

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

MESSAGE CENTER

VZCZCMLT080ILN984 ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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MULT

ACTION DIA:

DISTR CJCS DJS J3:(04) J5(02) NMCC NMIC SECDEF: ASD:ISA(10)

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P R 131429Z AUG 75

FM (b)(3):10 USC 424

TO RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC

INFO RULPALJ/USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

RULPAKA/193 INF BGDE FT AMADOR CZ

BT

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THIS IS IR (b)(3):10 USC 424

- 1. AR
- 2. POLITICAL APPOINTMENT OF ARGENTINE ARMY OFFICER
- 3. N/A
- 4. 1975, AUG 12
- 5. 1975, AUG 12 BUENOS AIRES
- 6. (b)(3):10 USC 424
- 7. [Redacted]
- 8. [Redacted]
- 9. 1975, AUG 12
- 10. (b)(3):10 USC 424;(b)(6)
- 11. [Redacted]
- 12. [Redacted]
- 13. [Redacted]
- 14. [Redacted]

15. 1. ~~(C-REF)~~: TO THE SURPRISE OF MANY ARGENTINE OBSERVERS, COLONEL (CORONEL) VICENTE DAMASCO WAS APPOINTED AS MIN. OF INTERIOR, THE NUMBER ONE CABINET POST IN THE GOVERNMENT. HE HAD BEEN SERVING AS SECRETARY OF THE GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY SECRETARY GENERAL TO THE PRESIDENT SINCE EARLY JUN 74.

PAGE 1

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DAMASCO HAD A SOUND MILITARY REPUTATION PRIOR TO HIS ASSOCIATION WITH THE PERON GOVERNMENT AND WAS REGARDED AS A VERY COMPETENT OFFICER BY MANY MILITARY (b)(3):10 USC 424

2. ~~(S,INFO)~~ Sec. 3.3(b)(1) YESTERDAY THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF DAMASCO'S APPOINTMENT STIRRED UP THE ARMY GENERAL STAFF. INITIAL COMMENTS SHOWED CONCERN AND ANGER THAT AN ACTIVE DUTY COLONEL WAS THRUST INTO SUCH AN ELEVATED POSITION. TODAY, TEMPER'S APPEAR TO HAVE COOLED DOWN AND THE STAFF MAY BE WILLING TO ACCEPT HIM AS INTERIOR MINISTER AND ALLOW HIM TO REMAIN IN ACTIVE MILITARY STATUS.

3. ~~(S,INFO)~~ CMT: ARMY REACTION TO DAMASCO'S APPOINTMENT APPEARS TO BE MIXED. MANY APPARENTLY STILL VIEW HIM AS A COMPETENT PROFESSIONAL WHILE OTHERS CONSIDER HIM AS AN OPPORTUNIST. SOME CRITICISM CAN BE EXPLAINED IN PART TO PROFESSIONAL JEALOUSY. IT IS TOO EARLY TO SPECULATE AS TO HOW DAMASCO WILL BE ACCEPTED AS INTERIOR MINISTER, NOR IS IT POSSIBLE TO ACCURATELY ASSESS HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ARMED FORCES.

~~NOFORN TO AVOID COMPROMISE OF SOURCE IN UNIQUE POSITION.~~

~~DDG DEC 31 1981~~

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