



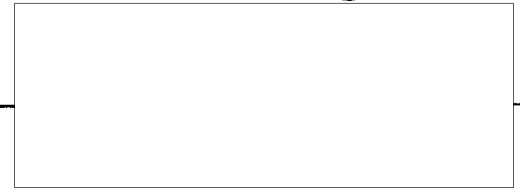
National Foreign Assessment Center

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Human Rights Performance: January 1977-July 1978

A Research Paper

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In *Argentina* the human rights issue continues to cause strains with the United States. Senior Argentine officials view human rights abuses as an unfortunate but inevitable consequence of intense efforts to eradicate leftist terrorism, and under these circumstances resent efforts by foreign critics to portray the Argentine Government as an oppressive dictatorship. Now that the terrorist threat seems to be abating, the government is attempting to wind down its massive security operations and to exercise tighter controls over police and military units. It has ordered release of many prisoners to their relatives during daylight hours. The Interior Minister recently warned police chiefs to stop bullying the public and to restore normal procedures, and the government has strengthened requirements for proper police identification. In an effort to appease its critics, the government has published several lists of those arrested and under detention and is making a more concerted effort to locate missing persons. Nevertheless, thousands of prisoners are still being held under state of siege provisions which deny them benefits of trial and due process. The fact that there are still occasional reports of disappearances, torture, and death indicates that the government is either unable or unwilling to bring all elements of the security forces under full control.

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