

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

~~NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION~~
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This report contains unprocessed information. Plans and/or policies should not be evolved or modified solely on basis of this report.

1. COUNTRY: ARGENTINA (AR) 2. REPORT NUMBER: (b)(3):10 USC 424

3. TITLE: (U) Hostilities and Insurgencies - Subversive Activity - Follow-up on Bombing at Aeroparque 4. PROJECT NUMBER: N/A

5. DATE OF INFORMATION: 770224 6. DATE OF REPORT: 770228

7. DATE & PLACE OF ACQUISITION: 770224, Buenos Aires, Argentina 8. REFERENCES: (b)(3):10 USC 424

9. ASSESSMENT: SOURCE (b)(3):10 USC 424 INFO (b)(3):10 USC 424 10. ORIGINATOR: (b)(3):10 USC 424

11. REQUEST EVALUATION NO. QPQ (country) 12. PREPARING OFFICER: / 13. APPROVING AUTHORITY: /

14. SOURCE: Press, (b)(3):10 USC 424

240

15. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: ~~NOFORN TO AVOID EMBARRASSMENT TO HOST GOVT~~ D YES
~~WARNING NOTICE SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES~~ I
~~AND METHODS INVOLVED~~ R C NO

16. SUMMARY: 1. (C/NOFORN) An attempt was made on the life of Argentine President VIDELA on 18 Feb 77 when a bomb exploded near the presidential aircraft as it lifted off Aeroparque Municipal Airport (b)(3):10 USC 424. The Argentine Air Force (ARGAF) investigation revealed a second, larger bomb, placed directly under the runway. The second bomb was wired to go off with the first but failed to detonate. Increased security measures are in effect at Aeroparque. The incident points out the sustained capability of the Argentine guerrillas to undertake complex operation requiring manpower, materiel and expertise. It also tends to indicate that operational surface-to-air missiles are not available to the Argentine terrorists.

17. SUBJECT AND AREA CODES:
105224 306306 } 606644 AR
288310 606144 } 405110 AR
306341 606514 } 701710 AR

REQUEST PHOTOS DIRECTLY FROM DC-GE
ORDER BY IR AND PHOTO LOG NUMBER

REC'D DS-13 16 MAR '77

18. DISTRIBUTION BY ORIGINATOR: DIA (original)

DIA/DS-6A w/o encl
USCINCSO/SC12-AD w/o encl
CINCLANT/J24 w/o encl
USCINCRD/RDJ-2-PR w/o encl
USCINCSO w/o encl encl
DIA/DIR-3B3 w/o encl
MAC SCOTT AFB/IN/I11/
DOIO

19. DOWNGRADING AND DECLASSIFICATION DATA:
~~CLASSIFIED BY (b)(3):10 USC 424~~
~~EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652. EXEMPTION CATEGORY TWO. DECLASSIFY ON 31 Dec 1983~~

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
DIA FOIA & Declassification Services Offices
Date: Oct 18, 2018

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20. ENCLOSURES:
1. One (1) photograph, 1 copy from negatives of (b)(3):10 USC 424
(CONFIDENTIAL/UNINTEL/NOFORN)

21. This IR contains 3 pages.

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Continuation Sheet

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2. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~

Sec. 3.3(b)(1)

reported that a second bomb, with about 50 kilos of explosives was found directly under the runway. It was connected in series with the device that did detonate. Both bombs were placed in an underground concrete-lined conduit which channels a stream under the airfield, and exits at Rio La Plata about 60 meters from the field boundary. Authorities assume that water or humidity corroded the wiring and prevented the second bomb from detonating. The second bomb was made up of two packages of explosives. It was fastened to the ceiling of the conduit with bolts driven into the concrete. The bomb was supported by steel cables and was encased in plastic.

3. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ Source reports that the conduit through which the Maldonado Stream passes is almost ten kilometers long, and nine meters wide. Water to a depth of four meters flows through the conduit during this season, with surges which fill the entire waterway and overflow through access hatches to the streets above. Source stated that the people who placed the bombs could have entered the conduit from the river, in a small boat, or through one of many inland accesses. Access was available without penetrating any military controlled areas. Source estimated that a large amount of equipment, a high level of technology, and about a month of work were required to install the bombs.

4. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ The method of detonation is still unknown. There was no evidence of wires leading to the first bomb. The distance underground, about seven meters, would seem, according to source, to preclude radio detonation, unless there was someone at the river exit (about 400 meters from the runway). In that position, another person would have to give instructions as to when to detonate the devices because the airport is not visible. Source stated that the ARGAF investigators believe the personnel responsible time the explosion, based on the performance of the Boeing 737's which operate out of Aeroparque every few hours. The investigators also feel that if the second bomb had exploded the presidential aircraft would have been destroyed, and extensive damage done to the civilian terminal area and fuel storage tanks, in addition to extensive civilian and military casualties.(See enclosure)

5. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ Source indicated that security measures throughout the tunnel/conduit system in Buenos Aires have been increased in all sectors of Aeroparque, but particularly at the military section. According to source, court martial proceedings have been brought against the Aeroparque Base Commander, Comodoro (COL) POCCIONI, at the direction of the CINC, Brig Gen (Lt Gen) AGOSTI.

COMMENT: ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ The large dimensions of the Maldonado Stream conduit would permit the gradual build up of personnel and equipment needed to place the bombs without ever going through police or military control points. The engineering and planning difficulties accompanying this attempt on

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Videla's life demonstrate that some subversive groups still have personnel and materiel resources to engage in a major operation, although at a limited risk of contact with security forces. The planning for detonation of the devises was facilitiated by regular announcements in the papers of where, when, and how the President is going to travel. These announcements continue in basically the same form, but the President is now flying out of Palomar Air Base (b)(3) 10 USC 424 in the suburbs of Buenos Aires.

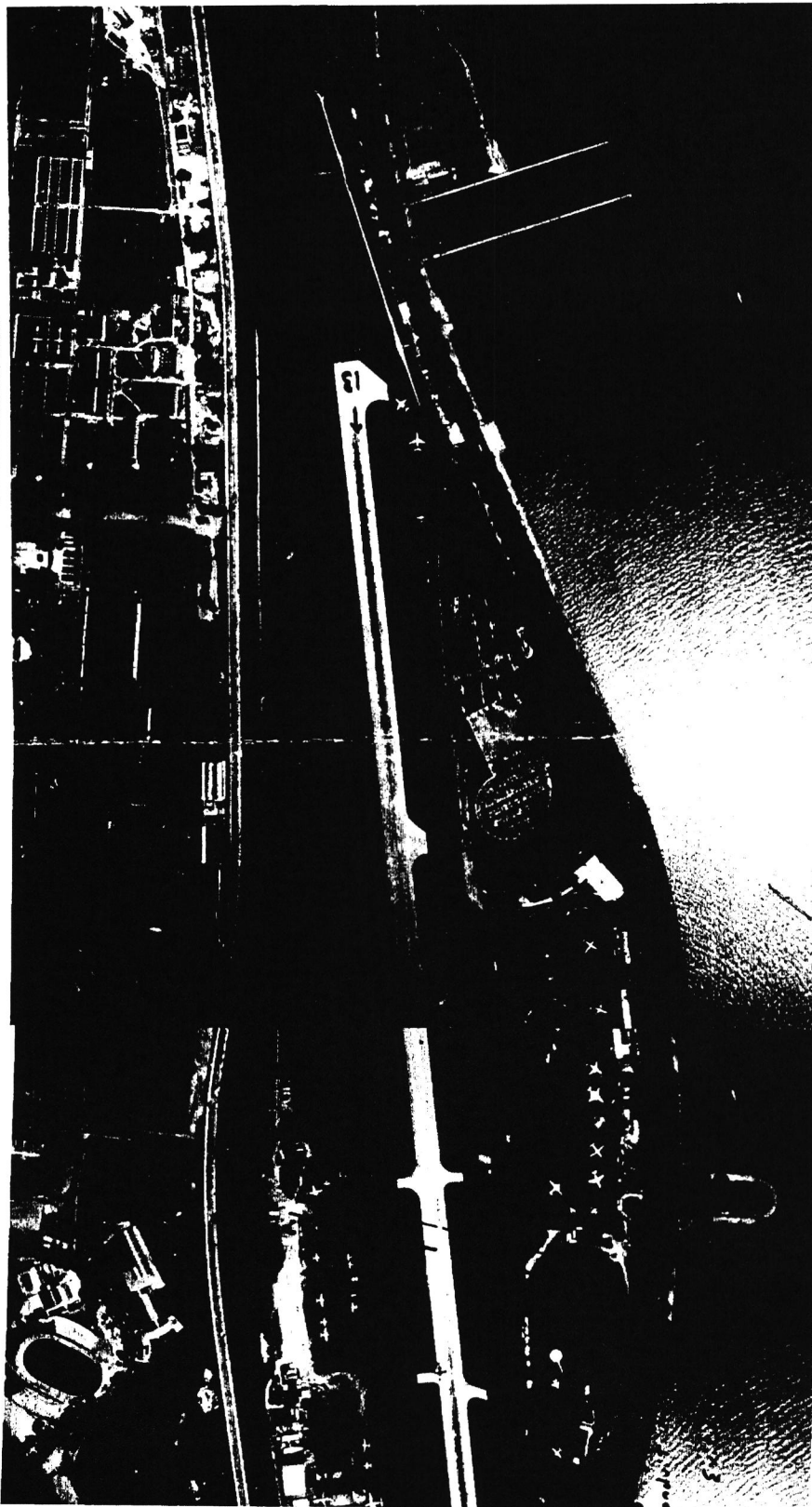
(b)(3) 10 USC 424

COMMENTS: ~~(C//NOFORN)~~ The nature of the attack (and assuming it was carried out by the montoneros) tends to indicate that there are no operational surface-to-air missiles available to the terrorists in the Buenos Aires area. An attack on the president while aboard an aircraft is precisely the type of operation where SAMs would be used by the subversives, (b)(3) 10 USC 424, if they had any available. This incident, and the absence over the last months of any indications that SAMs are present in-country, leads to the conclusion that the probability of the guerrillas having operational SAMs in Argentina is very low at present.

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