

CONFIDENTIAL

RELEASED IN PART  
B6PAGE 01 BUENOS 00879 01 OF 03 262057Z  
ACTION ARA-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	INR-07	SS-00	CIAE-00	H-01	NSCR-00
	NSAE-00	L-03	PM-10	INRE-00	JUSE-00	SP-02	C-01
	DS-01	SCT-02	P-02	/029 W			

-----200010 262114Z /66

P 262051Z JAN 89  
 FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1217  
 SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
 INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION  
 AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
 AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO  
 AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PN  
 USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA  
 USAFSO HOWARD AFB PN//DOI/LAI//

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BUENOS AIRES 00879

CINCSO AND CINCLANT ALSO FOR INTAFF

E.O. 12356 DECL: OADR  
 TAGS: PREL, MARR, AR  
 SUBJ: PERONISTS ON LA TABLADA INCIDENT

REF: (A) BUENOS AIRES 811 (B) BUENOS AIRES 847

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT).

2. SUMMARY. PERONIST DEFENSE EXPERTS [REDACTED]

B6

[REDACTED] DISCUSSED WITH POL/MIL OFFICER  
 JANUARY 25 THE LA TABLADA EVENTS AND THE IMPLICATIONS  
 FOR THE POLITICAL SITUATION. BOTH EXPRESSED CONCERN  
 ABOUT THE SURPRISE NATURE OF THE ATTACK AND THE INTELLI-  
 GENCE FAILURE THAT IT REPRESENTED. THEY DISCOUNTED  
 CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BUENOS 00879 01 OF 03 262057Z

THE SUGGESTION THAT IT COULD HAVE BEEN INSPIRED BY  
 SOME ELEMENTS IN THE GOVERNMENT OR RADICAL PARTY, AND  
 THEY AGREED THAT THE TERRORISTS HAD RECEIVED EXTENSIVE  
 TRAINING AND SUPPORT FROM ABROAD. THE PERONISTS ALSO

UNCLASSIFIED

EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE CREATION OF A NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL TO DEAL WITH THE SUBVERSIVE THREAT AS IT COULD LEAD TO A REPLAY OF THE 1970'S WHEN THE ARMY'S SUPPRESSION OF THE TERRORIST THREAT LED TO INCREASING POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT BY THE ARMED FORCES AND EVENTUALLY A COUP D'ETAT. THEY PROPOSED THE U.S. ASSIST ARGENTINA IN DEVELOPING AND EQUIPPING SPECIAL POLICE UNITS UNDER CIVILIAN AUTHORITY TO COMBAT TERRORISM. END SUMMARY

3. POL/MIL OFFICER MET JANUARY 25 WITH [REDACTED]

B6

[REDACTED] TO DISCUSS THE EVENTS AT LA TABLADA AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS. BOTH SAID THEY HAD BEEN COMPLETELY SURPRISED BY THE LA TABLADA ATTACK AND THE STRENGTH AND SKILL OF THE TERRORISTS, AS HAD VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP.

4. [REDACTED] SAID IT WAS CLEAR TO HIM FROM THE OUTSET THAT SEINELDIN WAS NOT INVOLVED. FOLLOWING THE DECEMBER MILITARY REBELLION, HE AND [REDACTED] HAD WORKED THROUGH RELIABLE INTERMEDIARIES TO DEVELOP DISCREET CONTACT WITH ARMY OFFICERS LINKED TO COL. SEINELDIN. ACCORDING TO THESE SOURCES, THE SEINELDIN GROUP IS AWAITING THE OUTCOME OF EVENTS WITHIN THE ARMY AND THE FULFILLMENT OF THEIR DEMANDS. THE IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR SEINELDIN AND HIS FOLLOWERS IS THAT OF PUNISHMENT

B6

B6

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BUENOS 00879 01 OF 03 262057Z

FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE THREE MUTINIES. THEY RECOGNIZE THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED AND ARE WILLING TO GIVE GENERAL GASSINO A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF TIME TO RESOLVE THIS QUESTION. WHILE THERE ARE MORE IMPATIENT AND EXTREMIST OFFICERS AMONG THE ADHERENTS OF LT. COLONEL RICO, THESE WOULD NOT HAVE STAGED A BLOODY ATTACK ON THEIR FELLOW SOLDIERS.

5. AS TO REPORTS THAT THE POLICE REACTED SO QUICKLY TO THE ATTACK BECAUSE GOVERNOR CAFIERO HAD INFORMATION THAT SOMETHING MIGHT HAPPEN AT LA TABLADA, [REDACTED] SAID IT WAS WHOLELY UNTRUE. THE TERRORISTS MET MORE RESISTANCE THAN THEY ANTICIPATED BECAUSE THEY STRUCK AS THE POLICE WERE CHANGING SHIFTS AND BECAUSE MORE THAN THE USUAL NUMBER OF OFFICERS AND NCO'S HAD

B6

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

DECIDED TO OVERNIGHT ON BASE FOLLOWING A LATE NIGHT GOOD-BYE PARTY FOR SOLDIERS BEING TRANSFERRED TO OTHER UNITS. [ ] SAID THE MOST LOGICAL EXPLANATION OF WHAT THE TERRORISTS INTENDED WAS A HIT-AND-RUN RAID TO SEIZE ARMS AND PERHAPS TO IMPLICATE THE SEINELDIN AND RICO GROUPS. THERE WERE TWO THINGS THAT BOTHERED HIM ABOUT SUCH AN EXPLANATION, SAID [ ] WHY WERE THE TERRORISTS ARMED WITH HEAVY WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION FOR A LONG FIGHT? WHY DID THEY NOT BRING TRANSPORT TO HAUL AWAY CAPTURED WEAPONS?

B6

B6

6. [ ] CRITICIZED THE ARGENTINE INTELLIGENCE SERVICES AS BEING INEFFICIENT AND INCOMPETENT. HE SAID THE INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES ARE TARGETED ON THE GOVERNMENT'S POLITICAL OPPONENTS RATHER THAN ON THE THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY. HE QUESTIONED HOW SUCH A LARGE TERRORIST ORGANIZATION COULD BE ASSEMBLED AND EQUIPPED

B6

CONFIDENTIAL

NNNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BUENOS 00879 02 OF 03 271135Z

ACTION ARA-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	INR-07	SS-00	CIAB-00	H-01	NSCE-00
	NSAE-00	L-03	PM-10	INRE-00	JUSE-00	SP-02	FAIM-01
	C-01	DS-01	SCT-02	P-02	/030 W		

-----247555 271407Z /45/66

P 262051Z JAN 89  
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1218  
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION  
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO  
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PN  
USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA  
USAFSO HOWARD AFB PN//DOI/LAI//

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 BUENOS AIRES 00879

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

CINCSO AND CINCLANT ALSO FOR INTAFF

E.O. 12356 DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PREL, MARR, AR  
SUBJ: PERONISTS ON LA TABLADA INCIDENT

WITHOUT ANY HINT OF ITS EXISTENCE.

7. BOTH PERONISTS EXPRESSED CONVICTION THAT THE BAND AT LA TABLADA HAD RECEIVED EXTENSIVE TRAINING AND SUPPORT FROM ABROAD. [ ] RELATED THAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD BY AN ARMY MAJOR THAT A DISPROPORTIONATE NUMBER OF OFFICERS HAD BEEN SHOT IN THE TABLADA OPERATION, ALL OF THEM IN THE TORSO OR HEAD. CLEARLY, THE TERROR-  
CONFIDENTIAL

B6

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BUENOS 00879 02 OF 03 271135Z

ISTS WERE PICKING THEIR TARGETS CAREFULLY. TO THE MAJOR, THIS FACT PLUS THE LONG AND TENACIOUS NATURE OF THE RESISTANCE INDICATED A LEVEL OF MILITARY SKILL WHICH COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN ACQUIRED THROUGH ACTUAL COMBAT EXPERIENCE.

8. [ ] DISCOUNTED ANY LINKS BETWEEN THE TERRORISTS AND ELEMENTS IN THE GOVERNMENT OR RADICAL PARTY. THEY ALSO REJECTED THE NOTION THAT THE EPISODE WAS CONTRIVED TO PROVIDE THE MILITARY WITH THE JUSTIFICATION FOR AN ANTI-TERRORIST CAMPAIGN.

B6

[ ] SAID SOME PEOPLE HAD SPECULATED THAT THE TERRORISTS' COMMUNIQUE (REF A, PARA 6), OUTLINING THEIR PHILOSOPHY AND AIMS, HAD BEEN PLANTED BY THE AUTHORITIES TO LAY BLAME ON A SPECIFIC GROUP. HAD THAT BEEN THE CASE, THE DOCUMENT WOULD HAVE AT LEAST BEEN RATIONAL. IT WAS, HOWEVER, SO IRRATIONAL, UNREALISTIC AND ILLOGICAL THAT IT COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN THE WORK OF LEFT WING CRAZIES.

B6

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

9. ON THE QUESTION OF GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE THREAT, [ ] INDICATED HIS CONCERN ABOUT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL. WHILE THE PERONISTS HAD PROPOSED THE CREATION OF SUCH A BODY FOR SOME TIME, THEY SAW ITS MANDATE AS ADVISING THE PRESIDENT ON NATIONAL SECURITY MATTERS IN THE BROADEST POSSIBLE SENSE AND TO HELP DEVELOP AN OVERALL NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY THROUGH INVOLVEMENT OF ALL POLITICAL SECTORS. THE PROPOSED BODY WOULD LIKELY FOCUS ON THE MORE NARROW QUESTION OF COUNTERING SUBVERSION. MILITARY INVOLVEMENT WAS REQUIRED, BUT WOULD HAVE TO BE MANAGED CAREFULLY LEST THE ARMED FORCES AGAIN ASSUME A KEY ROLE IN THE SUPPRESSION OF TERRORISM. THE

B6

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BUENOS 00879 02 OF 03 271135Z

PERONISTS NOTED THAT UCEDE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ALSOGARAY WAS CALLING FOR A ROLE FOR THE ARMED FORCES IN COUNTERING THE TERRORIST THREAT. SUCH DIRECT PARTICIPATION BY THE MILITARY COULD CREATE CONDITIONS FOR A REPEAT OF 1970'S WITH INCREASING MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS, PERHAPS LEADING TO DE FACTO CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT BY THE ARMED FORCES OR AN OUTRIGHT COUP SHOULD THE CIVILIANS BE SEEN AS INCAPABLE OF COUNTERING THE SUBVERSIVE THREAT.

10. [ ] SAID ARGENTINA NEEDS TO DEVELOP, TRAIN AND EQUIP A SPECIAL POLICE UNIT UNDER CIVILIAN AUTHORITY, AN ANTI-TERRORIST QUICK-REACTION FORCE, TO DEAL WITH INCIDENTS LIKE LA TABLADA. WITH AN ADEQUATE POLICE FORCE, PROPERLY EQUIPPED, THE RATIONALE FOR DIRECT MILITARY INVOLVEMENT DIMINISHES. THE TWO PERONISTS HOPED THAT THE UNITED STATES COULD ASSIST ARGENTINA BY PROVIDING MODERN EQUIPMENT FOR SUCH A SPECIALIZED POLICE UNIT.

B6

11. POL/MIL OFFICER RESPONDED THAT THE U.S. STRONGLY SUPPORTED THE MAINTENANCE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER IN ARGENTINA AND WOULD GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO GOA REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE. HOWEVER, THERE WERE LEGAL RESTRICTIONS ON PROVISION OF TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT TO POLICE FORCES.

12. COMMENT. [ ] RAISE AN INTERESTING POINT. THOSE WHO WISH THE ARGENTINE MILITARY TO DEVELOP A PROFESSIONAL MISSION WHICH WILL KEEP THEM

B6

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

OUT OF POLITICS, IT MAKES SENSE THAT THE STRUGGLE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BUENOS 00879 03 OF 03 262058Z  
ACTION ARA-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	INR-07	SS-00	CIAE-00	H-01	NSCE-00
	NSAE-00	L-03	PM-10	INRE-00	JUSE-00	SP-02	C-01
	DS-01	SCT-02	P-02	/029 W			

-----200035 262116Z /66

P 262051Z JAN 89  
 FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1219  
 SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
 INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION  
 AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
 AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO  
 AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PN  
 USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA  
 USAF SO HOWARD AFB PN//DOI/LAI//

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 BUENOS AIRES 00879

CINCSO AND CINCLANT ALSO FOR INTAFF

E.O. 12356 DECL: OADR  
 TAGS: PREL, MARR, AR  
 SUBJ: PERONISTS ON LA TABLADA INCIDENT

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

AGAINST INTERNAL SUBVERSION BE ORGANIZED AS A POLICE  
OPERATION UNDER THE FIRM DIRECTION OF CIVILIAN AUTHORITY.  
WE DO NOT DOUBT THAT ALFONSIN INTENDS HIS NATIONAL  
SECURITY COUNCIL TO DO JUST THAT, BUT IF HE IS TO RESIST  
PRESSURE FROM THE MILITARY AND THE RIGHT TO INVOLVE  
THE ARMED FORCES, THE POLICE AND CIVILIAN INTELLIGENCE  
AGENCIES WILL HAVE TO PERFORM EFFICIENTLY.

SERVICE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BUENOS 00879 03 OF 03 262058Z

UNCLASSIFIED

CONFIDENTIAL

UNCLASSIFIED

NNNN

UNCLASSIFIED