REPORT U.S. ISSUES OBJECTIVELY. INFLUENTIAL WITH TOP POLICYMAKERS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, POLITICIANS, AND THE MILITARY. D. (U) DAILY NEWSPAPER, "LA PRENSA", BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA, 950504 (U) IN SPANISH. INDEPENDENT-CONSERVATIVE NEWSPAPER WHICH USUALLY SUPPORTS THE U.S. AND HAS AN INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION FOR INTEGRITY. INFLUENTIAL WITH POLITICIANS AND THE MILITARY.

SUMMARY: (U) APPROXIMATELY TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS AND ONE WEEK AFTER THE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF ISSUES A STATEMENT IN SELF-CRITICISM FOR THE MILITARY'S ACTIONS DURING THE "DIRTY WAR", THE AIR FORCE AND NAVY CHIEFS DO THE SAME.

TEXT: 1. (U) APPROXIMATELY ONE WEEK AFTER THE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF, GENERAL **MARTIN ANTONIO ((BALZA))** SPOKE OUT IN SELF-CRITICISM AGAINST THE ACTIONS OF THE ARMY DURING THE 1970'S DIRTY WAR (CITE IIR (b)(3):10 USC 424) THE CHIEFS OF THE NAVY AND AIR FORCE FOLLOWED SUIT.

2. (U) GENERAL JUAN DANIEL ((PAULIK)), THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARGENTINE AIR FORCE, SPOKE OUT AGAINST THE ARMED FORCE'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE WAR AGAINST SUBVERSION ON 950503 FOLLOWING A CEREMONY COMMEMORATING THE ARGENTINE AIR FORCE'S BAPTISM UNDER FIRE IN THE FALKLAND/MALVINAS WAR. THE GENERAL ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HORRIFIC ACTS WERE COMMITTED BY BOTH SIDES DURING THE WAR. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE ACTIONS OF THE ARMED FORCES SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT AS THOUGH THE MILITARY HAD SOLE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE TRAGIC EVENTS OF THAT ERA. EVEN THOUGH GENERAL PAULIK DID NOT SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFY MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ABUSES COMMITTED DURING THE "DIRTY WAR", HE DID ADMIT THAT IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM, GRAVE PROCEDURAL ERRORS OCCURRED AND ATROCITIES WERE COMMITTED. THE GENERAL WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE AIR FORCE ACKNOWLEDGED ITS PAST ERRORS WHICH IT FELT AN OBLIGATION TO RECOGNIZE AND BY UTILIZING THE WISDOM IT HAD GAINED FROM THAT UNFORTUNATE EXPERIENCE, PLEDGED TO MOVE FORWARD INTO THE FUTURE. RECOGNIZING THE PROFOUND SORROW THE FAMILIES OF THE "DISAPPEARED" FELT FOR THEIR LOSSES, HE EXPRESSED HIS DESIRE FOR THE AIR FORCE TO DEMONSTRATE AN OBJECTIVE SELF-CRITICISM AND TO CONTINUE FORWARD WITH ALL ARGENTINE SOCIETY TOWARD AN AUTHENTIC

RECONCILIATION. GENERAL PAULIK DENIED THERE WERE ANY OFFICIAL LISTS OF THOSE WHO "DISAPPEARED" DURING THE WAR, BUT HE DID NOT RULE OUT A COLLABORATIVE WORK TO COMPILE LISTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE AIR FORCE WHO MIGHT HAVE SOME INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT.

3. (U) ADMIRAL MOLINA PICO SPOKE ABOARD THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER 25 DE MAYO IN PUERTO BELGRANO NAVAL BASE

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ON 950503 AND GENERALLY

ECHOED THE WORDS OF GENERAL PAULIK. HE BELIEVED THAT EVERYTHING ABOUT THE "DIRTY WAR" SHOULD BE MADE PUBLIC. THE ADMIRAL ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE ARMED FORCES HAD COMMITTED CRIMES DURING THE INSURGENCY BY DESTROYING THE ARGENTINE PEOPLE'S CONSTITUTIONALLY GUARANTEED RIGHTS. HE CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EXCESSES OF THAT PERIOD BELONGED TO THE INSTITUTION AND NOT TO THE MEN WHO LOYALLY CARRIED OUT THE PLANS AND ORDERS OF THE DAY BELIEVING THEY WERE FIGHTING A JUST CAUSE. SOURCE C REPORTED THAT THIS SHIFT OF RESPONSIBILITY FROM THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE INSTITUTION IS IN MARKED CONTRAST TO GENERAL BALZA'S STATEMENT THAT UNLAWFUL ORDERS SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN OBEYED. IN THE EYES OF SOME SENIOR NAVY OFFICIALS, GENERAL BALZA'S STATEMENT LEAVES THE INDIVIDUAL MILITARY MEMBERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE WAR AGAINST THE SUBVERSIVES VULNERABLE (NFI). ADMIRAL MOLINA PICO FINISHED BY AFFIRMING THAT THE CRIMES OF THE PAST WILL NEVER BE REPEATED IN THE FUTURE -- EACH MAN MUST LIVE WITH HIS ACTION AND HISTORY WILL JUDGE THE INSTITUTION.

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SENIOR NAVY OFFICIALS ARE PROBABLY CONCERNED THAT THE STATEMENT BY GENERAL BALZA ACKNOWLEDGING THAT UNLAWFUL ORDERS SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN OBEYED COULD LEAVE MILITARY MEMBERS OPEN TO LEGAL PROSECUTION SHOULD THE LAWS OF DUE OBEDIENCE AND AMNESTY BE REPEALED IN THE FUTURE.)

4. (U) GENERAL BALZA AND ADMIRAL MOLINA PICO ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE 24 MARCH 1976 MILITARY COUP WAS A UNJUSTIFIABLE ERROR AGAINST A CONSTITUTIONALLY ELECTED GOVERNMENT. GENERAL PAULIK DID NOT SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS 1976 MILITARY COUP, BUT HE DID AFFIRM THAT THE ARMED FORCES SHOULD BE UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT WHICH ACTS UNDER THE AUSPICES OF

THE CONSTITUTION.

5. (U) ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE FENCE, SOURCE B REPORTED THAT MARIO EDUARDO ((FIRMENICH)), THE FORMER LEADER OF THE MONTONEROS TERRORIST ORGANIZATION, STATED DURING A TELEVISED PROGRAM THAT IT WAS A GRAVE ERROR TO HAVE GONE UNDERGROUND IN ORDER TO MILITARILY CONFRONT A CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT AND ADDED THAT HE WOULD NOT DO IT AGAIN. HOWEVER, HE REFUSED TO ACKNOWLEDGE ANY SELF-CRITICISM FOR THE ACTIONS OF HIS GROUP DURING THE "DIRTY WAR." DURING A SEPARATE INTERVIEW, SOURCE D REPORTED THAT TWO FORMER MEMBERS OF THE SAME TERRORIST ORGANIZATION GENERALLY ECHOED FIRMENICH'S STATEMENTS.

6. (U) IN A RELATED ARTICLE, FORMER NAVY LIEUTENANT COMMANDER ADOLFO ((SCILINGO)) WHO BEGAN THE MOST RECENT EPISODES OF MILITARY CONFESSIONS EARLIER THIS YEAR BY REVEALING ITS PARTICIPATION IN THE NAVY DEATH FLIGHTS (CITE IIR: (b)(3):10 USC 424) WAS ARRESTED ON 950503 ON UNRELATED FRAUD CHARGES INVOLVING HALF A MILLION DOLLARS OF BOUNCED CHECKS.

(b)(1);1.4 (c)

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Withheld pursuant to exemption

(b)(1);(b)(3);10 USC 424;1.4 (c)

of the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act