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SEC 1-2 OF 2

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FM (b)(3):10 USC 424

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

THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINISHED INTELLIGENCE

1. (U) COUNTRY: ARGENTINA (AR)

2. (U) REPORT NUMBER: (b)(3):10 USC 424

3. (U) TITLE: MILITARY AFFAIRS-DUST SETTLES ON ABORTIVE
COUP BY MENENDEZ

4. (U) PROJECT NUMBER: N/A

5. (U) DATE OF INFORMATION: 791002-791010

6. (U) DATE OF REPORT: 791010

7. (U) DATE AND PLACE OF ACQUISITION: 791002-791010,

BUENOS AIRES

8. (U) REFERENCES: (b)(3):10 USC 424

9. (U) ASSESSMENT:

10. (U) ORIGINATOR: (b)(3):10 USC 424

11. (U) REQUEST EVALUATION: (b)(3):10 USC 424

12. (U) (b)(3):10 USC 424;(b)(6)

13. (U)

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Date: Oct 19, 2018

14. (U) SOURCE: A. "CLARIN" 791002 B. "CLARIN" 791003
C. "CLARIN" 791004 D. "CLARIN" 791005 E. "LA OPINION"
791007 F. "CLARIN" 791009 G. "CLARIN" 791009

15. (U) SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: DIRC-NO NOFORN TO AVOID
EMBARRASSMENT TO HOST GOVERNMENT

16. (U) THE FOLLOWING EVENTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE SINCE THE
790928-790929 REVOLT BY FORMER III CORPS COMMANDER
MENENDEZ: ARMY CINC VIOLA OPTED FOR LENIENT DISCIPLINARY
DETENTIONS FOR MENENDEZ AND HIS SECOND IN COMMAND, MARADONA--
90 DAYS DETENTION FOR MENENDEZ, AND LESS FOR MARADONA;
MENENDEZ, ON HIS WAY TO DETENTION IN CORRIENTES, INDULGED
IN FURTHER CRITICISM OF JUNTA PRACTICES AND ATTITUDES,
FOMENTING SPECULATION OF AN INCREASED PERIOD OF DETENTION;
IN LA RIOJA AND SAN LUIS, ENGINEER BATTALION AND ARTILLERY GROUP
COMMANDERS WERE REPLACED; THREE RETIRED ARMY OFFICERS
SERVING IN POSITIONS IN THE MEDIA IN CORDOBA WERE FIRED
IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR REPORTING OF THE EVENTS SURROUNDING
THE REVOLT BY MENENDEZ; AND SIX COLONELS (III ARMY CORPS)
WERE PLACED UNDER ARREST IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR ACTIONS
DURING THE ABORTIVE REVOLT.

22. (U) DETAILS: 1. SOURCE A REPORTED ON 791002 THAT
GENERALS MENENDEZ AND MARADONA WOULD SPEND 90 DAYS IN
DETENTION AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THEIR INSUBORDINATION.
SOURCE B REPORTED THAT MENENDEZ WOULD SERVE HIS
DETENTION IN CORRIENTES (II CORPS JURISDICTION), WHILE
MARADONA WOULD SERVE A LESSER DETENTION IN BAHIA BLANCA
(V CORPS JURISDICTION).

2. ACCORDING TO SOURCE C, MENENDEZ INDULGED IN FURTHER
CRITICISM OF JUNTA ACTIONS, ASKING RHETORICALLY AT ONE
POINT WHY AN UNCONSTITUTIONALLY EMPOWERED JUNTA ADHERES
TO SUPREME COURT DIRECTIVES, WHEN IT SHOULD CONDUCT ITS
AFFAIRS IN "MILITARY STYLE." SAME REPORT INDICATED THAT
THE NEW COMMANDER OF THE 141 ENGINEER CONSTRUCTION
BATTALION WOULD BE COL. JORGE PEDRO MALAGAMBA, REPLACING
COL. ANTON MOLINARI; 141ST ENG. CON. BATTALION IS HQ IN
LA RIOJA. FURTHER, THE NEW COMMANDER OF THE 141 AIR
DEFENSE ARTILLERY GROUP WOULD BE LT. COL. EDUARDO JORGE
BLANCO, REPLACING LT. COL. PAULINO ENRIQUE FURIO. DAILY
"LA NACION" OF 791004 REPORTED, ADDITIONALLY, THAT THREE
RETIRED ARMY OFFICERS SERVING IN RADIO/TELEVISION STATIONS
IN CORDOBA HAD BEEN REMOVED, IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR
REPORTING DURING THE MENENDEZ REVOLT.

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3. SOURCE D REPORTED THAT IT APPEARED LIKELY THAT AS A RESULT OF MENENDEZ' INOPPORTUEN REMARKS, HIS DETENTION PERIOD WOULD BE INCREASED. IN A SEPARATE BUT RELATED REPORT, SAME SOURCE REPORTED AIR FORCE CINC GRAFFIGNA'S DENIAL OF UNREST WITHIN THE ARGENTINE AIR FORCE.

4. SOURCE E REPORTED THAT ARMY CINC VIOLA WOULD MAKE A MAJOR SPEECH IN LATE OCTOBER RELATING TO MILITARY MATTERS. SAME SOURCE DISCUSSED THE MANNER IN WHICH CINC VIOLA ARRIVED AT HIS DECISION AS TO HOW TO DISCIPLINE MENENDEZ: THE

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DECISION RESTED ENTIRELY WITH VIOLA, AND HIS CHOICES OF ACTION WERE EITHER COURT MARTIAL, OR DETENTION, THE LATTER OF WHICH WAS CHOSEN IN THE INTEREST OF PRESERVING MILITARY DISCIPLINE. THE REPORT ADDED THAT VIOLA'S DECISION NOT TO COURT MARTIAL MENENDEZ IN NO WAY SETS A PRECEDENT. FURTHER, CIVILIAN SECTORS EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT THE LENIENCY OF THE PUNISHMENT FOR MENENDEZ (SEE A/ARMA COMMENT).

5. SOURCE F REPORTED THAT RESOLUTIONS PROVIDING FOR THE FORCED RETIREMENTS OF MEENEDEZ AND MARADONA WERE PUBLISHED IN THE ARMY BULLETIN. THE SOURCE ADDED THAT THERE WAS NO OFFICIAL CHANGE IN THE LENGTH OF TIME MENENDEZ WOULD BE DETAINED.

6. SOURCE G REPORTED THAT SIX COLONELS OF THE III ARMY CORPUS WERE BEING PLACED UNDER DETENTION, BUT THE REPORT OMITTED NAMES AND COMMANDS INVOLVED. SAME SOURCE ALSO REPORTED THAT WHEN NEW III ARMY COMMANDER VAQUERO ARRIVED TO TAKE COMMAND OF THE III CORPUS, MORALE WAS LOW, AND DIVISIONS PREVALENT

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WITHIN THE CORPS. VAQUERO ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT BRIGADES AND UNITS WERE RESPONDING TO ORDERS OF RDE COMMANDERS.
RO COMMENT: ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ THE DETENTION OF SIX ADDITIONAL COLONELS WOULD INDICATE THE ARMY'S DETERMINATION TO WEED OUT ANY FURTHER SOURCES OF UNREST WITHIN THE ARMY--PARTICULARLY WITHIN THE III CORPS. THE THREE NEWS MEDIA CASUALTIES IN CORDOBA WERE PERHAPS MINOR ONES IN THE LIGHT OF LIVELY AND UNRESTRAINED PRESS COVERAGE OF THE REVOLT. MENENDEZ' INCISIVE STATEMENTS, ALONG WITH CAUSING EMBARRASSMENT TO VIOLA, MAY HAVE THE LONG-TERM EFFECT OF OPENING UP PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF CURRENT ISSUES TO CORPS COMMANDERS AND OTHER SUB-JUNTA LEVEL OFFICIALS. IN THIS CONNECTION, III CORPS COMMANDER VAQUERO POINTEDLY REFRAINED FROM COMMENTING PUBLICLY ON CURRENT ISSUES, ON 791008, IN DEFERENCE TO VIOLA, SAYING THAT THIS WOULD ONLY CAUSE DISORDER AND INVITE STATEMENTS BY HIS COUNTERPARTS IN THE AIR FORCE AND NAVY. ONE DAY LATER, HOWEVER, AIR FORCE AIR OPERATIONS COMMANDER (GEN) CAPELLINI PUBLICLY COMMENTED ON NUMEROUS CURRENT ISSUES, INCLUDING THE JUNTA'S MUCH TALKED-ABOUT (BUT AS OF YET UNSEEN) POLITICAL PLAN; CAPELLINI, WHO LED AN UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW THEN-PR SIDENT ISABEL PERON IN 1975, SAID THAT "A PROPERLY STRUCTURED POLITICAL PLAN DOES NOT EVEN EXIST." THE FOLLOWING DAY, 790910, CAPELLINI AGAIN MADE PUBLIC STATEMENTS CONCERNING A NUMBER OF CURRENT MILITARY/POLITICAL ISSUES. THEY WERE NOTABLY MORE SUBDUED, AND CAPELLINI SAID THAT AIR FORCE CINC GRAFFIGNA WAS THE SOLE SPOKESMAN FOR THE AIR FORCE ON CURRENT ISSUES.

(b)(3):10 COMMENT: ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ A. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ THE ARMY HAS, FOR THE PAST YEAR, TRIED TO PORTRAY TO THE PUBLIC AND FOREIGN COMMUNITY A PICTURE OF SOLIDARITY AMONG THE RANKS. NUMEROUS SOURCES IN THE GRADES OF LTC AND COL HAVE STATED THAT THEY HAVE MATURED TO A POINT WHERE CONFLICT WITHIN THE OFFICER RANKS COULD NO LONGER RESULT IN BLOODSHED AMONG OFFICERS. THE EVENTS OF THE RECTN PAST HAVE ALMOST PROVEN THIS GROUP OF OFFICERS TO BE WRONG. TALKS WITH THIS SAME GROUP SINCE THE MENENDEZ MINI-REVOLT STILL REVEAL THAT THEY SEE MENENDEZ' ACTION AS PURE STUPIDITY. NOTWITHSTANDING THIS AGE GROUP'S OPINION, IT IS QUITE EVIDENT THAT WITHIN THE HIGHER OFFICER RANKS THERE IS ENOUGH DISCONTENT OVER THE VIDELA/VIOLA METHOD OF GOVERNING TO FOMENT A MINI-REVOLT.
B. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ ONE POINT OF VIEW NOT YET VERIFIED IS THAT MENENDEZ CALLED FOR VIOLA'S RESIGNATION BELIEVING

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THAT HE WOULD RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM CAVALRY GENERALS LOCATED IN BUENOS AIRES--I.E., POSSIBLY SUAREZ MASON AND GEN. CAMPS, AMONG OTHERS. THE REVOLT FAILED WHEN THE SUPPORT DID NOT APPEAR, FOR SOME REASON OR ANOTHER. C. ~~(S//NOFORN)~~ VIOLA MOST PROBABLY DID NOT COURT MARTIAL MENENDEZ BECAUSE HE DID NOT WANT FURTHER DIVISION WITHIN THE OFFICER RANKS. GEN. MENENDEZ WAS A POPULAR GENERAL AMONG HIS OFFICERS. (b)(3):10 USC 424 ~~_____~~ HAS BEEN TOLD BY ONE SOURCE THAT MENENDEZ WILL SPEND HIS 90 DAYS UNDER RESTRAINT IN CORRIENTES; THIS HAS BEEN CONFIRMED IN THE MEDIA. HE WILL PROBABLY STAY IN THE OFFICERS CLUB (CASINO DE FOFICIALES) AND HAVE FREE MOVEMENT IN THE POST, BUT HE WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE POST.

D. ~~(S//NOFORN)~~ THE FEELING AMONG JUNIOR MAJORS AND CAPTAINS OVER WHAT TRANSPIRED IS MIXED. SEVERAL MAJORS HAVE STATED THAT MENENDEZ' ACTIONS WERE ILL-CONCEIVED. HOWEVER, THERE ARE A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF SENIOR CAPTAINS WHO, WHILE NOT ADVOCATING A FORCEFUL REMOVAL OF THE VIDELA/VIOLA TEAM, ARE MOST UNHAPPY WITH THE WAY THINGS ARE BEING RUN, AND THEY HAVE BEEN VOICING THEIR DISCONTENT MORE READILY RECENTLY. AS THE PRINCIPLE REASONS FOR THEIR DISCONTENT, THEY CITE: THE RELEASE OSOPXNUPECIALLY SINCE THE KLEIN BOMBING) THE LACK OF GOVERNMENT RESOLVE TO ELIMINATE THE GUERRILLA THREAT ONCE AND FOR ALL, BY ELIMINATING THE REMAINING GUERRILLAS. THE VISIT BY THE OAS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ADDED FUEL TO THE BELIEF, AMONG SOME OFFICERS, THAT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT'S STANCE ON TERRORISM IS TOO SOFT. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT VIOLA HAS THE ARMY UNDER CONTROL FOR NOW, AND THAT HE HAS SUFFICIENT SUPPORT TO CONTINUE WITH HIS PRESENT POLICY. HOWEVER, THE FEELING OF DISCONTENT WHICH EXISTS WITHIN THE JUNIOR OFFICER RANKS COULD BECOME MORE VOCAL IN THE FUTURE, ESPECIALLY IF THERE IS AN INCREASE IN TERRORIST ACTIVITY.

E. ~~(S//NOFORN)~~ THE SIX COLONELS WHO HAVE SINCE BEEN DETAINED (AS A RESULT OF THEIR ACTIONS DURING MENENDEZ' REVOLT) ARE MOST PROBABLY MEMBERS OF III ARMY CORPS STAFF AND COMMANDERS OF CORPS GENERAL SUPPORT UNITS.

F. ~~(S//NOFORN)~~ THE LATEST WORD FROM GENDARMERIA HQ IS THAT MG ANTONIO DOMINGO BUSSI WILL BE MOVING SOON TO TAKE COMMAND OF ARGENTINE ARMY V CORPS, REPLACING VAQUERO. THIS MSG AMEMBA COORDINATED. ~~REVW 11 OCT 1985~~

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