



UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

Department of Social Development and World Peace

1312 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005 (202) 659-6812

May 17, 1977

Office of International Justice and Peace

Dear Representative:

It is my understanding that Congressman Gerry Studds will introduce an amendment to the International Security Assistance Act (H.R. 6884) on Wednesday, May 18, when that bill is brought to the floor of the House. The Studds amendment would eliminate the \$700,000 allocated for military training for Argentina and prohibit U.S. military sales to that country.

I support this amendment and urge you to support it when it comes to the floor on Wednesday.

For your information: The Catholic Bishops of Argentina released a statement on May 7, 1977, expressing the serious concern caused them by:

"a) the numerous disappearances and kidnappings which are denounced frequently, without the authorities responding to the demands which are formulated, which would seem to show that the government has still not achieved the exclusive use of force;

b) the situation of numerous inhabitants of our country who the requests of family and friends have described as missing or kidnapped by groups who identify themselves as members of the Armed Forces or Police. These requests, by family members and bishops who have so often interceded, in the majority of cases received no reply;

c) the fact that many prisoners, according to their own and their families' declarations have been subjected to tortures which are certainly unacceptable for any Christian, and which degrade not only those who suffer them but those who carry them out;

d) finally, something which is very difficult to justify, the long detention period in which detainees cannot defend themselves or even know the reason for their detention, especially when the prison conditions, at times, do not consider the primordial human necessities, including religious necessities."

With cordial good wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Handwritten signature of J. Bryan Hehir in cursive.

Rev. J. Bryan Hehir
Associate Secretary