



# UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

Department of Social Development and World Peace  
1312 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005 (202) 659-6812

Office of International Justice and Peace

November 18, 1977

The Honorable Cyrus R. Vance  
Secretary of State  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We have been encouraged by reports that you will be making forceful representations to the Government of Argentina concerning the fate of several thousand arrested or disappeared persons in that country.

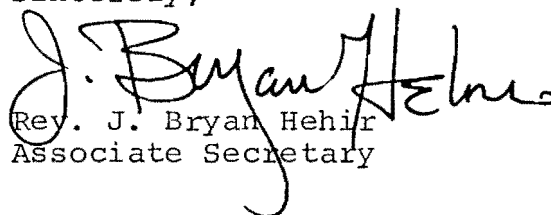
It is our strong impression that the condition of human rights in Argentina, far from improving in recent weeks, has in fact continued to deteriorate. Hardly a week goes by that our office does not receive information on new arrests or disappearances as well as plaintive requests for help on individual cases going back many months.

The number of political prisoners range as high as 17,000 with the number of persons presumed to have been killed by the security forces over the past two years ranging as high as 6,000.

While we, of course, have no sure way of verifying these data there is no question that the Argentine authorities have failed utterly to establish a rule of order and peace, guaranteeing the full rights of all citizens.

We hope that your visit will be a significant step in that direction.

Sincerely,

  
Rev. J. Bryan Hehir  
Associate Secretary

JBH/mj