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MESSAGE CENTER

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

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ACTION**

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P 182020Z FEB 77

FM (b)(3):10 USC 424

TO RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC/DS-6A/DB-3B/

INFO RULPALJ/USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ/SCJ2-AD/

RUCJBBA/USCINCRD MACDILL AFB FL/RCJ2-PR/

BT

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ NOFORN 0133 FEB 77

SUBJ: THIS IS

1. ARGENTINA (AR)

(b)(3):10 USC 424

3. (U) HOSTILITIES & INSURGENCIES - TERRORISTS MAKE ATTEMPT

ON LTG VIDELA

4. N/A

5. 770218

6. 770218

7. 770218, BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

8.

(b)(3):10 USC 424

9.

10 (b)(3):10 USC 424

11. NO

12. (b)(3):10 USC 424

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13. (b)(3):10 USC 424

14.

15. DIRC: NO, NOFORN TO AVOID EMBARRASSMENT TO HOST GOVT
16. 1. SUMMARY, (C/NOFORN) AT APPROXIMATELY 0830 HOURS 18 FEB 77, AN ATTEMPT WAS MADE ON THE LIFE OF ARGENTINE PRESIDENT, LTG RAFAEL VIDELA, A FEW MINUTES EARLIER, THE GENERAL ALONG WITH MAJOR GENERAL AZPITARTE, V CORPS COMMANDER, AND INTERIOR MINISTER, BG HARGUINDEGUY, HAD BOARDED THE PRESIDENTIAL AIRCRAFT, F-28 NAMED THE PATAGONIA, AT AEROPARQUE JORGE NEWBERRY IN DOWNTOWN BUENOS AIRES TO FLY TO BAHIA BLANCA. THE AIRPLANE WAS AT AN ALTITUDE OF 25 METERS WHEN A 25 KILO TROYL BOMB WAS DETONATED BELOW AND TO THE SIDE OF THE AIRCRAFT. ACCORDING TO ONE SOURCE THE BOMB CREATED SIGNIFICANT AIR TURBULENCE, BUT THE AIRCRAFT WAS ABLE TO CONTINUE ITS FLIGHT AND WAS DIVERTED TO THE EL PALOMAR AIR FORCE BASE (2654S-6436W) FOR INSPECTION. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE AIRCRAFT WAS NOT DAMAGED NOR WERE THE PASSENGERS INJURED. FOLLOWING THE INSPECTION, THE AIRCRAFT AND PASSENGERS PROCEEDED TO BAHIA BLANCA.

2. (C/NOFORN) SOURCES STATED THAT THE BOMBING AT AEROPARQUE WAS SIMILAR TO THE ONE AT TUCUMAN IN 1975 THAT DESTROYED AN ARGENTINE AIR FORCE C130. (b)(3):10 USC 424 AND THEY ARE CONVINCED THAT THE ATTACK WAS THE WORK OF TERRORISTS. ONE SOURCE STATED THAT HE HOPED THAT THE US WOULD TAKE NOTE THAT THERE HAD BEEN AN ATTEMPT TO VIOLATE THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF GENERALS VIDELA, HARGUINDEGUY AND AZPITARTE. COMMENTS: THE 18 FEB INCIDENT REPRESENTS THE THIRD ATTEMPT ON GENERAL VIDELA'S LIFE. ONE SOURCE

Sec. 3.3(b) (1)

FELT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD LEAN EVEN HARDER ON TERRORISTS AND INTENSIFY THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THEM. IN A CALMER VEIN, HOWEVER, HE EXPRESSED HIS HOPE THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND THE US ON THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FURTHER HOPED THAT THE ATTEMPT ON LTG VIDELA'S LIFE WOULD DEMONSTRATE TO THE US THAT ARGENTINA IS ENGAGED IN A "REAL WAR" WITH THE GUERRILLAS.

(b)(3):10
USC 424

COMMENTS: (C/NOFORN) A. THE REMOTELY TRIGGERED EXPLOSIVE WAS PLACED AT APPROX 800 METERS FROM APPROACH END OF RUNWAY 31 (2100 METERS LONG), AND 15 METERS OFF TO THE R.H. SIDE. PRESIDENT VIDELA'S AIRCRAFT USED RUNWAY 13 AND WAS APPROX 50 METERS ABOVE THE RUNWAY WHEN IT CAME ABEAM THE BOMB'S LOCATION. THE POWERFUL EXPLOSION SENT DEBRIS ACROSS THE RUNWAY BUT WELL UNDER THE AIRCRAFT. HAD THE TAKEOFF BEEN MADE FROM RUNWAY 31, THE AIRCRAFT WOULD PROBABLY HAVE BEEN DESTROYED SINCE IT WOULD

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HAVE BEEN JUST BREAKING GROUND AS IT ENTERED THE PATH OF THE
WEAPON'S MOST POWERFUL EFFECTS. B. THE BOMB'S PLACEMENT
IN A CULVERT OR DRAIN NEAR THE GEOGRAPHIC CENTER OF THE AIRPORT
UNDERScores AEROPARQUE'S VULNERABILITY TO SABOTAGE DESPITE INTENSE
SECURITY MEASURES. BECAUSE OF ITS LOCATION WITHIN A POPULATED
AREA, FOOLPROOF SECURITY MAY BE IMPOSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE.
C. Sec 3.3(b)(1) LOCAL TV STRONGLY ECHOED THE HUMAN RIGHTS
ASPECTS OF THE ATTEMPT AS NOTED IN PARA 2. THIS MSG COORD
W/EMBASSY, XGDS-2

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