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ACTION ARA-16

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 INR-10 SS-15 CIAE-00 ICA-11 DODE-00  
H-01 NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-09 PA-01 SP-02 SPRS-02  
/073 W

-----274150 111537Z /47

R 101915Z APR 81  
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9156  
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS  
USCINCLANT NORFOLK

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CINCSO FOR INTAFF, CINCLANT FOR POLAD

E.O. 12065: N/A

TAGS: PEPR, OVIP, AR

SUBJECT: ARMY COS MEYER'S VISIT TO ARGENTINA: A SUBSTANTIVE AND  
PUBLIC RELATIONS SUCCESS

1. THE ARRIVAL OF ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL EDWARD C. MEYER IN ARGENTINA APRIL 5 CAPTURED PRIMARY ATTENTION IN THE ARGENTINE MEDIA AND REMAINED THE FOCUS OF TOP HEAD, FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE UNTIL THE VISIT WAS INTERRUPTED APRIL 8 WHEN GENERAL MEYER HAD TO CANCEL HIS PROGRAM AND RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES FOR THE FUNERAL OF GENERAL OF THE ARMY OMAR BRADLEY. EDITORIAL COMMENT HAS BEEN SLOW IN DEVELOPING, AS IS USUAL HERE, BUT THE INTENSE NEWS TREATMENT OF THE VISIT MAKES PLAIN THE IMPORTANCE THE ARGENTINE MILITARY PLACED ON GENERAL MEYER'S PRESENCE.

2. ON APRIL 6, ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR SHLAUDEMANN, GENERAL MEYER MET FOR NEARLY AN HOUR WITH PRESIDENT VIOLA.

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AS GUEST OF ARGENTINE ARMY CINC GALTIERI, THE US ARMY COS SPENT MOST OF HIS TIME SUBSEQUENTLY IN MEETINGS WITH THE TOP ARGENTINE ARMY OFFICERS AND VISITS TO ARMY INSTALLATIONS IN THE BUENOS AIRES AREA. AT A RECEPTION IN ARMY HEADQUARTERS MONDAY EVENING, APRIL 6, GALTIERI DECORATED GENERAL MEYER WITH THE ARGENTINE ARMED FORCES' HIGHEST AWARD OF HONOR, THE MILITARY ORDER OF MERIT (ORDEN DE MAYO AL MERITO MILITAR EN EL GRADO DE GRAN CRUZ).

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Marvin  
Russell, Senior Reviewer

3. BESIDES THE HIGH COMMAND OF THE ARGENTINE ARMY, THE RECEPTION WAS ATTENDED BY THE OTHER TWO MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING JUNTA, NAVY COMMANDER LAMBRUSCHINI AND AIR FORCE CINC GRAFFIGA, ON WHOM GENERAL MEYER HAD ALSO PAID CALLS. ON PRESENTATION OF THE MEDAL, GALTIERI SPOKE WARMLY OF THE "COMMON MANDATE" SHARED BY THE US AND ARGENTINA TO PRESERVE LIBERTY. GALTIERI SAID GENERAL MEYER'S VISIT "CONTRIBUTES TO CONSOLIDATING THE TIES BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES AND PROVIDES A NEW IMPETUS TO OUR UNITED DECISION TO TRAVEL THE ROAD OF LIBERTY AND PEACE FOR AMERICA AND THE WORLD." GENERAL MEYER RESPONDED WITH APPRECIATION AND AN EXPRESSION OF HIS BELIEF THAT "OUR COMMON INTERESTS LEAD US, WITH FIRMNESS, TO STRIVE TO EXERCISE COOPERATIVE AND RESPONSIBLE ROLES, BE THEY IN INTERNATIONAL FORA, IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS, OR AS INDIVIDUAL AND INDEPENDENT COUNTRIES SEEKING OUR OWN DOMESTIC PRIORITIES."

4. AT AMBASSADOR SHLAUDEMANN'S RECEPTION FOR GENERAL MEYER WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, BOTH AMERICAN AND ARGENTINE GUESTS REMARKED THE NOVEL ATMOSPHERE OF GENUINE CORDIALITY, EVEN CAMARADERIE, WHICH CONTRASTED WITH THE FORMALITY OF PREVIOUS SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS WITH HIGH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ARGENTINE MILITARY FIGURES. SOME SENSE OF THE GRATIFICATION OF THE ARGENTINE ARMY LEADERSHIP IN HAVING GENERAL MEYER AS GUEST HERE WAS CONVEYED IN PRIVATE REMARKS OF CINC GALTIERI. HE TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT ALL PAST DIFFERENCES WITH THE US CAN BE PUT BEHIND THE TWO GOVERNMENTS AS RELATIONS ENTER A CONSTRUCTIVE PHASE. IMPORTANT AS THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION'S INITIATIVE TO REPEAL THE HUMPHREY-KENNEDY AMENDMENT IS IN SETTING THE RELATIONSHIP IN NEW FRAMEWORK, GALTIERI SAID WHAT IS OF MORE VALUE IS RENEWAL OF CONTACT WITH US MILITARY LEADERS. HE SAID THE AMENDMENT, EVEN IF ITS REPEAL BECOMES A LENGTHY PROCESS, REPRESENTS LITTLE MORE THAN A REMINDER OF THE UNPLEASANT RECENT PAST; IT NEVER WAS A HINDRENCE TO THE ARGENTINE ARMED FORCES, WHICH COULD GET WHAT THEY REQUIRED FROM EUROPEAN AND OTHER SUPPLIERS; IF NEEDS COULD NOT BE MET BY ARGENTINE INDUSTRY. WHAT HE SAID WAS GENUINELY MISSED WERE DIRECT, PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LINKS WITH AMERICAN MILITARY OFFICERS. IT SEEMED HE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN MORE PLEASED THAT THE LINK-UP APPEARS NOW TO HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED.  
SHLAUDEMANN

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