

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

~~NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION~~

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1. COUNTRY: ARGENTINA (AR)

2. REPORT NUMBER:

(b)(3) 10 USC 424

3. TITLE: (U) Military - Political - Admiral Massera and Human Rights

4. PROJECT NUMBER: N/A

5. DATE OF INFORMATION:

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6. DATE OF REPORT: 780202

(b)(3) 10 USC 424

7. DATE & PLACE OF ACQUISITION:

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(b)(3) 10 USC 424

15. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

ADVANCE REPORT FOR ~~DEFENSE USE ONLY~~

D YES ☐
I
R NO ☒
C

16. SUMMARY:

(U) Report forwards American Embassy, Buenos Aires telegram concerning Admiral Massera and Human Rights.

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302150 AR 102100 AR

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~~AT TWO YEAR INTERVALS DECLASSIFIED ON 31 DEC 1989~~

20. ENCLOSURES:

1 Enclosure
1. Copy of Amembassy Buenos Aires Telegram 0742, DTG 302100Z JAN 78
1 cy, 3 pages (ct)

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Date: Oct 19, 2018

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21. This IR contains 1 pages.

SECRET
1-10

CN 0742
302100Z JAN 78

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TELEGRAM

INDICATE

(b)(3):10 USC 424

ROUTING

FROM
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

CLASSIFICATION
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11652
TAGS:
SUBJECT:

~~CDS~~
PINT, SHUM, AR
MASSERA AND HUMAN RIGHTS

ACTION:

SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ BUENOS AIRES 0742

AMB
DCM
POL3
POLR
ECOM
ISIS
LEGATT
SY
RF
CHRON

(b)(3):10
USC 424

REF: STATE 22648

1. It is difficult for us to believe that Massera is on the side of the angels where human rights in Argentina are concerned. We believe this difficulty is shared by private Argentines who give thought to human rights. It is widely believed here that the Navy (as well as the Army, Air Force and Federal Police), has been responsible for abductions, torture during interrogations, summary execution, and extra-legal detention.

2. There is no firm evidence, however, ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXX~~ of this. The possibility exists that Massera's boys in blue are truly Argentina's finest, pure of heart and with unstained hands.

The fact, however, that the Navy has its own

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278

CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION AREA

DCM:MChaplin

CLEARANCES

USIS:JHiggins (in draft)

POLR:JSears

(in draft)

LEGATT:KScherer

SY:RKelly (in draft)

(b)(3):10 USC 424

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OPTIONAL FORM 1
15 JAN 78

(b)(3):10
USC 424

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individual security ~~for~~ service, and of its known involvement in security investigations leads to opposite conclusions. The Navy's anti-terrorist operations in 1976 and early 1977 was very tough in such specific areas as Mar del Plata and Bahia Blanca. The Navy Mechanics School has been cited as a tough interrogation center. Consensus here ^{also} ~~is~~ that ~~also~~ Massera is responsible for whatever the Navy does. There are few "out of control" theories of rumors about the Navy.

3. Admiral Massera, whatever his other flaws, is an instinctive and savvy politician who has worked hard--and within some constituencies effectively--to create for himself a base of power grounded upon personal popularity. In addition to his own efforts, Navy officers and civilians especially trusted by Massera go about praising his name and replenishing his laurels. Massera boasts of his contact and popularity with labor people, Peronists, Jews and Civil Rights groups. He has a front man who has even ~~been~~ opened a "civic center" here in Buenos Aires to act in the Admiral's support. While his actions make him look very much like a populist, Massera ^{criticizes} ~~especially/criticizing~~ Army Chief of Staff Viola for his "populist" tendencies. Massera, in fact, bad-mouths his Army colleagues with increasing indiscretion. It was inevitable, we believe, that some bright reporter would

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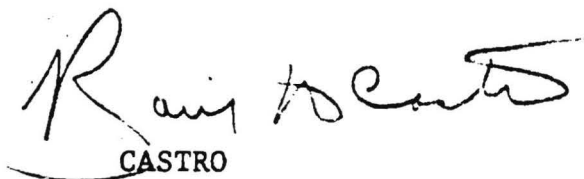
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open doors upon Massera's not so-private political activities. Just as Massera has used incidents like the Russian trawlers and, to an extent, the Beagle issue to gain popularity within Argentina, he now appears to be using the human rights issue to gain the good will of the US Government.

4. As of noon January 30 no press coverage of or commentary concerning the "Washington Post" story had appeared, except for brief mention in ^{a Buenos Aires} German language daily to President Carter's reference to the "Washington Post" article. We suspect nothing further will appear, but that the story will nevertheless become widely known here and will cause a stir in government circles.

5. Lastly, we should point out that the rivalry game is not one which Massera plays unopposed. Two publications-- "Conviccion" ~~XXXXXX~~ and "Tribuna de la Republica"--believed linked closely to Massera have had issues seized and been briefly suspended from publication. ~~XXXXXX follows the brief banning of "Conviccion", also believed a Navy supported XXXX~~


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