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TELEGRAM NUMBER 309 OF 31 MAY

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(?)

YOUR TELEGRAM NUMBER 131: FALKLANDS: ARGENTINA INTERNAL.

1. THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR LATIN AMERICA AT THE SPANISH MFA MADE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS THIS MORNING.

2. REPORTS RECEIVED FROM BUENOS AIRES ABOUT A WEEK AGO SUGGESTED THAT THE INTERNAL SITUATION REMAINED CALM AND THAT THE MILITARY TOOK A RELATIVELY OPTIMISTIC VIEW. THE MILITARY COMMANDER OF

TOOK A RELATIVELY OPTIMISTIC VIEW. THE MILITARY COMMANDER OF
THE BUENOS AIRES AREA, FOR INSTANCE, HAD TOLD THE SPANISH
AMBASSADOR THAT HE WAS RECONCILED TO THE LOSS OF THE FALKLAND
ISLANDS IN THE SHORT-TERM. BUT THIS WOULD BE TO LOSE A BATTLE,
NOT THE WAR, WHICH IN THE LONGER TERM HE WAS SURE ARGENTINA
WOULD WIN. THERE HAD BEEN NO WAVERING IN THE FULL POPULAR SUPPORT
WHICH THE GOVERNMENT ENJOYED ON THIS ISSUE. ON THE OTHER HAND,
US POLICY AROUSED EVEN STRONGER FEELINGS THAN BRITAIN'S.
THE ARGENTINIANS FELT BETRAYED AND RESENTFUL.

- 3. CASSINELLO WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE ARGENTINIAN MFA TOOK A
  MORE PESSIMISTIC VIEW, PERHAPS BECAUSE THEIR INTERNAL POLITICAL
  ANALYSIS WAS MORE SOPHISTICATED. MINDS THERE WERE ALREADY
  TURNING TO WHAT MIGHT FOLLOW THE MILITARY REGIME. THE MILITARY
  HAD DELIBERATELY DISMEMBERED THE INTERNAL CIVILIAN STRUCTURE
  AND THE POLITICAL PARTIES. AS A RESULT THERE WAS NO VIABLE
  ALTERNATIVE CAPABLE OF SEIZING, LET ALONE HOLDING, POWER. NO
  CLEAR CIVILIAN MODEL OF GOVERNMENT HAD EMERGED. A NUMBER OF
  POLITICIANS OF THE VIOLA PERIOD, SUCH AS CAMILLON AND LIAS, WERE
  BEING SPOKEN OF AS POSSIBLE MEMBERS OF A CIVIL/MILITARY GOVERNMENT.
  ONE SHOULD ALSO REMEMBER THAT GALTIERI'S SUPPORT REMAINED STRONG
  ENOUGH FOR HIM TO BE THE FIGURE TO HEAD SUCH A JOINT GOVERNMENT.
- ON DOMESTIC POLITICS HE WAS, BY COMPARISON WITH ANAYA, A MODERATE.
  - 4. CASSINELLO SAID THAT THE AMERICANS WERE CLEARLY WORKING HARD FOR AN HONOURABLE SURRENDER OF ARGENTINIAN FORCES ON THE FALKLANDS. BUT A PERONIST POLITICIAN HAD MADE THE POINT THAT THE ARGENTINIAN MILITARY GOVERNOR MENENDEZ WAS UNPREDICTABLE AS WELL AS TOUGH. THERE COULD BE NO GUARANTEE THAT IF ASKED TO PRESIDE OVER A DIGNIFIED SURRENDER, HE WOULD COMPLY.
  - 5. CASSINELLO ENDED BY SAYING THAT IT WAS ONLY IN THAT VERY NARROW SECTOR OF ARGENTINIAN SOCIETY WHICH WAS CAPABLE OF SOPHISTICATED POLITICAL REFLECTION THAT ANY SORT OF SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT THE WHOLE OPERATION WERE BEGINNING TO EMERGE. THE GREAT MASS OF THE POPULATION WERE FED ON HEAVY PROPAGANDA AND DENIED ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF INFORMATION. THEY REMAINED UNSHAKEN BY LOSSES ALREADY SUSTAINED.