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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

Argentina

DATE: November 11, 1977

SUBJECT: Admiral Massera's attitude towards GOA
PLACE : Mignone's Residence
PARTICIPANTS: Emilio Mignone, Director, Permanent Assembly for Human Rights
F. Allen Harris, Political Officer

During conversation on human rights developments in Argentina, Mignone shared comments he had received earlier in the week from a mutual friend of his and Admiral Massera's:

Mignone's source met with Admiral Massera after his return from Europe. Massera commented that the Argentine image in Europe is very poor.

Massera complained that there is no effective government here. He reportedly stated that Videla and Viola cannot make decisions and cannot even control the Army. There is no way to solve the disappearance problem as the Army doesn't have control over its own troops.

Massera in describing the GOA's economic policy said that it was a mess and was the government's weak point. Massera is reported to have commented that Martinez de Hoz "can't get to the corner".

Mignone said that his friend came away shaken after his meeting with Massera, because Massera's conversation was like that of a critical spectator of the government instead of one who has major responsibility for the government's actions.

COMMENT: Admiral Massera's actions and words are always passed through the analytical prism of his personal ambitions to increase his (and the Navy's) power and his potential to become President. The impression Mignone received, if an accurate reflection of Massera's mood, was a feeling of the Navy's

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weakness and a sense of pessimism about the current political situation in Argentina.

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