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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS
Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
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E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PINS, SHUM, AR
SUBJECT: ARMY OUTLINES NEW ANTI-SUBVERSIVE PROCEDURES

SUMMARY: THE ARMY HAS ALLEGEDLY IMPARTED ORALLY NEW OPERATING GUIDELINES FOR THE ANTI-SUBVERSION CAMPAIGN. UNAUTHORIZED "INDEPENDENT" OPERATIONS ARE TO END AND NON-TERRORIST SUBVERSIVE SUSPECTS ARE TO BE HANDLED WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF LAW. THE INSTRUCTION DISTINGUISHES BETWEEN MARXIST POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS AND TERRORIST BANDS, FOR WHOM DIFFERING PROCEDURES ARE ENVISIONED. DISAPPEARANCES CONTINUE TO BE RECORDED, HOWEVER, ALBEIT IN DIMINISHING NUMBERS, LEADING TO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SCOPE AND EFFICACY OF THE NEW GUIDELINES. END SUMMARY.

1. A SENIOR ARMY INTELLIGENCE SOURCE (PROTECT) CONFIDENTIALLY INFORMED EMBOFFS THAT ARMY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF VIOLA ORALLY INSTRUCTED ARMY CORPS COMMANDERS AND INTELLIGENCE SERVICES THAT HENCEFORTH ALL ARRESTS OF NON-TERRORIST SUBVERSIVES WERE TO BE CARRIED OUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH EXISTING LAWS AND THAT "INDEPENDENT"

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OPERATIONS, UNLESS SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED, WERE TO END. THE INSTRUCTIONS APPARENTLY WENT OUT IN LATE AUGUST.

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2. ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE, THE GUIDELINES DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "MARXIST POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS" AND "MARXIST TERRORIST DELINQUENT BANDS". THE FORMER INCLUDES THE PRO-SOVIET ARGENTINE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCA), THE PRO-CHINA COMMUNIST REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (PCR), THE COMMUNIST-MARXIST-LENINIST EX-VANGUARDIA COMMUNISTA PARTY, THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY (PST), WORKERS POWER PARTY AND THE POPULAR LEFTIST FRONT. ALL SAVE THE PCA HAVE BEEN DELCARED ILLEGAL AND DISSOLVED, THEREFORE PARTICIPATION IS ILLEGAL AND SUBJECT TO FEDERAL CRIMINAL PROSECUTION. MEMBERS OF THE PCA, WHICH LIKE OTHER TRADITIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES HAS HAD ITS ACTIVITIES SUSPENDED BUT NOT OUTLAWED, ARE SUBJECT TO ARREST ONLY IF THEY HAVE VIOLATED THE LAW SUSPENDING POLITICAL ACITIVITES. IN THE CASES OF BOTH PCA AND NON-TERRORIST MARXIST POLITICAL GROUPS, SUSPECTS MUST BE OPENLY ARRESTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAW--ACCORDING TO OUR INFORMANT--WHICH REQUIRES A WRITTEN REPORT, TESTIMONY OF WITNESSES, CERTIFICATION REGARDING PERSONAL PROPERTY, ANDNOTIFICATION TO FAMILY ON THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE SUSPECT. AGAIN ACCORDING TO OUR MILITARY SOURCE, WHILE ARRESTS MUST BE ACKNOWLEDGED, PRISONERS CAN BE HELD INCOMMUNICADO FOR PERIODS WHICH VARY ACCORDING TO THE PROVINCE AND CORRESPONDING STATUTE, GENERALLY UP TO TEN DAYS, AND SUBJECT TO A LIMITED EXTENSION. NON-TERRORIST SUBVERSIVE SUSPECTS ARE TO BE TRIED IN THE FEDERAL COURTS AND ARE SUBJECT BY LAW TO SENTENCES RANGING FROM THREE TO FIVE YEARS.

3. THE SECOND CATEGORY OF "MARXIST TERRORIST DELIN-
QUENT BANDS" INCLUDES THE PRT-ERP, THE MONTONEROS,
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THE COMMUNIST ORGANIZATION OF THE WORKERS POWER PARTY (OCPO), THE COMMUNIST-MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY OF ARGENTINA (THE MILITANT SPLINTER GROUP OF THE FORMER VANGUARDIA COMMUNISTA LISTED ABOVE), THE REVOLUTIONARY FRONT OF OCTOBER 17, AND SEVERAL MINISCULE OTHERS. SOURCE INDICATED TERRORIST SUSPECTS IN THE LATTER CATEGORY ARE TO BE TRIED BY MILITARY COURTS. THEY ARE SUBJECT BY LAW TO THE DEATH PENALTY. IT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT LEGALLY TO IMPOSE THE DEATH PENALTY, HOWEVER, AS ARGENTINES ARE TEMPERMENTALLY OPPOSED TO CAPITAL PUNISHMENT AND JUDGES ARE HISTORICALLY FEARFUL OF RETRIBUTION BY ANGERED RELATIVES OR TERRORIST COMPANIONS, OUR MILITARY INFORMANT SAID.

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4. THE GUIDELINES DESCRIBED ABOVE WERE ISSUED TO THE ARMY CORPS COMMANDERS. IN EFFECT, ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE, THEY SHOULD TIGHTEN UP ALL ANTI-SUBVERSIVE OPERATIONS IN THE COUNTRY SINCE ALL UNITS--INCLUDING THOSE WITHIN THE NAVY, POLICE, AIR FORCE,--ARE WITHIN THE GEOGRAPHIC JURISDICTION OF THE CORRESPONDING CORPS COMMANDER. (SEPARATELY THE SOURCE SAID THERE IS CONFLICT BETWEEN VIOLA AND HIS CORPS COMMANDERS--PARTICULARLY FIRST CORPS COMMANDER SUAREZ MASON AND MILITARY INSTITUTES COMMANDER RIVEROS--OVER DIRECTIVES ON ANTI-SUBVERSION OPERATIONS. DIVISION COMMANDERS ALSO ARE CONCERNED IN THAT THEY FEEL THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ANTI-SUBVERSION CAMPAIGN IN THEIR AREAS AND BELIEVE THEY SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED BY VIDELA'S NEW GUIDELINES. REPORTEDLY VIOLA TOLD THEM TO FOLLOW ORDERS OR RETIRE.)

5. SOURCE QUALIFIED VIOLA'S ABILITY TO ENFORCE ABSOLUTELY AND IMMEDIATELY THE NEW GUIDELINES. THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE SECURITY FORCES ARE STILL PSYCHOLOGICALLY AND BY TRAINING VEHEMENTLY OPPOSED TO COMMUNISTS AND LEFTIST SUBVERSIVES, HE SAID, AND TEND TO LUMP TOGETHER BOTH MARXIST IDEOLOGUES AND MILITANT TERRORISTS. CHANGING THIS MENTALITY REQUIRES AN ON-GOING RE-EDUCATION PROCESS.

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6. EMBASSY NOTES THAT REPORTS OF DISAPPEARANCES HAVE CONTINUED TO APPEAR IN THE PRESS AND FROM EMBASSY VISITORS, ALBEIT IN DECLINING NUMBERS. REAPPEARANCES, HOWEVER, DO OCCUR. MEDICAL DOCTOR LEPANTO BIANCHI, ABDUCTED FROM HIS OFFICE IN BUENOS AIRES SEPTEMBER 18, REAPPEARED SEPTEMBER 22. (OUR ARMY INTELLIGENCE SOURCE, WHO SHOWED EMBOFFS BIANCHI'S FILE IDENTIFYING HIM AS A PCA MEMBER, SAID SEPTEMBER 22 THAT HE BELIEVED THAT ABDUCTION WAS A MISTAKE, THAT VIDELA WAS FURIOUS IN LIGHT OF THE BAD PUBLICITY COMING SHORTLY BEFORE THE INTERNATIONAL CANCER CONGRESS, AND THAT BIANCHI MIGHT WELL TURN UP VERY SHORTLY. BIANCHI REAPPEARED THAT NIGHT.) TWO CORDOBA LAWYERS, REPORTED MISSING SEPTEMBER 20, WERE NAMED SEPTEMBER 22 AMONG TEN PERSONS DETAINED BY THE ARMY IN CORDOBA FOR "DISTURBING ORDER". PHYSICS STUDENT EDUARDO BENDERSKY AND HIS FRIEND MIGUEL ANGEL SPINELLA, ALLEGEDLY ABDUCTED SEPTEMBER 16 AND 14 RESPECTIVELY, HOWEVER HAVE NOT YET TURNED UP (SEPTEL). (SPINELLA, AN ITALIAN CITIZEN, IS REPORTEDLY A MEMBER OF THE PCR.)

7. COMMENT: EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED SEVERAL SIMILAR REPORTS
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CONCERNING HIGH LEVEL INSTRUCTIONS AIMED AT BRINGING THE ANTI-SUBVERSIVE FIGHT BACK WITHIN THE REALM OF LAW AND DUE PROCESS. WE ARE WATCHING CLOSELY TO SEE WHETHER REPORTS OF DISAPPEARANCES WILL IN FACT SUBSTANTIATE THIS WELCOME SHIFT IN ANTI-SUBVERSIVE OPERATIONS AND WHETHER VIOLA CAN IN PRACTICE REIGN IN HIS MORE HARD-LINE REPRESSIVE GENERALS. ALSO INTERESTING IS OUR INTELLIGENCE SOURCE'S ALACRITY IN REPORTING THE INSTRUCTED CHANGE IN PROCEDURES AND HIS TOP BOSS VIOLA'S EFFORTS TO TIGHTEN CONTROL OVER THE ANTI-SUBVERSIVE APPARATUS.

END COMMENT.
CASTRO

[REDACTED]

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