

CONFIDENTIAL

DOCUMENT ID: 178775437
INQNO: DOC44D 00169839
DOCNO: TEL 006388 97
PRODUCER: BUENOS AIRES
SOURCE: STATE
DOCTYPE: IN
DOR: 19971219
TOR: 141145
DOCPREC: 0
ORIGDATE: 199712191907
MHFNO: 97 0049674
DOCCLASS: C

HEADER
OO RUEAIIB
ZNY CCCCC ZOC STATE ZZH
MSI7278
OO RUEHC
DE RUEHBU #6388/01 3531907
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 191907Z DEC 97
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9180
INFO RHEHAAA/WHITEHOUSE WASHDC
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA 0175
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0001
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 4731
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 4863
RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 9570
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 2961
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0017
BT

CONTROLS
C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 006388

STATE FOR ARA, ARA/BSC

ROME FOR VATICAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/19/07

TEXT
TAGS: PREL, PHUM, PTER, SENV, KNAR, ETRD, CU, AR
COMBINE: COMPLETE

SUBJECT: DI TELLA ON BILATERAL ISSUES

REFS: A) FBIS 162257Z DEC 97, B) BUENOS AIRES 6281,
C) STATE 228685, D) BUENOS AIRES 6194,
E) STATE 234871,

CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE V. MANUEL ROCHA. REASONS: 1.5 (B)
AND (D).

1. (U) ACTION REQUESTS THROUGHOUT.

STATE DEPT. DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW
 Retain class'n
 Declassify
Change/classify to _____
with concurrence of _____
after _____
EO 12958, 25X
IPS/CR/IR by RL Date: 8/30/01

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCES METHODS EXEMPTION 3828
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2001 2007

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
2000

CIA HAS NO OBJECTION TO
DECLASSIFICATION AND/OR
RELEASE OF CIA INFORMATION
IN THIS DOCUMENT

CONFIDENTIAL

SUMMARY

2. (C) IN A DECEMBER 18 MEETING WITH CHARGE, FONMIN DI TELLA ECHOED THE U.S. POLICY LINE ON PARAGUAY, FORESHADOWED ARGENTINE ATTENDANCE AT AN IBERO-AMERICAN SUMMIT IN CUBA, AND STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF MOVING FORWARD ON THE FALKLANDS/MALVINAS ISSUE. HE ALSO ARGUED AGAINST THE USE OF "SALAMI TACTICS" IN PURSUIT OF A FREE TRADE AREA, AND UNDERScoreD THAT ARGENTINA HAD PAID A PRICE FOR BACKING THE U.S. ON CLIMATE CHANGE. END SUMMARY.

3. (U) FONMIN GUIDO DI TELLA CALLED IN CHARGE DECEMBER 18 FOR A REVIEW OF BILATERAL ISSUES. ALSO PRESENT WERE VICE FONMIN ANDRES CISNEROS, UNDER SECRETARY ALBERTO DAVEREDE, AND EMBASSY POLCOUNS.

PARAGUAY

4. (C) DI TELLA ACKNOWLEDGED BEING "VERY WORRIED ABOUT PARAGUAY." THINGS WERE NOT GOING WELL. WASMOSY SEEMED TO BE HAVING AN ATTACK OF NERVES OVER OVIEDO, WHOM DI TELLA CONSIDERED TO BE "A DISASTER IN ALL WAYS." THAT SAID, GOA WAS COMMITTED TO THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN PARAGUAY. WASMOSY SHOULD NOT VIOLATE THAT PROCESS. IF THE RESULT WERE AN OVIEDO VICTORY, GOA WOULD HAVE TO DO ITS BEST TO WORK WITH OVIEDO. (NOTE: DI TELLA'S LINE, WHICH EFFECTIVELY PARALLELS U.S. POLICY, OFFERED NO HINT OF THE "U.S. VS. OVIEDO" REMARK ALLEGED BY REF A TO HAVE BEEN MADE BY PRESIDENT MENEM. END NOTE.)

CUBA

5. (C) DI TELLA SAID CUBA WAS NOT HIGH ON THE LIST OF ARGENTINE PRIORITIES, AND NOT AN ISSUE OVER WHICH IT WISHED TO "FIGHT" WITH THE U.S. NEVERTHELESS, GOA HAD "AN OPINION" ABOUT CUBA. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WAS THE ONLY WAY TO OPEN THE COUNTRY AND SECURE DEMOCRATIC CHANGE. IT HAD NOT WORKED IN THE CASE OF CHINA, BUT CUBA WAS SMALLER. HELMS-BURTON WAS "EXACTLY THE WRONG WAY TO GO," AND HAD HELPED CASTRO GREATLY BY REVIVING FLAGGING PUBLIC SUPPORT. CUBA ALSO OWED ARGENTINA 1.4 BILLION DOLLARS, A FACT THAT AFFECTED HOW ARGENTINA DEALT WITH CUBA.

6. (C) HE SAW NO REAL OPPONENTS TO HOLDING THE 1999 IBERO-AMERICAN SUMMIT IN CUBA. NICARAGUA MIGHT SAY NO, BUT THAT WOULD NOT MAKE A DIFFERENCE IF "THE BIG BOYS" DECIDED TO ATTEND. LIKE THE POPE'S VISIT TO THE ISLAND, THE SUMMIT COULD BE A BREATH OF FRESH AIR FOR THE CUBAN PEOPLE. AS A CONDITION OF HIS ATTENDANCE, PRESIDENT MENEM COULD INSIST ON ACCESS TO THE MEDIA, THEN USE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESS FOR DEMOCRATIZATION IN A "TOWN HALL" MEETING. DI TELLA URGED THAT THE U.S. AND ARGENTINA AVOID ANY PUBLIC

CONFIDENTIAL

SHOWDOWN OVER THE QUESTION OF ARGENTINE ATTENDANCE.

7. (C) NOTE: UPON LEAVING DI TELLA'S OFFICE, CHARGE ENCOUNTERED THE NEW ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR TO HAVANA (TELLERMAN), DUE TO TAKE UP HIS POST DECEMBER 24. THE TWO WILL MEET IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS TO DISCUSS POLICY AND EXCHANGE VIEWS. END NOTE.

TRI-BORDER AREA

8. (C) DI TELLA EXPRESSED "EXTREME APPRECIATION" FOR U.S. HELP ON THE TRI-BORDER PROBLEM (REF B). CISNEROS, WHO HAD RECENTLY VISITED THE AREA, DESCRIBED IT AS "A BIG MESS."

IRAN

9. (C) IRANIAN CULTURAL ATTACHE RABANNI, SUSPECTED OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE BOMBINGS OF THE ISRAELI EMBASSY AND AMIA JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER, IS CURRENTLY OUTSIDE ARGENTINA. DI TELLA SAID HE WOULD BE ALLOWED BACK TO "PACK HIS BAGS AND LEAVE." THIS WAS PREFERABLE TO DECLARING HIM PERSONA NON GATA: "WE DO NOT WANT TO STACK UP UNNECESSARY OFFENSES, RESULTING IN UNNECESSARY BOMBS."

10. (C) DI TELLA ASKED FOR THE U.S. PERCEPTION OF RECENT IRANIAN OVERTURES TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. ACTION REQUEST: WE WOULD WELCOME GUIDANCE ON LATEST DEVELOPMENTS, TO SHARE WITH THE MFA. END REQUEST.

MALVINAS

11. (C) DI TELLA SAID ARGENTINA APPRECIATED THAT THE U.S. DID NOT WISH TO GET CAUGHT BETWEEN TWO ALLIES OVER THE FALKLANDS/MALVINAS ISSUE. NEVERTHELESS, FROM TIME TO TIME GOA WOULD ASK FOR WASHINGTON'S HELP. THERE WAS NOT MUCH THAT COULD BE DONE AT THE MOMENT, BUT PERHAPS THAT WOULD CHANGE IN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS OR SO. HE INQUIRED WHERE THE DE-MINING PROPOSAL STOOD (REF C AND D). DAVEREDE INTERJECTED THAT THE PROJECT WAS PROGRESSING. DI TELLA STRESSED THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THE ISSUE NOT BE ALLOWED TO "FLOUNDER." GOA DID NOT WISH TO BE SEEN AS DRAGGING ITS FEET ON THIS.

FREE TRADE

12. (C) DI TELLA ASKED THAT, WHATEVER THE OUTCOME ON FAST-TRACK, THE U.S. NOT ADOPT A "SALAMI APPROACH" TO FREE TRADE. WASHINGTON SHOULD NOT TRY TO IDENTIFY SOME PRODUCTS FOR SPECIAL TREATMENT (E.G., AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT) WHILE OTHER PRODUCTS LANGUISHED. THERE SHOULD BE NO "MINI FAST-TRACK" OR "NOT VERY FAST-TRACK."

KYOTO

CONFIDENTIAL

13. (C) CHARGE REITERATED U.S. THANKS FOR ARGENTINE SUPPORT ON CLIMATE CHANGE AT THE MEETING IN KYOTO. DI TELLA REPLIED THAT THE KYOTO VOTE "COST US" IN TERMS OF ARGENTINA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER STATES. HE ASKED THAT THE U.S. AND ARGENTINA WORK TOGETHER CLOSELY IN THE RUN-UP TO THE NOVEMBER 1998 MEETING IN BUENOS AIRES.

14. (C) CISNEROS ADDED THAT THE OPPOSITION WAS GIVING THE GOVERNMENT A HARD TIME FOR "FOLLOWING" THE U.S. LEAD. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF GOA WERE ABLE TO ELABORATE FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION A THEME AS TO WHY THE CLIMATE CHANGE VOTE WAS GOOD FOR ARGENTINA. ANY INFORMATION/LITERATURE THE U.S. COULD PROVIDE ALONG THOSE LINES WOULD BE APPRECIATED. (NOTE: WE HAVE PROVIDED CONSIDERABLE LITERATURE AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO. END NOTE.)

EXTRADITION

15. (C) DI TELLA SAID THE VATICAN IS ASKING GOA TO "RE-ACCEPT" PRIEBKE, WHOM DI TELLA DESCRIBED AS A "WAR CRIMINAL" EXTRADITED TO ITALY TO STAND TRIAL. IF **ARGENTINA** DID NOTHING, PRIEBKE COULD NOT RETURN. BUT THE VATICAN WAS EXERTING PRESSURE. HE ASKED WHETHER THE U.S. HAD AN OPINION ON THE MATTER. PLEASE ADVISE.

NAZI GOLD

16. (C) DI TELLA, NOTING THAT **ARGENTINA** HAS A "HUGE" JEWISH COMMUNITY, ASKED THAT WE KEEP HIM UP TO DATE ON DEVELOPMENTS PERTAINING TO "NAZI GOLD" (REF E).

COMMENT

17. (C) THIS TOUR D'HORIZON REVEALED ONCE AGAIN THE WILLINGNESS OF THE GOA TO STAND BY AND WITH THE U.S. ON KEY ISSUES, BUT ALSO SERVED TO REMIND US OF THE LIMITATIONS AND CONSTRAINTS THAT GOVERN THIS WILLING ALLY. CLEARLY, THE BEST WAY FOR THE GOA TO STAY THE COURSE IS FOR US TO CONTINUE TO BE AS RESPONSIVE AS POSSIBLE IN THOSE AREAS WHERE WE HAVE SOME LEEWAY. ROCHA

ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

CONFIDENTIAL