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FROM

FM (b)(3):10 USC 424

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

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

BODY

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

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

SUBJ: IIR FORMER ARGENTINE ARMY CHIEF OF
STAFF SUSPENDED INDEFINITELY FROM THE CIRCULO MILITAR
(U) (b)(3):10 USC 424

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

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

DOI: (U) 20000211.

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

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

C. (U) (b)(3):10 USC 424;(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

SUMMARY: (U) RETIRED ARMY GENERAL **MARTIN ANTONIO**
((BALZA)) HAS BEEN SUSPENDED INDEFINITELY FROM THE
ARGENTINE ARMY CIRCULO MILITAR, A SOCIAL ORGANIZATION
THAT MOST ACTIVE AND RETIRED ARMY OFFICERS BELONG TO.
TEXT: 1. ~~(C)~~ FORMER ARGENTINE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF
GENERAL **MARTIN ANTONIO ((BALZA))** RETIRED IN 991200,
AFTER EIGHT YEARS AT THE HELM. (b)(1);1.4 (c)

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(b)(1);1.4 (c)

2. (U) THE CIRCULO MILITAR DEL EJERCITO (CM) IS A SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF ACTIVE AND RETIRED ARMY OFFICERS. IT OFFERS VENUES FOR SOCIAL FUNCTIONS AND SPORTS ACTIVITIES, AND MOST OFFICERS ARE MEMBERS. THE CM ALSO SERVES AS AN "UNOFFICIAL" PLATFORM FOR THE ARMY ON ISSUES SUCH AS PAY, HEALTH CARE, ETC. THE LARGE NUMBER OF RETIRED MEMBERS GIVES THE CM A DECIDEDLY CONSERVATIVE INCLINATION.

3. (U) NO SOONER HAD GENERAL BALZA RETIRED, THEN THE CIRCULO MILITAR LEADERSHIP VOTED TO SUSPEND HIM INDEFINITELY FROM THE ORGANIZATION. ALTHOUGH NOT THE MOST DRASTIC OPTION AT THEIR DISPOSAL (WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN "EXPULSION"), IT WAS NEVERTHELESS A PERMANENT SANCTION. THE RATIONALE GIVEN WAS THAT BALZA WAS ALSO A MEMBER OF ANOTHER ORGANIZATION WHICH HAD SPLINTERED OFF FROM THE CM IN THE PAST, AND DUAL MEMBERSHIP WAS INCOMPATIBLE. BALZA WAS VACATIONING AT THE BEACH IN JANUARY WHEN HE GOT THE NEWS. HE PLAYED IT DOWN AT FIRST, BUT HAS SUBSEQUENTLY ASKED CURRENT CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL ((BRINZONI)) TO CONVENE A PANEL (TRIBUNAL DE HONOR) TO DETERMINE THE LEGITIMACY OF THE SUSPENSION. THIS SHOULD OCCUR SOON. IN VINTAGE BALZA STYLE, THE ENTIRE EPISODE HAS BEEN PLAYED OUT IN THE MEDIA SPOTLIGHT.

(b)(1);1.4 (c)

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Withheld pursuant to exemption

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

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~~DRVD FM: DHS SCG, OCTOBER 97~~

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