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SECT 01 OF 11213

ACTION

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INFO RULPALJ/USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PN (b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

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SUBJ: THIS IS (b)(3):10 USC 424 (U)

THIS IS AN INFO REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTEL

1. (U) COUNTRY: ARGENTINA (AR)/CHILE (CI)
2. (U) REPORT NUMBER: (b)(3):10 USC 424
3. (U) TITLE: HOSTILITIES - BEAGLE CHANNEL CRISIS ARGENTINA/CHILE 781222 AFTER-ACTION REPORT
4. (U) PROJECT NUMBER: AA, AB, AC
5. (U) DATE OF INFORMATION: 790801-791108
6. (U) DATE OF REPORT: 791227
7. (U) DATE AND PLACE OF ACQUISITION: 790801-791108, BARILOCHE AND BUENOS AIRES, AR.
8. (U) REFERENCE: (b)(3):10 USC 424 CONTINUES
9. (U) ASSESSMENT: (b)(3):10 USC 424
10. (U) ORIGINATOR:
11. (U) REQUEST EVALUATION: NO

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12. (U) PREPARING OFFICER: (b)(3):10 USC 424

13. (U) APPROVING AUTHORITY

14. (U) SOURCE: (b)(3):10 USC 424

15. (U) SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: ~~DIRC-NO, NOFORN~~ (b)(3):10 USC 424

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16. ~~(S/NF)~~ THIS REPORT PROVIDES AFTER-ACTION INFORMATION CONCERNING THE ARGENTINE ARMY 5TH CORPS'S EXPERIENCES DURING THE MOBILIZATION EXERCISES WHICH OCCURRED DURING 7810/7812 IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF ARGENTINA. ALSO REPORTED ARE EVENTS WHICH TOOK PLACE IN THE 3RD CORPS AREA OF OPERATIONS IN THE VICINITY OF BARILOCHE (b)(1);1.4 (c)

INFORMATION RECEIVED INDICATES THAT THE ARGENTINE ARMED FORCES WERE GIVEN THE ORDER TO ATTACK CHILE WITH H-HOUR SET FOR 2400 HOURS ON 781222. THE ORDER WAS REVOKED AT 1630 HRS THE SAME DAY AND THE LAST UNIT TO RECEIVE THE REVOCATION ORDER WAS INFORMED AT 2130 HOURS.

22. ~~(S/NOFORN)~~ DETAILS: A. ~~(S/NF)~~ (b)(1);1.4 (c)

(b)(1);1.4 (c)

(b)(1);1.4 (c) EXERCISES. — INDICATED THE FOLLOWING OOB INFORMATION:

(1) TEN MARINE BATTALIONS WERE STATIONED IN TIERRA DEL FUEGO DURING THE PERIOD 7810/7812. ADDITIONALLY THERE WERE SEVEN (7) COMBAT SERVICE AND COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT TYPE UNITS TO SUPPORT THE TEN (10) MARINE COMBAT BATTALIONS.

(2) (b)(1);1.4 (c) THAT THERE WERE TEN-THOUSAND (10,000) MARINES ON THE ISLAND OF TIERRA DEL FUEGO AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS.

(3) HE INDICATED THAT THERE WERE TWO (2) ENGINEER COMPANIES ASSIGNED TO THE MARINE BATTALIONS FOR GENERAL SUPPORT. ONE OF THE ENGINEER COMPANIES WAS AN ARMY ENGINEER COMPANY ATTACHED SPECIFICALLY FOR THE MOBILIZATION EXERCISE.

(4) (b)(1);1.4 (c) THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY TWENTY-THOUSAND (20,000) ARMY TROOPS WITHIN THE 5TH CORPS AREA OF OPERATION DURING THE PERIOD MENTIONED.

(5) (b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c) THAT THE NINE FRENCH PUMA HELICOPTERS FROM ARMY AVIATION COMMAND WERE PLACED IN DIRECT SUPPORT OF THE MARINES LOCATED ON TIERRA DEL FUEGO.

(6) WITHIN 5TH CORPS, THERE WERE SEVENTEEN (17) BELL UH-1 TYPE HELICOPTERS EQUIPPED WITH ROCKETS WHICH FORMED PART OF THE CORPS RESERVE.

(7) (b)(1);1.4 (c) THE FRENCH PANHARD ARMORED VEHICLES

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WHICH HAD ARRIVED IN COUNTRY DURING THE 7810/7812 TIMEFRAME WERE ALSO IN OPERATION AND ASSIGNED WITHIN 5TH CORPS ON THE BASIS OF FIVE PANHARD VEHICLES TO EACH RECONNAISSANCE TROOP ASSIGNED TO THE SEPARATE BRIGADES.

(8) HE INDICATED THAT THE 181ST ARMORED RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON HAD TEN (10) PANHARD VEHICLES ASSIGNED.

B. (b)(1);1.4 (c) THAT A GREAT DEAL OF THE INFORMATION (b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c) GAINED (b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c) WAS OBTAINED AS A RESULT

(b)(1);1.4 (c)

CHILEAN POSITIONS. AS A RESULT OF THESE (b)(1);1.4 (c) THAT THE 5TH CORPS HAD FIXED THE CHILEAN DISPOSITION OF FORCES ALMOST DOWN TO THE FOXHOLE. (b)(1);1.4 (c) MENTIONED THAT (AMONG

(b)(1);1.4 (c)

OTHERS) (b)(1);1.4 (c)

C. WHEN (b)(1);1.4 (c) THAT THE RECONDITIONED SHERMAN TANKS ASSIGNED TO THE 2ND TANK BRIGADE (THEN OPERATING WITHIN THE 5TH ARMY CORPS) FUNCTIONED BEAUTIFULLY. THE TANKS WERE DUG INTO REVETMENTS IN THE SIDES OF HILLS FOR CONCEALMENT. ON THE CHILEAN SIDE, (b)(1);1.4 (c) THAT THEIR TANKS HAD ALSO BEEN DUG INTO CONCEALED POSITIONS.

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781222. H-HOUR (ATTACK HOUR) WAS DESIGNATED FOR 2400 HRS ON 781222. THE ORDER RESCINDING THE ATTACK ORDER WAS ISSUED AT 1630 HRS TO ALL ELEMENTS PREVIOUSLY ORDERED TO MOVE TO THEIR ATTACK POSITIONS. THE LAST ELEMENT TO RECEIVE THE RESCISSION ORDER WAS AN INFANTRY UNIT WHICH RECEIVED THE WORD AT 2130 HRS ON 781222.

(2) (b)(1);1.4 (c) WHERE THE MAIN ATTACKS WERE TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE) TO WHICH HE INDICATED THAT THIS WAS NOT TOO HARD TO FIGURE OUT, ALL ONE HAD TO DO WAS FIND OUT WHERE THE TANK REGIMENTS WERE; ONE OF WHICH WAS LOCATED IN ZAPALA (b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c)

(b)(1);1.4 (c) 3RD ARMY CORPS AREA. THE OTHER MAIN ATTACK WHICH WAS TO TAKE PLACE IN THE 5TH CORPS AREA WAS TO BE SPEARHEADED BY THE 1ST TANK REGIMENT WHICH HAD MOVED FROM 2ND CORPS AND WAS STATIONED ON THE NIGHT OF 781222 OUTSIDE THE RIO GALLEGOS AREA IN

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SANTA CRUZ PROVINCE. THE OBJECTIVE OF THE 1ST TANK REGIMENT WAS TO ATTACK TOWARDS PUNTA ARENAS. (b)(1);1.4 (c) HAVE INDICATED THAT A MAIN ATTACK WAS TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE TOWARDS THE PUNTA ARENAS AREA.

(3) (b)(1);1.4 (c)

THE FACT THAT HELICOPTERS (WITH INFANTRY ABOARD) HAD LAUNCHED FROM RIO GALLEGOS AND WERE MOVING TOWARDS PUNTA ARENAS WHEN THE TERMINATION ORDER WAS ISSUED. (b)(1);1.4 (c) THE STORY OF THE FIVE ARGAF ATTACK AIRCRAFT WHICH HAD BEEN LAUNCHED AND RECALLED DURING THEIR FLIGHT BY AN OBJECTIVE. (b)(1);1.4 (c) MENTIONED THAT THERE WAS ONE PILOT WHO INITIALLY IGNORED THE RETURN TO BASE ORDER. APPARENTLY THIS STORY HAS BEEN WELL PUBLICISED WITHIN THE ARGENTINE MILITARY AS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW CLOSE THE COUNTRY COULD COME TO WAR. (b)(1);1.4 (c)

(b)(1);1.4 (c) WAS AWARE OF ANY UNITS THAT ACTUALLY CROSSED INTO CHILE. (b)(1);1.4 (c) INDICATED "NO", BUT THAT UNITS LOCATED IN 5TH AND 3RD CORPS AREAS WERE VERY NEAR TO THE BORDER IN MANY CASES WHEN THE TERMINATION ORDER WAS RECEIVED.

COMMENT: (SANDFORN) THIS REPORT IS OF INTEREST IN THAT IT GIVES INFORMATION INDICATING THAT THE ACTUAL ORDER TO ATTACK CHILE HAD BEEN ISSUED AT MID-DAY ON 791222 AND RESCINDED THAT AFTER-NOON WHEN WORD THAT THE POPE WOULD MEDIATE THE BEAGLE CHANNEL DISPUTE BECAME KNOWN. THIS REPORT ALSO PROVIDES INFORMATION INDICATING THAT THE ARGENTINE ARMY HAD A MAIN ATTACK PLANNED IN THE 3RD CORPS AREA TO BE LAUNCHED FROM ZAPALA WHICH HAD BECOME A MAJOR STAGING AND TROOP CONCENTRATION AREA. ALSO OF SIGNIFICANCE IS THE FACT THAT PUNTA ARENAS BECAME A PRINCIPLE OBJECTIVE FOR THE 5TH ARMY CORPS LOCATED IN THE SOUTHERN REGION OF ARGENTINA. THE FACT THAT ARMY ENGINEER UNITS AND PUMA HELICOPTERS WERE ASSIGNED TO SUPPORT 10,000 MARINES ON TIERRA DEL FUEGO IS ALSO OF INTEREST AND SHOWS A DEGREE OF INTER-SERVICE COOPERATION WHICH THE ARGENTINE FORCES HAVE NOT PREVIOUSLY PRACTICED.

THIS INFORMATION CONCERNING THE EVENTS OF DEC 1978, COULD AT A LATER DATE PROVE WORTHWHILE SHOULD THE BEAGLE CHANNEL SITUATION AGAIN BECOME A VOLATILE ISSUE.

(b)(1);1.4 (c)

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D. IN DISCUSSING OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES, (b)(1);1.4 (c) STATED THAT THE MARINES WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR TAKING CERTAIN ISLANDS SOUTH OF THE BEAGLE CHANNEL AREA. DEPENDING UPON CHILEAN REACTION TO THE MARINE ASSAULT, 5TH CORPS HAD THE MISSION OF ATTACKING BASED UPON PRIOR OPERATIONAL PLANS. (b)(1);1.4 (c) WHAT GEN MENENDEZ IN 3RD CORPS WOULD BE DOING AT THIS TIME. HE INDICATED THAT THIS ALSO DEPENDED UPON WHAT TRANSPIRED WITHIN THE AREA SOUTH OF THE BEAGLE CHANNEL AND IN 5TH CORPS. HE STATED THAT HE DID NOT HAVE 3RD CORPS' TOTAL PLAN, BUT DID KNOW THAT GEN MENENDEZ HAD ORDERS TO CUT CHILE IN HALF. DDUR DID NOT SPECIFY WHERE CHILE WAS TO BE CUT IN HALF.

E. SOURCE INDICATED THAT IN THE 5TH ARMY CORPS MORALE WAS HIGH DURING THE ENTIRE PERIOD. THE ECONOMIC MINISTRY SENT THE TROOPS CANDY, CAKES, ETC., ON A DAILY BASIS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN HIGH MORALE. MOVIES WERE SHOWN BEGINNING AT 1800 HRS

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IN THE MORNING AND TERMINATING AT 2100 HRS WHENEVER TROOPS WERE NOT IN THE FIELD CONDUCTING MANEUVERS.

F. ALL TROOPS WERE QUARTERED UNDER ROOFS, BY THIS HE MEANT THAT ALL SCHOOLS WITHIN 5TH CORPS AREA WERE USED AS BARRACKS.

G. (b)(1);1.4 (c)

INDICATED THAT IN RIO TURBIO THE ARGENTINES AND CHILEANS WERE ACTUALLY IN FRONT OF EACH OTHER FOXHOLE-TO-FOXHOLE, THE OPPOSING COMMANDERS TRADED WHISKEY, WINE AND OTHER SOCIAL GESTURES. (b)(1);1.4 (c) THAT ON DIFFERENT NIGHTS, CHILEANS WOULD COME TO THE ARGENTINE CAMP AND ON OTHER NIGHTS THE ARGENTINES WOULD RECIPROCATE BY VISITING THE CHILEAN CAMP. WHEN IT WAS ANNOUNCED ON 791222 THAT THE POPE WOULD MEDIATE THE DISPUTE, (b)(1);1.4 (c) THAT THE FRONT-LINE TROOPS HAD A BIG PARTY TO CELEBRATE.

H. DURING THE PERIOD 790905-790907, RO WAS ON AN AMBASSADORIAL

(b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c)

TO BARILOCHE, WHILE THERE, (b)(1);1.4 (c)

(b)(1);1.4 (c)

CONCERNING THE MOBILIZATION EXERCISE DURING 7810/7812:

(b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c)

TO A SPECIAL COMMAND LOCATED WITHIN THE BARILOCHE AREA.

THAT A GREAT DEAL OF 1ST CORPS ELEMENTS (TO INCLUDE THE PATRICIO REGIMENT - NORMALLY A GUARD REGIMENT FROM BUENOS AIRES) HAD BEEN MOVED TO THE BARILOCHE AREA. ALSO MOVED TO THE BARILOCHE AREA WERE ADDITIONAL 1ST CORPS UNITS TO INCLUDE THE 8TH TANK REGIMENT WHICH WAS IN ZAPALA AND THE 10TH BRIGADE (NORMALLY STATIONED IN BUENOS AIRES, PROVINCE) WHOSE ELEMENTS WERE ALSO MOVED TO THE PROVINCE OF NEUQUEN.

(S/NOPORN) COMMENT: PREVIOUSLY IT WAS BELIEVED THAT ELEMENTS FROM THE 1ST CORPS Hqs IN BUENOS AIRES ALONG WITH OTHER 1ST CORPS UNITS HAD MOVED TO THE BARILOCHE AREA OR THE ZAPALA AREA AS PART OF 1ST CORPS FORWARD. (b)(1);1.4 (c) THAT 1ST CORPS UNITS OPERATING IN NEUQUEN PROVINCE IN THE VICINITY OF ZAPALA AND BARILOCHE WERE NOT UNDER 1ST CORPS CONTROL, BUT IN FACT WERE ATTACHED TO GENERAL MENENOEZ'S 3RD CORPS.)

(2) (b)(1);1.4 (c)

THAT ON 781222, THE ATTACK ORDER WAS ISSUED AND UNITS IN HIS VICINITY MOVED TO LOCATIONS ON THE BORDER IN PREPARATION FOR THE H-HOUR ATTACK. (b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c)

THAT THE 8TH TANK REGIMENT (WHEN THE ATTACK ORDER WAS FINALLY RESCINDED) HAD MOVED FROM ZAPALA AND WAS FIVE KILOMETERS FROM THE CHILEAN BORDER WHEN THEY RECEIVED THE ORDER TO HALT. UNITS WITHIN THE BARILOCHE AREA HAD ALSO RECEIVED WORD TO MOVE TOWARDS THE BORDER. (b)(1);1.4 (c) THAT THE MAIN ATTACK FOR 3RD CORPS WAS TO

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OCCUR IN THE ZAPALA AREA. THE ATTACK IN THE BARILOCHE AREA WAS TO BE THIRD CORPS' SECONDARY ATTACK. A GREAT DEAL OF USE WAS MADE OF COVER AND DECEPTION OPERATIONS. (b)(1);1.4 (c) THAT THE 8TH TANK REGIMENT WAS MOVED SEVERAL TIMES FROM ZAPALA TO BARILOCHE IN ORDER TO TRY AND CONFUSE THE CHILEAN ESTIMATE AS TO THE EXACT LOCATION OF THE MAIN ATTACK. (b)(1);1.4 (c) THAT ON THE NIGHT OF 781222, A REGIMENTAL SIZE INFANTRY UNIT WAS TRUCKED ALL THE WAY FROM MENDOZA DOWN TO THE ZAPALA AREA TO BE IN POSITION FOR THE ATTACK. SEVERAL REGIMENTAL SIZE UNIT AND ARTILLERY BATTALION MOVEMENTS TOOK PLACE ON THE ROAD BETWEEN BARILOCHE AND SAN MARTIN DE LOS ANDES TO TRY TO CONFUSE THE CHILEANS. (b)(1);1.4 (c) WHAT THE OBJECTIVE OF THE 4TH AIRBORNE BRIGADE WAS DURING THE ATTACK PLAN; TO WHICH (b)(1);1.4 (c) THAT (b)(1);1.4 (c) TO THIS INFORMATION, BUT BELIEVED THAT THE 4TH AIRBORNE BRIGADE'S OBJECTIVE WAS THE CITY OF CONCEPCION IN CHILE. (b)(1);1.4 (c) HAD NO FURTHER DETAILS TO JUSTIFY THIS SUPPOSITION. (b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c) THAT WITHIN THE 5TH CORPS AREA OF OPERATION THE ATTACK ORDER HAD ALSO BEEN GIVEN AND HELICOPTERS HAD BEEN LAUNCHED TOWARDS PUNTA ARENAS. (b)(1);1.4 (c) ONE INCIDENT WHICH TOOK PLACE WITHIN THE AIR FORCE WHICH INDICATED HOW CLOSE THE ARGENTINE FORCES WERE IN MAKING CONTACT WITH THE CHILEANS. A SQUADRON OF ARGENTINE AIR FORCE ATTACK AIRCRAFT WAS LAUNCHED FROM RIO GALLEGOS (51 389-69 13W) WITH AN UNSPECIFIED TARGET (WHICH (b)(1);1.4 (c) WAS PROBABLY PUNTA ARENAS). (b)(1);Sec. 1.4(c) THAT HALF-WAY TO THE TARGET, THE AIRCRAFT WERE TOLD TO RETURN. ALL DID EXCEPT ONE THIS LONE AIRCRAFT ACKNOWLEDGED RECEIPT OF THE ORDER TO RETURN, BUT INDICATED THAT HE WAS NOT OBEYING THESE ORDERS AND WAS CONTINUING TO ATTACK. AFTER CONSIDERABLE CONVERSATION WITH THIS PILOT, HE WAS CONVINCED TO RETURN TO HIS BASE, AT WHICH TIME HE WAS PLACED UNDER ARREST.

I. ON 791108, (b)(1);1.4 (c) WHEN A DISCUSSION OF THE BEAGLE CHANNEL CRISIS AROSE. (b)(1);1.4 (c)

(b)(1);1.4 (c) THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION CONCERNING THE EVENTS ON 781222:

(1) THE ORDER TO ATTACK WAS ISSUED AT 1200 HRS ON

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