

(CO 0030)

ARGENTINA
(ANTI-SEMITISM)

Q. I am greatly concerned over reports that the Argentine Government maintains an official policy of anti-Semitism in Argentina. Is this true?

A. Our Embassy reports that there is no official GOA policy of anti-Semitism, a fact confirmed in the Inter-American Human Rights Commission's report on Argentina. This is the opinion of almost every qualified observer of Argentina. Members of the Argentine Jewish Community exercise their religion without restraint, have a well-organized and active community life, and participate fully in Argentina's economic and cultural life.

Q. What about recurring reports of anti-Semitic incidents in Argentina?

A. There have been no reports of anti-Semitic incidents this year. Incidents that occurred last year, such as bombing attempts of Jewish schools and synagogues and the distribution of anti-Semitic publications are believed to be the actions of groups outside Government control.

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS
Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
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Q. What has the GOA done about these incidents?

A. Former President Videla and spokesmen for his Government have condemned the incidents. President Viola has expressed his concern and said the Government has adopted energetic methods against anti-Semitism. The Government appears to have been effective, in view of the absence of anti-Semitic incidents this year.

ARGENTINA
(ADMINISTRATION REQUEST FOR REPEAL
OF ARMS SALES PROHIBITION)

Q. Why is the Administration seeking repeal of Section 620B (Humphrey-Kennedy Amendment) which proscribes U.S. arms sales to Argentina?

A. The Executive Branch has long opposed country-specific legislation which restricts Executive flexibility to respond to changed situation. In this case, there may well be a strategic need to permit military sales to enhance the defense of the South Atlantic. Moreover, the Amendment -- passed in reaction to the serious human rights situation which existed in Argentina in 1977-78 -- does not permit recognition of major improvements in human rights made by the Argentines since that time.

Q. Does that mean the U.S. is going to abandon consideration of human rights and other concerns in resuming arms sales to Argentina?

A. No. As in countries without restrictive amendments such as 620B, we will still take into account the full range of U.S. interests, including human rights. Existing legislation and control procedures are adequate to take these concerns into consideration without resorting to 620B.

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