

Where are the Malvinas combatants today?

Col. Mohamed Alí Seineldín is a hero of the 1982 Malvinas War, during which the Argentine military government attempted to retake the South Atlantic islands which Great Britain usurped in 1833. Throughout his career, Seineldín has fought to defend Argentine sovereignty and the dignity of the country's military institution. Yet today, he sits in a jail cell at the Magdalena military prison in Buenos Aires, for having attempted to halt the British-inspired policy of dismembering the Armed Forces in the December 1990 uprising against the Army high command.

Queen Elizabeth's second son, Prince Andrew Duke of York, was also a combatant in that 1982 war, although "the little prince," as he was derided by Argentine troops, never got too close to combat. During November 1994, Andrew is scheduled to visit Argentina to meet with the commanders of the three branches of the Armed Forces, reportedly to strengthen British ties with them. But many observers in Buenos Aires think that the prince may really be coming to survey what the queen considers to be one of her own colonies. Twelve years after the 1982 South Atlantic conflict, the British feel that Argentina is sufficiently subdued. As the Sept. 24 London *Economist* smugly remarked, "The Argentine Armed Forces are now among the most docile in South America." Nowadays, it went on, "the most popular way to serve the fatherland is to join a U.N. peacekeeping mission."—*Cynthia Rush*

Destino Histórico, I justified Colonel Seineldín's denunciation of an international conspiracy to weaken national sovereignty and his effort to "rescue the Argentine Army as the military arm of the Fatherland, as a fundamental institution of the nation and as safeguard of the highest national interests, and to break its strategic dependency on the new international order. . . ."

At that stage of the grave military crisis, I stated that national defense had ceased to be a priority for Argentina . . . and I emphasized that the military policy adopted was being defined by a foreign policy subordinate to the globalization of defense promoted by the U.S. Department of State. . . .

Through misunderstandings and vacillation, the country continued to experience confrontation between military and civilian forces, encouraged by the lack of an effective policy of national reconciliation. Thus we arrived at December 3, 1990, on which a military action was clearly defined as an act of resistance to the policy of dismantling the Armed Forces inherited by your government; an action whose meaning, in terms of strengthening sovereignty, [Army nationalists] attempted to convey to the entire nation. . . .

The cause of this action was explained by the Federal Court when it clearly established that the events of December 3, 1990 did not constitute an attempted anti-democratic coup d'état. . . .

Among the basic principles elaborated by Colonel Mohamed Alí Seineldín in his own testimony before the Federal Court were the role of international financial centers in creating the military crisis, in weakening the small and medium-sized business sector, destroying our culture and replacing our people's traditional values. . . .

My dear President Menem, at this stage of my life, I only desire to see my Fatherland on the road to progress, peace, and the permanent unity of its people. I understand that since December 3, 1990 to date, sufficient time has passed to allow all sectors to calm their spirits and carry out an honest self-criticism.

Mr. President, prior to taking office, you defined the national campaign to recover the Malvinas as an operation which "returned to the officer and non-commissioned officer corps of the Armed Forces that national mystique which characterized the Argentine military man from even before 1810."

That is why, in the name of national unity and on behalf of those compatriots who remain buried on Argentine soil occupied by a foreign power which made the [Navy ship] *General Belgrano* into a tomb, I ask that you make the decision to pardon all those men of the Armed Forces now imprisoned for the December 3, 1990 uprising. Democracy and the future of our Fatherland demand it.

May God illuminate the path of your government.

Arturo Frondizi
Former President of the Argentine Nation

toward the same ends.

Mr. President, you awoke in me many hopes when, during your electoral campaign, you stated that "the defense production system should be in the vanguard of those who would participate in the 'Productive Revolution,' transforming itself into one of the motors of our national industry. . . ." You concluded your comments saying "there is not a nation in the world today which does not possess adequate military potential. In a democratic system, that potential is based on the elaboration of a national military doctrine and also on its own national production." Alexander Hamilton maintained that it was necessary to favor those industries which would make us independent of foreign powers when it came to supplying military equipment.

For the same reasons which caused me to share your views on the role of our Armed Forces, expressed as the future President of the Argentine nation in the magazine