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AREA HANDBOOK  
for  
ARGENTINA



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**AREA HANDBOOK**  
**for**  
**ARGENTINA**

*Coauthors*

**Thomas E. Weil**

**Jan Knippers Black**  
**Howard I. Blutstein**  
**Hans J. Hoyer**  
**Kathryn T. Johnston**  
**David S. McMorris**

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## FOREWORD

This volume is one of a series of handbooks prepared by Foreign Area Studies (FAS) of The American University, designed to be useful to military and other personnel who need a convenient compilation of basic facts about the social, economic, political, and military institutions and practices of various countries. The emphasis is on objective description of the nation's present society and the kinds of possible or probable changes that might be expected in the future. The handbook seeks to present as full and as balanced an integrated exposition as limitations on space and research time permit. It was compiled from information available in openly published material. An extensive bibliography is provided to permit recourse to other published sources for more detailed information. There has been no attempt to express any specific point of view or to make policy recommendations. The contents of the handbook represent the work of the authors and FAS and do not represent the official view of the United States government.

An effort has been made to make the handbook as comprehensive as possible. It can be expected, however, that the material, interpretations, and conclusions are subject to modification in the light of new information and developments. Such corrections, additions, and suggestions for factual, interpretive, or other change as readers may have will be welcomed for use in future revisions. Comments may be addressed to:

The Director  
Foreign Area Studies  
The American University  
5010 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20016





## PREFACE

Significant economic and political developments that have occurred since 1968 underline the desirability of revising the *Area Handbook for Argentina*. In 1973 the military, after dominating the government for seven years, cleared the way for free elections, and Juan Domingo Perón, who had been exiled in 1955, was returned to the presidency. In late 1973 President Perón, in the face of political turbulence, was endeavoring to consolidate his position and to stabilize the economy.

The death of President Perón, on July 2, 1974, occurred after research and writing of this edition had been completed. At that time his wife, María Estela, whom he had named as his vice presidential running mate, assumed the presidency. Military commanders, political parties, and the labor movement pledged their support, but schisms within the Peronist movement constituted a major problem for the government. Rightist Peronists fought leftist Peronists. Political assassinations and kidnappings continued. Army units, which had been used rarely against guerrillas during the preceding five years, were called out to suppress guerrillas who had attacked army installations. Inflation, food shortages, and a treasury deficit posed additional challenges to the new government.

This book supersedes the *Area Handbook for Argentina*, researched and written by Jan Knippers Black, Howard I. Blutstein, Kenneth W. Martindale, David S. McMorris, Kathryn E. Parachini, William N. Raiford, and Charles Townsend under the direction of Frederick P. Munson and Thomas E. Weil. It represents an effort to provide a compact and objective exposition and analysis of the dominant social, political, and economic characteristics of Argentine society. Consultants with first-hand knowledge of the country have provided data not available in printed sources. The authors alone are responsible for the final draft.

English usage follows *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (abridged). Spanish words and phrases, used only when adequate English equivalents are lacking, are defined at first appearance. If employed frequently, they are listed in the Glossary. Spanish is based on *Appleton's New Cuyas Dictionary* (Fifth Edition). Unless otherwise stated, tons used in production and commodity figures are metric tons.



## COUNTRY SUMMARY

1. **COUNTRY:** Argentine Republic (República Argentina), formerly a Spanish colony, which gained its independence in 1816.

2. **SIZE, TOPOGRAPHY, AND CLIMATE:** Second largest country in South America, and eighth largest in the world. Area of over 1 million square miles, extending some 2,000 miles from north to south and nearly 1,000 miles from east to west. Andes mountains and foothills lie in west along Chilean frontier. Remaining two-thirds of country is lowland. Paraná-Uruguay river system in north is the most extensive; other rivers relatively small. Climate predominantly temperate, although extreme temperature readings range from well over 100°F in north to little more than 0°F in south. Rainfall varies regionally from heavy to scanty. Climate in Buenos Aires includes dry summers (December to March) and damp winters (June to September); no extremes in temperature.

3. **POPULATION:** Nearly 23.4 million according to 1970 census. Rate of population growth was one of lowest in Latin America and believed declining during 1960s and early 1970s. Median age substantially older than Latin American average. In 1970 over four-fifths of population was urban, more than one-third of which lived in fast-growing Buenos Aires. Waves of European immigrants arrived in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Immigration from Europe declined after mid-1950s, to be replaced by substantial influx from neighboring countries.

4. **ETHNIC GROUPS AND LANGUAGES:** Population overwhelmingly of European descent—largely a result of immigration from Spain and Italy. These people settled mostly around Buenos Aires and the coastal area, enhancing the regionalism already dividing residents of that area and the rural hinterlands. Those in the cities are lighter skinned and are not only descendants of Italians and Spaniards but are English, Germans, East Europeans, Jews, and Middle Easterners. Those in the countryside are often of Indian descent.

Spanish, the official language, spoken almost universally. English used increasingly in business and professional circles. A number of newspapers and magazines are published in other languages, including Italian, German, French, and Yiddish.

5. **RELIGION:** Roman Catholicism is the official religion, and the professed religion of over 90 percent of the population. Religious freedom guaranteed by the constitution. Role of the Roman Catholic Church in society not as great as the large number of Roman Catholics would suggest. In the past the Roman Catholic clergy have both supported and condemned Juan Domingo Perón, although there was general support

for his return in 1973. Religious persecution and discrimination have always been minimal.

6. **EDUCATION:** Literacy rate estimated at well over 90 percent. In early 1970s some 22 percent of country's population was enrolled in schools. Nearly all of primary-school age attended school, and proportion enrolled in universities was one of highest in the world. There was an excess of qualified teachers at primary level.

7. **HEALTH:** Excellent nutrition, good sanitary conditions, and availability of medical care result in generally good health of population. Proportion of physicians and dentists per unit of population among highest in the world, although relatively few in rural localities. Medical school enrollments declined during 1960s and early 1970s, and many physicians emigrated. Principal causes of death: heart ailments, cancer, and infectious diseases.

8. **GOVERNMENT:** Constitution of 1853, in effect in 1973, provides for republican form of government; federal system; separation of executive, legislative, and judicial powers; popular elections; and elected governor and legislature in each province. In 1973 executive powers were exercised by Perón, who was elected to the presidency in September 1973.

9. **INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:** The country is a member of the Organization of American States; the Inter-American Development Bank; the Latin American Free Trade Association; the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development; the International Monetary Fund; and the United Nations and many of its specialized agencies. It is also a party to the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty) and the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

10. **CURRENCY:** Argentine peso; symbol changed to \$a on January 1, 1970, when a new peso replaced the old peso. The peso underwent frequent devaluations; and multiple exchange rates have been in effect since September 20, 1971.

11. **AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY:** Industry contributes largest percentage to gross domestic product (GDP), but agriculture provides most of exports and earns the foreign exchange required for necessary imports. Grains, cereals, fruits, oilseeds, and livestock are major agricultural products. Industry is well developed, producing such items as steel, chemicals, and motor vehicles.

12. **LABOR:** Labor force in 1970 estimated at about 38 percent of population. Proportion employed in industrial and services sectors gained steadily during 1950s and 1960s at expense of agriculture, which employed less than 18 percent of total in 1970. Rate of gain in manufacturing was insufficient to absorb influx of job applicants from countryside. Manufacturing employment suffered relative decline in 1960s, and in 1970 nearly half of labor force was employed in services. About 22 percent of workers were women. There was substantial urban unemployment.

ment and underemployment, but occasional shortages of agricultural labor were reported.

13. **TRANSPORTATION:** Adequate to bring goods and commodities from producing areas to seaports but inadequate to link interior urban centers with one another. Extensive highway and railroad network; aviation connects sparsely inhabited areas with capital city; river traffic important in Northeast region.

14. **COMMUNICATIONS:** All telecommunications systems owned by the government except for a few small local telephone companies. Demand for telephones exceeds supply. Communications connected with outside world via satellite.

15. **IMPORTS AND EXPORTS:** Imports mainly raw materials, intermediate goods, and capital equipment. Few consumer goods imported. Exports are mainly meat, grains, cereals, and oilseeds.

16. **ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS AND AID:** Extensive and varied assistance received from international organizations, foreign governments, and foreign private financial institutions. Some aid provided by Argentina to other Latin American countries.

17. **ARMED FORCES:** In 1973 three-fourths of army personnel were conscripts serving one or two years. Four corps, five infantry brigades, two mountain brigades, one airborne brigade, two mechanized brigades, and ten artillery regiments. Navy personnel included marines and the Naval Aviation Command. Air force consisted of five operational commands. National Gendarmerie was a federal constabulary subordinate to army. Police available as support for army in internal security included Federal Police. Provincial forces varied with area and population of each province; largest provincial force was Buenos Aires Provincial Police.



# ARGENTINA

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   | Page |
|---|------|
| FOREWORD .....  | iii  |
| PREFACE .....   | v    |
| COUNTRY SUMMARY .....   | vii  |
| SECTION I. SOCIAL   |      |
| Chapter 1. General Character of the Society .....   | 1    |
| 2. Historical Setting .....   | 7    |
| Spanish Occupation—Achievement of Independence—The Early Years (1810-29)—The Rosas Dictatorship (1829-52)—The Molding of the Nation (1852-90)—Political Confusion and Economic Growth (1890-1943)—The First Perón Era (1943-55)—Limited Democracy (1955-66) |      |
| 3. Geography and Population .....   | 29   |
| General Setting—Natural Features—Boundaries and Political Subdivisions—Settlement Patterns—Population Structure and Dynamics—External Migration—Family Planning—Structure and Dynamics of the Labor Force   |      |
| 4. Social System .....  | 69   |
| Historical and Ethnic Background—Social Stratification—Social Institutions and Values   |      |
| 5. Education .....  | 99   |
| Administration and Finance—The Educational System—Educational Reform—Literacy and Adult Education—The Teaching Profession   |      |
| 6. Living Conditions .....  | 131  |
| Diet and Nutrition—Clothing—Housing—Patterns of Living and Leisure—Health—Welfare   |      |
| 7. Artistic and Intellectual Expression .....   | 161  |
| Pre-Columbian Cultural Manifestations—The Colonial Period—The Revolutionary Period—Evolution of a National Culture  |      |
| SECTION II. POLITICAL   |      |
| Chapter 8. The Governmental System .....  | 185  |
| The Constitution—Structure and Function of Government—Provincial and Local Government—The Electoral Process—The Civil Service   |      |
| 9. Political Dynamics .....   | 195  |
| The Social Bases of Political Competition—Political Forces and Interest Groups—Political Parties—Military Rule, 1966-73—Perón's Return to Power   |      |

|   | Page |
|---|------|
| 10. Public Information .....  | 217  |
| Cultural Factors—The Mass Media—Government Influence in the Mass Media—Foreign Government Activities and Intercultural Exchange   |      |
| 11. Foreign Relations .....   | 231  |
| Evolution of Foreign Policy—Multilateral Western Hemisphere Affairs—Relations with the United States—Relations with Brazil—Relations with Neighboring Countries—Relations with Western Europe—Global Relations—International Organizations and Commitments  |      |
| <b>SECTION III. ECONOMIC</b>  |      |
| Chapter 12. Character and Structure of the Economy .....  | 253  |
| Society and the Economy—The Role of Government—Economic Planning and Development—Public Finance—Balance of Payments—Banking, Credit, and Currency   |      |
| 13. Agriculture and Industry .....  | 273  |
| Land and Land Tenure—Agricultural Practices—Crops—Livestock and Livestock Products—Fishing and Forestry—Mining—Energy—Manufacturing   |      |
| 14. Trade and Transportation .....  | 297  |
| Foreign Trade—The Latin American Free Trade Association and the River Plate Basin Group—Transportation—Domestic Commerce—Tourism—Telecommunications   |      |
| <b>SECTION IV. NATIONAL SECURITY</b>  |      |
| Chapter 15. Public Order and National Defense .....   | 315  |
| Internal Security—The Judicial System—The Police System—The Prison System—Military Tradition in National Life—The Armed Forces and the Government—The Military Establishment and the National Economy—Manpower—Mission and Organization of the Armed Forces—Conditions of Service—Ranks, Uniforms, and Insignia |      |
| <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....   | 343  |
| <b>GLOSSARY</b> .....   | 381  |
| <b>INDEX</b> .....  | 383  |

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

| Figure  | Page |
|---|------|
| 1 Argentina .....   | xiv  |
| 2 Physical Regions and Relief Features of Argentina ..... | 32   |
| 3 Argentina, Transportation System .....                  | 307  |

## LIST OF TABLES

| Table  | Page |
|--|------|
| 1 Cities in Argentina with Populations in Excess of 200,000 in 1960 and 1970 ..... | 47   |
| 2 Population of Argentina by Political Subdivisions, 1960 and 1970 .....           | 48   |



**Table**

**Page**

|           |  |                |
|-----------|--|----------------|
| <b>3</b>  | <b>Population, Labor Force Size, and Participation Rates in Argentina by Age and Sex, 1970</b> .....   | <b>54</b>      |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>Distribution of Argentine Labor Force by Economic Sector, 1950, 1960, and 1969</b> .....            | <b>61</b>      |
| <b>5</b>  | <b>Schools, Students, and Teachers in Argentina, 1970</b> .....  | <b>104</b>     |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>Baccalaureate Secondary School Enrollments in Argentina, 1971</b> .....                             | <b>109</b>     |
| <b>7</b>  | <b>Argentine Universities, Enrollments, and Teachers, 1970</b> .....                                   | <b>113-114</b> |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Enrollment in Argentine Institutions of Higher Education by Field of Specialization, 1971</b> ..... | <b>117</b>     |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Holidays Observed in Argentina</b> .....  | <b>143</b>     |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Argentina, Gross Domestic Product by Economic Sector, Selected Years, 1965-71</b> .....             | <b>255</b>     |
| <b>11</b> | <b>Argentine Public Sector Total Planned Expenditures, Fiscal Years 1972 and 1973</b> .....            | <b>260</b>     |
| <b>12</b> | <b>Composition of Argentine Tax Revenues, 1967-72</b> .....  | <b>263</b>     |
| <b>13</b> | <b>Argentina, Production of Selected Crops, Crop Years, 1967-72</b> .....                              | <b>278</b>     |
| <b>14</b> | <b>Argentina, Industrial Production of Selected Products, 1968-72</b> .....                            | <b>291</b>     |
| <b>15</b> | <b>Value and Relative Share of Argentine Exports, 1970-72</b> .....                                    | <b>300</b>     |
| <b>16</b> | <b>Value and Relative Share of Argentine Imports by Major Category, 1969-72</b> ...                    | <b>302</b>     |
| <b>17</b> | <b>Argentina, Direction of Trade, 1968-72</b> .....  | <b>303</b>     |

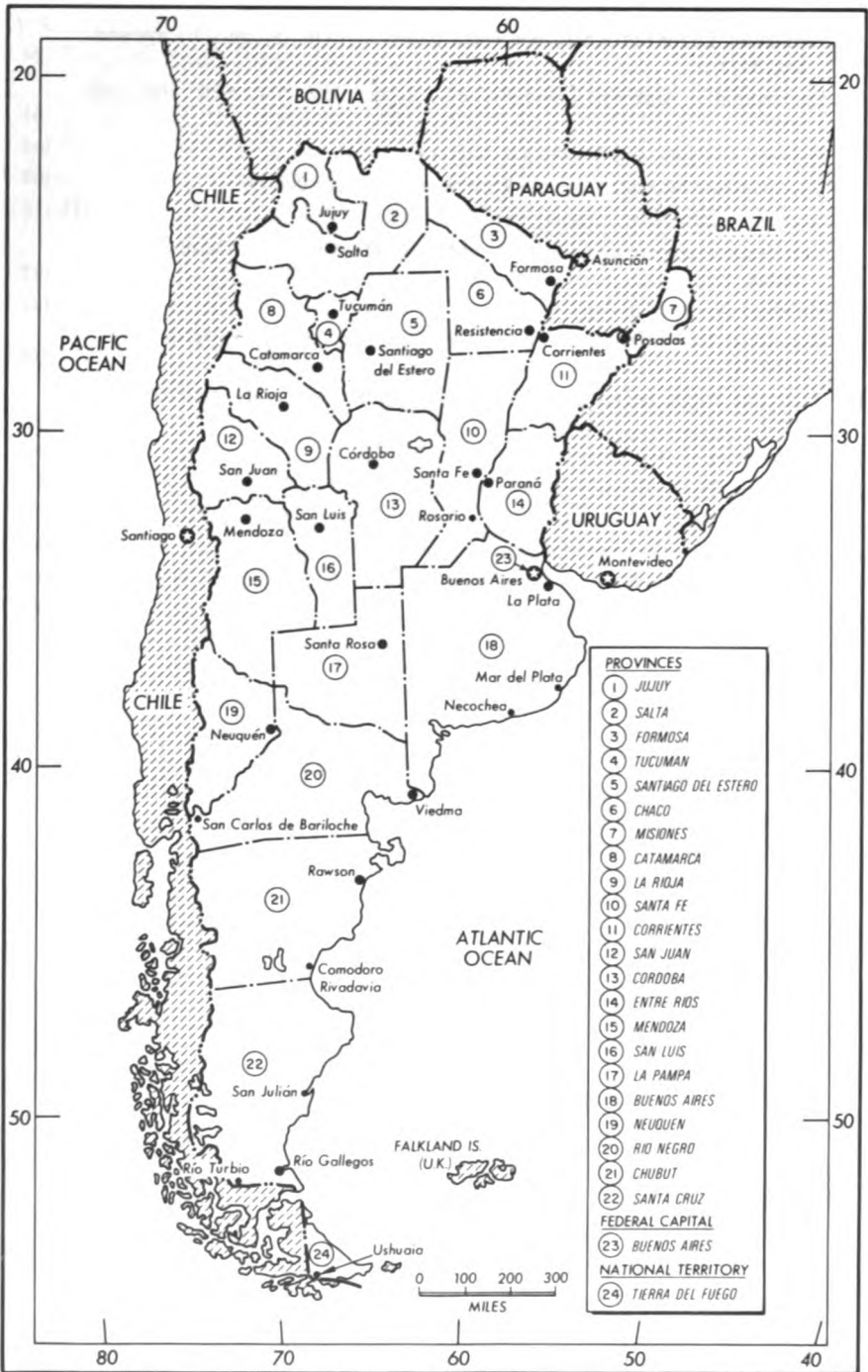


Figure 1. Argentina

# SECTION I. SOCIAL

## CHAPTER 1

### GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE SOCIETY

In late 1973 the people of Argentina, while enjoying one of the highest standards of living in Latin America, were beset by serious economic and political problems that over a period of years had stimulated a series of riots, strikes, and other manifestations of urban unrest, including guerrilla terrorism. Many Argentines hoped that restoration of civilian government after seven years of rule by the armed forces, and the election to the presidency of Juan Domingo Perón, who had been in power during the 1940s and early 1950s, would provide an era of urban stability permitting them to take full advantage of their natural resources and talents. Assassinations and kidnappings continued, however, some of which were attributed to factional feuds among Perón's followers.

During the 1960s and early 1970s inflation, trade deficits, lagging agricultural production, and a lack of new investment funds had combined to create increasing disillusionment among the people; and young persons with skills, unable to find satisfying jobs, were migrating to Western Europe, Brazil, or North America. In 1973 progress was being made in solving serious economic problems, but the health of the seventy-eight-year-old president, who was striving to establish order, caused concern among the citizens.

The country is the eighth largest in the world and the second largest in South America. With a population of more than 23 million and an area exceeding 1 million square miles, it extends southward for more than 2,000 miles from the arid Andean Piedmont and the subtropical forest of the Gran Chaco in the north to the windswept wastes of Tierra del Fuego on the fringe of the Antarctic region. At the widest point it extends some 800 miles from the peaks of the Andes in the west to the shores of the South Atlantic.

In the eastern central region lies the vast Pampa, the fertile plains that produce most of the country's pastoral and agricultural wealth and contain two-thirds of the population, three-fifths of the railroads, and four-fifths of the industrial plants. The southern tip of the wedge-shaped country is sliced off by the Strait of Magellan. Neighboring countries are Chile on the west, Bolivia and Paraguay on the north, and Brazil and Uruguay on the northeast. Although most of the people enjoy a temper-

ate climate, readings range from extremes of 3°F in the south to 120°F in the north.

The Ezeiza International Airport near Buenos Aires, the capital and one of the major ports of the Western Hemisphere, is more of a terminus than a crossroads. Air distances to other large cities are: New York, over 5,000 miles; Paris, almost 7,000; Cairo, over 7,800; and Tokyo, more than 11,000. Geographic isolation, however, does not shield the people from the effects of economic problems in other parts of the world nor from the repercussions of ideological, political, or armed conflicts of other nations.

Overwhelmingly European in origin, the population has remarkable cultural homogeneity, but this has not prevented class differences from plaguing the economic, social, and political life of the country. Most of the people are descendants of the Spaniards who first settled in Argentina in the sixteenth century, and of the millions of European immigrants—mainly Italian and Spanish—who arrived in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During the colonial period unions of Spaniards and Indians produced a mestizo population, and liaisons with Negroes, brought in as slaves, produced mulattoes. In 1973, however, the mestizos were few in number; pureblooded Indians were numbered only in tens of thousands; and Negroes and mulattoes had virtually disappeared.

Almost three-quarters of the population lives in cities and in towns of more than 2,000, and approximately one-third of the population lives in and around Buenos Aires, the most populous metropolitan area in the Southern Hemisphere. Since the early 1930s, when the agricultural economy was affected by the worldwide economic depression, large numbers of rural people have moved to the cities. With the growth of industry, many have been absorbed into the labor force, but others have remained rootless, living in shantytowns. It was from these sections of the population that the authoritarian rule of Juan Perón drew much support during the 1943-55 period.

The difference between the people of Buenos Aires, known as *porteños* (people of the port), and the population of the provinces has diminished in intensity since the nineteenth century, when caudillos (regional political strong men), demanded autonomy for the provinces and fought the *porteños*, who favored a centralist government.

Descendants of criollos (persons of Spanish descent born in Spanish America) on the one hand, and of nineteenth- and twentieth-century immigrants and their descendants on the other, have produced a population of notable ethnic homogeneity. In 1973 problems arising from ethnic minorities were minimal, and the people were proud of their Argentine nationality in a country where patterns of thought, political habits, and social structure clearly reflected the Spanish colonial and European backgrounds.

Although the character of the society has been predominantly influenced by criollos and by the comparatively recent waves of Italian and Spanish immigration, people of other nationalities also have been absorbed into the population.

An important factor in the development of ethnic homogeneity was the absence of large Indian communities in the territory that was to become Argentina. Compared with their experience in northern South America and in Central America the colonizers had a relatively clear field and did not have occasion to superimpose Spanish culture on Indian civilizations. In the nineteenth century the warlike nomads who remained to block the expansion of farming and cattle raising were exterminated or driven into remote parts of the country.

A folk-hero is the gaucho, the hard-riding cowboy who roamed the Pampa where, in the words of an Argentine writer, "The horizon is always indeterminate . . . and you cannot tell where the earth ends and the sky begins." For approximately 100 years, beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, the gauchos, usually mestizos, formed a large and vigorous segment of the population. They killed wild cattle for their hides and fought in the armies of the caudillos, who rewarded them well for their services. As the caudillos fell before the armies of the *porteños* and as the cattle ranches and cash-crop farms spread out over the Pampa, the gauchos fought back, but in 1973 the original gaucho type existed only in song and story.

The people's great national hero is José de San Martín (1778-1850), the liberator of southern South America. A brilliant soldier, he moved more than 5,000 men across the Andes from Argentina to Chile, one of the outstanding achievements in military history. Streets and squares named for San Martín are found throughout Argentina.

Since 1954 immigration has dwindled to a trickle. Population growth has also been affected by a diminishing birthrate, which was lower than those of neighboring countries. Relatively high standards of living in a largely middle-class society, urbanization, and industrialization have all combined to create a tendency to produce smaller families. This decline in population growth has caused concern among Argentine leaders.

A particularly important element in the social structure is the family, an institution that reflects both the Spanish colonial heritage and the impact of the industrial age. Family connections and loyalties play a paramount part in personal, political, and business relations, and the pattern is influenced by religious institutions and the legal system.

Since colonial times family structure and functions have changed less in rural areas than in urban centers, where middle-class families are not as strictly bound by tradition. Most Argentines, regardless of class or locality, place loyalty to the family above obligations to any other group or organization with which they may be involved. They tend to feel that only members of their families, however distant the relationship, can be expected to appreciate fully their personal qualities and to render assistance when it is needed.

The people speak Spanish with a distinctively Argentine flavor, laced with expressions, new pronunciations, and gestures contributed mainly by Italians. *Porteños* have their own accent, one not regarded with favor by Spaniards who speak Castilian.

French was once the second language of the privileged classes, but English is now spoken by an increasing number of Argentines—notably in business and professional circles in the cities. The German- and Anglo-Argentine communities for the most part are bilingual, and many immigrants continue to speak their native languages. Among the foreign-language publications in cosmopolitan Buenos Aires are dailies printed in English, German, Italian, Yiddish and French; and periodicals published in other languages.

The people are among the best informed and best read in the Western Hemisphere. They have a literacy rate estimated at better than 90 percent—the highest in Latin America. They support hundreds of newspapers and periodicals, some of which enjoy worldwide recognition for their journalistic excellence and their adherence to the principle of freedom of the press. Radio networks blanket the country and, as the use of transistor receiving sets has burgeoned, radio broadcasts reach virtually everyone in the nation. Millions also watch television, a rapidly growing mass medium.

In Buenos Aires, the leading publishing center of South America, hundreds of translations of European and North American works are published every year along with the works of Argentine writers. European and North American operas, theatrical performances, and motion pictures play a significant part in the cultural life of the people.

Most Argentines place more confidence in the printed word than in radio and television. Their attitude toward the content of the mass media is perceptive, questioning, and often skeptical. Much of their exchange of information and ideas takes place in cafes or clubs, where they gather after work in the cities and, to some extent, in the country stores.

A free education system provides the great majority of the people with an opportunity for elementary education, and large numbers go on to secondary schools and to universities. Since the beginning of the twentieth century the universities have become centers of political agitation. In 1973 students were increasingly unruly, qualified teaching personnel were in short supply, and funds were inadequate to keep pace with rapidly increasing enrollments.

The character of the society is influenced by Roman Catholicism, the state religion and the professed faith of more than 90 percent of the people. The constitution requires that both the president and vice president be Roman Catholics. At the same time, however, it also guarantees religious freedom, and Protestants of various denominations and Jews, collectively constitute an estimated 4 percent of the population. Government relations with the church are conducted by the minister of foreign affairs and worship. The Roman Catholic Church does not exercise the

power it possessed in colonial times and in the nineteenth century, but it still plays a part in the lives of most of the people, particularly the wealthy and important segments of the middle class.

Until the latter part of the first Perón regime, in the early 1950s, the church traditionally worked with the government in power. The government looked to the church to engender popular backing while the church received material support from the state. In 1955, however, Perón initiated policies contrary to those of the church and mounted attacks that led to his excommunication and contributed to his downfall in 1955.

Since 1955 differences between the traditional elements in the church and the liberals who actively espouse both reform and the cause of the underprivileged have become increasingly apparent. In 1973 "worker priests," who agitated for better working and living conditions for laborers, confronted the conservative segments of the church hierarchy, but relations between the hierarchy and President Perón appeared to be mutually conciliatory.

Attitudes and beliefs of the people have been molded by a variety of influences. Iberian culture dominated the scene until the early nineteenth century. The ideas of Western Europe and North American political philosophers influenced the framers of the constitution. Modern Mediterranean civilization infused traits apparent in the present day in the large middle class.

The nation's wealth, in the past, has derived principally from agricultural and pastoral production. In 1973 the industrial, construction, and service sectors contributed the larger portion of the gross national product (GNP), but the economy continued to depend on the export of primary products for most of its foreign exchange, even though the production contributed only about 15 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP).

Approximately 11 percent of the land is cultivated; more than 40 percent is pasture. Important exports are meat, wool, wheat and other cereals, dairy products, and vegetable oils and fats. Among the principal imports are iron, steel and other metals, machinery and vehicles, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, and fuel and lubricants.

The Spaniards who settled what is now Argentina found neither the silver and gold nor the Indian civilizations that existed in Peru and Mexico. As a result, the Río de la Plata area was neglected by the colonial authorities for some 200 years while the inhabitants engaged in trade—selling food, mules, and other commodities to the mining regions of Upper Peru (present-day Bolivia). Subsequently, the principal exports to Europe were hides and tallow.

The character of the society has been profoundly influenced by economic development. The prosperity of the port cities and growing industrialization has caused many rural dwellers to believe they were at a disadvantage as long as they remained in the countryside. They began to move to the cities, where they joined the labor force or became "shirtless ones" in the slums. Increasing urbanization and industrialization

provided breeding grounds for new political groupings, such as Socialists and Radicals who rose to challenge the power of the conservative landowners, the church and other privileged segments of the society.

The industrial population, organized into powerful labor unions, formed an important part of Perón's constituency in the 1940s and early 1950s. Perón's neglect of the agricultural sector, his prodigious efforts to increase domestic manufactures and provide higher wages and more advantages for workers, and his efforts to purchase foreign-owned railroads and public utilities contributed to the economic difficulties experienced by the people in the 1960s and early 1970s. In late 1973 increasing exports, a reduced inflation rate, and a favorable balance of trade gave promise of a brighter future for the people if political conditions could be stabilized.

Although most Argentines probably favor a republican form of government, the military have regarded themselves as custodians of law and order and, since the founding of the republic, have intervened whenever they believed a civilian government was failing in its duty. Thus, the military controlled the government from 1966, when a military junta ousted President Arturo Umberto Illía from office, until early 1973, when General Alejandro A. Lanusse announced elections that elevated a civilian, Héctor Cámpora, to the presidency.

Cámpora was elected by a coalition of pro-Perón groups that included factions of traditional political parties. The same coalition voted overwhelmingly for Perón later in 1973. In both elections Ricardo Balbín, leader of the Radical Civic Union (Unión Cívica Radical—UCR), an established party, won about one-fourth of the votes whereas candidates of coalitions involving minor parties received only negligible support.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **HISTORICAL SETTING**

In 1973 Argentina had yet to take full advantage of its enormous potential. It was fortunate in its possession of vast natural resources and a racially homogeneous population. The successful struggle for independence from Spain and the development of power and prestige among the country's neighbors had contributed to Argentina's unification, but counterbalancing these factors were aspects of its heritage that presented obstacles to progress.

A series of military revolts had hindered the stabilization of a democratic government. This situation was further aggravated by a centralized power system that permitted extensive intervention in provincial affairs by the national government. This system placed the locus of power in the capital and created tension between Buenos Aires and the interior provinces. The status of Buenos Aires as the country's megalopolis represented the culmination of a process that had been developing for at least two centuries.

After 1930 the development of the country was influenced by global conflicts and a worldwide depression that unfavorably affected the rapid rise in economic and social progress achieved during the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. Some of these events were caused by international circumstances; nevertheless, they resulted in a series of political upheavals that undermined the stability of the government and adversely affected its economy.

Discovered by Europeans early in the sixteenth century, the portion of South America that is present-day Argentina was isolated from the principal Spanish empire in South America. It was first administered as a part of the viceroyalty of Peru. Although Argentina was to develop with close ties to Europe and relatively loose links with neighboring states, it was first settled from previously established colonies. The first area of permanent settlement was at Cuyo in the Andean Piedmont, reached by Spanish adventurers who had come from mineral rich areas of Chile and Peru. The first Spanish attempt to settle in Argentina occurred at the present-day site of Buenos Aires, but the effort failed, and the permanent settlement resulted from an expedition mounted in what is now Paraguay.

The Spaniards came to South America in search of silver and gold; Argentina had none to offer and was therefore largely neglected. In addition, the growing port town of Buenos Aires was not permitted to use

the sea as a trade route until the viceroyalty of La Plata (present-day Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Bolivia) was established in 1776. Trade, strictly controlled, was routed by land across the Andes to Lima for transshipment up the west coast and across the Isthmus of Panama to Spain.

Colonial Argentina could have developed into two countries, had it not been for its topographical features, which were to subordinate the role of the interior cities to that of the port city. That portion of the Andean foothills known as the Cuyo was historically oriented toward the Pacific Ocean, and Buenos Aires was oriented toward the Atlantic, but geography favored the supremacy of the port city. In addition to being the region's one real port, Buenos Aires was located on the rim of the Pampa, a wide and fertile, empty plain that fanned outward to the south and west from the city. During the period when this southern movement was occurring from Buenos Aires, little development was occurring in the old cities of the Cuyo, which had no real hinterland to develop.

Independence was achieved earlier in Argentina than in most of the other Latin American countries. Argentine General José de San Martín led troops across the Andes that were eventually to meet those of Simón Bolívar from Venezuela in a massive movement that was to bring about the independence of most of the South American continent. Forces of the Cuyo joined with those of Buenos Aires in the war of independence, but the port city did not emerge as dominant until a ruthless but highly competent dictator named Juan Manuel de Rosas laid the foundations of unity during a regime that lasted from 1829 to 1852. In the latter half of the nineteenth century there were two developments of immense importance to Argentine history: one was the building of the Argentine railroads; the other was the onset of what was to be a continuous emigration from Europe.

The railroads, constructed with British capital and under British management, were built in a peculiar pattern that served to connect all parts of the country with Buenos Aires. Railroads reached all of the fertile and developing Pampa and, eventually, Patagonia, in the far south. The old cities of the Cuyo and parts of the country to the north were connected by railroads, and thus further consolidated the growing supremacy of the port. Although railroads also penetrated the northeastern part of the country, that region continued to develop slowly and played an unimportant part in the country's development.

The influx of millions of immigrants that commenced following the European uprisings of 1848 came mostly from Italy; these immigrants gave an Italian cast to the Argentine ethnic structure and added an Italian flavor to the Argentine version of the Spanish language. The immigrants came from all parts of Europe, but people from the British Isles in particular contributed extensively to the settlement of Patagonia. The immigrants followed the routes of the new railroads. The movement was to reach its apogee at the beginning of the twentieth century and contin-

ued at the same level until the onset of the world depression in the 1930s. It increased sharply after World War II but again declined after the early 1950s.

Gradually, early in the twentieth century, the fanning-out movement from Buenos Aires to the interior was offset by an opposite movement—one in which country people migrated to Buenos Aires and, to a much lesser extent, to other cities. This pattern was still in progress early in 1974, and Buenos Aires had become one of the great megalopolises of the world. The cities of Córdoba and Rosario were approaching 1 million in population, and the process of urbanization emerged as the most significant historical fact of twentieth-century Argentina. It meant that all political, economic, and cultural imperatives originated in Buenos Aires.

Argentina remained neutral in both world wars. Wartime demand for the country's almost limitless ability to provide agricultural products for export and the wartime inability to import manufactured materials provided further impetus to the already substantial flow of urban migration.

At the end of World War II urban migration and industrialization resulted in the rise of Juan Domingo Perón, leader of the country from 1943 to 1955 and the most significant figure in twentieth-century Argentine history.

Perón was a career army officer who was carried to victory at the polls by the *descamisados* (literally, the shirtless ones). They were the new urban proletariat, and his first regime was characterized by remarkable social and economic ventures. Politically, it was marked by the institutionalization of the Argentine "third position," one in which the country was to lead Latin America in adopting a posture uncommitted either to East or West.

Perón subdued those who opposed him, and during his time in power there was a steady erosion of the vast treasury balances that had been built up during World War II. After Perón was overthrown in 1955 an attempt was made to return to representative civilian government, but in 1966 the first of a series of generally conservative military governments assumed control of the country.

## SPANISH OCCUPATION

The Spanish settlement in Argentina resulted from a misconception in that it was believed that mineral riches in Peru and Upper Peru (present-day Bolivia) extended to the southeast across the continent and that communication and transportation from Peru to the east coast were feasible and would shorten the time necessary to transport the valuable mineral cargoes from the colonies to the mother country. The usual route was by boat from Callao (the port of Lima) to Panama, by land transportation across the isthmus, and again by boat.

The first recorded arrival of Europeans in the broad estuary of the Río de la Plata was a small Spanish expedition, headed by Juan Díaz de

Solís. He landed on the northern bank in 1516 and was subsequently killed by the Indians.

Ferdinand Magellan also explored the east coast in 1520 during his voyage around the world (1519-22). In 1526 John Sebastian Cabot, son of the famous Venetian explorer, John Cabot, explored the Río de la Plata estuary and the lower part of the Paraguay and Paraná rivers. Sebastian Cabot named the watercourse Río de la Plata in the belief that extensive silver deposits would be found in the area. Cabot also established a fort above Rosario that he named Espíritu Santo. It is believed to have been the first settlement in present-day Argentina.

Most Spaniards who settled within the borders of present-day Argentina, however, came down from the north and west—over the mountains from settlements in Peru and Upper Peru. These settlers established Córdoba, Tucumán, and other cities, and other Spaniards came over the Andes from settlements in Chile.

The wealthy Pedro de Mendoza received from the crown of Castile an extensive grant of land. In 1535 he came to the Río de la Plata region with an expedition that had been lavishly outfitted at his own expense. He arrived in South America too ill to take an active part in exploration, but he founded the city of Santa María del Buen Aire (named in honor of the patron saint of navigators seeking fair winds) and dispatched his lieutenants inland to explore.

Mendoza died on the way back to Spain; his settlement in Buenos Aires (the new name of the settlement) was soon attacked and destroyed by hostile Indians. Mendoza had sent Juan de Ayolas and Juan de Salazar to explore the estuary in the hope of finding a route to Peru, and this unit proceeded up the Paraná and Paraguay rivers and constructed a fort at Asunción. Ayolas, who was lured to eastern Peru by tales of the Inca empire, was killed by Indians when returning to Argentina. Another lieutenant, Domingo Martínez de Irala, led his followers into present-day Paraguay, where he founded the settlement of Asunción in 1534 and became its governor.

Governor Irala moved the population of Buenos Aires to Asunción in 1541 because there the Indians were more tractable. Expeditions moved down the Paraná River and founded other towns on the Argentine plain. Through the gorge of Humahuaca and along the valleys in the land of the Calchaqui Indians, they explored the regions of the north and sought out the plains by following the Salado River. The road was opened, and others returned to explore it, certain now that it was the easiest route by which to reach the shores of the Atlantic. Soon cities began to spring up—Santiago del Estero, Tucumán, and Córdoba. At the time that Córdoba was established, Juan de Garay was founding the town of Santa Fe on the Paraná River and completing, almost unknowingly, a line of settlement. Later he turned toward the south to found Buenos Aires in 1580, for the second time on the banks of the Río de la Plata. The hope of the people of Asunción that their city would be on the road to Peru was frustrated by this new route, which terminated on the bank of the

wide estuary. The new city became, as its founder said, "the port of the land." Buenos Aires began to grow and Asunción to decline, even though the latter kept its primacy as an established city for another half-century.

Asunción had become a productive center. Around it Indian towns had developed, which were organized by Spaniards who obtained from the Indian labor some benefits in agricultural products, livestock, and manufactured goods. But Buenos Aires was well suited for the life of the Spanish colonists. Its climate was favorable to both men and livestock, and in the vicinity there was considerable wealth in wild horses, the offspring of the horses that had remained at liberty when the original city had been depopulated. Furthermore, its vast plains were adaptable to the easy breeding of livestock. But the principal advantage of Buenos Aires lay in its greater proximity to Spain and, before long, ships from Spain began to visit the port.

The Spanish expeditions that first arrived at the Río de la Plata were motivated by a desire to obtain personal wealth, such as that which had been obtained in Mexico and Peru. Finding no evidence of mineral riches, they nevertheless pushed inland, searching for a communication route to Peru. The Spanish came as conquerors; and they felt that the Indians should provide food, act as guides, and undertake such tasks as the construction of forts, churches, and other buildings. The Indians had never seen mounted warriors or the effect of a shot from a harquebus, and Spanish columns were able to defeat or disperse Indian concentrations many times their size.

Several developments resulting from the arrival of the Spaniards in Argentina affected the economic and political development of the country. The first was that the horses released by the Mendoza expedition when it evacuated Buenos Aires thrived on the lush grasslands of the Pampa. When Juan de Garay reestablished the settlement in 1580, he brought with him approximately 1,000 horses and 500 cattle, many of which escaped confinement and roamed wild. As decades passed they multiplied in countless numbers. The Spaniards also brought their knowledge of farming, and they introduced wheat and other cereals. The exportation of beef and wheat eventually became two of the most important items in Argentina's economy.

Another development was colonization by Spaniards from both east and west, which later caused political strife between the western inland area and the eastern coast. The western cities were developed first, and the areas remained under the jurisdiction of the governors of Peru and Chile until the creation of the viceroyalty of La Plata in 1776. Expeditions pushing westward from the estuary eventually met those going eastward to seek an outlet on the Atlantic Ocean. A jurisdictional dispute arose that was decided in favor of the colonizers coming from the east.

Buenos Aires, which in the middle of the eighteenth century had slightly more than 10,000 inhabitants, reached a population of 40,000 at the

end of that century. The city had an adequate anchorage, a mild climate, and was surrounded inland by the fertile Pampa on which livestock flourished and agricultural products imported from Spain thrived. As Buenos Aires increased in size and importance, it attempted to gain political control of the whole country, a policy which was openly contested by the inland provinces.

Until 1776 Argentina continued as a dependency of the Peruvian viceroyalty. Buenos Aires was not permitted to trade by the sea at its door, or even freely with its interior neighbors. All trade was strictly controlled and moved by land to Lima (3,000 miles away), from there to Panama, and on to Spain. It was not until the viceroyalty of La Plata was created and the restrictions upon trade were relaxed that Buenos Aires really began to grow rapidly.

The Spanish merchants of Buenos Aires were the most important economic force. Their wealth and power had been achieved in the shadow of the protection afforded by their monopoly in trade, and ranching received strong encouragement whereas agriculture did not. Legal and illegal trade in hides, lard, and other animal products brought large profits to the Spanish merchants that were increased when they invested their money in manufactured articles destined to be sold at high prices in Buenos Aires.

The isolation of Buenos Aires led to the development of self-reliance and independence among its population. At the same time, antagonism developed between its people and the inhabitants of the interior. Thus, even before the republic had been founded, the people of Buenos Aires and those of the interior were developing two distinct ways of life and two contrary attitudes toward the world that were to become the foundations of Argentina's future political conflicts.

Early in the nineteenth century, the colonists began to unite to obtain complete independence from Spain. The growth of nationalism was fostered by the rebellion of the English colonies in North America and by the French Revolution. When the Spanish government was overthrown by Napoleon Bonaparte the colonists began to renounce their allegiance to Spain, which had imposed upon them oppressive laws and regulations that were enforced by the arrogant Spanish officials who held all the important positions in the government, the military, and the clergy.

In 1806 British Commodore Home Popham, without permission from his government, sailed to Buenos Aires and occupied it on June 27. The Spanish viceroy, Marques de Sobremonte, fled to Córdoba with his family and his entire staff. He left no one in charge and had made no preparations for the defense of the city. The English issued a proclamation guaranteeing the people freedom to practice the Roman Catholic religion, freedom of commerce, the right of private property, and the right to administer justice to themselves.

The people of Buenos Aires did not accept the English as their masters. A French national, Santiago Liniers, who had been in the employ

of the Spanish government, started the independence movement. On August 12, 1806, the *criollo* (see Glossary) militia surprised the English and forced them to surrender.

An urgent request was sent to Spain for military aid, as it was expected that the English would return; but the mother country indicated that it was in no position to send assistance.

In May 1807 the English sent another force of at least 10,000 men under John Whitelocke. The *criollos* had time to prepare the militia of approximately 8,000 men who decisively defeated the English in one day. A truce was arranged, and an agreement was signed; and on September 9, 1807, the entire English expedition—troopships, warships, and merchantmen, sailed home. The second victory against English forces is chronicled in Argentine history as the *Defensa* (Defense). The *porteños* (people of the port) became aware that they could be organized into military units capable, without support from the interior provinces, of preventing the occupation of the city by trained regular troops. They began to recognize their own strength and the inability of the Spanish crown to protect them.

During the short English occupation of Buenos Aires the people had been guaranteed complete freedom of commerce and drastically reduced import duties. The English prisoners of war also suggested the idea of independence, perhaps under an English protectorate. The effect was to make the *porteños* more dissatisfied with the oppressive commercial regulations that bound them to Spain. Thus, the seeds of independence, planted long before, were fertilized by the English invasions. Social progress was achieved not only by the bourgeois minority, which partially assumed the leading role, but also by the people who linked themselves to that minority, beginning to recognize it as its authentic ruling class. A notion of nationality based on the principles of birth in the colony and of adherence to its way of life thus became increasingly clear.

## ACHIEVEMENT OF INDEPENDENCE

The revolutionary movement of 1810 opened a new era in Argentine history. Henceforth, the chief concern of the groups seeking independence would be to organize the country politically and to reform it socially and economically. This undertaking involved enormous difficulties. In the minds of the men of the revolution not even the geographic boundaries of the newborn state had been defined; their doubts were revealed in their preoccupation with the adoption of its name. Discounting the abortive attempts to include the Banda Oriental (present-day Uruguay) and Paraguay, the boundaries in the north were extremely uncertain because of the influence of Upper Peru in many provinces and because of the changing fortunes of the patriot armies. But the geographic problem was insignificant compared to the social problem brought on by independ-

ence. The revolution was to some degree a social revolution aimed at facilitating the rise of the criollos to the top level of the country. Highly educated criollos had been the makers of the revolution, but it was necessary for them to appeal to the provincial criollos because of the strength of their convictions and the need to obtain solid support for the movements. The rural people responded to the call and joined the movement, but the nucleus of *porteños* had already established the fundamental principles of the politicosocial order, and the masses who answered the call did not believe that they were being faithfully represented by a system that naturally gave leadership to the educated groups with European backgrounds.

Napoleon's campaign in the Iberian Peninsula created political repercussions in Argentina and in all the other Spanish-American colonies. Spain gave tacit support to the Spanish viceroy in Buenos Aires, but in 1810, when the French captured Seville and Cadiz, the last of the Bourbon strongholds, the viceroy's position was hopelessly weakened. On May 25, 1810, the municipal council of Buenos Aires appointed Argentina's first criollo government, acting on behalf of the Spanish king in place of the viceroy. This date is considered the beginning of independence.

The criollo leaders recognized that the country could not be fully free from Spanish domination until Spanish military power in Chile and Peru was overthrown. The principal proponent of this was José de San Martín, born of Spanish parents in Misiones Province in 1778. He traveled to Spain with his parents and served as an officer in the Spanish army. In 1812 he returned to Buenos Aires and offered his services to Argentina; and in 1814 he was appointed governor of what was then the province of Cuyo, in the western part of the country near the foothills of the Andes.

For the next three years San Martín recruited, equipped, and trained an expeditionary force, including mounted troops, infantry, and artillery units. Women assisted in making uniforms, and great technical help came from a priest, Luis Beltrán, who had come from Chile to join the movement. Beltrán, thoroughly acquainted with physics, chemistry, and mathematics, organized factories and foundries for the manufacture of weapons and ammunition.

In 1816 a congress was held in Tucumán and was attended by representatives from each of the provinces that formed the viceroyalty of La Plata. After much discussion the congress issued a declaration of complete independence from Spain. Argentina had no sizable Spanish garrisons, but large garrisons were permanently stationed in Chile, Peru, and Upper Peru.

In January 1817 San Martín led his expeditionary force across the Andes, utilizing the passes of Uspallata and Los Patos. The strength of the army was about 4,000 men; it was accompanied by some 1,400 militia. Although they were suffering from cold and lack of oxygen, the columns successfully crossed the mountains and converged on the Chilean side. On February 12 they met and defeated the Spaniards at the battle



of Chacabuco (north of Santiago). On April 5 they defeated the remaining Spanish forces at Maipu, thus assuring the independence of Chile.

In 1820, after his army had rested and obtained reinforcements, San Martín made an amphibious landing on the southern coast of Peru and entered the city of Lima in July 1821. He formally declared the independence of Peru but left in the hands of the Venezuelan liberator, Simón Bolívar, the military operations required to defeat the Spanish garrisons. San Martín returned to Argentina by way of Chile and retired from public life, steadfastly refusing to become involved in politics. Today he is one of Argentina's most venerated historical figures; his statue can be found in many Argentine marketplaces.

### THE EARLY YEARS (1810-29)

Complete independence from Spain left the country beset by political disunity. The *porteños* wished to have Buenos Aires recognized as the center of political control for the entire country, but they were opposed by the powerful leaders of the interior provinces, most of whom were self-elected governors maintained in power by armed bands of gauchos.

Gauchos were used to guard the vast herds of cattle on the large estates. The gauchos were cared for by the owner and, in turn, gave him their complete loyalty. Combined bands of armed gauchos, therefore, remained a permanent military threat to central political control of the country by the city of Buenos Aires. From 1816, after the declaration of independence, until 1820 centralized political organization of the provinces was subordinated to the outcome of the military operations against the Spaniards. In 1820 the province of Buenos Aires had a series of twenty governors, and most of the rest of the country was controlled by local caudillos.

Bernardino Rivadavia, minister of foreign affairs (1821-24) and president (1826-27), established a military academy, a munitions factory, and the University of Buenos Aires; he encouraged foreign trade and attempted to assist the nation's agriculture by distributing public lands. Rivadavia was a *porteño*, however, and did not understand life in the interior provinces that he had never visited. His land distribution program failed, and a small number of individuals became the renters or owners of huge tracts. In 1827, 6.5 million acres had been allocated to 112 people. Rivadavia resigned that year because of provincial opposition to the terms of a constitution that he had helped to prepare in 1826.

### THE ROSAS DICTATORSHIP (1829-52)

Out of the confusion and violence following Rivadavia's fall emerged Argentina's caudillo (regional political strong man) from 1829 to 1852, Juan Manuel de Rosas. Although his administration soon evolved into a tyranny under the prodding of his aides, it arrested the disintegration of

Argentina and restored a substantial measure of order and security. It also represented a criollo nativist reaction against Rivadavia's program of europeanizing and modernizing Argentina.

Rosas came from a family of large landowners and made his own fortune by raising cattle and salting meat. He attended one of the best schools in the city of Buenos Aires and at the age of thirteen volunteered to join the militia that recaptured the city from the British. In 1815 he established, at Quilmes, the first meat salting business in Buenos Aires Province. Later, he acquired extensive cattle lands in Salado, where the province was expanding into Indian territory. There, as a kind of lord of the manor, he exercised undisputed sway, severely punishing drunkenness, idleness, and theft. His discipline made of his gauchos an army that not only ensured safety from Indian raids but that also could be used effectively in the civil wars. Rosas learned to outride, outrope, and outfight the best of the gauchos. Keenly intelligent, he had an intuitive understanding of political forces and strategy. But unlike Rosas' predecessors in the government, his experience of life and culture was provincial. His personal experience had never extended beyond the confines of his province; and his successes had been won in the savage life of the Pampa.

Summoned by the provincial legislature in 1829 to become governor of Buenos Aires Province, which was in the midst of anarchy, he refused reelection as governor in 1832, returned to office in 1835, however, and the legislature placed all the powers of government in his hands. Rosas uninterruptedly held the post until he was overthrown seventeen years later. Nominally, his rule never extended beyond his own province, except that by general agreement he was given control of Argentina's foreign relations. But this was an important exception, and because of both the advantage given him by the commercial and political preeminence of Buenos Aires and the elimination of other provincial caudillos who might have been serious rivals, Rosas soon made himself master of all Argentina. Argentina had no national constitution, and Rosas gave it none. When provincial governors opposed him he eliminated them remorselessly by force or intrigue, holding the provinces together as a loose league of caudillos.

Rosas' foreign policy reflected his own xenophobia and aggressiveness. The leading example is his frequent interventions in Uruguay, culminating in a ten-year siege of Montevideo. As a result, under his rule, Argentina was almost constantly embroiled with foreign powers, neighboring Brazil, and Paraguay, and at various times France and Great Britain as well.

Rosas was a champion of the Roman Catholic Church, although he asserted the government's right to control appointments to ecclesiastical office and brooked opposition from clergymen no more than from laymen. The church was expected to reciprocate his protection of it by supporting him, as it did in a number of ways, most notably by permit-

ting portraits of Rosas the Restorer to be placed on altars alongside statues of Christ the Redeemer.

His rule was a reign of terror and violence enforced by a secret organization called the *Mazorca* (ear of corn). It has been argued, however, that it was not possible to think of governing the country on any different basis during those times. Although rule by terror was prevalent, it was not alien to the Spanish tradition. Rosas understood this, and he was no more addicted to violence than many of his contemporaries. He was honest in handling financial affairs, never accepted a salary as governor, and retired to exile in poverty, although he had been one of the wealthiest landowners in Buenos Aires. However his reign of terror is judged, it had the effect of welding Argentina into a nation. The political system Rosas presided over was an oligarchy of cattleowners (*estancieros*), but by rejecting the aristocratic reformers of the city of Buenos Aires, he was able to base his rule, to a considerable degree, on popular acceptance. Most important, his rule was a triumph of the localism represented in the provincial caudillos upon whom his power rested.

### THE MOLDING OF THE NATION (1852-90)

Justo de Urquiza, the caudillo who defeated Rosas in 1852 at the Battle of Monte Caseros, was hailed as a liberator when he arrived in Buenos Aires and was granted the title of provisional director of the entire nation. Urquiza invited the provincial governors to meet at San Nicolás de los Arroyos. There they agreed to convene a national assembly to draw up a federal constitution, each province to send two delegates. They also agreed that the military forces of the provinces should be merged into a national army over which Urquiza was given command. He was authorized to conduct foreign affairs, to regulate the navigation of the rivers, and to administer the postal service.

Within a year of the fall of Rosas, Argentina had a liberal constitution under which it was still governed in late 1853. In addition, it had started on the liberal economic policy that ultimately transformed an aggregation of undeveloped provinces into a nation. The constitution was framed by Juan Bautista Alberdi but modeled after that of the United States (see ch. 8). It provided for a federal system of representative government based on a division of power between the central government and the provinces, and on the separation of executive, legislative, and judicial powers. These were vested, respectively, in a president, a bicameral congress, and a hierarchy of federal courts headed by a Supreme Court. The three powers were interconnected by a system of checks and balances. The resemblance to the North American model was so close that for many years Argentine courts interpreted their country's constitution in the light of interpretations of the Constitution of the United States by its courts and leading commentators.

A key provision of the constitution, however, gave the province of Buenos Aires less than proportionate representation in the congress in

order to prevent *porteños* domination. Furthermore, there was a stipulation that the city of Buenos Aires should become the capital of the republic. This, among other points, was reason enough for the province of Buenos Aires not to ratify the constitution. But despite this opposition, the constitution was proclaimed on July 9, 1853, and Urquiza was elected president for the 1853-59 term.

At first Urquiza did not govern a united nation. Buenos Aires rose against Urquiza and separated itself from the other provinces of the country. But in the final analysis, the split did not compromise the ultimate unity of Argentina, and neither the national constitution nor the Buenos Aires provincial constitution of 1854 closed the doors to a future understanding.

Under Urquiza's progressive administration peace and order were restored. Treaties of peace and friendship were signed not only with the major powers of Europe and the United States but also with Buenos Aires. The Paraguay and Uruguay rivers were opened to international commerce. The University of Córdoba was made a national university, and education was generally encouraged. Plans for building railroads were developed. After six years Urquiza turned the presidency over to a constitutionally elected successor, Santiago Derqui, who it was hoped would quiet the interprovincial conflict by governing in the interest of the entire republic. But the conflict was not appeased as evidenced by the fact that in 1861 the forces of Buenos Aires Province, led by Bartolomé Mitre, resorted to the use of arms in the battle of Pavón. The outcome was determined by one of the most controversial events in the history of Argentina. Urquiza, for still undetermined reasons, retired with his troops to Entre Ríos, leaving Buenos Aires in control not only of the battlefield but also, as it turned out, of the whole Argentine political arena. Mitre was elected the first president of a united Argentina in 1862.

The last five years of President Mitre's term were concerned primarily with the exhausting Paraguayan War (1865-70), in which Paraguay was defeated by Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. The Argentines were divided in their support of the war. Opinions in many of the interior provinces opposed the collaboration of the Buenos Aires government with the Brazilians against their traditional allies among some Uruguayan factions and Paraguay. Nevertheless, the victory of Argentina under the military leadership of Mitre consolidated the precarious union forged by Urquiza.

The election of 1868 brought Domingo Faustino Sarmiento to the presidency. Sarmiento, like Mitre, sought to accelerate the modernization of Argentina through foreign investment and immigration, modern technology, and education (see ch. 4). Mitre and Sarmiento gave Argentina the best public school system in Latin America, and Sarmiento, a friend of Horace Mann, a pioneer in public education in the United States, founded a teachers training school, staffed with personnel brought from the United States. Sarmiento, forced to cope with frequent attacks by Indians and caudillos, imported modern weapons that

ultimately provided the margin for victory. Although Mitre was opposed to involving Argentina in multilateral security arrangements such as those planned by a conference of Spanish American states in Lima in 1865, Sarmiento strongly supported them.

Sarmiento was succeeded by presidents Nicolás Avellaneda (1874-80), Julio A. Roca (1880-86; 1898-1904), and Miguel Juárez Celman (1886-90). Celman resigned in 1890 and was replaced by Vice President Carlos Pellegrini. Provincial opposition to the continuance of *porteños* domination helped Avellaneda, from Tucumán, win the election in 1874. He continued the policy of modernization with foreign aid and met with some success despite the Argentine panic depression of the 1873-78 period. The principal feature of his administration, however, was the "conquest of the desert," which was already begun by General Roca. Basically, he completed the centuries-long cycle of Argentina's Indian wars, which represented the almost complete elimination of the country's Indian population. Contrary to its name, this territory was not desert but one of the most fertile plains in the world—the Pampa.

The country's march toward a completely centralized government, backed by a strong executive power, was to begin in the administration of President Roca. In 1880 Argentina completed the plan to establish a federal capital within the boundaries of Buenos Aires Province. Thus the long dispute between *porteños* and the provinces seemed to come to an end, with the triumph of the latter; but in the long run the victory belonged to Buenos Aires Province and to its city and its port. From Buenos Aires the government of the nation was to raise itself above the provinces and extinguish the last vestiges of federalist localism.

The first census, taken in 1869, revealed a total population of 1.8 million; 500,000 people lived in Buenos Aires Province, and 212,000 were foreign born. Railroad and telegraph lines were extended, and a transatlantic cable linked Buenos Aires with Europe. Border disputes were settled with both Paraguay and Chile. The extension of railroads and the cessation of marauding actions by the Indians made the interior a favored place for immigrants; almost a quarter of a million immigrants arrived between 1880 and 1889, mostly from Italy and Spain. In 1884 an estate was fenced in for the first time, an operation made possible by the introduction of barbed wire, and this practice was soon followed by the owners of other large properties. Control of cattle herds followed for more selective breeding, and gauchos were unable to roam at will. The first refrigerated ship sailed from Buenos Aires in 1875, and the country soon became one of the principal food suppliers to Europe.

## **POLITICAL CONFUSION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH (1890-1943)**

The rapidity of social and economic change and the oligarchic control of economic and political life produced a current of unrest that made

it necessary for every Argentine president to meet the threat of armed resistance at some time during his term. None of these uprisings succeeded. But political pressure forced two presidents during the 1890s to turn over their offices to their vice presidents, and the federal government frequently intervened in the provinces. For the most part, however, the constitutional transmission of power from one elected president to another had continued unbroken since the presidency of Mitre.

From 1890 to 1916 the country was governed by an oligarchy of estate owners, bankers, and merchants, and its foreign relations were closely related to economic development. The National Autonomous Party held together a loose alliance of provincial oligarchies, which bridged the historical gulf between Buenos Aires Province and the other provinces and dominated national political life, by managing elections to congress, to the presidency, and to the provincial governments. The oligarchy admitted to their circle a significant number of representatives of newly powerful interests connected with international trade and finance. Together, they controlled politics through local bosses whose henchmen flagrantly abused the electoral system. The agrarian oligarchy accepted the abuses in order to resist the rising tide of urban influences that was challenging their position.

When President Miguel Celman was forced out of office in 1890, Vice President Carlos Pellegrini came to power and was succeeded in 1892 by the aging Luis Saenz Peña. Saenz Peña resigned in 1895, and his vice president was unable to cope with the conflicting aims of the political parties. The election of 1898 brought to power the soldier and politician, General Roca. Until 1904 Roca's term of office was an effective one-man rule in which the desires of the provinces were frequently overridden by forceful intervention authorized by the constitution. The country prospered considerably—boundary disputes with Brazil and Chile were settled; public buildings were erected; the ports were improved; commerce was increased; and railroads were extended.

The middle-class Radical Party, led by Hipólito Irigoyen, reflected the new importance of commerce and industry in national life and appealed to the rising middle sectors in the cities. It also wooed rural and urban labor, turning them away from a socialist movement in which European leadership predominated. After 1898 the Radicals stayed away from the polls in protest against the control of elections, but by 1912 their influence was strong enough to force the enactment of electoral reforms. The Electoral Laws of 1912, commonly referred to the Saenz Peña Law, were the kind of reforms that some leaders had been urging for years—reforms that would make democracy effective. An important goal was to promote the two-party system. To these ends, the laws provided for: the secret ballot in place of the voice voting that had enabled landowners and employers to coerce their workers and tenants at the polls; a new and honest registration of voters; compulsory voting; and the so-called "incomplete list," under which two-thirds of the posts at stake in a con-

stituency were allocated to the party with the largest vote, and the remaining one-third to the second largest (see ch. 8).

The law paved the way for the election of the Radical Party presidential candidate, Irigoyen, in 1916 and for Radical Party rule until 1930. From 1916 to 1930 many of the members of the traditional oligarchy were ousted from office, and the seats were filled by new men who, for the most part, were not linked to conservative interests. At the same time, there were signs of the rise of the middle class to influential levels in various aspects of national life—the final phase of a process that had begun many years earlier.

During this period Argentina confronted the problems of World War I and of the prosperity and readjustments of the 1920s. Since the economic life of Argentina was tied to that of Great Britain, strong domestic and foreign pressures tended to draw it into the war. But Irigoyen held firmly to Argentina's historical neutrality, refusing to break diplomatic relations with Germany, even when both houses of congress approved resolutions to that effect. Argentine exports increased during the war, while the wartime reduction in imports stimulated domestic industrial development.

Irigoyen strongly supported a broad program of labor laws, including the compulsory arbitration of labor disputes. But congress opposed many of his proposals. A minimum wage law and annual vacations with pay for railroad workers were adopted, but many other proposals were defeated. During the war years he strengthened his popularity by having the government purchase foodstuffs for sale in the open market in order to keep food prices down. He introduced university reforms that assured the autonomy of educational institutions and granted student participation in university government. These reforms were designed to modernize and nationalize the curriculum; to purge the faculties of conservative as well as incompetent members; to increase the number of universities, making each one autonomous; and to give the student body a decisive, or at least an important, voice in the university administration (see ch. 5).

Under Irigoyen's able leadership, the Radical Party swept the elections of 1922 and 1928. Yet those Argentines who thought their country needed even more fundamental reforms, especially those that would affect the lower class, felt that he had failed. They believed that he had not effectively used his political power to break through the blind opposition of the ruling elite and accomplish the necessary changes.

Irigoyen's successor, Marcelo T. de Alvear, was elected in 1922 and disassociated himself from Irigoyen. Relations with the church and with the United States caused Alvear some difficulties, but on the whole his presidency was favored by the prosperity of the era. In 1928 Irigoyen was reelected by receiving two-thirds of the popular votes. But his personal triumph concealed a rift within the Radical Party, many of whose leaders resented Irigoyen's domination of the party, his secretive manner, and his doctrinaire insistence on the ideals of the party. Two years

later he was overthrown by the first successful armed revolt in seventy years of Argentine national history. In 1930 a new era was also ushered in, one in which the military came to play an active role in the political arena.

From 1930 to 1943 the country was governed by a group of army officers and estate owners, supported by clergymen, bankers, and merchants. General José F. Uriburu was installed as president in 1930, but opposition to his policies caused him to call for a general election in 1931 that brought to power another army officer, General Agustín P. Justo. Justo selected as foreign minister, Carlos Saavedra Lamas, who improved the country's foreign relations.

General Justo introduced the country's first income tax, largely to offset the decline in customs revenues resulting from the world depression. Another of his measures was the initiation of an expansive road building program. This was badly needed and was carried out in spite of opposition from the British, who complained that the program represented government-sponsored competition with the British-owned railroads.

Roberto M. Ortíz became president in 1938 but because of illness relinquished the office to Vice President Ramon S. Castillo in 1940. During this period, Argentina was moving away from neutrality and toward the Axis powers. At first intensifying its neutrality, Castillo's government gradually gave evidence of friendship toward the Axis powers, which were at the height of their strength. Many of the Argentine military personnel, strongly influenced since the turn of the century by German military tradition and advisers, were convinced that the Axis powers would emerge victorious.

Castillo's continued pro-Axis position elicited criticism within the country. Although the exportation of food products was bringing the highest prices in the country's history, the people were not sharing in the resultant prosperity because of an abrupt rise in the cost of living. As the election of 1943 drew near, no prominent political leader appeared who could attract the support of the quarreling political parties. A group of army officers organized a coup on June 4, 1943. Selected military units marched to the Casa Rosada, the presidential palace, thus ending the term of President Castillo.

### **THE FIRST PERÓN ERA (1943-55)**

The purpose of the leaders most, of whom belonged to a self-styled United Officers' Group (Grupo de Oficiales Unidos—GOU), was not clear, as the confused political events of the next two years demonstrated. In the course of the confusion, a young army colonel, Juan Domingo Perón, leader of the GOU, emerged as the directing hand behind the scenes. Born in Buenos Aires Province in 1895 of an Italian farmer father and a Spanish mother, his paternal ancestors are believed to have



come from the island of Sardinia. Young Perón entered the Military College in 1911; nineteen years later he attained the rank of captain. During the late 1930s he studied military tactics in France, Germany, Italy, and Spain. After his return he studied political theory, wrote some books, gave lectures, and completed a tour of duty as a professor of military history.

Perón sensed the essential political weakness of the regime of militarists and ultranationalists in the face of the profound changes that had come to Argentina through urbanization and industrialization. He also began to realize how neglected the Argentine working class was by the ruling elites, and how this class could represent the foundation of a powerful new political constituency. First, as minister of labor and social welfare and later, as vice president, he set about creating a strong organization of workers whose support he won by decrees enacting a wide range of labor and social welfare measures. Within a few years he raised the proportion of unionized labor from one-tenth to two-thirds of the working force. Perón built up the police force of the city of Buenos Aires until it was better armed and more powerful than the nearby army garrison. The support of church leaders was gained by a law requiring religious instruction in the schools.

Perón's long-range objective was to create an economic and social revolution that would convert the country into a modern industrial state. His short-range objective, however, was to consolidate absolute power in his own hands. Perón wanted the loyal support of the armed forces, but they had been used to overthrow regimes in the past; and he needed support from another segment of the society to counterbalance the military. He chose the urban workers.

Perón was an inspired mass leader, an imperious commander, and an astute contriver. The initial backing of the military enabled him to organize small groups of workers to carry out his propaganda measures. He furnished them with a fighting issue—the emancipation of the common man—proclaiming dignity, freedom, and higher wages. Unions were permitted to debate problems freely, elect their own officials and strike with government permission. Even though they had to have Perón's approval for strikes and had to elect officials loyal to him, he was still their benefactor.

Perón's social policies cannot be separated from the career of Eva Duarte Perón. Born in a provincial town in 1919, she had gone, as a young woman, to Buenos Aires to become an actress. She had a few minor parts on the stage but found a better livelihood by singing in cabarets and on the radio. Soon she was circulating in the society of high-ranking army officers. Although her formal education was limited, she was intelligent and, in a sentimental way, idealistic. Perón met her during the summer of 1943. He was a widower just then rising to power. Eva became his mistress, but more, she was a devoted Peronist and an assistant with great acumen. They were married in October 1945.

Eva Perón served as secretary of labor and welfare in her husband's government. After agitating successfully for the right of women to vote, she organized and headed the women's branch of the Peronist Party (Partido Peronista). She was heard all over the country by radio and in public appearances. She spoke out energetically against Perón's enemies. Her special foes were upper class women, the society ladies who sneered at the titular first lady of Argentina. For 125 years the leading women of *porteño* society had enjoyed a monopoly of organized charity in the Society of Benefits (Sociedad de Beneficiencia), managing hospitals, orphanages, and related charities. When they snubbed Eva, she retaliated by organizing the Eva Duarte de Perón Foundation, to which a presidential decree committed control of all charities hitherto directed by the ladies. The foundation became the corporate source of help for widows and orphans, for the sick and the maimed, and for the poor. Its treasury overflowed with offerings from grateful labor unions, prudent employers, wise foreign corporations, and public employees. It became a multimillion-peso enterprise, larger than banks and meat packing plants. Eva was also given control of the ministry of health, in which capacity she conducted the first effective campaign against tuberculosis and malaria and established hospitals and clinics. Her devotion to Perón endured until her death, which was caused by cancer in 1952.

Perón's policies for the emancipation of the working classes gained him many enemies, including estate owners, businessmen, middle-class Radicals, left-wing Socialists, and even some union leaders. In the fall of 1945 this dissatisfaction spread to the military, who were disenchanted with Perón's failure to come to terms with the victorious Allies after World War II. On October 9 he was arrested and imprisoned on the island of Martín García. For one week no new leader appeared, but Eva had not been idle. Because of her skillful manipulations, the packing-house workers converged upon the capital from the suburbs, filled the streets, and loudly threatened civil disorders unless Perón was released. The General Confederation of Labor (Confederación General de Trabajadores—CGT also called for a general strike.

The military group was cowed, and President Edelmiro Farrell announced that Perón was free. Restored to power, he began to prepare for the elections to be held in 1946. Radical, Socialist, Communist, and Progressive Democratic parties formed a coalition against him. He appealed to a small nucleus of Conservative and Antipersonalist allies to win support among the ruling elite but relied chiefly upon two labor parties. The army guaranteed free elections, and the anti-Perón coalition was strong enough that it might have won the contest if it could have backed a strong candidate. Shortly before the election, the United States Department of State released a blue book charging Argentina with collaborating with Nazi Germany. Perón denied the charges, which involved him personally, and alleged that the United States was attempting to dictate the election of an Argentine president. Throughout the

campaign speeches he attacked Spruille Braden, the United States ambassador at that time, more than his opponent. He appealed to the working class to prevent United States intervention from defeating his plans for their welfare. Perón was finally elected to the presidency in 1946.

After 1946 Perón furthered his control of the unions by coercing leaders of independent unions who resisted. The new congress, which was clearly in the hands of Peronists, sanctioned his previous labor decrees and even went further. The minimum wage law was changed to recognize the increased cost of living, paid vacations were established, and the pension system was strengthened. Although Perón instituted a national program to provide low-cost housing for workers, he did nothing to break up the monopoly of landownership, thereby breaking his earlier promise to institute fundamental programs of agrarian reform.

In 1947 Perón announced his first Five-Year Plan. Its three objectives were: to nationalize, by purchase, the foreign-owned railroads, steamship lines, and public utilities; to accelerate the industrialization of Argentina; and to utilize the wealth of the country to augment the nation's international power and prestige.

At the end of World War II the country was in an excellent economic position, with large reserves of blocked sterling in London and a surplus of agricultural products that were badly needed in Europe. In 1946 Argentina's wartime accumulation of foreign exchange balances amounted to the equivalent of US\$1.6 billion representing more than one-third of the total reserves of this kind held by all of the Latin American countries. By 1949 those reserves had been exhausted, as Perón had bought back the railroads, telephones, gas companies, port installations, and the Buenos Aires streetcar system; he also had liquidated the foreign debt.

In 1946 Perón established the Argentine Institute for the Promotion of Trade, a government agency that purchased at its own prices all agricultural products for sale abroad and, in turn, purchased from abroad all industrial machinery and other commodities needed for all Argentine establishments. The low purchase prices forced upon the livestock raisers and farmers caused an immediate decrease in production. Land under cultivation, which had reached an average of 53 million acres during the 1934-44 period, was reduced to 46 million acres in 1949. The country's gross national product (GNP) that had been rising when Perón became president, continued to rise until 1948 and then began a disastrous four-year decline.

After 1946 it was clear that Perón was the most powerful force in Argentina. The branches of the national government and the local organizations had no independent power whatever. Congress remained obedient because most of its members were Peronists and could be disciplined through the political machine. The judiciary was severely weakened despite the fact that it enjoyed considerable prestige for its probity and an independence unique in Latin America. Four of the five Supreme

Court justices were impeached. To suppress student-faculty opposition, Perón reorganized the universities under national interventors. Newspapers were subjected to pressure by rationing newsprint, while the president's followers built up a labor press of their own by buying up struggling Radical papers. A long controversy with the conservative *La Prensa* (one of Latin America's most outstanding newspapers) ended when the great newspaper was nationalized.

Although Perón was reelected to the presidency in 1952 with 65 percent of all votes cast, his difficulties multiplied, and three years later, in September 1955, he was driven from power by a military revolt led by army officers whom Perón had persecuted for their opposition. One of the reasons cited for his downfall was the death of Eva, who had largely run the CGT, chief source of Perón's strength, and had organized the women's Peronist Party after the adoption of women's suffrage. Perón furthermore lost public support because he antagonized the Roman Catholic Church by proposing to legalize divorce and by opposing the church's growing influence in the labor unions. Another source of criticism was his agreement with the North American oil companies for the development of Argentine petroleum. But the two basic causes of Perón's failure were his short-sighted economic policy (worsened by alleged corrupt diversion of public funds) and the political opportunism that led him to disregard Argentine devotion to civil liberties.

### LIMITED DEMOCRACY, 1955-66

While Perón took refuge on a Paraguayan gunboat, a military junta took control of the government in 1955. Its first leader was General Eduardo Lonardi, who proved to be strongly influenced by the Roman Catholic hierarchy. A bloodless coup on November 13, 1955, deposed Lonardi, and another group of officers led by General Pedro Aramburu took control of the country. But the governments that followed Perón were faced by a continuing crisis as the cost of living soared and as riots, revolts, strikes, bombings, and other disturbances became commonplace. Much of the difficulty could be attributed to the fact that about one-fourth of the population continued to be sympathetic to Perón. Trade unions controlled by Peronists carried on continuous agitation for higher wages and against the United States. Perón's Constitution of 1949 was abrogated and the Constitution of 1853 reinstated. A free press returned to the country, but the Peronists were banned from political activity, and interventors took control of the trade unions. The workers, however, who had benefited under Perón's presidency, continued to look upon him as their leader despite his residence in Spain. Two-thirds of the labor movement, sixty-six syndicates, remained loyal to Perón.

Arturo Frondizi, the leader of the Intransigent Radical Civic Union, was elected president in 1958. He realized that Peronist voters were a potential majority and set out to woo them. Frondizi came to a political

understanding with the exiled Perón that assured him of Peronist support. The military leaders, dubious of Frondizi's alliance with Peronists, nevertheless turned over the reins of power.

Despite thirty-five rumored attempts by the military to overthrow his government, Frondizi stayed in office until March 29, 1962. Skillfully, Frondizi managed partially to revive the economy and set the country on the road toward constitutional government. He stimulated the production of petroleum, fostered industrialization, and strongly encouraged foreign investment. Yet Frondizi could not win the support of all sections of the population for a concentrated effort of austerity to save Argentina's economy from the chaos it had undergone. The workers, the rich, the military, the government employees, the landowners, and the industrialists all thought someone else ought to make sacrifices. Frondizi came to grief when the reinstated Peronist Party won control of several provinces and increased its membership in congress in the elections in 1962. The Peronist Party garnered 34 percent of the popular vote—forty-two seats out of a total of 192 in the Chamber of Deputies and eleven governorships out of the sixteen provinces that voted that year. The armed forces, alarmed at the rise in Peronist power, deposed and arrested President Frondizi.

The succession fell to José María Guido, the provisional president of the Senate, who governed until the election of Arturo Umberto Illía, candidate of the popular wing of the Radical Party, the following year. During the de facto presidency of Guido, the real control of the government fluctuated between two factions of officers, the *azules* (blue) and the *colorados* (reds) (see ch. 9). The *azules* defeated the *colorados* in an armed struggle and purged the armed forces of all officers openly sympathetic to the *colorados*. The *azules* favored a return to constitutional government, and they organized an election in 1963. But, in the meantime, the situation in Argentina had become chaotic: the economy continued to decline; in that period bankruptcies increased 46 percent; the cost of living went up 50 percent; the new peso dropped 67 percent; and the GNP declined 3 percent.

On July 7, 1963, a new election law and new rules regulating political parties went into effect. Proportional representation was introduced to give all legal political parties an opportunity to participate in the electoral colleges and in the new legislature. Peronists were banned from electing executive officers but were allowed to elect members of the electoral colleges and of the various legislative bodies.

Arturo Umberto Illía who was elected president for the 1963-69 term took office on October 12, 1963. Generally, the election produced a weak government because no party won a clear majority. The People's Radical Civic Union, the party that won the largest vote, received only about 25 percent of the total vote.

President Illía was even less successful than his predecessor in solving Argentina's economic problems and resisting pressure from the military.

In two years, the cost of living rose about 63 percent. When Illía canceled the oil-production contracts signed by Frondizi, Argentina found itself forced to import almost US\$100 million worth annually. He became embroiled in a dispute with General Juan Carlos Onganía and thereby lost the support of the *azules* faction of the military in 1965. Illía failed to galvanize the nation into a vigorous course of action and was forced out by a coup in 1965. The new government under Onganía, supported by the military, pledged to carry out a long-range program to set national affairs in order. Congress was dissolved, and the governors and the legislatures of the provinces were expelled from office. All political parties were banned, and their property was confiscated. Coeducation was abolished in all Buenos Aires primary schools. The military ended the traditional autonomy of Argentina's public universities because many students and professors were active politically. University autonomy was finally abolished by Law 16912 on July 29, 1966 (see ch. 9).

## CHAPTER 3

### GEOGRAPHY AND POPULATION

Argentina, the eighth largest country in the world, is more than one-fourth the size of Europe. It is the second largest country in South America, both in area and in population, and its relief features range from the highest peak in the Western Hemisphere to a dry lake more than 100 feet below sea level. Buenos Aires is South America's largest metropolis, but some parts of Argentina's southern plains have less than one inhabitant per square mile. In different parts of the country, the continent's highest and lowest temperatures have been recorded. Vegetation includes desert scrub as well as lush jungle foliage, and the species of wildlife are correspondingly varied. The soils of the central plains are among the deepest and richest in the world, but there are also deserts and swamps in the northeastern reaches and, with the changing of the seasons, portions of the northern plains change from one to the other (see fig. 1).

Shaped roughly like a giant cornucopia, the 1,072,000 square miles of Argentina's landmass extend over 2,000 miles from north to south and nearly 1,000 miles from east to west. A 2,500-mile Atlantic coastline on the east is punctuated by no more than an occasional harbor.

On the west the Andes mountains that separate the country from Chile extend the full length of both countries. Broad and lofty in the north, they are narrower and progressively lower in the south. East of the Andes and its foothills lies a great plain that covers two-thirds of the national territory. In the south its arid and windswept expanse is sparsely peopled and devoted principally to shepherding. In the north its soils range from good to poor, its vegetation from jungle to scrub, and its population densities from scanty to dense. In the central lowlands the broad and fertile plains of the Pampa make up the country's economic and demographic heartland. It is in the Pampa that Buenos Aires and all of the other largest urban centers are located.

Since the megalopolis of Buenos Aires is famous as one of the great cities of the world, it is remarkable that no such place exists as a jurisdictional entity. At the center of the urban complex known by that name lies the Federal Capital, coterminous with the Federal District. It is not part of the province of Buenos Aires. Immediately surrounding it on three sides, but under separate jurisdiction, twenty-four urban *partidos* (districts) of Buenos Aires Province make up what is known as Greater

Buenos Aires. The two make up a metropolitan area so large and significant that the entire remainder of the country is referred to often as "the interior," and Argentines as well as people elsewhere refer to the enormous urban concentration as the city of Buenos Aires.

The structure and dynamics of the population and labor force are characteristic less of Latin American countries than those of western Europe. The birthrate, progressively on the decline since early in the century, during the early 1970s was among the lowest in the world. Steadily improving health conditions had lowered the death rate, and the average age of the population was considerably greater than that in neighboring countries.

The once massive flow of immigrants from Europe was slowing to a trickle, and an increasing number of Argentines emigrating to other countries included large numbers of professionals and highly skilled technicians. The decline in European immigration beginning in the 1950s and a coincidental rise in Argentine emigration was quantitatively offset by increasingly heavy immigration from neighboring countries, but many of the newcomers were unskilled and illiterate.

A massive shift in the settlement pattern during the twentieth century has seen the society transformed by urban migration from a rural to an urban one and a largely unskilled agrarian labor force transformed into a highly skilled one in which urban occupations have come to predominate. Since about 1950, however, gains in industrial employment have flagged, and in the early 1970s nearly half of the labor force was engaged in service-sector occupations.

## GENERAL SETTING

Argentina shares with neighboring Chile the distinction of extending farther south than any other country. It has boundaries with five neighbors, but the bulk of its population, concentrated on the Pampa, is remote from the population centers of Chile, Bolivia, and Brazil. Only Uruguay and, to a lesser extent, Paraguay are readily accessible.

Throughout its history the country has remained remote from major migration and trade routes as well as from power centers. In 1973 the Ezeiza International Airport at Buenos Aires remained less a crossroads than a final destination. Political, economic, and social development have been influenced profoundly by the fact that travelers and merchandise go to or from—but not through—Argentina. The highway and railroad networks are constructed to connect Buenos Aires with a few other cities and towns, but there are so few interconnecting lines that the urban centers have no ready way of communicating with one another, and the more remote rural areas are left in virtual isolation.

The loneliness of the countryside may help to account for the melancholy of the national songs and literature, a tendency toward somberness in dress, and a generally fatalistic outlook. The traditional open



spaces of the Pampa, rather than crowded modern-day Buenos Aires, are the Argentine's spiritual home, and the gaucho of the Pampa remains the country's archetype. The word *gaucho*, of Quechuan Indian origin, means orphan or abandoned one.

Isolation from neighboring countries has been coupled with a relative closeness to Europe. Migrants between Europe and Argentina have come and gone directly, rather than by passing through other Latin American states. More than any other country of the region, Argentina is made up of European immigrants and people of European origin. Argentina has been and remains probably the least Latin American and the most European of any country of the Americas.

## NATURAL FEATURES

### Geographic Regions

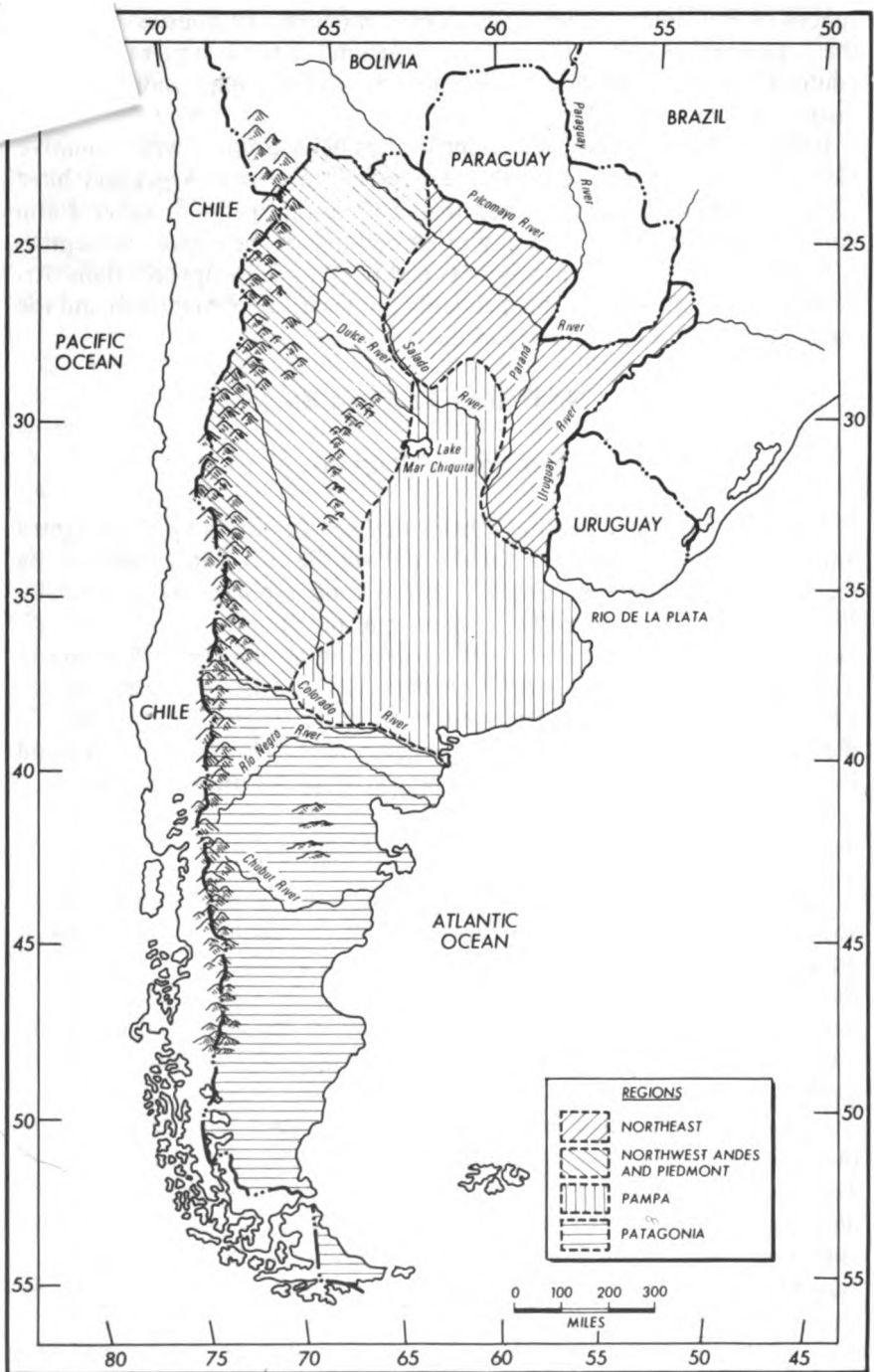
Although several ways have been devised for dividing the country into geographic regions, the windswept southern region is universally recognized as Patagonia, and the fertile central plains are universally recognized as the Pampa. The remainder of the country is frequently divided into two additional regions by drawing an imaginary line southward from the border tripoint with Paraguay and Bolivia to the northwest corner of the Pampa and southwest to the limits of Patagonia. To the west of this imaginary line is the region of the Northwest Andes and Piedmont; to the east is the lowland region of the Northeast (see fig. 2).

#### The Pampa

The Pampa, a great oval extending more than 500 miles both north to south and east to west, is the heartland of the country. Consisting of only about one-fifth of the national territory, it includes well over half of the population, approximately 60 percent of the railroad network, 70 percent of the paved roads, and 80 percent of the industrial establishments. Nearly all the cereal crops, truck farm and dairy products, and cattle are produced in it.

Pampa is a Quechuan Indian word meaning level land or space, and the region consists almost entirely of an unbroken and very fertile plain. To the north its limits are determined by juncture with the scrub forests and savannas of the less fertile Chaco plain. Southward the line corresponds roughly to the Colorado River, which bisects the country on a slanting course from the Andes to the sea between latitudes 35° and 40° S. To the west it corresponds to the beginnings of the Andean piedmont and, along the northern part of the western edge, to a low mountain chain called the Sierra de Córdoba.

Lying beneath the soils of the region is an immense basin-like substructure of granites, gneisses, and quartzites, regarded as a southern fragment of the old Brazilian massif. The low profile of the Sierra del



**Figure 2. Physical Regions and Relief Features of Argentina**

Tandil and Sierra de la Ventana, which range along the southern border of Buenos Aires Province, and the island of Martín García in the Río de la Plata estuary are outcroppings of this crystalline substructure. The rich overlay of soils that fills the basin to varying and sometimes enormous depths is an accumulation of clays, loesses, and sands. Some are apparently of marine origin, but most are products of the leaching of soils from mountain and piedmont, or they have been deposited as dust from windstorms out of the southwest. There is a virtual absence of rock formations and stone over most of the plain. The surface is monotonously smooth, and there is a tilting toward the Atlantic coast that results in a pattern of drainage from the northwest.

There is a natural division into humid and dry subregions. The Humid Pampa fans out some 200 miles from Buenos Aires, and the Dry Pampa occupies the outer reaches of the plain where rainfall becomes progressively scantier but where cooler weather reduces the rate of evaporation of surface water. Neither indigenous wildlife nor indigenous vegetation was distinctively different in the two subregions, and the distinction drawn between them dates from the extensive planting of the better watered Humid Pampa to food crops during the nineteenth century. When an Argentine refers to *la pampa*, he is referring to the gaucho and cattle country that lies largely within the Dry Pampa.

Three other regional names are frequently applied to areas lying all or in part within the Pampa. The Littoral (Litoral) is the area immediately to the north of Buenos Aires that lies along the west bank of the Paraná River, the site of the major cities of Rosario and Santa Fe. The Comahue is an area comprising the province of La Pampa, the southern Panhandle of Buenos Aires Province, and the Patagonian provinces of Neuquén and Río Negro. The third regional name is applied to an area vaguely referred to as the "camp." An anglicization of the Spanish word *campo* (country), the "camp" can be defined generally as rural Argentina. More exactly, however, it seems to refer principally or exclusively to the rural parts of the Pampa, Patagonia, and the Piedmont. It is less the name of any specific part of Argentina than of the parts of the countryside where pioneer British, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh immigrants settled. Native Argentines are familiar with the term, but it is encountered most frequently in English-language publications by writers who appear able to understand but not to define this term, which concerns as much a state of mind as it does geographical coordinates.

### **Patagonia**

Occupying more than one-fourth of the country's continental territory, Patagonia extends southward some 1,200 miles from the Colorado River to the Strait of Magellan and laterally from the Atlantic to the Chilean frontier. It contains all of the provinces of Neuquén, Río Negro, Chubut, and Santa Cruz. The Argentine portion of the Tierra del Fuego is also usually considered a part of the region.

Patagonia is an arid land of windly plateaus, crisscrossed at intervals by valleys carved out by floods from melting Andean ice fields. The coast is fringed by steep escarpments that truncate the interior plateau at elevations ranging from 200 to nearly 2,000 feet near the port of Comodoro Rivadavia.

Rising in tiers toward the west, the heavily eroded terrain reaches elevations of up to 5,000 feet. In the north, however, the Granbajo de Gualicho, a natural depression between the Colorado and Río Negro rivers, descends to 105 feet below sea level. The Patagonian soils, probably resting on a crystalline foundation similar to that of the Pampa, are considerably shallower and less productive. Made up of continental deposits accumulated over long periods, they consist principally of sandstones but include clays and marls in areas near tidewater.

The southern Andes, usually considered part of Patagonia, have natural features entirely different from those of the plateau but have little population or economic significance. Between the Río Negro and Colorado rivers they are dotted with lakes, on one of which the world famous resort town of San Carlos de Bariloche is located. In the extreme south there are glaciers, ice fields, and moraine-blocked lakes that drain into the Pacific.

#### **The Northeast**

The Northeast region is made up of the lowlands lying north of the Pampa and east of the Andes mountains and their foothills. The Northeast provinces of Entre Ríos, Corrientes, and Misiones lie between the Paraná and Uruguay rivers and, because of their interriverine location, are frequently referred to as the Argentine Mesopotamia. The rolling grasslands of Entre Ríos Province, however, have characteristics similar to those of the Pampa, and some authorities include it in that region. The remainder of the Northeast, lying to the west of the Paraná River, is made up of the Argentine portion of the Gran Chaco Plain of South America that extends northward across Paraguay and into Bolivia. The Chaco subregion includes the provinces of Chaco and Formosa and portions of the provinces of Santiago del Estero and Santa Fe.

The fertile soils of Mesopotamia extend to depths of twenty feet or more. The contours are low and flat, and the slow course of the rivers results in seasonal floods that drain southwestward through the Paraná-Uruguay river system. Topographical features are similar on the Chaco plain, but the shallower topsoil is made up of materials washed down from the Andean highlands. During the seasonal rains the rivers overflow their banks and flood extensive areas, which are converted into parched wastes during the dry months.

#### **The Northwest Andes and Piedmont**

The region formed by the central and northern Andes and their pied-

mont approaches is approximately the size of the Pampa. It extends along the western half of the country from Bolivia in the north to Patagonia in the south. On the west it is bordered by the Chilean frontier; and on the east, by the Chaco-Pampa sector of the great South American plain that extends from the tip of the continent northward the full length of the country and continues across Paraguay and into Bolivia.

In the far northwest there is little to distinguish the terrain from the high plateau area of neighboring Bolivia. Along the frontier with Chile, peaks in Jujuy, Salta, Catamarca, and Tucumán provinces rise to 20,000 feet, and the highest plateaus have elevations of from 11,000 to 13,000 feet. The topography includes dry, sandy, and clay-filled salt basins, residual mountain systems, and volcanic cones and debris. The countryside is cut by deep river valleys as well as some broader valleys known as *quebradas*, historically important as colonial routes of penetration to the highest Andes.

To the south the Andes narrow as central Argentina is approached. In some areas the Chilean frontier follows the mountain crests; in others it veers eastward, and only piedmont areas remain in Argentina. South of Mendoza the elevations of the highest crests are lower but, in that province, on the Chilean border, is Aconcagua—the loftiest peak of the Western Hemisphere.

In the northern part of the region most of the population is located in isolated high valleys and on piedmont slopes where corn and wheat are grown and cattle are raised. Southward, in Tucumán Province, natural conditions have made possible extensive sugarcane culture. South of Tucumán rainfall becomes scanty, and the populations of the provinces of Catamarca, San Juan, and La Rioja are found along the principal streams on oasis-like patches of fertile land in the generally inhospitable countryside.

The old cities of San Juan, Mendoza, and San Luis were among the earliest centers of colonial settlement, and they, together with their hinterlands, became known as the Cuyo. The name survives in the National University of Cuyo, located in the city of Mendoza; and the provinces of San Juan, Mendoza, and San Luis are still considered by some authorities to be a separate Cuyo region. The Cuyo zone of the Piedmont is separated from the Pampa by the natural barrier of the Sierra de Córdoba, a low range of mountains extending along a north-to-south axis west of the city of Córdoba.

The Cuyo is an area of violent natural phenomena. There are volcanoes in its northern sector, and it lies entirely in an earthquake zone. The city of Mendoza was founded in the sixteenth century, but in its third centennial year it suffered a disastrous earthquake. To prevent a recurrence of the disaster occasioned by the tremor, the city was rebuilt with extraordinarily wide streets and solid buildings. In the early 1970s the city of San Juan had barely recovered from a major convulsion that had nearly destroyed it in 1944.

## Hydrography

Except in the Northeast there are few large rivers, and many have only seasonal flows. Nearly all watercourses drain eastward toward the Atlantic, but a large number terminate in lakes and swamps or become lost in the thirsty soils of the Pampa and Patagonia. The four major riverine systems are those that feed into the Río de la Plata estuary, those made up of the Andean streams, those of the central river system, and those of the southern system.

The system of the Río de la Plata drainage basin is made up of the Paraná and Uruguay rivers and their tributaries. The basin is generally known as the Cuenca de la Plata (Basin of the Plata) and extends into Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, and Brazil. These countries have joined with Argentina in a collective program for river development of the basin and are known as the River Plate Basin Group, the name deriving from an anglicization of Río de la Plata as River Plate rather than River of Silver—the literal translation.

The Uruguay River serves as the border with Uruguay and as the border between the Mesopotamian provinces and Brazil. The Paraná, together with its principal tributary streams, marks the entire border with Paraguay. Navigation of the upper Uruguay is blocked by falls near the town of Concordia in Entre Ríos Province, but the Paraná is navigable by vessels of varying depths across northern Argentina and—via the tributary Paraguay River—across Paraguay and into Brazil. During flood season, oceangoing vessels can proceed as far as Asunción, the capital of Paraguay. Shallow-draft vessels can continue up the Paraguay as far as Corumbá in Brazil, the terminus of a railroad that extends westward across the nearby Bolivian border and connects with the Bolivian capital of La Paz. In early 1973 the economic importance of the Paraná-Paraguay system as a navigable stream was measurably increased by shipment of the first iron ore from the newly opened Mutún iron mines in Bolivia for reduction in Argentine furnaces.

Improvement in navigation is foreseeable through dredging in the estuary of the Río de la Plata. In mid-1972 contracts had been signed for the dredging of a thirty-foot channel connecting the port of Buenos Aires with the mouth of the Paraná River. Passing about five miles off the southern shore of the estuary, it is to bypass a sandbar near Martín García Island which, with a twenty-four-foot passage limit, has for many years blocked development on the Paraná (see ch. 14).

In the early 1970s the rivers of the Río de la Plata basin were of economic significance principally for drainage of the provinces of the Northeast and as means of cheap transportation. Their potential for production of hydroelectric power, however, was estimated at not less than 18 million kilowatts. About a dozen hydroelectric projects involving Argentine sections of the rivers were in various stages of planning, and others were planned for the upper stretches of the rivers as part of

the program of the River Plate Basin Group (see ch. 13). Some projects were to provide economic benefits far beyond the production of electric power. Plans for development of the Bermejo River—a major tributary of the Paraná—called for damming, flood and silt control, and canal construction measures that were to open up more than 4 million acres of land in the Chaco for farming and to provide cheap transportation for ores from the mines of Salta and Jujuy provinces.

The Andean system of rivers is made up of rapid-flowing but short streams that originate high in the cordilleras and terminate in lakes and lagoons of interior basins. The largest are the Desaguadero, Tunuyan, San Juan, Diamante, and Ituel. For the most part, the rivers flow seasonally in the north and perennially in the south. Watercourses of this river system provide irrigation for the vineyards of Mendoza Province, and it is along them that the population clusters of the Piedmont are located. Since most of the Piedmont is semiarid and idle, the more than 50 billion cubic yards of water estimated to lie underground in Mendoza and San Juan provinces are of potential importance.

The central system of rivers is made up of small streams that drain eastward toward the Atlantic but which, as a consequence of scanty rainfall and lack of gradient in the terrain, are in many instances lost in the porous soils of the plains. One of the largest, the Dulce, drains into the saline Mar Chiquita (Little Sea), Argentina's largest lake and a popular vacation spot. The other principal rivers of the system bear names that may lead to some confusion. The Salado River that separates the Chaco subregion from the Pampa is sometimes known as the Salado del Norte (Salado of the North) to distinguish it from the Salado del Sur (Salado of the South), which flows across the southern part of the Pampa. In all, however, there are no less than eighteen rivers of the country bearing the name Salado. In addition, five streams of the central system bearing the name Córdoba flow eastward from headwaters in the Sierra de Córdoba. They are denominated Primero (First) through Quinto (Fifth) Córdoba rivers. The largest, the Tercero (Third) and the Cuarto (Fourth), unite before joining the Paraná above Rosario. The remaining three are absorbed by the land. Drinkable surface water is in scanty supply in the lands of the central drainage system, and windmills are prominent features of the landscape.

The southern river system drains most of the Pampa and all of Patagonia. The principal streams that flow across the Pampa are the Salado del Sur, the Quequén Grande, and the Sauce Grande, and yet another Salado River discharges into the Atlantic immediately to the south of the Río de la Plata estuary.

The Colorado River is generally accepted as marking the imaginary boundary between the Pampa and Patagonia. Within the Patagonian region, the principal rivers are the Río Negro and the Chubut. At the southern extremity of the continent the Gallegos River flows from an Andean source near the Río Turbio coal mines to the Atlantic. Most of the Patagonian watercourses are small and flow parallel to one another

eastward from the Andes. Several, the Río Negro and the Colorado in particular, rise close to the Chilean border, but the configuration of the Andean terrain causes them to follow tortuous courses of up to 100 miles before escaping through the mountain walls. They have few tributaries and lose much of their water before reaching tidewater as they flow across the arid plains of Patagonia. Many of the numerous mountain lakes discharge toward the Pacific, but they are situated almost at the continental divide, and heavy rains sometimes cause them to overflow and send excess water eastward toward the Atlantic.

The Río Negro is easily the most important of the rivers in the southern system. It is the only watercourse outside of the Paraná-Uruguay system suitable for shallow-draft navigation. It is also a center for alfalfa and fruit culture and for colonization, and the great Chocón hydroelectric complex—in partial operation in 1973—is located on one of its tributaries. The reservoir created by the Chocón dam is the country's second largest lake.

Except in the Northwest Andes and Piedmont, the drainage systems of Argentina tend to be poor. The terrain is flat or gently rolling throughout most of the Northeast, the Pampa, and Patagonia; gradients are minimal; and rivers and streams are relatively few. Although the rainfall is nowhere excessive, shallow lakes and seasonal swamps form in many parts of the country; and there are permanent swamps in much of the Mesopotamian provinces, in some coastal areas of Buenos Aires Province, to the north of the Mar Chiquita, in La Pampa Province, and in the drainage zone of the Bermejo River. The characteristic porosity of the soils makes possible the absorption of excess surface waters during normal times, but most of the country is susceptible to flooding during times of heavy rainfall, even in semiarid Patagonia. Floods during the winter of 1973, believed to be the worst in history, were reported to have inundated nearly 5 million acres of land in western Buenos Aires Province and to have caused the equivalent of US \$200 million in damage. In Patagonia the loss of up to 500,000 head of sheep was reported. Flood and control measures are important features of the several hydroelectric projects planned for the Paraná-Uruguay river system, and in the early 1970s the presence of the Chocón power installations in the Río Negro basin had already prevented what might have been serious flood damage in that area.

## Climate

In the vicinity of Buenos Aires the average temperature is about 62° F, and the range of daily means is from 72° F during the Southern Hemisphere summer (December through February) to 50° F during the winter (June through August). Precipitation is heaviest during summer, but some rain falls during all months of the year. Snow falls rarely, and the occasional frosts are seldom sufficiently severe to damage crops. Sum-



mers, however, can be disagreeably hot, and a persistently high humidity aggravates summer heat as well as winter chill.

Both the Pampa and the Northeast are visited occasionally by the *pampero*, a violent windstorm accompanied by thunder and magnificent displays of lightning and usually a drenching rain. The phenomenon is caused by the meeting of cool *pampero* winds blown up from Patagonia with warm masses of air from the north. The result is massive backing up of the waters of the Río de la Plata which, before the improvement of harbor facilities, was a serious hazard to shipping.

Temperatures in the Pampa as a whole are generally similar to those around Buenos Aires, although summers are hotter northwestward and more moderate near the coast where the cooling influence of the Falkland current is felt. Rainfall diminishes toward the south and the west to about ten inches at the perimeter of the region, and there is a corresponding decline in humidity.

In the Mesopotamian provinces humidity reaches as much as 90 per cent during the winter months, and the year-round temperature averages over 70° F. Rainfall declines from seventy inches annually in Misiones Province to thirty-five inches in Entre Ríos.

Temperatures of the Chaco plain average 74° F, and there is little seasonal change. Although the rainfall, concentrated in the summer months, is moderate, evaporation is so rapid that sedentary agriculture is impossible without irrigation. In these lowlands both rainfall and humidity decrease to the west. Farther westward still, in the plateaus and valleys of the northern Andes, average temperatures drop to the low fifties, and the rainfall declines to a few inches annually, although a few of the lower valleys of Salta and Jujuy provinces are humid and moist. Immediately to their south, the sugar plantations of Tucumán Province have ample rainfall, mild winters, and hot summers.

In most of the Piedmont the climate is dry and, in its lower reaches, substantially hotter than that of the Pampa. Sudden and extreme fluctuations in temperature are common, however. In Santiago del Estero Province, temperatures reaching 118° F are as high as any recorded in South America. Humidity is low except in occasional damp depressions.

The Patagonian climate is dry, and temperatures and rainfall become progressively lower from north to south. The principal exception is the cool and humid Andean lake district of Neuquén Province. The relative aridity of the region stems from its location in the rain shadow of the cordillera and the dominant west-to-east movement of the winds. Throughout Patagonia, winters are mild because the tapering of the continent and the relatively low elevations of the southern mountains expose the region to the moderating climatic effects of both the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans.

## Vegetation

The flora of the country range from the rain forest of the north-north-eastern frontier and the rich grasses of the Pampa to the desert scrub of Patagonia and the cacti of the Andean plateaus. The remaining natural forest covers about one-fifth of the country. Over half is in the Río de la Plata basin; the remainder extends the full length of the Andean highlands. In all, there are five forest zones.

The northern part of Mesopotamia is covered with forests of mixed pine and broadleaf. The cedar, the Paraná pine, and South American hardwoods called the *guatambu* and the *petiribi* are among more than ninety species identified. Rising well over 100 feet in height, the trees are mixed with bamboos, lianas, tropical herbs, and thick shrub growths, which include the indigenous *yerba*, cultivated as the source of *yerba mate*—the popular Paraguayan tea.

Parkland forests occur in the southern part of Mesopotamia and in the Chaco plain. The outstanding species is the red quebracho tree, or "axe breaker," the source of an extract used in the tanning of leather and of very hardwood used for posts and railroad ties. In other portions of the Chaco thorny trees grow in almost impenetrable thickets. To the west, foothills of the Andes are marked by scrub forest and desert growth.

An open woodland consisting largely of black algarroba is found in some western parts of the Pampa. It and the forests of the Northeast have been subjected to indiscriminate exploitation; it is estimated that in the Río de la Plata basin less than 6 percent of the originally wooded areas have been replanted. In particular, much of once-forested Santiago del Estero Province was cleared by burning for shifting agriculture, and the cleared land is empty except for thistles, dark-colored prickly shrubs, and occasional withered trees.

The two other forests occur in the Andes. A narrow forested band no more than fifty miles in width stretches from the Bolivian frontier to Tucumán at altitudes ranging from 1,500 to 8,000 feet. Conifers and elderberry flourish at high altitudes. At lower levels cedar, oak, and South American species known as *cebiles* and *tipa blanca* rise to heights of 100 feet or more. In Tucumán Province the forest is bright with the pink flowers of a hardwood called the *lepacho*, the crimson flowers of the ceiba, and the white-tufted pods of a tree called the *palo borracho*. These and other trees of the area, such as the black acacia, are festooned with climbing creepers.

There are fewer trees south of Tucumán, but highland forest appears once more from Neuquén Province to the Beagle Channel. This zone is also narrow and includes both conifers and deciduous broadleaf; forests are formed by no more than one or two species. Cyprus, beech, and Chilean pine are characteristic, particularly in the wooded lake sector around the resort town of San Carlos de Bariloche. In the far south and on the Tierra del Fuego are found half-frozen forests of Antarctic beech. The wooded zone of the southern Andes includes large national

parks that have been set aside as forest reserves, and the province of Santa Cruz is the site of an ancient petrified forest believed to be more than 70 million years old.

In the Northeast the forested areas occur in valleys of the Mesopotamian subregion and are separated by undulating grasslands that become more extensive in the south. In the Chaco and in the Piedmont open land is sparsely covered with drought-resistant scrub growths. Giant cacti appear at higher altitudes, and the sparse vegetation of plateau areas in the north resembles that of the Bolivian Altiplano. In the early 1970s the invasion of extensive areas of open land in the northwestern provinces by a woody thorn bush called *vinal* was causing concern to government agricultural authorities. The growth appeared to be similar to one reported to be invading the plains of southern Paraguay at about the same time.

The extensive lowlands that make up the Pampa were originally covered in the Dry Pampa subregion on the west by *monte* vegetation consisting of a scattering of drought-resistant broadleaf trees twenty to thirty feet in height. Eastward, in the Humid Pampa, the *monte* vegetation was mixed increasingly with a grass called *pasta duro*, which grew in spiny clumps to heights of up to three feet and once provided nourishment for the wild cattle and horses. There was also the *ombú* (a giant thistle), which grew to great heights during the spring rains. A long-lived growth that botanically resembles an herb rather than a tree, it provided shelter to range cattle and to horsemen in a region where no other shade was available. It became known as the lighthouse of the Pampa and achieved the status of a national symbol. During the nineteenth century, however, the indigenous flora of the Pampa was largely replaced by alfalfa and European grasses (*pasta tierna*), and the *ombú* gave way to the eucalyptus and poplar trees planted around the ranch houses.

South of the Colorado River the surface of the Patagonian plateau is marked only by desert shrubs and occasional stunted trees, often blown into strange shapes by the wind, by poplars planted as windbreaks, and by protective plantings along the coastal downs. Grasses that provide fodder for the herds of sheep flourish in the river valleys where most of the scanty population is gathered, and in the Gulf of San Juan marine vegetation in the form of algae is harvested commercially.

## Wildlife

Wildlife in great variety is found in the humid mesopotamian lowlands where some of the principal species are the howler monkey, the tapir, the giant anteater, the jaguar, the ocelot, and the world's largest rodent—the pig-sized capybara. The small *guazú pucú*, sometimes called the marsh deer, survives in small numbers on the delta of the Paraná River. Once numerous, the species has been easy game to hunters and is now protected by law. There are also alligators, a variety of turtles and liz-

ards, and numerous kinds of snakes, including an occasional boa constrictor and poisonous varieties, such as the rattlesnake, coral snake, and fer-de-lance.

There are few animal species in the Pampa and the Piedmont other than rodents of numerous varieties. Wild boars, wild goats, and an occasional puma are found in the Andes. On the high plateaus in the north, droves of miniature donkeys and llamas, alpacas, and vicuñas are sometimes seen.

It is the variety of grassland and desert fauna of Patagonia that gives the country's wildlife its distinctive character. Most striking are a camel-like relative of the llama, called the guanaco, and the ostrich-like rhea. These two species and deer often run sociably together in mixed herds. There are also armadillos, hare, and a large assortment of burrowing rodents, which riddle the plains with their holes in the manner of North American prairie dogs. Wild dogs and red foxes roam the region, and sea lions and sea elephants are native to coastal areas.

Among the more serious pests are the estimated 50 million Buenos Aires rats, which are present as a result of the port city's shipping, and the summertime visitations of flies and mosquitoes. In addition, a fly called the *pulgón* ravages the Pampa alfalfa crop, and visitations of killer or African bees are hazards in the Northeast. This bee, a kind of wasp that attacks cattle—and sometimes man—with ferocity, makes its home in the central Brazilian jungle but appeared in Argentina in 1972 and returned in greater strength in 1973.

The famed California swallows return each spring to San Juan de Capistrano after having wintered in Argentina. The country's resident birdlife includes tropical species in the northern forests and varieties in the Pampa and Patagonia that range from the great screamer to the tiny sandpiper. There are carrion crows, sparrow hawks, chaffinches, black ibis, partridge, and ovenbirds. The albatross and penguin are found along the southern coast, and the great condor is occasionally seen high over the Andes.

The country's best known game fish, the *dorado*, is found in the waters of the Paraná-Uruguay river system, but landlocked salmon and brook, rainbow, and brown trout abound in the Andean lakes and rivers. Off the Patagonian coast the waters of the wide continental shelf provide one of the world's most important underexploited fishing grounds. The principal fish is hake (*merluza*), a whitefish of good quality. Mackerel, whitebait, and bass are also plentiful deep-sea species, and closer to the shore there are anchovies and sardines. A second fishing grounds, somewhat less extensive but more intensively worked, extends from the Río de La Plata estuary to near Mar del Plata. At various points along the coast the kinds of shellfish available include crabs, scallops, shrimps, and various kinds of mollusks. Squid, cuttlefish, and octopus are caught near Mar del Plata.

## Minerals

Mineral deposits occur the full length of the Andes and elsewhere in scattered occurrences. About 100 different minerals of all kinds have been exploited on a limited basis, and a concerted effort to tap the country's mineral wealth has never been undertaken. The data available, however, indicate that the varied deposits tend to be small and that the overall endowment is less generous in Argentina than in the other Andean countries.

Some sixteen or more metallic minerals are produced, the number varying from year to year because of intermittent working of some deposits. On the basis of current production during the late 1960s and early 1970s, the most important metallic minerals reserves were located in the northern Andes. In particular, Jujuy Province produced seven metallic minerals and accounted for 80 percent or more of the output. Most of the balance came from Andean portions of the provinces of San Luis, Salta, and Mendoza. Except for some lead in Río Negro Province and a small amount of manganese from Santiago del Estero, the provinces of the Northeast, the Pampa, and Patagonia yielded virtually no metallic ores, and production was negligible in the Andes south of Mendoza. In the 1960s, however, geologists had discovered an extensive deposit of high-quality iron ore near the northern coast of Río Negro Province.

Lead ores accounted for more than half of the country's metallic output, followed in order by zinc, tin, copper, iron, and manganese. All were exploited in several of the Andean provinces. Jujuy, however, was the principal source of lead and iron ores and the only important source of zinc. Among the other metallics produced in small quantities in various parts of the Andes were wolfram, columbium and tantalum, chrome, lithium, antimony, beryllium, and bismuth. Some uranium ore was taken in Mendoza and Salta.

The possibility of expanding the scanty metallic minerals exploitation in the Andes remains. In the mid-1960s a United Nations team conducted a study of fifty-five prospect areas in the mountains of San Juan, Mendoza, and Neuquén provinces. Some forty-five of these sites yielded results sufficiently encouraging to warrant further work in mapping, geochemistry, or drilling. Porphyry copper deposits were the most promising and numerous. Also found to warrant further study were deposits of low-grade molybdenite, lead and zinc, and vein deposits of magnetic iron.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s the value of nonmetallic minerals produced was only slightly less than that of metallics, and only the provinces of the Chaco, Corrientes, and Misiones had little or no nonmetallic production. Collectively, the provinces of Mendoza, Salta, and Buenos Aires accounted for about half of the total. The most important of the nonmetallics was salt from beds in the Northeast and from saline lakes in the Piedmont. Clay and kaolin production was concentrated in

Buenos Aires Province, and volcanic sulfur was produced in Salta. Other nonmetallics included asbestos, barite, basalt, borax, feldspar, fluor spar, gypsum, mica, graphite, and sulfates.

The value of building materials produced substantially exceeds that of metallic and nonmetallic minerals combined. Gravel is the most important, followed by limestone. During the late 1960s and early 1970s each of the provinces had some building-material production, but the volume of materials produced appears to have reflected less the richness of deposits than the amount of local demand. Crowded Buenos Aires Province accounted for more than one-third of the total in value, and the heavily urbanized provinces of Córdoba and Mendoza ranked next in order.

Hydrocarbons are of considerably greater economic importance than other minerals. Occurrences of coal are more extensive than in any other South American country except Chile. Production comes only from bituminous mines at Río Turbio in a remote part of Santa Cruz Province, but deposits are known to exist in Neuquén and in the Piedmont between the cities of Mendoza and La Rioja. In 1973 there were estimated in all to be some 550 million tons in 250 different known deposits. There were also an estimated 750 million tons of bituminous shale in San Juan Province, 90 million tons of peat on the Tierra del Fuego, and 500,000 tons of asphalt in Mendoza Province and in northern Neuquén.

Petroleum is the only mineral exploited in considerable quantity. The largest oil fields are located in Patagonia near the port town of Comodoro Rivadavia, and the second largest at Tartagal in Salta Province. Oil is also found at Tupungato in Mendoza Province, in Jujuy, at Río Gallegos in Santa Cruz Province, and on the Tierra del Fuego. Gas is produced from oil fields near Mendoza and Comodoro Rivadavia and at Campo Durán in Salta.

Offshore oil prospecting had yet to prove successful in 1973, although as early as mid-1971 some thirty-two exploratory wells had been drilled in major sedimentary basin areas off the Patagonian coastline. The Colorado River sedimentary basin is developed principally on the continental shelf. The basin of the Gulf of San Jorge and the Austral, or Magallanes, Basin are developed principally on the mainland, with only the eastern platforms offshore; and the Malvinas, or Birdbank, Basin occurs entirely on the continental shelf.

## **BOUNDARIES AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS**

International boundaries with the five contiguous states coincide generally with natural features, and all but a few miles have been demarcated. In 1973 there were no current border disputes with Bolivia, Paraguay, or Brazil. The Bolivian frontier extends 400 miles between the crests of mountain peaks and along watercourses, except where straight connecting lines are drawn for short distances. The 1,000-mile frontier

with Paraguay, formed by the channels of the Pilcomayo, Paraguay, and Paraná rivers, is fully demarcated except on a sixty-mile stretch of the Pilcomayo where the location of the channel has not been settled. The Brazilian frontier follows the channels of the Uruguay River and of smaller streams for 700 miles between the tripoints with Uruguay and Paraguay.

On the west the 3,200-mile border with Chile follows Andean crests and watersheds almost to the tip of the continent. It then veers eastward around a low-lying area sometimes called Atlantic Chile to Point Dungeness at the eastern approach to the Strait of Magellan. The Tierra del Fuego is bisected by a straight line drawn along latitude  $68^{\circ} 34'S$ .

The most recent of several minor border adjustments in the remote and sparsely settled southern Andes occurred in 1967 and left at issue with Chile only the perennial dispute over the title to three small islands in the Beagle Channel to the south of the Isla Grande, the principal island of the Tierra del Fuego archipelago (see ch. 11).

The 300-mile continental frontier with Uruguay is determined by the course of the Uruguay River and has been fully demarcated. At the beginning of 1973, however, the two countries were continuing a long-standing dispute over their mutual boundary in the Río de la Plata estuary. At issue were both the location of the border in that waterway and sovereignty over certain islands in it.

In November of 1973 the presidents of Uruguay and Argentina reached an agreement by terms that stated that the geographical middle-point was to be the frontier for purposes of minerals exploitation but that Argentina was to retain control over navigation on its side of the deepwater channel, which at some points runs close to the Uruguayan shore. The agreement also confirmed Argentine sovereignty over the disputed island of Martín García and gave the island of Timoteo Domínguez to Uruguay.

In 1961 the two countries had issued a joint declaration setting the Atlantic limits of the Río de la Plata along a line connecting points on the Uruguayan and Argentine coastlines at the estuary's limits. In 1974, however, the United States continued to consider the body of water as an international waterway.

Argentina claims the Falkland Islands, which it calls the *Islas Malvinas*, as well as the South Shetlands, the South Orkneys, and some smaller islands administered by Great Britain. It also claims sovereignty over a wedge-shaped section of the Antarctic continent. In 1973 the conflicting claims to the several island groups appeared on the way to resolution, and the Antarctic claim was in abeyance for a thirty-year period under terms of a multinational treaty signed in 1959 (see ch. 11).

Internally the country is divided into the Federal District, twenty-two provinces, and the National Territory of Tierra del Fuego. In 1970 Buenos Aires Province was subdivided into 140 *partidos*, and the remaining twenty-one provinces were subdivided into 363 *departamentos*. The

National Territory of Tierra del Fuego was made up of four *jurisdicciones*.

Provincial borders reflect natural features only to a limited extent, and some provinces have territory in two geographic regions. The panhandle of the Pampa province of Buenos Aires, for example, extends into Patagonia. The internal political map took approximately its present form in 1955, when the number of provinces was raised to twenty-two by assigning provincial status to several national territories, in a redrawing of the map that saw one territory abolished and its lands divided between two neighboring provinces.

Disputes sometimes arise over internal borders. Most recently, in 1968 the provinces of Tucumán and Salta were at odds over control of policy regarding public works in an area claimed by both. In the same year the national government issued decrees resolving border questions involving eight provinces.

## SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

With an average density of 22.2 inhabitants per square mile, Argentina has the lowest overall population density among the Latin American states after Guyana, Bolivia, and Paraguay. The province of Tucumán has seventy times the density of Santa Cruz Province, however, and the urbanized province of Buenos Aires contains more than one-third of Argentina's population.

Already crowded almost to capacity in 1960, the population of the Federal Capital increased less than 6,000 during the 1960s to reach 2,972,000 in 1970. The population of Greater Buenos Aires, however, increased by more than 40 percent to attain a 1970 population of 5,380,000. Made up of a conglomerate of urban centers girdling the capital, Greater Buenos Aires consists of twenty-four *partidos*, ten of which are themselves cities with populations in excess of 200,000 (see table 1).

The emergence of Buenos Aires as the country's megalopolis is of fairly recent date. The earliest centers of Spanish settlement were in the northwest where colonial towns were established with links to the mining centers of Peru and Bolivia. Cities such as Mendoza, San Jose, and Córdoba had become important at a time when Buenos Aires was still little more than a settlement. The second historical zone of settlement, developed after the beginning of the nineteenth century, was the Humid Pampa. Buenos Aires did not assume its place of importance until the country's railroad net was built during the late nineteenth century, not in a pattern designed to connect the centers of production and population with one another, but in a fan-shaped pattern designed to transport the agricultural produce of the countryside to the port of Buenos Aires for export. This pattern was later perpetuated in the construction of highways and, later still, in the development of the pattern of air transport.



Table 1. Cities in Argentina with Population in Excess of 200,000 in 1960 and 1970

| City                      | Province         | 1960           | 1970  |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------------|-------|
|                           |                  | (in thousands) |       |
| Federal Capital .....     | Federal District | 2,967          | 2,972 |
| Córdoba .....             | Córdoba          | 586            | 798   |
| Rosario .....             | Santa Fe         | 591            | 798   |
| La Matanza* .....         | Buenos Aires     | 403            | 659   |
| Morón* .....              | .....-do- .....  | 344            | 486   |
| Lanús* .....              | .....-do- .....  | 382            | 450   |
| Lomas de Zamora* .....    | .....-do- .....  | 275            | 411   |
| La Plata .....            | .....-do- .....  | 337            | 408   |
| General San Martín* ..... | .....-do- .....  | 318            | 361   |
| Quilmes* .....            | .....-do- .....  | 318            | 355   |
| Avellaneda* .....         | .....-do- .....  | 330            | 338   |
| Tres de Febrero* .....    | .....-do- .....  | n.a.           | 313   |
| Santa Fe .....            | Santa Fe         | 209            | 312   |
| Vicente Lopez* .....      | Buenos Aires     | 251            | 285   |
| San Isidro* .....         | .....-do- .....  | 196            | 250   |

n.a.—not available.

\*Unit of Greater Buenos Aires.

Source: Adapted from Organización de los Estados Americanos, *América en Cifras 1972, Situación Demográfica: Estado y Movimiento de la Población*, Washington, 1972, p. 31; and *Demographic Yearbook, 1968*, New York, 1969, p. 173.

Pampa residents still tend to think of themselves as living in the zone of such and such railroad rather than in the Pampa.

Buenos Aires was federalized as the national capital in the 1870s, and its growth has been uninterrupted since that time. Migrants from the countryside streamed to it along the routes of the railroads, and it became the home of a large part of the heavy flow of immigrants who arrived during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The country's industrial growth, stimulated by both world wars, was concentrated in it and attracted additional waves of migration from the countryside. By 1970 the urban area of Buenos Aires had become the third largest in the Americas and fifth largest in the world. It generated half of the country's gross domestic product in industry and services and over half of its bank loans. It contained 84 percent of the data-processing centers, and its per capita income was three times that of the rest of the country. It also had accounted for more than half of the national population growth since 1960 (see table 2).

The continued growth of the area has alarmed successive recent governments, and several means of combating it have been considered. Transfer of the capital to a place in the interior has frequently been proposed, and in 1969 President Juan Carlos Onganía moved his government to the Patagonian town of Río Gallegos for a few days in a gesture to popularize the idea of decentralization. Legislation enacted in 1969

Table 2. Population of Argentina by Political Subdivisions, 1960 and 1970

|   | 1970       |          | 1960       |          | Increase or Decrease |          |
|---|------------|----------|------------|----------|----------------------|----------|
|   | Number     | Per-cent | Number     | Per-cent | Number               | Per-cent |
| Federal Capital .....   | 2,972,453  | 12.7     | 2,966,634  | 14.8     | 5,819                | 0.2      |
| Buenos Aires .....  | 8,774,529  | 37.6     | 6,766,108  | 33.8     | 2,008,421            | 29.7     |
| Catamarca .....   | 172,323    | 0.7      | 168,231    | 0.8      | 4,092                | 2.4      |
| Córdoba .....   | 2,060,065  | 8.8      | 1,753,840  | 8.8      | 306,225              | 17.5     |
| Corrientes .....  | 564,147    | 2.4      | 533,201    | 2.7      | 30,946               | 5.8      |
| Chaco .....   | 566,613    | 2.4      | 543,331    | 2.7      | 23,282               | 4.3      |
| Chubut .....  | 189,920    | 0.8      | 142,412    | 0.7      | 47,508               | 33.4     |
| Entre Ríos .....  | 811,691    | 3.5      | 805,357    | 4.0      | 6,334                | 0.8      |
| Formosa .....   | 234,075    | 1.0      | 178,526    | 0.9      | 55,549               | 31.1     |
| Jujuy .....   | 302,436    | 1.3      | 241,462    | 1.2      | 60,974               | 25.3     |
| La Pampa .....  | 172,029    | 0.7      | 158,746    | 0.8      | 13,283               | 8.4      |
| La Rioja .....  | 136,237    | 0.6      | 128,220    | 0.6      | 8,017                | 6.3      |
| Mendoza .....   | 973,075    | 4.2      | 824,036    | 4.1      | 149,039              | 18.1     |
| Misiones .....  | 433,020    | 1.9      | 361,440    | 1.8      | 81,580               | 22.6     |
| Neuquén .....   | 154,570    | 0.7      | 109,890    | 0.5      | 44,680               | 40.7     |
| Río Negro .....   | 262,622    | 1.1      | 193,292    | 1.0      | 69,330               | 35.9     |
| Salta .....   | 509,803    | 2.2      | 412,854    | 2.0      | 96,949               | 23.5     |
| San Juan .....  | 384,284    | 1.6      | 352,387    | 1.8      | 31,897               | 9.1      |
| San Luis .....  | 183,460    | 0.8      | 174,316    | 0.9      | 9,144                | 5.3      |
| Santa Cruz .....  | 84,457     | 0.4      | 52,908     | 0.3      | 31,549               | 59.6     |
| Santa Fe .....  | 2,135,583  | 9.1      | 1,884,918  | 9.4      | 250,665              | 13.3     |
| Santiago del Estero .....   | 495,419    | 2.1      | 476,503    | 2.4      | 18,916               | 4.0      |
| National Territory of the<br>Tierra del Fuego,<br>Falkland Islands, and<br>Antarctic and South<br>Atlantic islands <sup>1</sup> ..... | 15,658     | 0.1      | 11,209     | 0.1      | 4,449                | 39.7     |
| Tucumán .....   | 765,962    | 3.3      | 773,972    | 3.9      | -8,010               | -1.0     |
| Total Population ...  | 23,354,431 | 100.0    | 20,013,793 | 100.0    | 3,350,638            | 16.7     |

<sup>1</sup>Falkland Islands and South Atlantic islands are under British jurisdiction; population of Tierra del Fuego: 13,431.

Source: Adapted from Organización de los Estados Americanos, *América en Cifras, 1972, Situación Demográfica: Estado y Movimiento de la Población*, Washington, 1972, p. 23.

gave tax incentives for bringing new business operations to the Patagonian provinces of Chubut and Santa Cruz, and 1972 legislation designed to decentralize industry placed a relatively heavy taxload on new factories established in Buenos Aires and progressively lighter tax burdens on operations established away from the area.

The provisional report of the 1970 census included a table indicating, by province, the population statistics that might have been anticipated on the sole basis of natural growth (births minus deaths) adjusted to allow for immigration from abroad. The difference between these totals

and the actual census figures were designed to approximate the changes in settlement patterns brought about by internal migration into and out of each province during the intercensal period. With the exception of the province of Buenos Aires, the only provinces gaining in population through internal migration were Córdoba, Santa Fe, and the four that made up Patagonia. The remaining fifteen were zones of net out-migration. Populations of the northern provinces of Formosa, Misiones, Jujuy, and Salta increased at a rate higher than the national average, but large proportions of the increases apparently resulted from immigration from neighboring countries.

In both Córdoba and Santa Fe most of the growth took place in the largest city; in remaining parts of both provinces growth was at a rate below the national average. In Santa Fe, the city of Rosario owed its population increase to its status as the country's second port after Buenos Aires and its location at the center of a prosperous wheat-growing hinterland. In Córdoba Province the city of Córdoba drew migrants because of its status as an important industrial center, particularly for the production of automotive vehicles. In the early 1970s these two cities, like Greater Buenos Aires, could be expected to continue to grow at disproportionately rapid rates and, in so doing, to intensify the relative underdevelopment of the remainder of the country.

Between 1960 and 1970 the urban population in centers with populations in excess of 2,000 increased from 73.8 to 80.5 percent of the total, a proportion that made Argentina in 1970 the most urbanized country of Latin America after Uruguay. During the same period the proportion with populations of 20,000 or more grew still faster—from 57.3 to 66.8 percent. In 1970 the cities of metropolitan Buenos Aires together with Córdoba and Rosario made up half of the urban total. The only other cities of the country with populations over 200,000 were La Plata—forty miles east of Buenos Aires on the Río de la Plata estuary and itself almost a satellite city—and the city of Santa Fe in the province of that name.

The stagnation of other cities was at its most extreme in Tucumán (only occasionally referred to by its full name of San Miguel de Tucumán). This chronically depressed center of the sugar industry with a 1970 population of 171,000 had counted 194,000 inhabitants in 1947. A few medium-sized cities of the interior gained substantially in population during the 1960s. Between 1960 and 1970, however, urban centers with populations of under 200,000 had grown at rates averaging less than that of the population as a whole. Internal migration appeared to have been less a movement from country to town than from smaller to larger urban center.

The urban centers of Patagonia and the smaller centers of the Pampa are most frequently located along the routes of railroads. In the Northwest Andes and Piedmont and in parts of the Chaco, they customarily occur in small oases of fertile land surrounded by semiarid plains.

In the Río de la Plata basin more than 200 river ports have grown up along streams of the Paraná-Uruguay river system, but many have stagnated as the dominance of Buenos Aires port facilities has grown. In particular, the once important grain ports of Campana and Zárate on the lower Paraná have declined, and even the big port of Rosario has felt the impact of competition by Buenos Aires.

Only a scattering of ports on the Atlantic coast have grown into cities. Natural harbors are few, particularly on the coastline of Patagonia where tidal ranges are as much as thirty-eight feet and high cliffs discourage passage to the interior. With a 1970 population of nearly 200,000 Bahía Blanca is the only truly large coastal city, although the population of the resort center of Mar del Plata exceeds that figure during the summer season. In general, the extensiveness of the railroad network has militated against the growth of cities on the coast as well as in the interior.

Between 1960 and 1970 the four provinces of Patagonia were immigration areas in which the growth attributed to migrants from other parts of the country ranged from 6 percent of the 1970 population in Chubut to 27.2 percent in Santa Cruz. The overall growth of the region, however, was no greater in number than that recorded in the single province of Mendoza, and in 1970 inhabitants of Patagonia made up only about 3 percent of the country's population. Over half of it was clustered in small urban centers, and most of the remainder was on sheep ranches located in canyon bottoms where surface and ground water were in better supply and there was some relief from the wind and dust of the plateau surface. The small farming population was found in river valleys, principally in the valley of the Río Negro, which served as a center of colonization by European immigrants during earlier years.

Proportionately large, the growth of population in Patagonia has been relatively small in actual numbers and has fallen far short of governmental goals. Efforts to settle colonists in it have met with limited response, and efforts to establish new industries have been similarly frustrated. Aside from its inhospitable climate, the region is too remote from Buenos Aires which, according to a 1966 economic analysis, was the source of 74 percent of the goods brought in and the destination of 96 percent of the goods shipped out of the region. Entrepreneurs were discouraged by the high transportation costs and the need for maintaining heavy inventories, and workers were discouraged by the isolation.

The pattern of rural settlement throughout the country is one of dispersed farms, rather than of farm villages, and of ranches, plantations, and commercial farms on which regular and seasonal workers live in clusters. As recently as the 1950s some fifty families owned estates of 75,000 acres or more in extent in Buenos Aires Province, and properties in Patagonia were larger still. There has been little land reform in the form of expropriation of estates and little spontaneous settlement. In 1973 the Land Settlement Institute (Instituto de Colonización) had reset-

bled annually an average of only 1,800 families on new lands during its forty years of existence; during the preceding fifteen years, 265,000 acres had been occupied. Throughout its history, most of the country's colonization has been accomplished not by resettlement but by immigration from abroad.

The text accompanying the release of provisional statistics from the 1970 census noted a profound regional disequilibrium in the rhythm of population growth during the 1960s and described it as reflecting a movement from economically stagnant zones to zones where job opportunities and the availability of social services were better. Throughout the country's history, however, internal migration has consisted almost entirely of a movement from country to town, and the attraction of urban life has involved something deeper and less tangible than a search for material betterment. The gaucho of the open Pampa is the archetype of Argentina, but the refrain of a famous old tango speaks of the lure of the city: "Adiós, Pampa mía—me voy para la ciudad" (Goodbye, my Pampa—I am leaving for the city.)

## POPULATION STRUCTURE AND DYNAMICS

According to provisional data from the 1970 census the country's population was 23,364,431 as compared with 20,008,945 in 1960. Publication of final census data in 1974 was anticipated. The 1970 tally came as a surprise in the sense that the total was 1 million or more below current estimates, although some 350,000 enumerators had participated and national and United Nations demographers were later to estimate that a margin of error of no more than 2 or 3 percent had been involved.

The rate of population growth was slowing down. During the years 1900 through 1965 there had been an average annual increase of about 2.5 percent. Between 1947 and 1960 it had been 2 percent, and between 1960 and 1970 it further slowed to 1.5 percent. During the years 1967 to 1970 an annual rate of as low as 1.3 percent was estimated. At the current rate of growth, in 1970 some forty-six years would be required for the population to double, a time period longer than that for any other country in Latin America with the exception of neighboring Uruguay. Argentina remained one of the least densely populated countries in the region and, unlike most of the countries, it would benefit from an increase rather than a decrease in the birthrate (see Family Planning, this ch.).

The reasons for the low and declining growth rate are not far to seek. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Argentina has been one of the most urbanized countries in the Americas and has possessed one of the best and most extensive educational systems. It is axiomatic that the birthrate (and population growth) tends to vary inversely with the extent of urbanization and education, and the already high proportion of well-educated city dwellers has risen progressively during the course of the century. In addition, the per capita income of Argentina has been far

higher than the Latin American average, and a disposable income sufficient to permit substantial expenditure on recreation and other consumption items tends also to retard the rate of natural growth.

Urbanization, education, and per capita income indirectly affect population growth in the sense that educated cityfolk with substantial incomes are likely to begin bearing children later than the uneducated rural poor and, for this reason, to have fewer children. In the mid-1960s the median childbearing age of mothers and fathers was twenty-eight and thirty-two years, respectively, far older than the Latin American average.

There is a close and unusual relationship in Argentina between demographic dynamics and housing. The massive urban migration of the 1950s and 1960s has contributed to an urban housing shortage of monumental proportions (see ch. 6). In Buenos Aires, in particular, young people unable to find a place to live have deferred marriage and child-bearing in a number believed sufficient to have a statistically significant effect on the birthrate.

The reported crude rate of birth declined from 23.7 per 1,000 inhabitants in 1960 to 21.7 in 1968, far lower than the thirty-eight per 1,000 inhabitants in 1970 estimated for Latin America as a whole. The retarding effect of the progressively lower birthrate on population growth was only partially offset by a corresponding decline in the rate of mortality. With improving health care, the number of deaths per 1,000 dropped from an annual average of 9.6 per 1,000 inhabitants during the years 1950 to 1954 to an estimated 8.4 per 1,000 in 1971. In the early 1970s the mortality rate could not be expected to decline much further. With the increasing maturity of the population, the proportion saved from premature death by improved health conditions would soon be offset by the increasing proportion becoming mortality statistics as consequences of the infirmities of old age. Pronounced regional variations in the death rate reflect internal migration patterns rather than health conditions. For example, a 1970 death rate in the Federal Capital of almost twice that for the country as a whole was no more than a reflection of heavy migration to that city during previous years.

With the decline in birth and death rates, life expectancy at birth increased from 59.2 years (56.9 for men and 61.4 for women) in 1947 to an average of 67.4 years for both sexes during the 1965-70 period. A further increase to 67.9 years was predicted for the period 1970 to 1975. In the early 1970s the Argentine birth and mortality rates were the lowest and life expectancy at birth was the highest among all Latin American countries other than Uruguay.

The number of females in relation to the number of males in the population has increased steadily during the twentieth century, the coefficient of masculinity (proportion of males to females) declining from 115.4 in 1914 to 105.1 in 1947, 100 in 1960, and 98.6 in 1970, when for the first time the female sex emerged in the majority. This continuing trend has in part been a consequence of improving health conditions permitting a

larger proportion of women to survive during a life span that is naturally greater than that of males. In particular, maternal mortality has declined; the proportion of children under the age of five years who had lost their mothers declined from 4.2 per 100 in the 1913-15 period to 0.8 per 100 from 1959 to 1961. The trend also in part results from a progressive decline in the once heavy and predominantly male immigration from Europe (see External Migration, this ch.).

The provisional data released from the 1970 census did not include figures on the population's age composition. Estimates by the International Labor Office, the Secretariat of the International Labor Organization (ILO), however, indicate that in 1970 the median age of the population occurred between the ages of twenty-five and forty-four years, approximately at the age of twenty-eight. Males outnumbered females at birth, and females remained a minority until reaching the age group between forty-five and fifty-four years, where they emerged as a majority that increased progressively at more advanced ages (see table 3).

The pattern was strikingly different from that of Latin America as a whole. Other ILO estimates for 1970 show the median age of the region to have been in the late teens and the predominance of males at birth to have diminished much more rapidly. The two sexes were almost equal in number between the ages of twenty and twenty-four, and women emerged in a clear majority between the ages of twenty-five and forty-four. The unusual demographic pattern in Argentina is explained by the country's low birthrate, the heavy flow of predominantly male immigration during previous years, and the advanced Argentine health care program that has greatly reduced maternal mortality, which continues to plague many other countries.

Population structure and dynamics vary substantially by geographic region and, in particular, between urban and rural sectors. Men tend to be more numerous in the country and women to predominate in the cities and towns; in the Federal Capital the coefficient of masculinity declined from an already low 87.6 in 1960 to 85.6 in 1970. At the opposite extreme it was 114.1 in Misiones and 139.2 in Santa Cruz. Moreover, since the excess of males in the country and females in the town was almost entirely a consequence of urban migration, children of the two sexes were about equal in number in the two sectors, and the coefficients of masculinity for males who had reached adulthood were substantially lower in the Federal Capital and higher in Misiones and Santa Cruz. The disparity in numbers between the adult members of the two sexes was so substantial as to serve as yet another depressant to the birthrate.

Urban birthrates were much lower than those in the countryside—in early 1970s the rate in the largely rural Jujuy Province was more than twice that in the predominantly urban province of Buenos Aires. Mortality rates were also higher in urban localities, but the significance of this difference was severely limited by the fact that a large proportion of deaths involved people who had been born, and spent much or most of

Table 3. Population, Labor Force Size, and Participation Rates in Argentina by Age and Sex, 1970  
(population and labor force in thousands; participation rates in percentage of total population)

| Age            | Total               |             |                     | Male       |                    |                     | Female     |             |                     |
|----------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------|------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------|-------------|---------------------|
|                | Population          | Labor Force | Participation Rates | Population | Labor Force        | Participation Rates | Population | Labor Force | Participation Rates |
| 0-9 .....      | 4,843               | 0           | 0.00                | 2,460      | 0                  | 0.00                | 2,383      | 0           | 0.00                |
| 10-14 .....    | 2,242               | 71          | 3.16                | 1,152      | 53                 | 4.56                | 1,090      | 19          | 1.70                |
| 15-19 .....    | 2,171               | 982         | 45.21               | 1,105      | 682                | 61.73               | 1,066      | 299         | 28.09               |
| 20-24 .....    | 1,986               | 1,279       | 64.40               | 1,010      | 882                | 87.30               | 976        | 397         | 40.72               |
| 25-44 .....    | 6,613               | 4,071       | 61.55               | 3,349      | 3,267              | 97.54               | 3,264      | 804         | 24.64               |
| 45-54 .....    | 2,657               | 1,434       | 53.97               | 1,316      | 1,197              | 90.94               | 1,341      | 237         | 17.70               |
| 55-64 .....    | 2,019               | 751         | 37.17               | 983        | 640                | 65.09               | 1,036      | 111         | 10.69               |
| 65-over .....  | 1,773               | 281         | 15.86               | 828        | 240                | 29.04               | 945        | 41          | 4.32                |
| National ..... | 24,304 <sup>1</sup> | 8,869       | 36.492              | 12,203     | 6,960 <sup>2</sup> | 57.032              | 12,101     | 1,909       | 15.772              |

<sup>1</sup>Estimate made before provisional 1970 census figure (23.3 million) became available.

<sup>2</sup>Activity rates and national statistics as given in source.

Source: Adapted from International Labor Organization, International Labor Office, Labor Force Projections, 1965-1985: Part III, Latin America, Geneva, 1971, p. 98.



their lives, in rural localities before migrating to an urban center. Similarly, the heavy urban migration made it impossible to differentiate between life expectancy at birth in urban and in rural localities.

## EXTERNAL MIGRATION

According to provisional 1970 census data, 2,180,918 persons, or about 10.7 percent of the population, had been born abroad. This figure compared with 2,565,000, or 12.8 percent, in 1960. The relative decline had been almost unbroken since 1914, when persons born abroad made up 30 percent of the population. Almost two-thirds of the 1970 foreign-born population lived in the Buenos Aires metropolitan area, but the remainder was widely distributed in all of the provinces and all but one of the 363 departments.

Historically, Argentina has been a country of immigrants. Even in the 1970s its foreign-born population was proportionately one of the largest in Latin America, and its proportion of first- and second-generation citizenry was probably the highest in the world. Immigrants played the leading role in the development of the country's industry and commerce, and in the late 1960s and early 1970s the number of business leaders of immigrant origin was such that a study of 268 selected at random showed that almost half had been born abroad.

During the century ending in 1968 there had been a net gain in population through immigration of nearly 6 million people, a large majority from Spain and Italy and nearly all of the remainder from other European countries. European immigration had slowed during the worldwide depression of the 1930s and virtually ceased during the years of World War II. It revived at the end of the war and, during the decade that followed, the approximately 600,000 people entering Argentina from Europe represented more than half of the flow to all of Latin America.

Many of the new arrivals came under sponsorship of the International Committee on European Migration (ICEM), which by 1969 had arranged the emigration of 116,000 carefully selected persons with skills adapted to the needs of the Argentine economy. A large proportion of these had been displaced persons emigrating during the years immediately following the end of hostilities in Europe. With the restoration of economic prosperity in Europe during the 1960s, the flow of emigrants sponsored by the ICEM and arriving independently declined progressively. Between 1956 and 1970 some 571,000 persons entered the country legally as immigrants, but the number included progressively more from neighboring Latin American countries. The changing pattern of immigration was reflected in 1969 statistics, which showed an official net immigration of 3,400 persons from European countries and 27,400 from Chile, Bolivia, and Paraguay.

Emigration from Argentina was moderate during the years before World War II and consisted principally of persons who had entered pre-

viously as immigrants. During the 1950s and 1960s, however, the emigration of native-born Argentines increased significantly. The exact number is unknown, and only scattered and incomplete statistics are available, but in 1973 a North American periodical estimated that nearly 500,000 persons had emigrated during the preceding ten years.

The decline of European immigration after the mid-1950s has been approximately counterbalanced by the corresponding increase in immigration from neighboring countries, a process that was not statistically significant until after World War II. How massive this new wave of immigration has been is a matter for speculation; many have entered illegally and, as a consequence, do not appear in immigration statistics and presumably have avoided contact with census enumerators. Many of those in Argentina at any given time are seasonal migrants who return to their own countries after participating in the sugarcane harvest in Tucumán Province or in other seasonal occupation. It is significant, however, that some 200,000 illegal immigrants were granted residence status simultaneously under terms of an amnesty declared by the Argentine government in 1965.

According to one 1973 estimate, the Argentine population included 600,000 immigrants—legal and illegal—from Paraguay alone, 500,000 from Bolivia, 400,000 from Chile, 150,000 from Uruguay, and 100,000 from Brazil. The estimated total of 2 million seems excessive, but in 1968 a Montevideo newspaper had conjectured that there were 500,000 Uruguayans in Buenos Aires alone. A 1972 study conducted by the Argentine Catholic Immigration Service in cooperation with Caritas International resulted in the estimate that there were 1,580,000 immigrants from neighboring countries in Argentina and that 60 percent of these were in the country illegally.

Some of the immigrants from neighboring countries have been highly educated professionals and skilled technicians. In particular, a yearlong closure of all Bolivian universities in 1971 and 1972 resulted in the entry of a large number of Bolivian university students, some of whom would probably remain in the country. For the most part, however, the newcomers have been unskilled and often illiterate workers of indigenous origin. Some are joined by dependents, but a probable majority are young single farmworkers unable to find employment at home and attracted by the promise of better employment opportunity and higher living standards in Argentina. Initially a majority find work on plantations and vineyards in the north or on sheep ranches of Patagonia, while others find work as laborers in construction projects. A large proportion, however, gravitate ultimately to the suburban slums of Buenos Aires and other large cities. Often handicapped by lack of skills, illiteracy, and clandestine status in the country, they cannot take advantage of the protection afforded by labor laws and social legislation and exist as the lowest stratum of the labor force.

Disturbed over the decline in European immigration, the government in 1969 attempted to stimulate the immigrant flow by offering various

inducements, most of them based on a program initiated in 1961 to encourage the immigration of European residents of North Africa. Extended in 1969 without consideration of nationality, the inducements were substantial, but the program was aimed primarily at skilled persons with middle-class status, preferably of European origin. Argentina was looking for experienced farmers and skilled technicians; the flow of immigrants from neighboring countries was already providing a superfluity of unskilled labor. The 1969 decree, therefore, offered lures on a basis so selective that a respected Buenos Aires publication commented that most foreign workers would find it very difficult to meet the requirements introduced in the decree.

Official concern over the dwindling European immigration has been far exceeded by concern over the increasingly large number of Argentine professionals and trained technicians joining the growing movement of emigrants out of the country. The rise in immigration from neighboring countries was offsetting the decline of immigration from Europe, but it was doing nothing to offset a brain drain that by the early 1970s had become a serious population problem.

Since the number of emigrants of all kinds remains unknown and there are no generally accepted criteria for determining inclusion of emigrants in this brain-drain category, its numerical strength cannot accurately be determined. It is the consensus, however, that during the 1960s and probably in the early 1970s Argentina ranked with Mexico and Colombia as the heaviest contributors to high-level emigration from Latin America. A study by Argentina's prestigious Torcuato di Tella Institute found that between 1950 and 1966 the United States alone had received some 2,000 Argentine physicians, engineers, chemists, accountants, and dentists. According to a Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) study, the immigration of Argentines to the United States during that period included about 6,000 professional and technical personnel of all kinds. The PAHO study noted also that a survey of immigration to the United States from seven major Latin American countries during the selected year of 1965 showed Argentina to be first in the number of physicians, engineers, teachers of all kinds, and technicians. It was second in the number of professors of higher education and third in the number of nurses. It contributed more than one-third of the physicians and nearly one-third of the engineers. An Argentine journal estimate that a majority of some 1,500 Argentines emigrating to the United States in 1971 were university-trained or skilled technical personnel indicated that the outflow was continuing.

Several subjective explanations have been proposed for the incidence of emigration by high-level personnel, but the root cause appears to have been the increasing inability of the economy to absorb the output of the universities and higher technical schools. In particular, this explains why physicians have been most numerous among the émigrés. Despite the extent of their emigration, during the late 1960s and early

1970s there were relatively more doctors in Argentina than in any other country in Latin America (see ch. 6). The fact that the skills of the high-level emigrants cannot be effectively used at home lessens the impact of their loss to the economy, but the estimated per capita cost of the equivalent of US \$25,000 or more spent on educating those who are university graduates represents a heavy burden on the economy.

Several efforts have been made to encourage the return of these educated emigrants. The results have indicated that many or most wished to return should suitable employment be available. During the early 1960s the Ford Foundation made available US \$400,000 to the National Council for Scientific and Technical Investigation in order to encourage the repatriation of academic scientists working abroad. By 1966 the council had been instrumental in arranging the return of more than half of the nearly 500 persons who might have taken advantage of the assistance. The Gillette Foundation of Argentina in 1967 circularized some 4,000 high-level emigrants concerning the possible return to Argentina and found that a majority would wish to do so should suitable and concrete employment offers be made. The foundation was able to place eighty-seven highly qualified returnees. The encouraging results of these isolated efforts strongly suggest that the exodus has been motivated primarily by simple economic considerations and that it can be substantially slowed by an increase in suitable job opportunity.

## FAMILY PLANNING

During the early 1970s Argentina was so distant from the specter of overpopulation facing some Latin American countries that underpopulation was regarded as a problem of importance in its own right. Shortly after his return from Spain, former President Juan Domingo Perón asserted that a population of 100 million was needed for optimum economic and social development, and the Secretariat of Public Health had estimated that a population of 150 million could comfortably be maintained.

The papal encyclical condemning birth control was generally well received in Argentina, motion pictures containing material concerning abortion were automatically censorable, and the Buenos Aires press had consistently supported an increase in family allowances as a means of encouraging larger families. Argentina, however, is one of a half-dozen Latin American countries to follow a middle-of-the-road official policy, which considers a high birthrate desirable for economic and social reasons but which tolerates, and to a limited degree encourages, family planning activities.

Family planning activity has been focused on the reduction of unwanted pregnancies, on the spacing of wanted pregnancies, and on the provision of clinical and contraceptive services conducive to family physical and mental health. In the early 1970s there were no legal restrictions on the distribution of contraceptive devices.

Planning activity commenced in 1962 with the organization of a small program in the Rawson Hospital of Buenos Aires. In 1965 the Argentine Federation of Family Planning Centers was brought into being to coordinate activities that had spread to other hospitals in the Buenos Aires area, and in 1966 a meeting at the University of Buenos Aires led to foundation of the private and nonprofit Argentine Family Protection Association (*Asociación Argentina de Protección Familiar*). By emphasizing the positive educational aspects of planning it escaped serious opposition, public or private. In 1969 it became affiliated with the International Planned Parenthood Federation, and by 1970 it was operating some fifty centers scattered about the country, some of them in facilities maintained by the Ministry of Public Health. In addition, during the late 1960s and early 1970s activities related to family planning were in progress at the universities of Buenos Aires, Córdoba, and El Salvador.

## STRUCTURE AND DYNAMICS OF THE LABOR FORCE

In mid-1973 labor force data based on the 1970 population census had yet to become available. A table of estimates prepared in 1971 by the ILO, however, fixed the 1970 strength of the labor force at 8,869,000 people. Females made up about 21.4 percent of the total. Determination of the effective strength of the Argentine labor force, however, involves two imponderables that frustrate efforts to assemble valid statistics. The number of jobs filled probably exceeds the number of people working or seeking work by several hundred thousand; a considerable number, particularly in the low-paid public sector of employment, hold two or more jobs as a matter of economic necessity. More than offsetting this double counting, the labor force may include as many as 1 million seasonal workers and illegal immigrants from Paraguay, Bolivia, and other neighboring countries (see External Migration, this ch.).

The ILO estimates show an unbroken downward trend in employment from 40.4 percent of the total population in 1950 to 38 percent in 1960 and 36.5 percent in 1970. A further decline to 35.7 percent in 1980 was forecast. A downward trend was reported also in most of the other countries of Latin America but for different reasons. Other countries of the region had high and increasing birthrates that resulted in progressively larger proportions of the populations too young to engage in economic activity. In contrast, Argentina had a declining birthrate, which might have been expected to result in a labor force growing in size or at least remaining stable as a proportion of the entire population. Its proportional decline is to some extent attributable to increasing proportions of young people remaining in school for longer periods of time and of increasing proportions of older people retiring from work as a consequence of the increasing spread of social security coverage (see ch. 5; ch. 6).

These influences were also coming into play in other Latin American countries, however, and in Argentina the decline in the activity rate (labor force as a proportion of the total population) seems in large part a consequence of the economy's inability to generate enough new jobs to accommodate the new job applicants. Many of the unsuccessful applicants have emigrated in search of employment abroad, and others appear to have dropped out of the job market (see External Migration, this ch.).

The 1960 census revealed that about 70 percent of the working population (and nearly 80 percent of all economically active females) were wage and salary earners. Almost 25 percent were employers and self-employed persons, and 5 percent were engaged in approximately equal numbers as unpaid family workers and as workers whose category of employment was not adequately defined. The size of the wage- and salary-earning sector, proportionately the largest in Latin America, was in great measure a reflection of the fact that nearly half of the labor force was occupied in the services sector of employment (see table 4). It also reflected the large number of big industrial and commercial establishments and the relatively limited number of independent artisans and small shopkeepers. In addition, it reflected the relatively small size of the agricultural labor force; the considerable proportion of that sector working for wages on plantations, ranches, and large commercial farms; and the virtual absence of subsistence farming.

The proportions reported for 1960 were generally similar to those registered in the census of 1947 and probably were little changed in the early 1970s. A customarily reliable Buenos Aires periodical estimated the strength in 1970 of the predominant wage- and salary-earning sector at 6,120,000, an increase of about 1 million, which would have left the proportion of the labor force engaged in the sector virtually unchanged at close to 70 percent of the total.

Wage and salary earners are either *obreros* (wage-earning manual laborers) or *empleados* (salary-earning employees). The distinction, roughly equivalent to that between blue-collar and white-collar personnel, is significant because conditions of employment tend to favor the latter. It is not unusual for some *obreros* in a single establishment to receive considerably more pay than some *empleados*, but *empleado* status carries with it higher social status as well as a customarily larger paycheck. The relative size of the two employment categories is not known, but surveys in three industrial sectors during the late 1960s and early 1970s showed that *obreros* made up between 70 and 79 percent of the total. The proportion of *empleados*, however, appears to be increasing. In one industrial area, national census authorities found that between 1960 and 1970 it rose from 21 to 26 percent of the total.

### Age and Sex Distribution

According to the ILO estimates for 1970 the labor force rate of activity was highest among young people in their early twenties. For males,

Table 4. *Distribution of Argentine Labor Force by Economic Sector, 1950, 1960, and 1969*

| Economic Sector                         | 1950           |              | 1960           |              | 1969           |              |
|---|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
|   | Thousands      | Percent      | Thousands      | Percent      | Thousands      | Percent      |
| <b>Primary (Agricultural):</b>          |                |              |                |              |                |              |
| Agriculture, fishing, and hunting ..... | 2,211.1        | 29.0         | 1,495.7        | 18.7         | 1,567.4        | 17.6         |
| Total .....                             | 2,211.1        | 29.0         | 1,495.7        | 18.7         | 1,567.4        | 17.6         |
| <b>Secondary (Industrial):</b>          |                |              |                |              |                |              |
| Mining and quarrying .....              | 33.5           | 0.4          | 45.0           | 0.6          | 57.8           | 0.6          |
| Manufacturing .....                     | 1,782.4        | 23.3         | 2,165.9        | 26.8         | 2,291.1        | 26.0         |
| Construction .....                      | 503.3          | 6.6          | 500.5          | 6.2          | 683.0          | 7.7          |
| Electricity, gas, and water .....       | 57.3           | 0.7          | 74.9           | 0.9          | 85.1           | 1.0          |
| Total .....                             | 2,376.5        | 31.0         | 2,786.3        | 34.5         | 3,117.0        | 35.3         |
| <b>Tertiary (Services):</b>             |                |              |                |              |                |              |
| Commerce and financial services .....   | 865.9          | 11.3         | 994.8          | 12.3         | 1,100.8        | 12.4         |
| Transport and communications .....      | 463.5          | 6.1          | 571.9          | 7.1          | 606.6          | 6.9          |
| Other services .....                    | 1,725.2        | 22.6         | 2,210.5        | 27.4         | 2,452.0        | 27.8         |
| Total .....                             | 3,054.6        | 40.0         | 3,777.2        | 46.8         | 4,159.4        | 47.1         |
| <b>Grand Total .....</b>                | <b>7,642.2</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>8,059.2</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>8,843.8</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Adapted from *Review of the River Plate*, Buenos Aires, CL, No. 3800, November 11, 1971, p. 741; and *Review of the River Plate*, Buenos Aires, CLII, No. 3829, August 31, 1972, p. 299.

maximum activity was recorded during the late twenties, thirties, and early forties. Female participation, however, was highest in the late teens and early twenties. In 1970 estimates for both sexes were generally compatible with those derived from the 1960 census, but some authorities argue that the actual female activity rate was considerably higher than that recorded. The contention is based on the belief that women frequently choose to identify themselves to census enumerators as housewives rather than as simple laborers.

Data from the 1960 census—available in more detailed age breakdown than the 1970 estimates—show the rate of female activity to have declined by more than one-fourth between the twenty- to twenty-four-year and twenty-five- to twenty-nine-year age-groups presumably as a consequence of marriage and childbearing. A decline of female employment between these two age-groups is characteristic in many countries, but data compiled by the ILO indicate that it was sharper in Argentina than in any other country in the Western Hemisphere. The answer involves the relatively late marriage and childbearing of Argentine women and general conservativeness of the country's society, which has been relatively slow in accepting the idea of the working wife.

As a consequence of a low and declining birthrate and a heavy flow of immigration from other countries before the late 1950s, the proportion of Argentines between the ages of fifteen and sixty-five years—the span usually considered to be that of regular economic activity—is unusually large. About 64 percent of the Argentine population in 1970 was between these ages, as compared with an estimated 53 percent for Latin America as a whole. Among all countries of the world, a study for 1961 found Argentina to rank twenty-fifth in population but fifteenth in the proportion of its population between the ages of fifteen and sixty-five.

With its relatively heavy concentration of population in the middle years, Argentina's overall labor force activity rate is correspondingly high—34.49 percent of the total population in 1970 as compared with 31.12 percent for Latin America as a whole. The consequence is a relatively light per capita burden of economically inactive people borne by the Argentine worker. In 1970 there were 100 workers per 270 inhabitants in Argentina as compared with 330 inhabitants for Latin America as a whole.

In addition to having a relatively small proportion of the population under the age of fifteen, Argentina has relatively few in this age bracket who are labor force participants. The country prohibits the employment of children under the age of fourteen who have not completed primary school, and nearly all such children still attend school. In addition, the relatively small size of the rural population means that relatively few young people are called upon to help their parents in the fields as unpaid family workers. In 1970 the participation rate of those under the age of fifteen in Argentina was less than half of that for Latin America as a whole.



The relatively small population of young people is offset by a relatively large population of the elderly. In 1970 the proportion aged sixty-five and over was almost twice the average for Latin America, but the reported labor force participation rate for that age-group was not much more than half the average for the region, a reflection of the comprehensive pension coverage afforded by the social security system to working men over the age of sixty and women over the age of fifty-five. For a variety of reasons, however, pension payments are frequently delayed or not forthcoming. They also are often insufficient to meet current living expenses. According to an estimate attributed to an official source, in the early 1960s nearly 30 percent of the pensioners in Greater Buenos Aires were supplementing their retirement incomes by continued employment (see ch. 6).

The rate of female employment increased from 16.2 percent of the labor force in 1947 to 19.2 percent in 1960 and to an estimated 21.4 percent in 1970. A marginal further increase to 21.8 percent was projected for 1980. Both the proportion employed and the rate of increase were slightly higher than the average for Latin America, but the lead was largely illusory. During the 1950s and 1960s the number of females taking part in the massive urban migration of those decades was substantially greater than the number of males, and many or most of the female migrants had undertaken the move because of the better job opportunities in urban localities (see Population Structure and Dynamics, this ch.). Girls and women held a relatively larger proportion of the jobs in Argentina than in most Latin American countries, not because the concept of the working woman had won greater acceptance, but because a relatively larger number lived in cities and towns.

### Employment by Economic Sector

During the 1950s and 1960s the sustained trend in employment was one of decline in the agricultural and of rise in the industrial and services sectors. According to estimates from an unofficial Argentine source based on government data, in 1969 the agricultural, industrial, and services sector represented 17.7 percent, 35.3 percent, and 47.1 percent of the labor force, respectively. Argentina had proportionately what was probably the smallest agricultural and the largest services sector of employment in Latin America. Estimates by this source differ somewhat in detail from ILO estimates which, in turn, differ from 1947 and 1960 census figures. They are more comprehensive, however, and all indicate the same trends.

In the early 1950s, during the first Perón era, agricultural employment plummeted as farmworkers poured into Buenos Aires and other major urban centers to take advantage of the welfare-state innovations of that time (see ch. 6). Later the movement lost momentum but continued with enough intensity to cause spot labor shortage to appear on farms in the late 1960s.

Industrial employment increased substantially during the 1950s, particularly in the manufacturing sector, but a relative shift from industrial to services employment was already beginning as a consequence of the establishment of intermediate and capital goods manufacturing industries with relatively low labor requirements. During the 1960s the introduction of technological economies of production further dampened the demand for new labor. Manufacturing employment experienced a relative decline, and the industrial sector as a whole was able to register a small gain only because of a modest construction boom during the last years of the decade.

From about 1950 onward the services sector has absorbed the lion's share of new employment. Its relative gain during the 1960s was lower than that during the 1950s only because it was fed by fewer urban migrants shifting from employment in the agrarian labor force. Increasing services employment as a side effect of urbanization and economic development is to be expected, but in the late 1960s and early 1970s the proportional size of the sector was high, even by the standards of developed countries, and the share of new employment absorbed by it was higher than that in most major European and North American states.

Exact statistics are not available, but the proportion of highly skilled personnel in the services sector appears to be high. In 1960 the 6.1 percent of the labor force classified as professional, technical, and related workers was the highest in Latin America. Many professionals, such as agronomists and engineers, who might have been employed in the agricultural or industrial sectors, gravitated to service-sector employment in government agencies, as professors in the universities, or in research. It was reported officially in 1960 that the proportion of professional personnel included 0.4 percent in agriculture, 9.1 percent in industry, and 90.5 percent in services. A 1968 survey by the Bariloche Foundation found that all but two of more than 400 physical scientists were engaged in research or teaching.

Services, however, is a catchall sector. In addition to the highly skilled professionals, it absorbs the totally unskilled migrants from the countryside who are unable to find a place in industry. It is estimated that during the 1960s about nine-tenths of the growth in services employment was in areas of the lowest productivity.

In addition to being the largest area of employment in the sector, personal services is the fastest growing. It is also the one that absorbs most of the unskilled. In particular, a 1960 housing census found that there were nearly a half million domestic servants.

The increasingly troublesome urban unemployment during the late 1960s and early 1970s indicated that the service as well as the industrial sector might be approaching the saturation point. For individuals needing jobs and unable to find them in these marginal areas of service employment there was no place to go except back to the countryside, but urbanized job-hunters have been conspicuously reluctant to take such a step.

Increasingly, women have found employment in service occupations. Between 1947 and 1960 the proportion of females employed in industry declined by 6.6 percent, and the proportion in the services sector rose correspondingly. In 1960 nearly 70 percent of all female workers were occupied in it, a large majority of them in personal services. The shift has been a continuing one, powered in part by the mechanization of industry. A late 1960s survey of Buenos Aires textile firms that had introduced technological advances in their fabrication processes since 1960 found that the proportion of female workers had been reduced from 40 to 15 percent of the rolls. Skilled personnel were needed to operate the modern machinery, and almost no girls had attended the country's technical industrial schools.

In none of the sectors of employment do women occupy many of the directive positions. In 1960 fewer than 8 percent of the personnel classified as administrative, executive, and managerial workers were female, and a 1960 survey of female workers in Buenos Aires industrial establishments indicated that only about 1 percent held positions that involved decisionmaking or personal responsibility.

### Unemployment

Official unemployment statistics are reported periodically, but the government acknowledges them to be incomplete and of uncertain validity. In mid-1972 a respected Buenos Aires periodical observed that "nobody knows the amount of unemployment that exists, the sectors in which it is most felt, or the incidence between the sexes."

The data regularly published are based on surveys taken in the Federal Capital; portions of Greater Buenos Aires; and the cities of Córdoba, Rosario, Tucumán, and Mendoza. Occasional surveys are conducted in other localities. Rates in the Federal Capital and Greater Buenos Aires ranged generally downward from more than 7 percent in 1964 to less than 5 percent in 1969 but turned upward in the early 1970s to exceed 7 percent in mid-1972. Reported levels were generally higher in the interior. They frequently exceeded 10 percent in perennially distressed Tucumán, and spot surveys in the early 1970s found them to be 8 percent or higher in Comodoro Rivadavia, Posadas, and Formosa. Estimates have frequently exceeded recorded figures by 40 to 50 percent.

The incidence of unemployment is believed to be felt to a disproportionate degree by women. It is also particularly heavy among young men aged eighteen and nineteen who have not yet performed their military service and among persons of both sexes over the age of forty. Workers with a large number of children tend to be the last hired and the first dismissed because their pay envelopes include substantial family allowances; some of the cost is reimbursed from social security funds, but these are often late in being distributed by the government.

During the early 1970s unemployment was becoming an increasingly serious problem, but the level was not yet excessive when compared

with that in many other Latin American states. Underemployment was a matter deserving equal or greater concern, particularly in the services sector. Increasingly during the 1960s and early 1970s people unable to secure employment elsewhere took or created service jobs with productivity little above zero.

In recent years the rate has probably been highest in the public sector. During the years 1960 through 1969 an average of about 20 percent or more of the labor force was employed by national and local governments and in state-owned business enterprises. The public rolls were slashed appreciably during the administration of President Onganía, particularly in the state-owned railroads, where massive featherbedding had been practiced. The effort, however, is believed to have contributed to his removal from office, and in early 1973 the public rolls were again estimated at as much as 20 percent of the labor force total.

In 1970 workers in privately operated petroleum refineries were reported to have produced about the same amount of products as had the five times as many workers in state-owned installations; in drilling operations the disparity in productivity was said to be even higher. In the same year it was reported in the press that half of the persons employed by the national government were to take their annual vacations in January and that the other half would vacation in February—the two months that traditionally represent the height of the holiday season. Noting this vacation schedule, a Buenos Aires periodical wondered editorially if a public administration that could spare half of its staff over so considerable a span of time really needed so many workers.

In mid-1973 the immediate prospects for improvement in the utilization of manpower were limited. The only real hope appeared to lie in industry. In that sector, however, for some years there had been a progressive shift within the large manufacturing area from operations involving fabrication of domestic raw materials to operations relying heavily on imported inputs and capital goods. By mid-1973 well over half of manufacturing employment was in this area, one particularly vulnerable to import restrictions and world shortages.

Earlier in the year it had been officially announced that a reduction by 50 percent of the unemployment rolls was anticipated from a newly launched project for the construction of 500,000 low-cost housing units by 1975 (see ch. 6). This, however, might not be an attainable goal, and at best it would represent a stopgap solution to the problem of unemployment. A more realistic one appeared to be a reversal of the trend that since the early 1950s had been away from production of labor-intensive consumer goods.

### **Occupational Skills and Productivity**

A 1962 survey of industrial firms employing 1.4 million workers found that 59 percent were skilled or performed directive functions, and in

1960 Argentina was ranked second among twenty Latin American countries in the proportion of personnel in the senior and intermediate grades of industry. The demand for skills increased during the 1960s with the introduction of technological changes in industry, but supply appears to have increased faster than demand. Late in the decade a large automobile manufacturer was reported hiring only one out of eight applicants for skilled positions. The National Institute of Industrial Technology was engaged in exporting industrial know-how to assist neighboring countries in the development of skilled personnel, and skilled Argentines were emigrating in search of jobs or accepting unskilled employment at home.

The general incidence and levels of skills in the services and agricultural sectors are lower than those in industry but compare favorably with those of other Latin American countries. In the areas of commerce and personal services, basic skills such as literacy and a knowledge of arithmetic that are important elsewhere are taken for granted, and the simpler commercial skills are in such plentiful supply that command of them has little or no effect on pay schedules. A 1970 survey of Buenos Aires firms found that the pay of a keypunch operator was the same as that of an unskilled worker, and that of a switchboard operator was only slightly higher.

In 1960 the proportion of the agricultural labor force without formal education was triple that in all nonagrarian occupations, and the incidence of skills was probably correspondingly lower. A large majority of farmworkers were literate, however, and agricultural extension services were more readily available than in most neighboring countries. Increasing mechanization of agriculture during the 1950s and 1960s carried with it an improvement in skills either through formal schooling or on-the-job training, and in 1970 it was reported that Argentina and Uruguay had the most efficient farm labor forces in Latin America.

The relative level of skills in the three economic sectors can roughly be measured by the per capita value added in production (value of output less value of input), which in 1960 was estimated at the equivalent of US \$1,800 in agriculture, more than US \$2,000 in services, and nearly US \$3,000 in industry. Substantial growth in productivity was registered during the 1960s. It was not possible to determine how much had been a consequence of increase in skills and how much a consequence of technological change but, according to one calculation, productivity had increased 26.9 percent in the economy as a whole between 1960 and 1969. In the manufacturing sector the increase in output was almost eight times that in employment.

High as the incidence of skills and the per capita productivity have been, underutilization of manpower has been perhaps the most severe problem of the economy. Underemployment has been rampant, and in 1970 an authoritative Buenos Aires source remarked that labor force's potential productivity could be realized only by the transfer of a massive

**number of workers from the overstaffed public bureaucracy and from other overloaded areas of the services sector to more productive areas of employment.**

## CHAPTER 4

### SOCIAL SYSTEM

Argentine society is complex and highly developed and is built on the many specialized institutions of a modern industrial nation. Two-thirds of the population live in towns and cities, which form the centers of cultural, political, and economic life. The people living in the various outlying localities constitute, in effect, regional subcultures based on some local economic or occupational specialization. Despite the distinctions that set them apart, the towns and cities of each regional subculture share general features of the national urban society and participate in national institutions.

Crosscutting the many regional variations is a relatively uniform system of social stratification comprising several classes arranged in status positions on a hierarchical scale. The major criteria for determining status and class membership are generally the same throughout the society. Among these criteria are occupation and economic well-being, followed closely by education. Family name is of major importance only to the traditional elite, the very small group at the top of the social structure.

Owing especially to the great degree of internal population movement, the rate of upward social mobility is high. Avenues of social mobility are open to everyone, and the possibilities for advancement are limited only by prevailing economic conditions and by individual ability and opportunity. Many well-to-do Argentines are self-made men who came from lower class families and worked their way up in the social system through education and occupational advancement.

The ease of mobility and the size and predominance of the middle class are the two most outstanding features in the society. Except for Uruguay, Argentina has the largest middle class of any Latin American country. The importance of the middle class is signaled by its prominent role in the political and economic sectors. The greater part of the middle class has developed since the end of the nineteenth century and is of European immigrant ancestry—as opposed to colonial Spanish or mestizo descent. Three basic interacting factors account for the rapid growth of this predominantly urban group: immigration from Italy, Spain, Germany, and central Europe; the development of modern industry; and the rural-urban migration within the country.

The factors that contributed to the rise of the middle class also brought about the development of an urban labor group. Composed

largely of rural migrants who had acquired no skills or education, the urban working class was powerless and disorganized until Juan Domingo Perón became their spokesman. By organizing the support of its members, he strengthened their influence in society and government and inspired unity among them (see ch. 9).

The ethnic makeup of the population in 1973 was best described historically. Most of the 4 million immigrants who have entered the country since the middle of the nineteenth century have been assimilated into Argentine society, which is therefore very homogeneous and in which the people more readily identify themselves as Argentine than in terms of the national origin of their ancestors. The largest number of immigrants have been Italians and Spaniards—30 and 40 percent, respectively. Being Roman Catholics of southern Europe, they have enhanced the basically Latin character of the society and helped to clarify the criteria for membership in the largest ethnic group. Other Europeans—Protestants from the British Isles and Germany, as well as Eastern European Jews—constitute small subgroups within an ethnic majority that constitutes 97 percent of the total population.

In the city and province of Buenos Aires, the people are almost entirely of European descent. In the provinces of the north and west, however, mestizos constitute about half of the population. This is not as impressive as it sounds, however, since these provinces are vastly underpopulated. The few remaining Indians live primarily in the highlands of the northwest, the northern Chaco regions, and southern Patagonia. They constitute no more than 3 percent of the total population.

The family is still an important institution. Even though living units tend to be nuclear—containing parents and their unmarried children—extended family and kin-like relationships are highly valued and provide a focal point of security and loyalty for most Argentines. Industrialization, urbanization, and a high rate of geographic mobility have altered family patterns among some sectors—particularly the urban middle class. In some cases family ties have been broken, but in the majority of instances the family has served as a buffer for rural migrants and has aided their assimilation into the urban setting. Thus, although the dynamics surrounding the family may be changing, its basic function as an institution of socialization has remained stable.

Over 90 percent of the Argentine population is Roman Catholic. The Roman Catholic Church has frequently clashed with governments, often more liberal, and of late more conservative, than itself. Although Roman Catholic values inherent in the society are taken for granted by most of the people, the power of the church is limited to influencing political or social affairs. When joined with other interest groups, however, it can represent a formidable opposition, as was the case during the last years of Perón's first regime. In the second half of the twentieth century, increasing numbers of the clergy were becoming concerned over and participating in social change.



The social values held by the society are European, largely Hispanic, in origin. Mass immigration of Latin peoples has enhanced many Hispanic colonial values while introducing industrialization and modern techniques. Male and female roles, as well as interpersonal relations, are largely traditional. Perhaps the greatest change has involved women, who have expanded their horizons in education and in occupations.

## HISTORICAL AND ETHNIC BACKGROUND

### Colonial and Early Independence Periods

Although the Argentine ethnic structure in 1973 was largely the product of the last hundred years, ethnic history is traceable as far back as 10,000 years. The Indians who migrated south to the Pampa and Patagonia never developed the complex agricultural societies of their Inca neighbors to the north. Moreover, populations were small, probably never exceeding 105,000 in the whole of Argentina. When the Spanish first began to penetrate and settle the area in the late sixteenth century, they encountered nomadic and generally hostile peoples who depended on hunting and fishing. With the introduction of the horse, the Indians' life changed considerably. Hunting was facilitated, and larger groups began to predominate. As more settlers filtered into the north of present-day Argentina they noted the increasing aggressiveness of the Indians. Contact between Indians and Spaniards became primarily hostile and involved frequent raids and skirmishes. Here again the horse proved an asset to the Indian. Nevertheless, sustained exposure to a European immigrant culture that had superior techniques, organization, and numbers resulted in the disappearance of the Indian as a dominant racial type. But it was not until 1880—about 300 years after initial contact—that the Indians of the Pampa were finally defeated.

The early Spanish soldiers and settlers brought few European women with them and often formed liaisons with Indian women. The combined effect of warfare and miscegenation contributed to the disappearance of the Indian culture and the decline of the pureblood Indian population. The mestizo children of these relationships were often raised as Indians but sought work in the Spanish community upon reaching adulthood. The mestizos incorporated elements of the two cultures but belonged to neither. They became the backbone of the rural working class and were typified by the *gauchos* of the Pampa. The lower class Spanish immigrants of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had little to differentiate them from the urban mestizos, who were also craftsmen and petty merchants.

Another ethnic group to enter the Argentine population consisted of black slaves, brought in to relieve the labor shortage. By 1810 this group constituted 10 percent of the population. Slave trade was among the factors that initiated a change in population and economic concentration from the interior to the coast. The illicit slave trade through Buenos

Aires was one of the most lucrative branches of smuggling, which in turn constituted the most important occupation of that port city in the late colonial period.

By the end of the colonial period, Argentina had a socially mixed population. In addition to the 10 percent black or mulatto, some 13 percent were Indian, and 60 percent were mestizo; the rest were pure Spanish or criollo (in colonial times those of Spanish blood born in the New World—see Glossary). The only major change to occur in the next fifty years was the virtual disappearance of the black and mulatto segment of the population. Although attempts have been made at explaining the phenomenon with such theories as absorption into the general population, there is no concrete evidence for these theories, and the disappearance remains a mystery.

The stratification system during the periods of colonization and early independence followed the dichotomous tradition of Spain. Ninety percent of the population were in the lower strata, occupied as rural and urban laborers. The Spanish and criollo elite were of urban origin, and their major interests were primary production and international trade. They gained an early access to the fertile land in the Pampa and formed huge *estancias*, or large ranches. Not only did they lead the independence movement, but their interests formed the foundation on which Argentine socioeconomic development would be based for the next 130 years (see ch. 2).

During much of this period the main economic activity was agricultural, centering in the Northeast. But once Buenos Aires began to develop its port facilities and governmental functions, it soon began to take emphasis away from the interior. Moreover, the *porteños* (people of the port) looked to European fashion and thought, whereas the interior emphasized the American rather than the European heritage. Economic, ideological, and cultural differences were only the beginning of a severe split between the two areas. This fissure was reinforced by immigration, urban settlement, the economic advancement of the port area, and political attitudes evolving in the mid-1800s.

### Immigration

The need for immigration to fill the demands for labor became apparent during the mid-nineteenth century. Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, president of Argentina from 1868 to 1874, encouraged European immigration in the belief that it would stimulate the social, economic, and political development of the country. During Sarmiento's term in office, immigration increased to 40,000 people a year, and in later years Argentina experienced a greater influx of European immigrants, mostly from Spain and Italy, than any other South American nation. Between 1856 and 1892 over 6 million people entered the country.

Many of the immigrants were of a temporary variety, coming in to help with the harvest in late spring and returning afterward to their native Italy and Spain in time to do harvesting there. This was possible because of the reversed seasons of the northern and southern hemispheres. Apart from the "swallows," as these temporary workers were called, there were millions who came to stay. Many of these came hoping to make their fortunes in Argentina and return to a luxurious life in their native homes. Luckily for Argentina, the majority of immigrants did not fulfill this wish and stayed on to become the forebears of most of today's Argentines. In the early 1960s it was estimated that nineteenth- and twentieth-century immigrants and their descendants made up 45 percent of the entire population.

The first immigrant farm colonies were established through agreements with private colonization companies. Esperanza, a Swiss agricultural colony founded in 1856 in Santa Fe Province, was the first settlement of this kind. It was followed in the next forty years by German, Spanish, and Italian colonies in Santa Fe, Corrientes, and Entre Ríos provinces. Other nationalities that provided significant numbers between 1857 and 1900 were the French, Welsh, Irish, Russian, Austrian, and various Slavic peoples.

Many would have liked to build homesteads, a pattern characteristic of immigrant settlement in North America at that time. Argentina did offer many inducements to the immigrants, but to the earliest groups it also presented many obstacles, especially in obtaining the best farmland. For one thing, the richest agricultural and grazing land had already been apportioned by the time the immigrants came, so that the only status the newly arrived could find was that of tenant farmer or wage laborer. Furthermore, the principal farm products in the Pampa and Patagonia did not require much labor in planting or harvesting. Labor needs were further diminished because of early technological advances in farming.

As a consequence of the prevailing circumstances, a huge proportion of the immigrants eventually migrated to cities. It is estimated that 60 to 70 percent of the immigrants lived in urban areas of 50,000 or over around the end of the century. Most of them lived in Buenos Aires or population centers of the Pampa and Piedmont. Between 1869 and 1914, 70 percent of the adult population (twenty years and over) in Buenos Aires and 50 percent of that in the central region were foreign born. By 1900 Argentina was one of the most urbanized countries in the world. The ramifications of this influx of immigrants and their urban settlement patterns could not be underestimated when dealing with ethnic structure, stratification, and regionalism in 1973.

Around the end of the nineteenth century the occupational composition changed drastically. The traditional agricultural sector had predominated until 1890. Then came a massive need for construction workers—for railroads, roads, and housing. With accelerating industrialization

arose the need for labor in the textile mills and shoe and cement factories. Commerce and the service sector also increased, providing jobs for many. The foreign born filled these positions and thus came to dominate the more modern sectors of the economy, leaving the traditional sectors to the native born. It was also during this time that Buenos Aires became the commercial and bureaucratic hub of Argentina. As the capital city and major port it grew and prospered more than most other cities of the world and for a time its development even determined the evolution of the nation.

The social and economic imbalance that followed immigration and the blossoming of Buenos Aires only increased the distance between the *porteños* and their neighbors in the rural interior and southern provinces. Evidences of the schism filtered through all cultural channels from religion to literature (see ch. 7). Because of a self-sufficient and insular existence, rural dwellers were better able to maintain a traditional life-style than were the immigrants in the mobile and cosmopolitan society of Buenos Aires. Moreover, many economists agree that the coastal economy developed at the expense of interior development (see ch. 12). Railroads were built to radiate from Buenos Aires, and there were few tracks connecting provincial centers. *Porteños* were more interested in using these rails to bring cattle and grain from the interior and return imports there than in developing an industrial interior. Because of this, many budding handicraft industries were destroyed, and the economy of the interior became tied to the production of agricultural produce for export. Whereas Buenos Aires developed, the interior remained somewhat undeveloped and dependent.

The traditional class structure began to break down because of the combined pressures of immigration, urbanization, changes in the occupational structure, economic expansion, and increasing literacy. Associated with these changes was the development of a middle class. During the last half of the nineteenth century the middle sector was a static group with no class consciousness, constituting less than one-quarter of the population. But by the end of the century the advances in education, industrialization, and commerce were having an impact. By the early 1900s, 80 percent of the owners of commercial or industrial establishments were immigrants or naturalized citizens, many of whom came from a working-class background. During this era, the middle class grew to constitute over one-third of the economically active population.

The upper class maintained its economic dominance through land and exports. Nevertheless, it expanded to include immigrants and their children who could meet the criteria of education, wealth, landownership, and a Roman Catholic European background. In many ways the Argentine elites proved more responsive to change, mobility, and modernization than other Latin American elites.

Circumstances were such that the growth of the middle sector was largely an urban phenomenon. In the rural areas, after an initial increase in the late 1800s, the proportion in the middle strata remained stable.

Consequently, many of the agricultural workers were tenants whose standard of living and chances of mobility remained static, whereas those of the urban dwellers increased dramatically. This regional imbalance would later encourage a flood of rural-urban migration that had not slowed by 1973.

Although immigration did much to alter Argentina's economic, political, and class structures, it did little to change the cultural heritage of the country. Immigrants usually shared many values and institutions with the persons of colonial Spanish descent. Many immigrants showed a decided preference for urban settlement. Only the Lombards, Piedmontese, and other northern Italians became tenant farmers or farmhands on the cattle estates. They were willing to do the manual labor found distasteful by the criollos and have been credited with transforming much of the Pampa into fertile agricultural land.

The Germans immigrated in smaller numbers than either the Italians or the Spaniards, but they have exercised a strong influence. Many persons of German ancestry still live in Misiones Province and maintain contacts with other German settlements across the river in Brazil. Many settled in the southern lake district, which is said to bear a strong resemblance to parts of Germany. A large number of refugees from Nazi Germany entered Argentina in 1930 and settled in Buenos Aires and other large cities. They are predominantly middle class, often operating small businesses and industries. Some belong to the German Evangelical Synod, an arm of the Lutheran Church.

Of the large numbers to enter from the British Isles, the English were the most significant. Between 1857 and 1924, 65,000 English immigrants entered the country and became merchants, technicians, and managers who worked for British-owned banks, businesses, and railroads. The importance of their capital and technical skill contributed more to the economic development and social customs than their small numbers would indicate, as evidenced by the fact that English still predominates as the second language of the country.

Other immigrants from the British Isles chose a rural existence—the Scottish on sheep ranches in Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, the Irish as agricultural settlers in the Pampa. Like the Italians, the Irish profited from the criollo dislike for manual labor. Many now own cattle estates purchased with the money earned by digging ditches and building fences. The Welsh immigrants form a unique community. Encouraged by the Argentine government, they established their first settlement in 1865 in the lower Chubut valley in Patagonia. They chose this remote area with the express purpose of preserving their language, customs, and religion. The economic success generated by successful irrigation techniques and wheat farming attracted many non-Welsh to the area; the Welsh eventually became a minority within the community. Nevertheless, they have retained their ethnic identity and language to a surprising degree.

Argentina received its first Jewish immigrants in the last half of the nineteenth century. Moved by the plight of Russian Jews, a French nobleman established the Jewish Colonization Association, hoping to send as many as 7 million Eastern European Jews to settle in Argentina. Despite his hope and the fears of some native Argentines, the number was small, and only a few farm colonies were established on the Pampa before 1914. The second wave of Jewish immigration was spontaneous, unlike the first planned colonization. It occurred between 1919 and 1930, after which Argentina closed its doors to practically all Jewish immigrants. Consequently, the majority are of Eastern European extraction and are often referred to as *rusos* (Russians) by non-Jewish Argentines. A few settled in rural areas and constitute the only Jewish peasantry in Latin America. But over half live in Buenos Aires and form the fourth largest Jewish community in the world.

Massive immigration, interrupted only by World War I, ended in 1930, a year that marked a turning point in many other ways, notably because of the worldwide depression. Argentine imports were curtailed, and domestic industry had to fill the gap. The resultant industrial growth encouraged internal migration, with consequent changes in the social structure.

### Assimilation and Current Ethnic Configuration

During the years of initial immigration, many organizations and clubs were formed to help the newcomers. Centers of social life and recreation were provided by Italian mutual benefit societies and German singing and gun clubs. Often these organizations served as a means of economic reinforcement for the immigrant, helping him to bear his first financial hardships in this new land. Daily newspapers in English, French, Italian, German, and Yiddish appeared around the beginning of the twentieth century and have remained widely read, especially in Buenos Aires (see ch. 10).

Assimilation in Argentina proceeded with greater ease than in other areas with huge numbers of immigrants. The reasons for this are several. Most important was the similarity of physical type and culture between Argentines and Old World arrivals. Furthermore, Roman Catholicism, the traditions of family unity and political paternity, and a personalistic, fatalistic attitude toward life—all part of an immigrant southern European outlook—were elements already present in the *criollo* background of Argentina. These obvious advantages for acculturation were enhanced by an excellent school system, which ensured that second-generation Argentines not only would speak Spanish but would be thoroughly versed in Argentine history and geography.

Throughout most of the period of immigration, the newly arrived met with a friendly and receptive attitude from Argentines and their government, which eased absorption tremendously. The Constitution of 1853

gave foreign-born citizens the same rights as the native born and guaranteed them freedom of religion. Often immigrants could vote in municipal elections without giving up their native citizenship. Foreigners were rarely discriminated against or segregated. Stereotyping was inevitable, although it was not the particularly virulent variety found elsewhere in the hemisphere.

Except for occasional proposals for Chinese and Japanese colonization, petitions by immigrants were rarely rejected. A few Asians immigrated independently, but the total has been minuscule, especially in comparison with the large numbers elsewhere in Latin America. Not until the late 1950s was an agreement reached permitting Japanese colonization in Argentina, and then it stipulated a limit of no more than eighty families per province. Shortly after the families began arriving, the restrictions were lifted, and in the mid-1960s Japanese agricultural colonies in Mendoza and Misiones provinces were flourishing.

Despite a general attitude of acceptance on the part of Argentines and rapid adjustment on the part of the immigrants, occasionally the latter became scapegoats in the wave of social problems that followed immigration in the early 1900s. Upper class observers in particular used immigration to explain such varied urban problems as anarchism, crime, labor unrest, and pauperism. There were periodic outbreaks of violence and even a legislative attempt to restrict immigration and discriminate against the foreign born. Despite the xenophobic attitudes of some, cooler heads prevailed. This spate of prejudice lasted only a few years during the peak immigration of the early 1900s. Of all forms of discrimination, stereotyping was probably the most notable. Immigrant Spaniards were often referred to as *gallegos* and characterized as inoffensive and hardworking, if somewhat stupid, whereas Italians were called *gringos* and were represented as society's drudges, determined to make a fortune and consequently unable to enjoy any of life's pleasures.

Children of immigrants received both pressures and incentives from the host culture to conform to the Argentine pattern. Consequently, second-generation Argentines were far more nationalistic than criollos whose families had been in the country for generations. They rejected the language and background of their parents, seeking to disguise anything that would identify them as foreigners or laborers. Nevertheless, the impact of the foreign multitudes was not dissolved upon assimilation, and many European influences have remained, especially in the architecture, language, and even certain customs of the *porteños*. In fact, some of the most prominent Argentine scholars have noted the relative disappearance of preimmigration national character and the emergence of entirely new patterns.

Effective assimilation followed on the heels of massive immigration and resulted in a fairly homogeneous society both racially and culturally. Only a few ethnic minorities remained in the early 1970s. Aside from the Japanese and Welsh, who maintained small agricultural enclaves in

the Pampa and Patagonia, there were a number of Middle Easterners clustered in and around Buenos Aires. These people were known as *turcos*, regardless of their national origin and were famous for their skill in the retail trade, textile manufacturing, and small industries.

In 1973 only a few purely indigenous groups remained. Estimates for the past several years have ranged from 25,000 to 250,000 for the entire native population, but all figures are highly speculative. In 1947 less than 5 percent of the Argentine population was classified as Indian, and the percentage has declined steadily ever since. The Northeast—that is, the Chaco and Mesopotamia subregions—may have the greatest concentration of indigenous peoples, but enumeration is difficult because of the seasonal migration of large segments of the population between Paraguay and Bolivia and Argentina. Many of these Indians constitute a transient labor force that actually works in the northwest only during the sugar harvest, and many remain to make up an illegal labor force in the area (see ch. 3).

Around a dozen tribes still exist in Argentina, though no recent census has attempted to enumerate them. In the Northwest Andes and Piedmont region the largest groups were the Colla and the Quechua. Araucanians, Tehuelches, and Pampa Indians are found in the five southernmost provinces, although their numbers are minimal. In the late 1960s the government's headquarters for Indian affairs estimated only fifty Tehuelches in the provinces of Santa Cruz and Chubut. The groups living in the extreme south—in Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego—have practically disappeared because of disease and assimilation. Yahgan, Alacaluf, and Onas have neared extinction. In 1953 it was reported that the number of Onas had declined to thirty. In 1966 only one of the ten remaining Selk'nam Onas spoke the language fluently and lived as an Indian.

Among the relatively large concentrations in the Northeast provinces of Chaco and Formosa were Mocovi, Chocoti, Churupi, Vilela, Mocho, Toba (or Toba-Pilagás), Chiriguano, and Matoco, most of them descended from Guaraní stock. Of these, the last three groups predominated. As elsewhere in Argentina they are ignored or discriminated against. In the early 1970s segregation existed in hospitals and schools, and discrimination existed on the job. Often government registrars did not record Indian births, and few Indians could obtain identification papers. Consequently, they were an easily exploitable labor force whose pay was often in the form of chits, exchangeable only at the farm's local store. Indians have not joined the labor union movement and remain outside this realm of protest. Although vast tracts of government-owned land were theoretically at the disposal of marginal tribes, not one pureblood Indian had title to such land in 1969. Economically disadvantaged and socially outcast, the only alternative for the Argentine Indian has been integration.



Many Indians have abandoned their traditional ways and have moved to towns and cities, adopting Hispanic Argentine names, dress, customs, and skills. These integrated Indians perceive their only hope for survival and upward mobility not in the hunting and gathering of the past but in the education and industrialization in Argentina's big cities.

## Language

Spanish is both the official and the popular language. During over 300 years of use in Argentina, Spanish has developed unique variations in pronunciation and grammar. These variations are especially characteristic of the area around La Plata, where the greatest amount of immigrant influence has been evident.

The *porteños* of Buenos Aires speak Spanish with an accent peculiar to them and popularly called Rio Platense. Vowels are thickened, and the soft Spanish pronunciation of the letters *ll* and *y* is hardened to an approximate English *j*. This linguistic trait (*yeísmo*) is considered repulsive by recent Spanish immigrants, who are accustomed to Castilian Spanish.

Italians have contributed more to the language than any other group except the Spaniards. They have added a number of new expressions and gestures and made pronunciation changes. Among the Italian words that have become part of the Argentine vocabulary are *morgar* (to eat) and *chau*, a familiar term of farewell derived from the Italian *ciao*. An Italianized Spanish dialect (*lunfardo*) had developed in the waterfront slums of Buenos Aires by the end of the nineteenth century. Despite its many variations, Spanish has survived largely because the children of the immigrants rejected their parents' language and patterned their own on that of the criollos.

English is spoken by increasing numbers of people among the professional and business classes of Buenos Aires and other cities. French was once the language of the aristocracy and often was learned before Spanish, but its use has greatly declined since World War II. The Anglo-Argentine and German communities are usually bilingual, and a significant number of the other immigrants have retained a knowledge of their mother tongue. The degree of bilingualism is unknown, but it is probably fairly significant. All of the larger immigrant communities in Buenos Aires maintain their own newspapers and other publications (see ch. 10).

The diminishing tribes of southern Patagonia still speak their own tongue, a version of the Tehuelche language. In Misiones Province members of the lower classes, who are predominantly of Indian and mestizo descent, continue to use Guaraní as their common language. Quechua, a modified form of the ancient Inca language, is spoken in some parts of Jujuy and Salta provinces.

## SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

### Upper Class

The upper class in Argentina is made up of two segments—the traditional landed elite and the extremely wealthy. Together they constitute a minute percentage of the total population—some authorities estimate a mere 1 or 2 percent. In addition to being the smallest stratum, they are also the most homogeneous and possess the greatest sense of class consciousness.

The traditional landed elite usually own *estancias* of over 5,000 acres. Their great wealth derived originally from the vast tracts of land practically given away between independence and the first large wave of immigration in the 1860s. A study in 1936 showed that Buenos Aires Province alone could claim fifty families owning 75,000 acres or more. The names of these families are still renowned throughout Argentina, traditionally linked to politics, the military, the Roman Catholic Church, sciences, and the arts, as well as extreme wealth. Over the years the economic base of the traditional elite has become more diversified. It has broadened to include the industrial sector—particularly those areas dedicated to the processing of livestock and agricultural products. Nevertheless, no agricultural reform has attempted to modify traditional holdings, and land remains of primary importance.

Although their income derives from the rural hinterland, the elite are by no means a rural-oriented group. Maintaining a dual residence is almost mandatory, as only Buenos Aires or another large city can provide the cosmopolitan social life the elite expect. The people are well educated and well traveled, often sending their children to school in the United States or Europe. Their life is comparable to that of elites the world over; they breed racehorses, collect art treasures, and endow the arts and the church. The women preside over Argentina's varied charitable institutions, considering them their exclusive realm. Their control of charity has been interrupted only once in recent history, when the Eva Duarte de Perón Foundation was formed during Perón's first term in office. This state-run operation was one of the greatest offenses to the traditional elite, who were forced to contribute to it.

There are two kinds of corporate interest in which the elite are involved: preservation of the class and preservation of family-based wealth. Internal cohesion is maintained through strong kinship ties and marriage within the group. Many marriages occur between first and second cousins, and there is a marked inclination to intermarry with members of the elite whose lands are in the same vicinity rather than with those whose *estancias* are more distant. This helps to keep the land intact. There is no primogeniture under Argentine law; each child inherits an equal part of land. To keep the land from being endlessly subdivided through inheritance, the probate of the parent's will is often deferred. This arrangement may last for generations. The only alternative is to incorporate the other properties, naming a member of the family as

chairman of the board. Both methods serve to keep the wealth and land of the family intact.

The traditional elite now shares at least economic dominance with a group of extremely wealthy Argentines of more recent origin who, unlike the traditional elite, have achieved their wealth and position rather than inheriting it. This segment of the upper class got its start with the mass migration of the nineteenth century and the increased industrialization that followed. The elite began to lose its monopoly of strategic positions after World War I, and the process was hastened considerably during the Perón years. Industrial interests grew stronger, and as a consequence wealthy descendants of Spanish, Basque, Italian, German, English, and Irish entrepreneurs can count themselves among the upper class. Moreover, many of the educated elite who are not directly involved in business are bank presidents, judges, and high-level government officials. In the early 1970s the wealthiest segment of the population was no longer the landowners but the newer urban entrepreneurs who were not members of the traditional elite (see ch. 12).

There has been considerable crossing over of social and economic interests between the two upper class segments. Intermarriage is fairly common. Moreover, just as many of the elite have moved into the business world, so have many wealthy businessmen acquired *estancias* for the economic and prestige factors involved. Their tracts of land are usually not as large as those of the elite and average 5,000 acres or less. Nevertheless, the latest farming techniques are employed, and the estates are extremely profitable. An *estancia* is added assurance that an upper class family will weather fluctuations in the business world with a minimum of upsets. No matter what the source of income, however, it must permit the person a life of leisure and seemingly effortless wealth. This apparent lack of economic effort is one of the most significant hallmarks of an upper class individual.

Because of the input of immigrant elements, the upper class in Argentina has been more fluid than in other Latin American countries. This is especially true of the wealthy industrial segment which, because of common interests, has often shared interests with labor. The upper class appears to be more receptive to innovation, be it institutional, political, or technological, and generally demonstrate a more modernizing outlook. Their continuing capacity to absorb middle-class elements has tended to dilute potential opposition without changing the status quo.

### Middle Class

Unlike the majority of Latin American countries, Argentina has a large and fairly cohesive middle class. Some estimate it to be as large as 40 percent or more of the entire population. Its origins are found in massive foreign immigration and the urbanization and industrialization that followed. An excellent educational system and the modern nature of

agricultural production have also contributed to the growth and structure of the middle class. The most distinguishing feature of class membership is a white-collar or professional occupation as opposed to manual labor. Argentine blue-collar workers are often considered a separate stratum or part of the lower class because their positions are based on manual skills. Nevertheless, at the lower end of the middle class there is considerable overlapping, and a blue-collar worker in a modern factory may earn more than a white-collar employee. This has caused many with a higher level of education to seek jobs in well-paying blue-collar positions.

The middle class has two major subdivisions: an upper segment, composed of self-employed persons, and a lower segment, composed of those who work for others in nonmanual jobs. Included are government workers, small businessmen and merchants, clerks of all sorts, doctors, lawyers, scientists, teachers, and other professionals. Moreover, most artists, musicians, journalists, and authors are also members of the middle class. Although these are mainly urban pursuits, there are a number of rural occupations that also fall into this category. The rural sector includes owners and renters of small or middle-sized farms and the managers and some employees of large agricultural and cattle-raising *estancias*.

There is considerable mobility into and within the middle class. Studies of middle-class Argentines, especially those living in cities, have shown that as many as 50 percent of the sons of manual laborers had attained nonmanual occupations. The percentage has been smaller among both foreign and internal migrants, although still high. As a consequence of its relatively recent formation and a continuing influx from migrant and lower class groups, the middle class presents a rather fluid, heterogeneous picture. It is bounded by occupational and financial criteria and a certain level of conspicuous consumption, but traditions and a strong class identity remain absent. What the middle class is able to achieve—politically or otherwise—it achieves through strength of numbers rather than strength of a common ideology.

A fairly high level of conspicuous consumption has always characterized the middle class. This is manifest in the dress, as well as in the size and style of the home and the number of modern conveniences it contains. The attainment of a certain quality of life may keep members of the middle class outspending their income most of their lives (see ch. 6). Another salient feature is the universal desire for education. Secondary and university education are prevalent in the middle class, but they are not prerequisites for membership. Many self-employed businessmen, technicians, and lower level white-collar workers have comparatively little education, but they are fully accepted as middle class because they possess the vital criteria of middle-status occupation and economic success. Nevertheless, their children will receive the best education the parents can afford, as it is a firmly held tenet of the middle class that education brings social mobility.

Ever since the early twentieth century, the middle class has been represented politically by the Radical Civic Union (Unión Cívica Radical—UCR, commonly known as the Radical Party). Although liberal and nationalistic in orientation, neither the party nor its followers have been as politically radical as the name suggests (see ch. 9). When the reins of government have been passed to the middle class, basic political and economic changes have been few. This stems from the fact that the Radical Party has never been homogeneous and that the middle class has been satisfied with a *de jure*—but not necessarily *de facto*—democracy. For the most part their economic and social goals have been met without government intervention.

Early in his career, Perón was able to woo this segment of the population with his nationalistic stance. Nevertheless, they were probably the first to abandon him when his austerity measures and pro-labor position came to light in the early 1950s. His austerity measures adversely affected their consumer life-style, and his favoritism toward labor made him unpopular with a middle class who preferred to identify themselves with the elite. The military governments that followed Perón's first term were not popular with the middle class, mainly because of the increasing economic stagnation and psychological malaise that occurred and because of the interruption of the democratic process the Argentines had previously enjoyed. Consequently, many members of the middle class who had rejoiced over Perón's ousting in 1955 helped to bring him back to power in 1973, considering him the only feasible alternative to economic stagnation. Aside from the Peronist movement, however, the Radical Party has continued to receive the largest vote, in or out of office.

Members of the middle class pride themselves on being well read. They form the largest readership for the many newspapers and magazines published in Argentina everyday. In fact, most popular fiction, biography, and essays are published with the middle-class market in mind. Moreover, most classics of world literature that have been translated into Spanish have also found a wide audience there. Considerable prestige is accorded a person who is a critical reader of literary journals and frequently attends cultural lectures. This interest in cultural activities is expressed in the realm of music, drama, and dance. Most middle-class Argentines have a genuine appreciation of the fine arts and are proud of Argentina's considerable contributions to them.

Social activities of middle-class Argentines take on a very European—especially English—quality. Clubs of all kinds are extremely popular. Sports clubs, particularly for soccer, include those organized and sponsored by a company or a union. Many descendants of foreign immigrants continue to belong to ethnic organizations and take an interest in traditional cultural activities. The women enjoy various social clubs and charitable activities. They have also played an increasingly important role in politics.

## Lower Class

In contrast to the lower class in most Latin American nations—composed largely of subsistence farmers—the Argentine lower class has three distinct segments: urban labor, rural labor, and marginal poor. These three groups are separated by regional, economic, political, and sociopsychological considerations and, although overlapping occurs between generations and within families, their varied outlooks separate them. They make up about half of the total population; the proportional breakdown within the lower class is not known.

### Urban Labor

Urban laborers were brought into political participation by Perón, who referred to them as his *descamisados* (shirtless ones) and put through considerable labor legislation in their behalf. They have remained his fanatical supporters, forming the backbone of the Peronist movement. They are well organized, and a large number are members of the General Confederation of Labor (Confederación General de Trabajadores—CGT). Collective bargaining is the framework for labor-management negotiations. It has produced agreement over wages, working hours and conditions, and grievance procedures and has given the Argentine worker wages and benefits, in addition to a sense of pride and self-worth, unknown in other parts of the continent.

Most of the urban proletariat are second-generation industrial workers—descendants of European immigrants who originally settled in the urban centers of Buenos Aires, Rosario, and Córdoba. The entire area is the hub of the industrial complex and contains the vast majority of factories. Rural dwellers have also been attracted by these industrial centers, and internal migration has long overtaken foreign migration. Industrial workers are only one section of urban labor; there are also many construction workers, semiskilled and unskilled laborers, and people employed in the service sector as waiters, domestics, and so on. There is some sector mobility, and someone who sporadically holds unskilled or service positions in his youth may eventually become a factory worker. There is little evidence of massive mobility from field to factory, however. The service sector is the major supplier of industrial workers.

The proportion of the working class completing primary school is considerably higher than the average for Latin America. The proportion that continues in school at the secondary level is less impressive, but—for those who do—the availability of technical or vocational schooling is relatively high. Moreover, technical high school need not be terminal; university schools of engineering draw their matriculants from these institutions, and during the late 1960s and early 1970s a remarkably large number of skilled workers were engaged in or looking forward to further schooling (see ch. 5).

Social activities of the urban proletariat are less structured than those of the upper classes. Pre-election rallies, political meetings, and factory- or union-sponsored soccer matches occupy most leisure time spent outside the home. Nevertheless, one analysis of free-time activities showed that most workers still spend a dominant amount of time in their homes. The same analysis showed that unmarried children lived at home, relatives clustered in the same neighborhood and even the same workplace, and strong family ties were maintained through frequent interaction. Although internal migration and increased geographic mobility have tended to dismantle the traditional extended family, important elements still persist, especially aiding new arrivals in adapting to an unfamiliar urban setting.

### **Rural Labor**

The majority of Argentine rural laborers cannot be termed peasants in Latin American terms. Rather, they are descendants of the criollo ranch hands and immigrant tenant farmers of the nineteenth century. Despite differing backgrounds, their culture, in content and structure, is a continuation of the life-style of the traditional Argentine gaucho. They are the backbone of the *estancia* staff and also constitute the unskilled labor pool and migrant labor in rural areas.

The rural labor force differs significantly from that in most other countries of Latin America in that a large proportion is made up of regular or itinerant paid labor. The sharecropper is relatively rare, and the subsistence farmer is almost nonexistent. Rural existence tends to be less isolated in Argentina than elsewhere in the region because of a relatively mobile rural labor force.

*Estancia* laborers own little property, and anything they produce on their small plots is for their own use or for exchange with relatives. They may have some income from such sidelines as the breaking and training of horses, but the bulk of their income derives from the wages they receive. The nuclear family living unit predominates, although extended family relations play a vital role in their social and economic livelihood. Nepotism on the *estancia* is common and is aided by the large network of pseudokinship relationships that surrounds each family.

The development of labor relations during the first Perón era extended to the rural sector. Strong unions were organized among sugar and vineyard workers, and a labor group was established among the grazing and agricultural workers of the Pampa. Labor laws concerning a minimum wage, an eight-hour workday, and social security were extended to rural workers. Nevertheless, the various welfare institutions have penetrated the countryside only to a limited extent. The highly independent nature of the traditional gaucho has precluded many forms of organized action. Furthermore, the kinship system has always served as each family's own social security system. Seasonal immigrant labor

from neighboring Paraguay and Bolivia has further diluted the application of these laws. As a consequence, a rural wage earner may receive half of what the law demands.

Many people in rural areas—especially the young—have felt the push-pull phenomenon of rural to urban migration. It is not uncommon to find small villages completely devoid of young people from seventeen to twenty-five years of age. Such migrants may make intermediate stops in sizable towns, but their ultimate goal is usually Buenos Aires or another industrial center. Nearly always they maintain links with their native area, however, and serve as examples and incentives to others from their area.

### **Marginal Poor**

The marginal poor constitute a small percentage of the entire population—probably about 5 percent. They are the least politically and economically active of any segment of the society and may not even be Argentine citizens. They are largely migrants: internal migrants from the interior provinces and seasonal migrant workers from Paraguay and Bolivia. All have come seeking improved economic opportunities and are in a transitional position while waiting to move into the urban proletariat or rural labor force. Urban elements of the marginal poor settle in *conventillos* (inner-city slums) or in suburban shantytowns called *villas miserias* (literally, misery towns). Because of their largely Indian or mestizo origins they are disparagingly referred to as *cabecitas negras* (little black-headed ones) by other Argentines. For the most part they are only sporadically employed in unskilled labor or service positions.

Perón's return in the summer of 1973 gave this segment cause for hope. They remembered Perón's generous welfare allotments, which were personally dispensed by his wife Eva through the charitable foundation that bore her name. Since his return, lines of people seeking aid through the Ministry of Social Welfare have lengthened. Hundreds arrive each week needing emergency medical supplies, food, and shelter. By the winter of 1973-74, however, no comprehensive social welfare legislation had been passed to accommodate their needs.

## **SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND VALUES**

### **The Family**

Argentine families of the upper and middle classes conform in many ways to the pattern of a modern urban industrial culture but in some other ways to that of the eighteenth-century Spanish colonial society. Traditionally, the structure of the family has been patriarchal, but the household and its affairs have functioned under maternal direction. In most cases the family takes precedence over all other groups and organizations to which an individual belongs.



The strongly traditional family exists primarily in the upper class household outside the centers of population. This pattern has been altered, however, especially for the dynamic urban middle class, by the industrial revolution, mass European immigration, the liberalization of the woman's role, and urbanization itself.

The changing economic and social environment has contributed to a decline in the size and function of the extended family group in the urban middle class and to some extent in the rest of urban society as well. The urban environment provides people with many opportunities for contacts and associations outside the sphere of family control. Along with urbanization and industrialization has come the involvement of individuals in nonfamilial, impersonal organizations.

Increased social and geographic mobility has given people greater freedom to form new independent relationships. Despite this, many still choose to stay within the family circle, tending to deal more with relatives than with persons outside the family. Young married couples show an increasing desire to depart from tradition and establish separate households, but few sever family ties completely. Even those who wish to live in single-family households are often forced to live for a time with parents or other relatives because of a severe housing shortage.

Although the majority of families no longer follow the traditional pattern of the multifamily household, all of the members of the extended family continue to cooperate for social, economic, and political purposes. The extended family continues to gather on special occasions, such as a baptism, a wedding, or a funeral, and for parties and holidays. In the middle and lower classes, relatives perform many reciprocal services, share tools and equipment, borrow and lend money, and cooperate in caring for the sick and tending one another's children.

For the urban and rural lower classes, family relationships are important. Marriage as an institution is not as stable, however, and the role of family head and chief authority frequently passes to the mother.

The *concuñado* (brother-in-law) relationship is of special significance to men in the rural working class, although comparable relationships among women are not. In common usage among the rural lower class and among some of the urban lower class, the term *concuñado* is frequently applied to a man outside the family with whom the individual has a friendly and mutually beneficial relationship. In every respect the two individuals who are part of such a *concuñado* relationship regard each other as brothers-in-law, worthy of the same trust and having the same obligations as real members of the family.

*Concuñados* are often chosen to be godfathers of one's children. The institution of *compadrazgo* (extension of kin relationships through godparenthood) that is so important in other parts of Latin America seems to have little significance in Argentina in comparison to ties with one's own distant relatives and with *concuñados*.

Argentine law, social mores, and the Roman Catholic Church provide strong reinforcement for family stability. The laws formalize family relationships, marriage, and inheritance and prohibit divorce. They also recognize the supremacy of the husband and father, although recent legislation and changes in the economic and social structure have extended the rights of women, permitting modification of their role in society.

Only civil marriages are recognized by Argentine law. A religious marriage ceremony has no legal status; it merely conforms to the religious beliefs of the participants. The majority of people are Roman Catholics and choose to be married in the church in accordance with church law. In order for their marriage to be valid, however, it must be preceded by a civil ceremony, which usually takes place the day before the religious marriage.

Young people tend to remain unmarried until they are in their mid-twenties or older. A man is expected to be financially secure before he assumes responsibility for a wife and a home. The average young middle-class male does not earn a sufficient salary as a beginning clerk, government employee, or lawyer to support a family, but in recent years young women have also been working. Housing shortages and high rental costs make it difficult for an engaged couple to find a home. Sometimes they postpone marriage or live with their parents until they are able to find a place to live and to support themselves.

In the lower classes both the civil and religious ceremonies are often forgone, and more informal unions are established. In some rural provinces such common-law unions constitute a large proportion of the marriages. The rural lower class community does not regard legal marriages as important or essential and does not censure those who live together without the sanction of the civil authorities. Distance from the civil register and the absence of a priest are often cited as reasons for common-law marriage. In the urban lower class, marriage standards are generally in accord with those of the rest of urban society. Many common-law marriages are eventually formalized when rural migrants move into the city.

The church has steadfastly opposed any liberalization of laws concerning divorce or separation. A legal marriage can be dissolved only by the death of either the husband or the wife or by annulment. There is no divorce in Argentina, and foreign divorces are not legally recognized. Married persons wishing to obtain a divorce sometimes go to Uruguay to get one, and they may remarry in Uruguay as well. Although Argentine law does not recognize either the divorce or the remarriage, persons involved in such relationships in the past have not been prosecuted for adultery.

## Religion

### Roman Catholicism

In the early 1970s over 90 percent of the entire population was Roman Catholic. Argentina was ranked as one of the largest Catholic countries in the world and, superficially at least, gave the appearance of being one of the staunchest supporters of that faith. Roman Catholicism has always been the official state religion; both the president and the vice president had to be Catholics; and the church received part of its financial support from the government. Even the colors of the national flag are supposedly based on the blue and white of the Virgin Mary's gown. Moreover, the church constituted a dominant pressure group in Argentine politics. Paradoxically, however, the church does not play as large a role in other Argentine affairs—especially economic or social—as so large a percentage of Catholics would imply.

As in all of Latin America, the church was part of the Spanish colonial administration. But because of Argentina's sparse population (of both Indians and Spaniards) and relatively unimportant position in the Spanish empire, the church never reached the apex of power it did in the viceroyalties farther north—primarily Peru and Mexico. The church owned little land and was consequently poor and fairly unimportant as an institution. This did not stop individual clergy from accruing wealth, however, and corruption was rampant. The inquisition in Argentina was lax; many heretics who settled in Buenos Aires made it the center for their extensive smuggling operations. By the end of the eighteenth century the town council in Buenos Aires raised objections that the clergy were not performing their duties on a secular or sacred level.

The loss of prestige during the colonial period was accompanied by dissension within the church during the independence movement. The higher clergy were of Spanish birth or education and returned to Spain rather than shift allegiance. The majority of parish priests and curates actively supported the revolution, however. In fact, over one-third of the those who signed the declaration of independence were priests. The independence movement set two patterns that have persisted into the second half of the twentieth century: internal dissension and political participation.

Many of the leaders of the revolution were not devout Catholics. They were children of the French Revolution and the Enlightenment and tended to be anticlerical. They utilized church support when it was convenient; otherwise they resented the temporal power of the church.

The history of the church since Argentina's independence has involved three major phases. Immediately after independence there was a period of confusion and chaos, characterized by demoralization within the church and by anticlericalism among the laity. There were frequent conflicts between the church and the new government as both vied for dominance. The second phase began in the second half of the nineteenth

century and continued until the 1930s. During this period opposing forces coalesced, and points were won on both sides. There was a consolidation and regrouping of Catholics who attempted to conserve the faith and protect it against the forces of liberalism. This element emphasized the past and the traditional position of the church and consequently grew increasingly out of step with the needs and demands of the people it served.

On the other hand, opposing anticlericalism became vocal enough to affect elections. Throughout the 1880s such groups won many points, including such things as the banning of religious instruction in public schools. Moreover, many immigrants, although Catholics from Spain and Italy, were anticlerical. The Socialist Party was formed during this time with the support of many such immigrant groups. Thus, throughout the second period, the church's influence in secular matters remained a dominant issue in political affairs. The third phase began in the 1930s and is characterized by the church's encounter with forces of social and economic change. This has been a general trend throughout all of Latin America but is in some respects more acute in Argentina because of the social, economic, and political ramifications of the first Perón regime.

Throughout these three periods, most Argentines have remained at least nominally Catholic. When the military regime seized power in 1943, it sought to rally mass civilian support by gaining the backing of the church. Overtures to the hierarchy succeeded in winning the support of both bishops and clergy for Perón's candidacy in 1946 and again in 1951. Nevertheless, a number of class-related issues caused Perón to initiate complete separation of church and state in the early 1950s. He was not entirely successful, although his actions included legalizing prostitution and divorce and granting equal rights to legitimate and illegitimate children. When Catholics protested, he responded by banning religious processions and jailing a number of priests. The church then retaliated by excommunicating Perón. This feud between government and church was undoubtedly a factor in Perón's overthrow. During the late 1950s and the 1960s there were attempts by the various military regimes at restoring the relationship between church and state. The divorce law was repealed, and other legislation was passed to assuage the tense situation created by Perón. Nevertheless, the military governments were not able to please all factions of the church, and many of the liberal clergy began to protest alleged repression of democratic freedom (see ch. 9).

Since the 1930s and particularly since the 1950s, the church has tried to modernize its tradition-bound path and attempt some programs of social change. In the late 1960s the most radical group constituted only about 10 percent of the total clergy, but they were a militant minority. Members of this branch—called "Third World" priests—had worked in urban and rural slums and advocated radical social improvements. Less militant but nonetheless liberal members of the clergy also openly favored a return to elected government during the 1950s and 1960s. As political repression increased and the possibility of social reform waned,

increasing numbers of priests became active in demanding reform and denouncing the torture allegedly used against Catholic clergy involved with urban guerrillas. Nevertheless, the clergy continued to be divided. During one peaceful demonstration involving forty-one priests in Rosario in 1971, police intervened at the behest of Rosario's bishop. In general, however, most internal disagreement was manifest in discussion rather than secular intervention.

In a sense, then, activities of militant clergy supported the labor movement begun by Perón. Catholicism became as involved in the secular life of Argentines as in their spiritual life. For example, church authorities consistently supported workers' claims in the impoverished sugar-growing areas of Tucumán during the late 1960s. Such militant church action in support of labor frequently mixed religious services with workers' demonstrations.

The crisis of change has involved reevaluation and division among not only the clergy but the laity as well. The Catholic Action Youth (Juventud de Acción Católica—JAC) arm of the laity has definitely favored reform and been oriented toward the Left. This group has always been made up of university students—presumably of middle-class origin—who favored social Christian, developmentalist, or Christian Democratic positions. Only a tiny minority were actually Peronist, despite apparent similarities concerning notions of reform. On the other hand, evidence in the late 1960s showed a working class that was only nominally Catholic. After the split between Perón and the church, the working class tended to retain allegiance to Perón. Such factionalism between various class and church segments has tended to frustrate and impede common goals of reform.

Like many other paradoxes concerning Perón's return in 1973, the church that was anxious to be rid of him eighteen years earlier seemed to welcome him back. In a "Message to the Argentine People" in the summer of 1973, the Argentine episcopate stressed several things concerning the political situation, listing several points of agreement with an earlier speech by Perón. The clergy reaffirmed the need to involve all Argentines in developing the country, the need for a peaceful society free of terrorism and violence, and the need for tolerance in government and in private affairs. Furthermore, the church seemed to look forward to a new coalition with Perón, where confrontations of the past would not govern present relationships. In the fall of the same year, Perón met with the church hierarchy, his first official visit since his overthrow. Topics discussed were church-state relations, the problems of youth, the struggle against pornography, and the reintroduction of a divorce law. It appeared that a new alliance between the institutions of Peronism and Catholicism was being formed.

The church in Argentina is still beset by many problems. The lack of homogeneity persists as a deep schism. Apart from political diversity, there is no unanimity on social issues such as Catholic education in

schools. In the more remote areas, heterogeneity has manifested itself in a folk Catholicism influenced by Indian beliefs. Although this does not exist to the degree it does in other Latin American countries, the tolerance of folk Catholicism in the hinterlands stands out against the strict doctrine in Buenos Aires.

Moreover, the influence of the Catholic religion in the lives of the people is limited by a serious shortage of priests, as it has been for 200 years. This is especially true in rural areas, where Catholics can receive the sacraments only occasionally from a traveling priest. In the cities the spatial problem is just the opposite, as thousands of parishioners are crowded into one parish with a priest who is so overburdened with administrative duties and ritual functions that he has time for little else. Finally, few young Argentines take an interest in the priesthood as a vocation. Church authorities say that for every 1 million Argentines, only one is being ordained per year—a rate far lower than that at which priests are renouncing orders to marry and take jobs. Foreign priests made up a quarter of the total 2,000 to 3,000 parish priests in 1968, which was below that of many other Latin American countries. Only three of the sixty-three bishops were foreign. Nevertheless, declining interest in the priesthood among Argentines could cause more foreign priests to be sent in.

In some of its more traditional functions—that is, in overseeing the moral and spiritual good of the people—Catholicism has maintained a tight hold. Although many women no longer feel the need to attend mass every Sunday as they once did, the core of their behavior is still based on Catholic ideals of chastity, charity, and submissiveness. In the realm of marriage, the church requires a Catholic wedding and prohibits divorce. The clergy has steadfastly refused to loosen its hold on censorship; as a consequence, many films are edited or denied permission to be shown at all (see ch. 10).

#### Other Faiths

Adherence to faiths other than Roman Catholicism is small. Only 2 percent of the population is listed as Protestant and another 2 percent as Jewish. Other religions are virtually nonexistent. Both Protestants and Jews are usually members of ethnic minorities as well, and conversion to either faith by Roman Catholic Argentines has rarely taken place. Some Protestant proselytism has occurred, but no sizable indigenous Protestant groups have arisen. Argentines often make a distinction between the Protestant immigrants who have their own churches and are little concerned with proselytizing—such as the Welsh in Patagonia—and the foreign missionary groups who actively seek converts. The immigrants constitute less of a threat to the church and consequently have earned respect rather than criticism.

About one-half of the Protestant community is composed of adherents of the German Evangelical Synod, the Danish church, and the

Southern Baptist Convention. The remainder belong to the Anglican, Congregationalist, Seventh-Day Adventist, Lutheran, or Methodist faiths. Many Protestant churches are regarded by their members as the center of community life. With the increasing use of Spanish in the church and intermarriage with Argentines, many of these churches are losing their distinctive ethnic quality.

The majority of the Jewish population are the children and grandchildren of Russian immigrants who arrived in the second half of the nineteenth century. Buenos Aires has the largest concentration of Jews in all of Latin America, and this population has played a significant role in Argentine life. They have been important in the economic, cultural, and political life of the country. Both the Radical and the Socialist parties can count Jews among their outstanding leaders.

Prejudice against non-Roman Catholic elements has been worse for Jews than for Protestants, although it has not been particularly virulent toward either. Discrimination against Protestants has been highly sporadic, as when the broadcasting of Protestant services was forbidden under Juan Carlos Onganía. On the other hand, a strain of anti-Semitism has continued to exist in Argentine politics during the twentieth century. The rise of Hitler intensified this trend and gave rise to some anti-Jewish literature. Perón, however, was adamant in his assurances to the Jewish community; at least one member of Perón's cabinet was Jewish. After Perón's first term there were several anti-Semitic incidents, but these were the work of radical fringe groups. Anti-Semitism has always been more of a nuisance than an actual threat in Argentina.

### Social Values

The social values held by the large majority of the population are derived in part from the Roman Catholic religious tradition and in part from other elements of the Hispanic cultural heritage. Massive Italian and other European immigration after the middle of the nineteenth century appears to have reinforced the values of the Hispano-Argentine society. The impact of rapid social and economic development since the beginning of the twentieth century, however, has introduced new values and patterns of living, affecting primarily the urban population. The participation of women in the labor force has caused a liberalization of their accepted role in society and the relaxation of traditional standards of conduct between the sexes.

The Hispanic influence in the value system appears in the emphasis on individuality, personal dignity, pride, family loyalty, and personalism—close personal relations as the basis of trust between people. Disdain for manual labor and the practical application of skills is also a remnant of the Spanish colonial value system. These traditional values are much stronger in the aristocratic landowning elite and in the rural sectors than in the urban middle and lower classes. Nevertheless, most of the people

recognize the same basic ideals, differing only in emphasis or on specific points of value.

The thread of individualism runs throughout the society and affects all kinds of activities. The individual is valued primarily for his personal, supposedly innate qualities. Ideally, the inner personal worth of every human being should be recognized and respected. Closely tied to the concept of individualism is an idea of personal dignity, which is essentially the recognition of one's own inner qualities. Every person is entitled to dignity and pride, regardless of his status in society. This is manifest through courtesy in interpersonal relations and a politeness that is extended even to strangers.

The family is still the institution in which the individual feels the most complete confidence. In relations outside the family, Argentines prefer intimate personal relations based on the family model. They may hesitate to become involved in any community effort with people whom they do not know well.

Urban society exhibits the values and ideals produced by its own rapid growth. Traditional loyalties to a *patrón* (see Glossary) have been replaced among the working class by loyalties to their own socioeconomic group, union, or political party. Especially in the middle class, interest centers on material goals and economic aspects of life. Many people are new to middle-class life and are extremely conscious of their higher social status and improved material well-being. Despite the presence of this dynamic middle sector, most persons in the society continue to model their values and desired life goals on those of the elite.

### Male Role

The male role in Argentine society is based on a number of physical and psychological traits expressed in the essence of machismo (literally, maleness). Among these characteristics are physical strength, dignity, bravery, self-confidence, the ability to speak well and forcefully, and readiness to defend one's honor and family. Moreover, demonstrations of sexual prowess gratify a man's self-esteem and also give evidence to society of his virility. Argentines see their brand of machismo as being specialized through the independent and solitary life-style of the gaucho and the driving ambition of the immigrant men—largely of Latin origin.

Machismo in Argentina has expressed itself through a number of role models. In the life of the gaucho—at least in the literature that surrounds him—the traits of bravery and physical strength are highlighted (see ch. 7). The family does not play an important part, and women are seen as a restraint on his freedom or as objects of his sexual prowess. Love of women is replaced by a love of liberty and justice, a love for his horse, and a love of adventure. Another expression of machismo has been in the *patrón*. This role model evinces the most paternalistic side of machismo. It is closely tied to family relationships, dignity, honor, and a sense of noblesse oblige and has often been sighted as the role model of



*estancia* owners. Such men must not only fulfill demands as *patrón*, however, but must also demonstrate enough gaucho values to gain the respect of their hired help. The characteristics of personal dynamism, self-confidence, and oratorical ability are also essential qualities for leadership. In the past such leadership has expressed itself through the caudillo, a kind of popular political figure prominent in both history and literature. Because the caudillo demonstrated the ideal masculine qualities, he attracted many followers who identified with these qualities and were attracted by his personal magnetism.

### Female Role

Popular concepts of the ideal woman were changing in the early 1970s because of the increasing involvement of women in the country's economic and business life since World War II. In the traditional view the image of the ideal woman was the opposite of the stereotyped ideal male image. A woman was expected to display gentleness, modesty, passivity, and deference to the males in her family. Her accepted social role involved raising a large family and maintaining a comfortable home for her husband; in addition, she was expected to possess social graces and domestic skills and to attend church services regularly as the family's representative.

As the accepted roles of men and women draw closer together, influenced by social, political, and economic forces, women have begun to assert their independence from domesticity and male dominance. The extension of political rights, educational advantages, and employment opportunities to women has given them new areas of activity and responsibility. Because many are economically productive and well-educated members of the family, they are less dependent on their husbands than they once were. They are still expected to respect their husbands' final authority in most family matters.

Despite the increased freedom allowed her, a woman is still expected to adhere to socially determined guidelines of feminine attitudes and behavior. Argentines believe that a woman maintains self-respect by recognizing accepted moral codes, specifically the double standard of sexual morality. Moreover, there is still inequality in the occupational sphere. In 65 percent of the cases included in one study, men earned higher salaries than women. Where both sexes were employed, men reached the highest position available in 82 percent of the cases, women in only 18 percent. Although laws have changed drastically, they still favor men in many cases. For example, even when a suit for separation has been won by a woman, she still must receive her husband's permission to take their children outside the country.

In September 1973 a woman was elected vice president of Argentina, the highest public office yet reached by a woman in the American republics. She was María Estela (Isabelita) Perón, wife and political running

mate of Juan Domingo Perón. Throughout his career, Perón has emphasized the importance of women to all sectors of Argentine life. The Peronist movement has always had the staunch support of working-class women, who make up a special branch of Perón's Justicialist Party. The combined factors of a Peronist government and an increased social and political consciousness on the part of Argentine women may mean a continued liberalization of woman's role.

#### **Interpersonal and Societal Relationships**

In most strata the family and its maintenance are of the greatest importance and serve as the prototype for most other social relationships. Family loyalty is the focus of trust, dependence, and responsibility. Close kinship ties have resulted in a large number of family-dominated companies and *estancias* at the upper level and a frequent choice of the relatives of current employees at the lower level. Such personalism is evident throughout all classes and positions and regardless of urban or rural setting. As a consequence of its pervasiveness, many Argentines have felt uncomfortable in impersonal functional relationships such as those existing in a large factory. Nevertheless, better working conditions, better wages, and a hope for social mobility have made such factories the goal of most blue-collar workers. Personalism that may not be expressed on the job is expressed through involvement in unions.

Among the urban working class the traditional values of loyalty and personalism coexist with specialized occupations and strong class consciousness. During Perón's first term traditional loyalties to personal relationships were translated into class loyalties. His working-class following had a sense of unity based largely on Perón's forceful personal leadership and a sense of allegiance to the nearly sainted image of his wife, Eva. These essentially personal relations were the kind familiar to most Argentines, but their class basis fostered distrust and disharmony between the favored working class and other social groups. It appears that Perón's personal relationship with the working class has had lasting effects. Despite an eighteen-year interruption, Perón commands the same unified support and class loyalty that he did more than a generation ago.

Nevertheless, emphasis on family and concurrent emphasis on mistrust of outsiders has inhibited the development of a strong notion of the nation as a whole and of the interdependence of various groups in matters of joint concern. Except for the working class, Argentines lack a central figure or ideal around which they can coalesce. This is not to say that Argentines are not an extremely proud and nationalistic people. It does, however, imply that such a personalistic familistic orientation toward life also inhibits the development of community organizations or strong community spirit.

Members of the lower and middle classes have generally given high prestige to the values and life patterns of the upper class. Most people

who have not become resigned to lower class status avoid manual labor because of the low esteem attached to it. The Argentine who seeks to advance develops his verbal and intellectual skills rather than his technical abilities; he enters the university to pursue a career in law, medicine, philosophy, or the social sciences and gains an academic degree that entitles him to deference (see ch. 5). Relatively few people have entered the physical sciences or fields that involve the technical application of skills.

Fate and forces that determine daily events are generally considered unpredictable and without order. A love of gambling and games of chance manifests the belief in fate. Many members of all social classes follow the races and the lottery and play cards and *quiniela* (an illegal numbers game). The gambling casinos draw huge crowds who come for the excitement of betting and for the possibility of attaining sudden wealth.

A generally optimistic view of the future has diminished somewhat in recent years because of the country's apparent inability to hold a steady course in economic development and because of frequent political upheaval. The fatalism that has always lain beneath the surface of the Argentine character sometimes emerges in the apathy and resignation that are felt by some sectors of the population. This sense of malaise abated somewhat when Perón returned in 1973.



## CHAPTER 5

### EDUCATION

During the early 1970s about 22 percent of the Argentine population was enrolled in schools at all levels in which another 1.5 percent of the population provided instruction. All but a few of the children of primary-school age attended school, and Argentina was one of the few countries of the world with an oversupply of qualified teachers. The country's teacher corps had increased by 300 percent between 1940 and 1970, a period during which the population had increased by 123 percent.

The best educational offerings were available in the cities of Buenos Aires, Córdoba, and Rosario—the principal centers of population—and nearly all the schools at the secondary and postsecondary levels were located in urban centers. More than 80 percent of the population was urban, however, and primary schools were not too far from nearly all of the rural population.

Universities and other institutions of higher education were in a state of crisis during the early 1970s. Budgets had not kept pace with fast-growing enrollments, there was a serious qualitative deficiency in teaching personnel, students were increasingly unruly, and in 1973 the nature of the mission of higher education was in debate. Argentina had, however, one of the world's most extensive systems of higher education as well as one of the world's highest enrollments as a proportion of the population.

Argentines are remarkably ready to point to deficiencies in their own educational system, and in the early 1970s a fundamental educational reform was in the process of implementation. The system's shortcomings, however, could not be measured in terms of the Latin American context. Curricula were frequently obsolescent, and budget allocations were insufficient to meet demands for installation and maintenance of school plants and facilities, but the rates of literacy and of school enrollment and retention were already probably the highest in Latin America. In general, the school program could realistically be compared with those of the fully developed countries of Europe and North America.

### ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Under the Ministry of Culture and Education, the Subsecretariat of Education supervises a variety of operational and administrative entities. Among these, the principal operational units are those responsible

for preprimary and primary education; secondary, special, teacher training, and higher education; and technical education at the secondary level. Other operational entities are responsible for physical education and recreation, instruction in the plastic and performing arts, literacy training, and supervision of private education.

The Subsecretariat of Education has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of a substantial minority of the school units. The Argentine education program, however, is a generally decentralized one in which, during the early 1970s, the subsecretariat acted under directives assigning it functions concerned essentially with the general supervision, planning, coordination, support, and evaluation of programs conducted by provincial, municipal, and private authorities.

The subsecretariat was responsible for schools in which less than one-third of the country's 5.5 million school-age and adult students were enrolled. Included in this number were the students at the nominally autonomous national universities. Also included at the national level were a small number of students in schools at all levels operated by the three defense secretariats, by the secretariats of agriculture and public health, and by the national universities.

Some 44 percent of the total student body was enrolled in schools operated by provincial ministries of education or education councils. In particular, the provinces were responsible for primary schools that had more than half the total enrollment at that level. Primary education was made a provincial responsibility under the Constitution of 1853, which set forth what was to continue as the basic charter for the country's educational system. Provincial governments were also responsible for numerous secondary schools, for several small provincial universities, and for some schools of adult education. In addition, a small number of students were in schools operated by municipal governments.

The remainder of the country's students (23 percent in 1970) were in private schools, a majority of them operated by Roman Catholic orders and by ethnic groups. Private primary and secondary schools, which had adopted the curriculum prescribed by the national authority, operated under its rules and were monitored by national inspectors; most received public subsidies.

In late 1973 the future of the private school system was somewhat uncertain. One of the planks in the platform of the Radical Party in its unsuccessful campaign for the presidency early in the year had been the elimination of private primary schools. The minister of culture and education during the interim presidency of Raul Lastiri, however, had met with associations representing the private schools to assure them that "private education must be accepted because it contributes to education in this country." Some tightening of controls over private schooling appeared likely, however.

During the early 1970s the Subsecretariat of Education, the other national secretariats, the provincial and municipal authorities, and the private school system all maintained preprimary and primary, secondary,

and adult education units. The national and provincial authorities and the private system also maintained institutions of higher education. Further decentralization of the already largely decentralized system was in progress. As announced by the National Development Council, educational reform during the 1971-75 period was to include progressive transfer of primary schools to provincial control, accompanied by an adjustment of the tax system to fund this changeover. The eventual transfer of all primary education to the provinces was contemplated.

Legislation enacted in 1956 conferred on the national universities the right to conduct their affairs through a tripartite (*tercio*) system of administration in which the professors, the alumni, and the students were represented on the governing councils. Graduates tended to vote with students, however, and the coalition of the two had held veto power, if not outright control, over most council decisions. State intervention in 1966 ended this student-led dominance of university affairs, the universities were remanded to government safekeeping, and the new Statute of the Universities was enacted the following year. The new legislation preserved the principle of autonomy, but in fact the institutions were placed under close supervision by the national government, and students were excluded from their governing bodies.

During the restless days of early 1973 the occupation by students of the university buildings led the government again to replace the rectors by intervenors. Late in the year a new basic universities law was being drafted, and the form in which the national universities would be administered in the future was yet to be revealed (see *The Educational System*, this ch.).

Provincial universities are administered by their respective provincial educational authorities. Private universities are governed by 1958 legislation and subsequent decrees. They are authorized to grant academic degrees equal in validity to those issued by public institutions, but permission for their graduates to practice any profession subject to federal regulation must be secured from the state after an examination. In addition, they must obtain recognition by the state, which also must approve their status and curricula.

Institutions of higher education outside the university aegis operating under the Subsecretariat of Education are directly and closely controlled by that agency. In addition, the Directorate General of Museums and Libraries operates a small school for librarians at the higher level, and postsecondary institutions in specialized fields are operated by the secretariats responsible for them.

Ministry of Culture and Education budgets during the 1968-72 period ranged between 14 and 15 percent of the national total and averaged 14.6 percent. In 1973, however, the allocation was reduced to 12.4 percent. An average of about 4 percent of the budgets was devoted to cultural responsibilities of the ministry and 96 percent to education. About half the education funds were allocated to payment of salaries of teachers and administrative personnel.

Even at the reduced 1973 budget level, education was allocated a higher proportion of national funds than the Ministry of National Defense (10 percent). The central government's financial contribution to education has, however, been consistently smaller on a proportional basis than that of most other Latin American countries.

It is common for critics of the Argentine public educational program to point to this relatively low national contribution. Many or most countries of Latin America, however, are largely or almost entirely dependent on the national treasury for their financing of public education. In Argentina provincial and local governments carry substantial parts of the cost burden. A 1973 multinational workshop on the financing of Latin American education found that in 1970 the per capita outlay of public funds for education in Argentina was the equivalent of US\$36—as compared with an average of US\$18 for the twenty-two Latin American countries and was fourth highest among the twenty-two.

The same workshop found that 41 percent of the public outlays were for primary education, 34.2 percent were for education at the secondary level, and 24.8 percent were for higher education. These proportions compared with an average of 51.7 percent, 27.2 percent, and 21.1 percent, respectively, for the twenty-two countries. The relatively low proportion spent on primary schools and the high proportion spent on schools at higher levels reflect higher enrollments in secondary and post-secondary schools rather than per student expenditures. In particular, on a per-student basis the proportion spent at institutions of higher education was well below the average for the region. Getting enough money has been a perennial problem for the big national universities, which in 1970 had enrollments representing nearly three-fourths of the total for higher education. Since the 1940s, budget allocations have failed to keep pace with soaring enrollments, and increasingly crowded classrooms and inadequate facilities have resulted.

Certain public revenues are earmarked for construction and maintenance of school buildings. Some schools in more remote parts of the interior have been constructed cooperatively through community development programs, and in 1973 a major automobile manufacturer delivered to the government the twenty-first school unit constructed by the manufacturer under a program initiated several years earlier. In general, however, school construction and maintenance activity have been badly hampered by insufficient funding. In 1965 the National Planning Council reported that the physical facilities of the educational system were undergoing rapid decapitalization, and in 1970 it was officially estimated that 50 percent of the public school buildings were in need of emergency repairs.

Private primary and secondary schools received subsidies from the state and, in some instances, from provincial governments for payment of operating expenses. The amounts involved in these public subsidies increased sharply, from 9 percent of the private school expenditures in



1969 to 19 percent in 1972. The amount to the individual school is usually determined on the basis of the fee charged per pupil and is applied mainly to payment of the teaching staff. There are, however, certain cases in which the private institution provides free instruction and in which its operating costs are fully subsidized by the state.

## THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

In 1970 nearly 5.5 million students were attending schools of all kinds. Nearly one Argentine in four was regularly enrolled in some kind of school. The total included nearly 113,000 primary students older than the regular primary school age (six to fourteen years) who were participants in the adult education program, and nearly 350,000 who were in adult education courses at the secondary and higher level that were not part of the regular school system. The latter were referred to as *parasis-tématica* units (see table 5).

According to official calculations, in 1970 some 92.6 percent of the population at primary school age, 28.4 percent at secondary school age, and 7.2 percent at postsecondary school age were enrolled in schools. The same source cited high dropout and grade-repetition rates and the excessive length and complexity of courses of study as the principal problems of the educational system.

At all levels of schooling, enrollments are heaviest in the Federal Capital and in Buenos Aires Province, where in 1970 some 2.6 million students were enrolled. Enrollments were also relatively heavy in the prosperous and heavily urbanized provinces of Santa Fe, Córdoba, and Mendoza, but school enrollments at all levels were remarkably well distributed throughout the country.

Private enrollments represent important minorities of the numbers at all levels, particularly at the secondary level and in adult education programs, and their proportions edged upward during the 1960s and early 1970s. Some of the most prestigious private institutions, particularly in Buenos Aires, were those operated by the Anglo-Argentines and other ethnic population elements. Most of the private schools, however, including many of the private universities, were operated by Roman Catholic orders.

The status of Roman Catholic education has had an up-and-down history in Argentina, having related initially to the progress or lack of progress of the anticlerical movement. In the 1880s the anticlericalists emerged in a commanding position. Religious instruction was banned in public schools, and only state-operated universities were permitted. Thereafter, the cause of anticlericalism tended to lose importance, but the clerical role in education continued in eclipse until 1943, when decree legislation by the military government then in power restored the teaching of Roman Catholicism in public schools. This practice was again banned in 1954 and, although a private universities law of 1958

Table 5. Schools, Students, and Teachers in Argentina, 1970

| Level of Instruction                               | Schools | Students  | Percent Female Students | Percent Private Students | Teachers | Percent Female Teachers |
|--|---------|-----------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| <b>Preprimary:</b>                                 |         |           |                         |                          |          |                         |
| Kindergarten .....                                 | 3,808   | 223,251   | 50.6                    | 30.5                     | 11,639   | 99.3                    |
| <b>Primary:</b>                                    |         |           |                         |                          |          |                         |
| School-age .....                                   | 20,184  | 3,409,655 | 49.3                    | 15.8                     | 181,259  | 91.9                    |
| Postschool-age .....                               | 1,464   | 112,687   | 29.4                    | 1.5                      | 7,749    | 68.4                    |
| Adult literacy training .....                      | 4,145   | 109,708   | 33.8                    | ....                     | 4,205    | 84.8                    |
| Total .....  | 25,793  | 3,632,050 | 48.2                    | 14.9                     | 193,213  | 90.8                    |
| <b>Secondary:</b>                                  |         |           |                         |                          |          |                         |
| Basic cycle and baccalaureate                      | 1,734   | 403,282   | 41.3                    | 48.0                     | 56,242   | 71.4                    |
| Commercial .....                                   | 1,130   | 271,142   | 54.1                    | 36.5                     | 36,842   | 64.9                    |
| Technical industrial .....                         | 445     | 147,994   | 2.9                     | 10.0                     | 23,041   | 22.0                    |
| Technical professional .....                       | 583     | 114,936   | 79.8                    | 5.1                      | 11,570   | 84.7                    |
| Agriculture and livestock .....                    | 62      | 4,914     | 14.1                    | 22.5                     | 888      | 46.4                    |
| Plastic and performing arts ...                    | 101     | 20,143    | 69.1                    | 4.0                      | 2,162    | 58.5                    |
| Health care ( <i>asistencial</i> ) .....           | 71      | 4,621     | 87.8                    | 83.7                     | 1,225    | 28.5                    |
| Special .....                                      | 20      | 7,228     | 56.8                    | 12.0                     | 559      | 39.4                    |
| Normal (teacher training) .....                    | 5       | 566       | 97.0                    | ....                     | 192      | 77.6                    |
| Total .....  | 4,151   | 974,826   | 52.7                    | 32.8                     | 132,721  | 61.3                    |
| <b>Higher<sup>1</sup>:</b>                         |         |           |                         |                          |          |                         |
| <b>University:</b>                                 |         |           |                         |                          |          |                         |
| National .....                                     | 125     | 198,656   | 35.2                    | ....                     | 8,823    | 17.5                    |
| Provincial .....                                   | 18      | 3,268     | 47.9                    | ....                     | 642      | 34.7                    |
| Private .....                                      | 137     | 34,591    | 38.5                    | 100.0                    | 6,539    | 21.8                    |
| Subtotal .....                                     | 280     | 236,515   | 35.9                    | 14.6                     | 16,004   | 20.6                    |
| <b>Extrauniversitary:</b>                          |         |           |                         |                          |          |                         |
| Teacher training .....                             | 138     | 31,107    | 86.9                    | 37.5                     | 5,075    | 61.7                    |
| Nonteaching special .....                          | 50      | 5,139     | 76.0                    | 24.8                     | 1,032    | 37.5                    |
| Plastic and performing arts .....                  | 27      | 1,873     | 79.3                    | 11.9                     | 366      | 50.3                    |
| Subtotal .....                                     | 215     | 38,119    | 85.0                    | 34.6                     | 6,473    | 57.2                    |
| Total .....  | 495     | 274,634   | 42.7                    | 17.4                     | 22,477   | 30.6                    |
| <b>Other (<i>parasistemática</i>)<sup>2</sup>:</b> |         |           |                         |                          |          |                         |
| Secondary .....                                    | 3,231   | 345,950   | 64.4                    | 80.1                     | 11,516   | 74.5                    |
| Higher .....                                       | 21      | 2,481     | 57.1                    | 100.0                    | 148      | 51.4                    |
| Total .....  | 3,252   | 348,431   | 64.3                    | 80.2                     | 11,664   | 74.2                    |
| Grand Total .....                                  | 37,499  | 5,453,192 | 49.9                    | 23.0                     | 371,714  | 76.4                    |

<sup>1</sup>Teaching units (faculties, schools, etc.) within institutions of higher education.

<sup>2</sup>Education in courses considered to be outside regular school system.

Source: Adapted from Argentina, Ministerio de Cultura y Educación, *Estadística Educativa*, 1970, Buenos Aires, December 1970, pp. 3, 15, 27.

authorized the establishment of Roman Catholic as well as nonsectarian private universities, in 1973 religious instruction in public classrooms had not been reinstated.

The Argentine school year usually begins in early March and, interrupted by a winter vacation of about three weeks in July, continues into December. Primary schools conduct daily classes of four-hour single sessions. During a school year in the late 1960s these sessions lasted 184 days. There was also a small but increasing number of double-session schools, morning and afternoon sessions making up a nine-hour day that included time for extracurricular activities. Secondary schools conducted single-session days of six or seven hours during a school year of approximately 200 days.

The institutions of higher education for the most part also have March to December school years, but faculties at the public universities independently select the time schedules for their courses of study. Because of climatic conditions and consequent economic necessities, some schools in Patagonia have academic years running from September to May.

Although tuition is free in public academic units of all kinds at all levels, the simple uniforms required of primary and secondary children represent important expenditure items for poorer families, and parents must purchase school supplies and textbooks. Transportation in some instances is a considerable expense, and students in more remote parts of the interior wishing to enter secondary or postsecondary schools face the problem of paying the cost of room and board. As part of the national development program for the years 1970 through 1975, the National Development Council stated as a goal the policy of extended assistance to students in the form of free lunches, clothing, equipment, books transferable to succeeding classes from year to year, medical treatment and medications, and transportation—particularly in suburban and rural areas.

A 1968 resolution calling for an integrated reform of the educational system was in the process of implementation in the early 1970s. Its fundamental feature was replacement of the current seven years of primary school and five years of secondary school by a basic program of nine years, followed by a minimum of three years at the next level. In addition, it was decided to phase out the secondary-level normal schools for the training of primary school teachers and to substitute training at the postsecondary level. The reform program also called for making school attendance compulsory through the ninth grade (see Educational Reform, this ch.).

### **Preprimary Schools**

In 1971 kindergarten classes were attended by over 240,000 children, almost three times the number that had attended in 1960. In addition to the regular kindergartens, legislation in effect called for the maintenance

of nursery schools by business firms employing twenty or more women. Kindergartens were designed for pupils between the ages of three and five, but the 1971 enrollment included a scattering of children aged six and seven. A majority, however, were five years of age.

Kindergarten enrollments during the 1960s had increased at more than twice the rate recorded by primary schools. Some 60 percent were in schools in the Federal Capital and Buenos Aires Province, and a large proportion of the remainder were in the heavily urbanized provinces of Córdoba and Santa Fe.

The schools cater generally to upper class and middle-class families, but bringing preprimary education to the children of families with limited incomes is one of the goals of a 1968 educational reform program. Nearly half the enrollment during the early 1970s was in provincial schools, and most of the remainder was in privately operated units. Educational authorities, however, planned to expand the program by encouraging greater participation in it by municipal governments.

### Primary Schools

The seeds of modern primary education were sown in 1853 with the inauguration of an elementary course in reading and writing. In 1884 the program was converted by Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, Argentina's schoolteacher president, into an integrated basic system that was to be free and obligatory. The legislation bringing about this conversion is widely considered to be among the most important ever enacted.

In his 1973 inaugural address President Héctor Cámpora cited as a failing of the national education system the fact that no more than 48 percent of the primary matriculants completed their courses of study. There had, however, been considerable improvement in school retention. Data for 1969 showed that the number of students enrolled in the seventh (the last) grade represented 45 percent of the number that had enrolled in the first grade six years earlier. The corresponding proportions had been 35.1 percent in 1960 and 30.1 percent in 1950. Moreover, although it was common practice during the late 1960s and early 1970s to deplore the large number of dropouts at all levels of the school system, Argentina's rate of retention was one of the highest in Latin America.

It appeared, however, that a large majority of the children enrolling in the first grade would ultimately complete at least the third year of study. This is an important goal, since it is the consensus of educators throughout the world that a minimum of three years of schooling is required for effective attainment of literacy and that money spent in schooling children who do not attain this level is largely wasted.

The primary curriculum prescribed by the National Council of Education is followed by private as well as public schools, although the practice has been to grant some latitude to the private institutions. Instruction must be in Spanish, except that private schools for foreign students need devote only half the day to courses in that language.

Curriculum changes were numerous during the late 1950s and 1960s. A continuing principle, however, was the provision of a broad base for the student's education during the lower primary grades and the teaching of the first specialized subjects in the upper grades. Particular emphasis was placed on preparation for living as a member of a community through instruction in such subjects as courtesy, cooperation, mutual help, civics, thrift, and budgeting. Persistent criticism of the curriculum as involving too much learning by rote was answered by introduction into the curriculum of more teaching by demonstration and practical training. Special upper primary instruction was available for children planning to specialize in music, dancing, and teaching of foreign languages. In general, however, the same course of study was followed by all students throughout the seven primary years.

In the early 1970s the curriculum contained sophisticated and innovative elements. A foreign language—usually English or French—was required at the primary as well as the secondary level, although primary-level language instruction was rudimentary in scope. In addition, new mathematics was included in the curricula in Buenos Aires and in some parts of the interior. An examination of both primary and secondary texts, however, revealed that only a few chapters were devoted to new mathematics and that most of the books were devoted to standard instructional material.

The high proportion of school-age children enrolled in primary schools and the relatively high rate of school retention reflect a variety of advantages enjoyed by Argentine students and teachers alike over those in most Latin American countries. The ethnic and cultural homogeneity of the population facilitates the teaching process. There is, for example, no indigenous population group unfamiliar with the language of instruction—although in 1973 the number of Portuguese-speaking children in schools of Misiones Province was reported sufficient to cause a problem. The fact that a large majority of the school-age children live in urban localities reduces to a minimum the problem of making schooling available to children scattered in rural localities. The relatively high per capita income in the country makes a high proportion of parents able to meet costs of school clothing, equipment, and transportation and minimizes the economic need to keep children out of school in order to work. In addition, the relative extensiveness of Argentine education during previous years meant that parents of children of school age in the early 1970s had at least an awareness of the importance of education for their children exceeding that of parents in most Latin American countries.

### Secondary Schools

Where President Sarmiento became the father of primary education by sponsoring the necessary enabling legislation, President Bartolomé

Mitre became the father of the secondary school system by example. In 1863 he created a prototype secondary school, the National High School (Colegio Nacional), which is still in existence in Buenos Aires. At the same time he was instrumental in redesigning the curricula of two existing schools to make them the first units specifically designed for the training of future university entrants. The modern system has developed directly from these roots. It has never had an organic law and, as a consequence, its evolution has been a haphazard one that has resulted in complex programs without clearly defined goals and with considerable duplication of course offerings.

Secondary enrollments increased at a rate nearly triple that of the population growth from 607,000 in 1961 to more than 1 million in 1971. During the latter year girls made up more than half of the student body, a circumstance rare in Latin America. In the early 1970s a large proportion of the students completing primary schools did not continue classes at the secondary level. The estimated proportion of young people at the median secondary school attendance age of sixteen years actually attending school, however, increased from 30 percent in 1961 to 35 percent in 1967 and to 40 percent in 1972.

Schools are divided into the general, or academic, and technical categories. General schools, for the most part five-year courses of study, are designed to prepare young people for further study at the postsecondary level. Technical and vocational schools offer some terminal schooling in academic subjects combined with career training in a craft or trade. The line of division between schools of these two kinds is clearly drawn in most countries of Latin America, but it is blurred in Argentina. The university preparatory schools offer highly specialized as well as general courses of study, and students completing some courses in the technical-vocational sector are eligible for university matriculation. Only students completing studies in the general or university preparatory units, however, receive baccalaureate (*bachillerato*) graduation certificates. As a consequence, they are commonly referred to as baccalaureate schools in order to distinguish them from those in the technical sector.

Curricula range from the wide-ranging liberal arts course selections in some baccalaureate programs to immediately practical ones in short technical courses. In a critical review of secondary education as a whole, in 1971 the National Development Council concluded that neither the fields of study offered nor the courses available within them were responsive to the country's needs. The baccalaureate dropouts and graduates who did not go on to universities were left without any semblance of skills equipping them to become part of the productive system; and the curricula of many technical programs had been rendered obsolete by economic development.

Students tend to enter secondary school at a somewhat older age than those in North America, where the average age is fifteen or sixteen. Consequently, in Argentina during the late 1960s and early 1970s in the

lower grades there were a heavy clustering of students aged fifteen to sixteen, a scattering as young as eleven or twelve, and nearly one-fifth between eighteen and twenty-four years old.

Grade repetitions are less frequent than at the primary level, but there are more dropouts, apparently a consequence of greater economic pressures on the older secondary-level students. The differing lengths of the several secondary programs limit the significance of school-retention statistics—in the technical schools the curricula vary from a single year to as many as eight years in night classes. President Cámpora, however, in his 1973 inaugural address estimated that 43 percent of all students at the secondary level completed their courses of study. In 1971 it had been estimated that 53 percent of the matriculants in the baccalaureate program, 41 percent in the industrial, and 22 percent in the agricultural sector completed their courses of study.

### Baccalaureate Program

In 1971 a large majority of the nearly 405,000 students in classes with courses leading to the baccalaureate certificate enrolled in a three-year basic cycle of study and a two-year general (*común*) upper cycle of non-specialized preparation for university matriculation. The remainder were in schools offering a dozen kinds of specialized baccalaureate (*bachillerato especializado*) courses of from five to seven years; the six-year course was the most common (see table 6). In these schools the first three years were devoted to basic studies also, but students in the two- to four-year upper cycle concentrated in the particular field of study that they planned to pursue at the postsecondary level.

Table 6. *Baccalaureate Secondary School Enrollments in Argentina, 1971*

| Course of Study                         | Enrollment |
|---|------------|
| Basic cycle .....                       | 241,997    |
| General .....                           | 108,489    |
| Commercial .....                        | 23,865     |
| Biological sciences .....               | 6,152      |
| Physical sciences and mathematics ..... | 5,743      |
| Agricultural technology .....           | 6,255      |
| Letters .....                           | 7,875      |
| Humanities .....                        | 2,332      |
| Bilingual in sciences and letters ..... | 1,063      |
| Plastic and performing arts .....       | 267        |
| Administration .....                    | 267        |
| Foreign languages .....                 | 109        |
| Penitentiary sciences .....             | 86         |
| Language specialization .....           | 168        |
| Total .....                             | 404,668    |

Source: Adapted from Argentina, Ministerio de Cultura y Educación. *Estadística Educativa: Comunicados para la prensa, Año 1972*, Buenos Aires, December 1972, p. 33.

It is in the baccalaureate schools that private education is of the greatest importance. In 1970 these institutions represented more than 48 percent of the total enrollment, a large majority in the Federal Capital and Buenos Aires Province. In the specialized baccalaureate courses private enrollments were in a substantial majority.

In addition to schools for general studies and specialized study in various arts and science fields, there are baccalaureate schools for agricultural technology. There are also technical and vocational schools in these fields, but in the early 1970s about 8 percent of the secondary-level commercial students and more than half the agricultural students were in baccalaureate programs. There is no corresponding baccalaureate course of study for industrial studies, but holders of school-leaving certificates from industrial schools in the technical sector are admitted to engineering faculties at the universities.

### Technical Program

In 1970 some 571,544 students, or about 60 percent of the secondary-level total, were enrolled in the technical and vocational study program. A majority were preparing for direct employment, but graduates of complete courses in several of the school categories were eligible for admission to institutions of higher education.

Enrollment in these units is almost exclusively male. The course of study consists of two three-year cycles in which the first three years resemble the basic cycle of baccalaureate schools but include some technical courses. After the fourth year an auxiliary technician certificate is awarded to those preparing directly for employment. The technician (*técnico*) certificate awarded after six or more years is the equivalent of a baccalaureate. Night school technical industrial programs are eight years in duration.

Technical industrial training was offered in more than a dozen specialties in 1970. The most popular in order of preference were general mechanics, electricity and electronics, industrial chemistry, and automotive mechanics. The selections available, however, included such specialized fields as metallurgy, marine construction, and refrigeration technology.

A two-year short course is offered for training of assembly line operators (*formación de operarios*). In parts of the interior there are also about 100 mobile trade schools (*escuelas volantes*) that are housed in trailers or prefabricated temporary buildings. Once located in a rural site or in a small town, the school operates for two or three years. It then moves to another locality and is sooner or later replaced by another mobile unit teaching a different skill or trade.

Some 90 percent of the technical industrial enrollment is in public schools, most of them operated by the National Council on Technical Education and in part financed by a 1 percent tax paid by employers on industrial payrolls. Most of this tax is rebated to enterprises providing



technical educational facilities of their own. In 1970 some 100 companies—particularly those in the automotive vehicle manufacturing industry—operated units ranging from on-the-job training to full-time schooling, some of them including upper cycle units leading to university matriculation.

The primary aim of these company-sponsored institutions is the creation of a supply of skilled labor for their own use. One automobile company, however, during the late 1960s, employed only 6 percent of its graduates. A significant proportion go on to university studies or emigrate in search of jobs abroad.

Although a small proportion of the secondary-level students in commercial schools are enrolled in studies of accountancy and office management leading to baccalaureates, more than one-fourth of all secondary students engage in terminal commercial courses in fields such as the operation of office machinery and stenographic and secretarial studies. Similarly, some schools of plastic and performing arts offer baccalaureate programs, but a majority offer terminal studies. Girls make up majorities of the enrollments in both these categories.

In 1970 some 115,000, or about 12 percent, of the technical secondary students were engaged in technical professional (*técnica profesional*) courses ranging from one year to as many as eight years in duration. As employed by the school system of Latin America the word *profesional* is misleading in the sense that it refers not to professional studies at the university level but to secondary studies thought of in North America as falling in the vocational or crafts category. About two-thirds of the nearly 600 technical professional schools in 1970 were operated by provincial governments and were designed primarily for training girls and young women. Courses of study in this catch-all category cut across functional lines and include training in a wide variety of skills in the industrial and services sectors of employment. More than 200 different kinds of school-leaving certificates are awarded.

Most of the enrollment is in fields related to dressmaking, millinery, weaving, and embroidery. Cooking and bakery courses are one year or more in duration. Courses of study in commercial subjects are similar to those in the regular commercial schools, and courses in industrial subjects (with primarily male enrollments) are in many instances similar to those in the industrial schools.

Although a majority of the courses of study are relatively short, an industrial chemistry course requires six years to complete, plastic and performing arts courses require as many as seven years, and an advanced certificate of proficiency in English requires eight years of study. Training in domestic science fields and in such specialties as hairdressing and cosmetology is not duplicated elsewhere, but the curricula in other fields so largely duplicate those offered in baccalaureate and in other technical schools that the difference seems largely to be administrative—most of the professional schools are maintained by provincial

governments, the others by the central government and private authorities. For the most part, however, the units in the professional sector have more specialized curricula that include relatively little general schooling.

### **Institutions of Higher Education**

In 1971 nearly 322,000 students were enrolled in educational institutions at the postsecondary level, some 84 percent in universities, and the remainder in extrauniversity units. The latter offer a variety of studies, but so large a proportion are devoted to the training of teachers that they are sometimes referred to as *profesorados*.

Students tend to be older than their North American counterparts. In the late 1960s only a little more than 20 percent were under the age of twenty, the median age was twenty-three or twenty-four, and nearly 15 percent were thirty years or older. The average age of graduates in engineering faculties was estimated at twenty-eight years.

#### **Universities**

With an enrollment soaring from 117,000 in 1961 to nearly 270,000 in 1971, Argentina's universities were the fastest growing element in the country's educational system. According to a preliminary official report, the total reached over 297,000 in 1973.

The national universities administered under general direction of the central government are the largest. The nearly 199,000 students enrolled in the ten national institutions in existence in 1970 constituted 84 percent of the university population. Four small universities maintained by provincial governments had enrollments of over 3,000, and twenty-four registered and provisionally recognized private universities had nearly 35,000 students in units with enrollments ranging from fewer than 100 to more than 5,000 (see table 7).

An additional fifteen public universities were reported to have been created during the administration of President Alejandro Lanusse (1971-73), although by 1973 the number of private units had dropped from twenty-four to twenty-three. The new institutions ranged in enrollments from more than 1,000 at the University of Lomas de Zamora to the University of Luján, which had yet to enroll any students. Some were created out of existing units; for example, the new National University of San Juan was reported formed out of the provincial university of that name, the decentralized Engineering Faculty of the National University of Cuyo, and several higher institutes and industrial and commercial secondary schools.

Table 7. Argentine Universities, Enrollments, and Teachers, 1970

| University  | Faculties<br>and Schools | Students |         | Teachers |
|---|--------------------------|----------|---------|----------|
|   |                          | Total    | Males   |          |
| <b>National (Ministry of Culture and Education):</b>    |                          |          |         |          |
| University of Buenos Aires .....                        | 13                       | 78,469   | 49,323  | 2,178    |
| National University of La Plata .....                   | 15                       | 28,594   | 20,318  | 1,249    |
| National University of the South .....                  | 13                       | 5,251    | 3,376   | 389      |
| National University of Córdoba .....                    | 15                       | 27,266   | 16,325  | 1,110    |
| National University of the Northeast .....              | 10                       | 7,767    | 4,816   | 448      |
| National University of Cuyo .....                       | 13                       | 6,873    | 3,924   | 769      |
| National University of the Littoral .....               | 9                        | 7,831    | 4,453   | 367      |
| National University of Rosario .....                    | 11                       | 15,362   | 9,900   | 708      |
| National University of Tucumán .....                    | 15                       | 10,157   | 5,521   | 592      |
| National Technical University .....                     | 11                       | 11,094   | 10,742  | 1,013    |
| Total .....   | 125                      | 198,664  | 128,698 | 8,823    |
| <b>Provincial (provincial ministries of education):</b> |                          |          |         |          |
| Provincial University of Mar del Plata .....            | 6                        | 1,868    | 985     | 222      |
| University of La Pampa .....                            | 2                        | 397      | 298     | 79       |
| University of the Neuquén .....                         | 6                        | 601      | 321     | 157      |
| University of San Juan .....                            | 4                        | 402      | 98      | 184      |
| Total .....   | 18                       | 3,268    | 1,702   | 642      |
| <b>Private (Ministry of Culture and Education):</b>     |                          |          |         |          |
| <b>Registered</b>                                       |                          |          |         |          |
| Pontifical Catholic University of Argentina .....       | 20                       | 5,574    | 3,663   | 1,199    |
| University of El Salvador .....                         | 14                       | 3,892    | 1,491   | 803      |
| Technological Institute of Buenos Aires .....           | 1                        | 264      | 259     | 72       |
| University of the Social Museum of Argentina .....      | 4                        | 1,810    | 654     | 361      |
| University of Belgrano .....                            | 4                        | 4,448    | 3,114   | 328      |
| Catholic University of Mar del Plata .....              | 5                        | 1,525    | 716     | 289      |
| Catholic University of Córdoba .....                    | 9                        | 3,008    | 1,978   | 503      |
| University of la Patagonia .....                        | 2                        | 496      | 290     | 86       |
| Private University "Juan A. Maza" .....                 | 4                        | 795      | 460     | 206      |
| University of Mendoza .....                             | 3                        | 847      | 533     | 202      |
| Catholic University of Cuyo .....                       | 6                        | 509      | 215     | 208      |
| Catholic University of Santa Fe .....                   | 9                        | 1,940    | 1,259   | 482      |
| University of the North                                 |                          |          |         |          |
| "Santo Tomás de Aquino" .....                           | 6                        | 654      | 396     | 187      |
| Catholic University of Santiago del Estero .....        | 4                        | 512      | 345     | 123      |
| Total .....   | 91                       | 26,274   | 15,373  | 5,049    |

continued on next page

Table 7. Argentine Universities, Enrollments, and Teachers, 1970—Continued

| University  | Faculties<br>and Schools | Students |         | Teachers |
|---|--------------------------|----------|---------|----------|
|   |                          | Total    | Males   |          |
| <b>Provisionally Authorized (Decree 2227/1968)</b>      |                          |          |         |          |
| Center of Higher Studies in Exact Sciences .....        | 1                        | 71       | 57      | 12       |
| Argentine University "John Kennedy" .....               | 6                        | 439      | 220     | 169      |
| Business University<br>(University de la Empresa) ..... | 5                        | 2,829    | 2,422   | 290      |
| Morón University .....                                  | 8                        | 1,986    | 1,385   | 385      |
| Catholic University of La Plata .....                   | 5                        | 1,129    | 763     | 236      |
| Argentine Notarial University .....                     | 6                        | 469      | 260     | 27       |
| University Institute of Tandil .....                    | 4                        | 200      | 75      | 79       |
| Higher Institute of the Aconcagua .....                 | 3                        | 491      | 361     | 95       |
| Catholic University of Salta .....                      | 4                        | 409      | 162     | 58       |
| Higher Institute of Agriculture<br>and Livestock .....  | 4                        | 294      | 202     | 139      |
| Total .....   | 46                       | 8,317    | 5,907   | 1,490    |
| Grand Total .....                                       | 280                      | 236,523  | 151,680 | 16,004   |

Source: Adapted from Argentina, Ministerio de Cultura y Educación, *Estadística Educativa, 1970*, Buenos Aires, December 1970, p. 5.

The largest and fastest growing of the national universities is the University of Buenos Aires. The only unit in the national university system not to use the word *national* in its name, the University of Buenos Aires had more than 78,000 students in 1970 and an estimated 100,000 in 1973. As early as 1965 it had been cited by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization as ranking with the University of Paris and the National Autonomous University of Mexico as one of the three largest universities in the world with enrollments in a single locality.

Second in size in 1970 was the nearby National University of La Plata, which maintained close academic ties with the University of Buenos Aires. The National University of Rosario was formed in 1968 as a spin-off from the Santa Fe-based National University of the Littoral of that institution's academic elements located in the city of Rosario. These two universities also maintain close ties with the University of Buenos Aires.

Founded in 1613 by the Jesuit order, the National University of Córdoba was the fourth to be founded in the Western Hemisphere; it is famous as the place from which the Córdoba Manifesto of 1918 was issued. That pronouncement aimed at establishing the principle of university autonomy, rationalizing and modernizing the curricula, and ridding the universities of incompetent and reactionary faculty influences. Its message spread throughout Latin America and, although few of its immediate objectives were accomplished, it was to serve as a symbol and to state a goal for universitarians throughout the region for years to come. Among the other national schools, probably the best known is the

National University of Cuyo, which has most of its academic units located in the city of Mendoza. Academically the most self-sufficient and isolated of the national universities, its agronomy and medical programs are considered particularly outstanding.

Several of the institutions have academic units in more than one city. The medical science and humanities programs of the National University of Tucumán, for example, are located in Salta. Much of the enrollment of the National Technical University is located in Buenos Aires, but it maintains facilities in eleven cities. Founded in 1948 as the National Workers' University, it offers study programs in such varied technical fields as machine construction, automotive technology, telecommunications, and industrial chemistry.

The provincial universities are of recent origin—the oldest was founded in 1958—and in the early 1970s some doubt was being expressed by educators with respect to whether these small units justified the cost of their upkeep. The private universities, about half of them administered by Roman Catholic orders, operated under 1958 legislation that made possible the recognition of several of them that had already been established. The oldest is the Catholic University of Cuyo, founded in 1953, and the largest is the Pontifical Catholic University of Argentina, whose headquarters are in Buenos Aires.

The private universities, in particular, face an uncertain future. The 1958 legislation that had authorized their creation had not been without its opponents, and in 1973 the opposition to them had not dwindled. A former dean at the University of Buenos Aires pointed out that many of these small private (and provincial) schools had enrollments so scanty that the expense of their continued existence was not justifiable at a time when money for the support of higher education was so hard to obtain and excellence rather than number of units was the need.

A leak to the press in late 1973 that was attributed to authorities at the University of Buenos Aires held that a new basic law governing the universities would call for progressive assimilation of the private units into the state system. Other reports had indicated only that the elimination of public subsidies to private institutions imparting a sectarian education was contemplated. A residue of the nineteenth-century anticlericalism was at work against the Roman Catholic institutions, but a summary analysis by a leading Buenos Aires journal concluded that the private universities could expect to survive under somewhat intensified official control.

Internally, the universities of Argentina are divided into faculties plus a few schools and institutes. The faculty as it is known in Latin America is not the total teaching staff of the university but the basic academic unit within it. Comparable roughly to the university college in some of the larger universities of Europe and North America, the faculty is made up of the personnel and facilities concerned with the teaching of a group of related disciplines. Examples are the faculties of law and social sciences and the faculties of exact and natural sciences. The enormous

Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of the University of Buenos Aires offers degree programs in such varied fields as philosophy, literature, history, sociology, and psychology.

In 1971 some 13.7 percent of the university enrollments were in medical and related studies, 12.7 percent were in the humanities, 36.4 percent were in social sciences, and 37.2 percent were in basic and technological sciences. The enrollment of no more than 5 percent in agronomy and veterinary surgery appeared much too small for a country so dependent on agriculture and stockraising for its foreign exchange earnings. The proportion compared favorably, however, with that of other Latin American countries where much larger proportions of the labor force are engaged in agriculture and stockraising (see table 8).

Changing preferences were shown in the relative decline of graduates in law and medicine as proportions of all graduates between 1961 and 1967. Between these two dates the proportion of engineering graduates had increased by 75 percent and graduates in economic sciences, by 244 percent. This changeover in preference, however, had commenced at an earlier date. Between 1940 and 1960 the proportion of doctors and lawyers in the population as a whole had increased by about 60 percent. During the same time span the proportion of engineers had almost tripled, and the proportion of accountants had more than tripled.

A measure of the increase in engineering's popularity was an increase in the number of engineering faculties from thirty-five in 1967 to forty-nine in 1971. By then there were faculties of engineering in all of the ten national universities, in three of the provincial universities and in fourteen private institutions. In number, the faculties exceeded the universities teaching engineering because several institutions maintained faculties in more than one locality. The several faculties of the National Technical University alone represented 40 percent of the national engineering enrollment. During the 1950s and 1960s enrollments in civil engineering experienced a relative decline as new and highly specialized engineering programs were established in response to the new demands of industry.

It has been during the years since World War II that economics has emerged in Latin America as an important field for university study. In Argentina both the rate of growth and the volume of enrollment have been among the highest in the region. The new importance accorded the economic disciplines has resulted from increasing sophistication of the needs of the national business community and from the opportunities offered by a variety of recently established private foundations and research institutes.

The current-day economic faculties have developed out of previously existing accountancy-administrative programs, which had their beginnings in bookkeeping studies at the secondary level. In 1953 the University of Buenos Aires introduced the first course of study in economics, a three-year program with course material that did not differ significantly

**Table 8. Enrollment in Argentine Institutions of Higher Education by Field of Specialization, 1971**

| Field                                       | Number         | Percentage   |
|---|----------------|--------------|
| <b>Medical:</b>                             |                |              |
| Medicine .....                              | 28,750         | 10.6         |
| Dentistry .....                             | 5,083          | 1.9          |
| Medical auxiliary .....                     | 3,206          | 1.2          |
| Subtotal .....                              | <u>37,039</u>  | <u>13.7</u>  |
| <b>Humanities</b>                           |                |              |
| Philosophy and letters .....                | 9,231          | 3.4          |
| Educational sciences .....                  | 3,793          | 1.4          |
| Other humanities .....                      | 18,316         | 6.8          |
| Fine arts .....                             | 2,145          | 0.8          |
| Music .....                                 | 813            | 0.3          |
| Subtotal .....                              | <u>34,298</u>  | <u>12.7</u>  |
| <b>Social Sciences</b>                      |                |              |
| Law .....                                   | 43,820         | 16.2         |
| Economics and administration .....          | 47,277         | 17.5         |
| Other social sciences .....                 | 7,149          | 2.7          |
| Subtotal .....                              | <u>98,246</u>  | <u>36.4</u>  |
| <b>Basic and Technological Sciences</b>     |                |              |
| Agronomy and veterinary medicine .....      | 13,415         | 5.0          |
| Engineering .....                           | 47,918         | 17.8         |
| Architecture .....                          | 17,055         | 6.3          |
| Exact and natural sciences .....            | 9,711          | 3.6          |
| Chemistry, biochemistry, and pharmacy ..... | 12,230         | 4.5          |
| Subtotal .....                              | <u>100,329</u> | <u>37.2</u>  |
| Total .....                                 | <u>269,912</u> | <u>100.0</u> |
| <b>Extrauniversity</b>                      |                |              |
| Teacher training .....                      | 45,593         | 87.8         |
| Nonteaching specializations .....           | 4,446          | 8.6          |
| Plastic and performing arts .....           | 1,831          | 3.6          |
| Total .....                                 | <u>51,870</u>  | <u>100.0</u> |
| Grand Total .....                           | <u>321,782</u> | ---          |

Source: Adapted from Argentina, Ministerio de Cultura y Educación, *Estadística Educativa: Comunicados para la prensa*, Año 1972. Buenos Aires, December 1972, pp. 61, 79, 83, 87, 91.

from that in public accountancy. In 1959 it added a program in political economy with a distinctive curriculum, and its faculty of economic sciences was subsequently established. By the early 1970s faculties of economic sciences were maintained in nine of the national and two of the provincial universities. In addition, about half of the private universities had established economic faculties and/or schools of business administration.

While enrollments in engineering and economics faculties and schools were soaring, those in medical faculties were experiencing a real as well as a relative decline. Enrollments in 1971 were nearly 25 percent under those of a decade earlier. The decline, however, reflected an oversupply of doctors rather than a waning attraction of medical studies. In the early 1970s Argentina had possibly more doctors per unit of population than any other country in the world, and large numbers of new medical graduates found themselves forced to emigrate and seek employment abroad (see ch. 3; ch. 6). Law enrollments during the 1960s and early 1970s fared somewhat better than those in medicine, increasing at about the same rate as that of the overall total. The supply of lawyers exceeded the demand, however, and many new graduates either found employment in fields not directly related to their training or joined in the emigration of professionals.

The number of faculties and schools in the universities varies from ten or more in the national institutions to a single teaching unit in some of the private establishments. In the early 1970s the enormous University of Buenos Aires supported faculties of agronomy and veterinary surgery, architecture and town planning, economic sciences, law and social sciences, engineering, philosophy and letters, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy and biochemistry, and exact and natural sciences.

Undergraduate courses of study for the most part are longer than those in North American universities. A majority are five or six years in duration, although a librarian's degree can be obtained in three years. There is no master of arts or master of science program as such, but doctoral degrees are offered in various fields, including law, social sciences, economic sciences, philosophy and letters, educational science, and exact and natural sciences. Although many Argentine students pursue studies abroad, the domestic graduate program is considerably more extensive than that found in most countries of Latin America. In 1969 some 34,000 students were enrolled in 206 graduate study programs.

Because so large a proportion of the students work as well as attend school, in 1972 some 60 percent of all young people enrolled were estimated to study less than full time. Under these circumstances, getting through university was no easy matter. One early 1970 estimate held that the proportion of students requiring more than one additional year to complete their study programs ranged from 23 to 35 percent; another contended that half the graduates required an additional period averaging three years in length. A 1965 survey found that only one-third of the



students canvassed pursued their studies regularly and that some had remained enrolled for as many as four years without passing any examinations.

In 1967 the number of university graduates was reported at less than 10 percent of the number commencing studies five years earlier, but some had already graduated from shorter courses, some were advancing slowly by grade, and some were enrolled in six-year or longer programs. In his 1973 inaugural address President Cámpora estimated that 70 percent of the entering university students did not complete their courses of study.

Academic failure probably accounts for noncompletion of courses by a relatively small number of students, and even this proportion is ascribed by Argentine educators to insufficient or badly conceived education at the secondary level. More important is the need to work while learning. Student employment in Argentina cannot be viewed in the context of the summer-job ethic of North America. In 1969 some 215 computer analysts and programmers were university graduates; 729 were university students.

The growing proportion of women students—more than one-third in 1970—included large majorities in humanities and fine arts. Women made up between one-fourth and one-half of the total in economics, law, medicine, architecture, and exact and natural sciences. Over half the student dentists and pharmacists were women, and there were small but appreciable female enrollments in the faculties of engineering and agriculture and veterinary surgery.

Despite all its accomplishments, the university system during the early 1970s faced a wide assortment of problems and was being bombarded by criticism from all sides. Much of the adverse comment related to its very size and rapid growth during recent years. Yet, in 1970 the University of Buenos Aires alone had reportedly been forced to turn away 10,000 applicants for admission because of lack of space, and certain student organizations in 1973 were clamoring for a policy of open admission for all graduates of secondary schools.

Soaring enrollments have meant soaring costs. Budgets have not increased correspondingly, and buildings and facilities have become increasingly inadequate. An Inter-American Development Bank credit of US\$43 million in 1970 was allocated for improvements in the faculties of exact sciences, but in general a lack of laboratories and equipment meant excessive reliance on lectures and textbooks. In the early 1970s medical students protested their inability to see live patients, and architecture students complained of the lack of practical courses.

In addition to being overcrowded, the university buildings are poorly located. Although an integrated campus for the University of Buenos Aires was said to be nearing completion in 1973 after multiple delays occasioned by fund shortages, the university campus is a concept almost

unknown in Argentina. As in most other Latin American countries, university buildings tend to be converted edifices scattered about the centers of cities. Dormitories and student gathering places are lacking. Physical movement between buildings represents a difficulty in itself, and the wide dispersion of buildings contributes to the student's feeling of impersonality and lack of a sense of identity with his school.

Some critics believe that the faculty system of organization is to blame for many of the university shortcomings. Under the decentralized faculty system, these units exist almost independently of one another, and much duplication of effort is involved. Some have grown unwieldy—the philosophy and letters faculty at the University of Buenos Aires is said to be the largest faculty unit in the world. The system worked well enough when units were smaller and the full professors in charge of programs of study (*titulares*) had informal and relatively intimate relationships with faculty deans. With growth in size, the relationship has been reduced to a symbolic one, and the chair-holding professors (*catedráticos*) have been left free to organize and conduct their programs without coordinating them with other courses of studies.

Particularly in the science and technology faculties, in the late 1960s and early 1970s there was increasing complaint that the courses of study were too long for the needs of most students who, in order to obtain their degrees, were required to remain in school for at least two unnecessary years, acquiring training that had little relevance to their needs. Among the corrections proposed for this situation was the establishment of short postsecondary technical programs, preferably in extrauniversity institutions. This demand echoed similar ones in other Latin American countries and appeared to be justified. In 1967 the United Nations had estimated that between 1960 and 1980 the increase in the demand for these technicians in Argentina would represent 70 percent of the increased demand for professional and technical personnel of all kinds.

In most instances entering students are required to commit themselves, without any orientation, to a curriculum in a particular faculty that may not prove suited to their interests or needs. To meet this deficiency as well as to correct the lack of direction and intercommunication inherent in the present system, it has been suggested that the university programs of study be regrouped into three major categories—medical sciences, social sciences, and science and technology. Within these the faculties would play a lesser role and, beneath the faculties, departments would be organized as the actual teaching units. Clear chains of command and intercommunication would be maintained throughout the new hierarchy.

A survey of the parents of university students during the mid-1960s found that only 20 percent had a university education and that 40 percent had not progressed beyond primary school. The families were predominantly middle class; however, in the early 1970s estimates regarding the proportions with working-class or lower income backgrounds ranged from 2 to 10 percent of the total. These judgments were based on

widely varying criteria, but the consensus made clear that the university population tended to come from an established sector of society. One Buenos Aires journal editorialized in 1973 that they represented a privileged minority who received much more financial assistance than any other sector of the educational system, including the primary level.

The late 1960s and early 1970s were times of student revolt throughout the world, and Argentina was no exception. Despite their relatively privileged background, the university population had grown up with a particularly acute concern over issues related to social change. A comparative survey of students in Argentine and United States universities in the mid-1960s underlined the relatively greater intensity of the Argentine sense of social commitment. Both attributed a high value to obtaining an education directly applicable to future careers. United States students, however, outvoted Argentines by a margin of seven to one over the value of obtaining a license to practice. By a lesser proportion, United States students outvoted the Argentines on the value of basic education and the appreciation of ideas. An appreciable minority of the United States young people stressed the importance of university schooling as a means of improving the enjoyment of leisure time and recreational activities during subsequent years; young Argentines did not feel this item worthy of votes. In contrast, Argentines emerged in overwhelming majorities over their United States peers in votes cast in favor of such considerations as development of knowledge and interest in national and community problems, activities directed toward national betterment, and participation in community matters.

The descendants of the students who in 1918 had produced the Córdoba Manifesto are active in support of liberal political causes as well as in matters of more direct university concern. Most belong to one or more student organizations, but these organizations are atomized and in frequent dispute with one another. In the early 1970s there were about 800 designated groups. Many or most were loosely associated in the Argentine University Federation (Federación Universitaria Argentina—FUA), but this entity was split into warring factions with headquarters in La Plata and in Córdoba. The various organizations were united in wanting immediate and substantial changes in their schools and in the country, but factional differences among them contributed substantially to the chaotic situation in the universities during 1973.

During the late 1950s and early 1960s students had participated in the administration of the then autonomous universities (see Administration and Finance, this ch.). The universities law of 1967 had brought an end to this, however, and the substitution of an office for university coordination in the Ministry of Culture and Education with an assignment to hear student grievances proved an unacceptable substitute for autonomy. Students after 1967 so often took to the streets in order to be heard that a leading Buenos Aires journal remarked editorially that studies had become something to be taken care of during recesses between political

activities, and a prominent educator complained that the proliferation of strikes and demonstrations had made it impossible to prepare an academic schedule.

In late 1971 President Lanusse warned the rectors that the universities had become focal points for the spread of disorder and violence and that an intolerable "parallel authority" had evolved in which students and some teachers were frustrating the proper exercise of authority. During 1972 and immediately before and after the 1973 elections that gave C ampora brief occupancy of the presidential chair, administration and classroom activity came close to collapse as academic buildings were physically occupied by competing undergraduate groups.

Shortly after the C ampora inauguration the government moved once more to intervene in the national universities. The motives for this action were complicated. The students were out of hand, but their several factions were united in general support of the new government. A better reason may have been expressed by President C ampora when, in his inaugural address, he stated that the universities would have to abandon their artificial isolation and place themselves at the disposal of society. This would seem to indicate that the intervention had been a preparatory move leading to the restructuring of the universities, a conclusion reinforced by the announcement that a new universities law was being drafted. Curiously, however, some of the intervenors—particularly the intervenor appointed for the University of Buenos Aires—commenced promptly to engage in altercation with the minister of culture and education.

Student disorders and occupations of buildings continued after the intervention, and late in the summer of 1973 the minister of culture and education declined to speculate on when the intervention would terminate. Among the several student factions the Peronist University Youth (Juventud Universitaria Peronista—JUP) played the most active, or at least the best publicized, role. In one of its press releases the JUP called for a better orientation of university education toward the needs of economic production, a gradual disappearance of the differentiation between manual and intellectual labor, and the incorporation of the universities into the political life of the nation through the introduction of doctrinary-theoretical training in their studies programs. Statements by some of the intervenors followed generally similar lines.

This populist and Marxist posture was supplemented by a strong nationalist reaction against foreign influence. On a theoretical level, the new xenophobia was marked by student and teacher protest against what was described as a foreign methodological and statistical approach to sociological and political study material. On a practical level, it was marked in one national university by violent protest over the proposed award of a copper-mining concession to a foreign corporation. Other incidents involved student protest over extension of a credit by the Inter-American Development Bank, a university's initiation of steps to

cancel a teaching contract with a foreign foundation, and a university intervenor's announcement that individuals holding posts in multinational or foreign business enterprises would be banned from teaching posts.

Soon after the intervention, an unreported number of professors were dismissed, sanctioned, or ordered to appear before academic tribunals. The intervenor at the University of Buenos Aires announced that the introductory cycle of basic studies in the law and social sciences faculty would be replaced by a vocational and informational cycle and that studies of the social history of Argentina would be made mandatory in all faculties. A further statement that entrance examinations would be abolished was later withdrawn or denied.

During the summer and early fall of 1973 some university intervenors and the dominant student groups and their teacher supporters appeared to be in a race against time. Their views did not necessarily reflect those of the government, and they seemed anxious to place in effect a maximum number of their kind of changes before the confused university situation became stabilized by enactment of the forthcoming university reform legislation.

#### **Extrauniversity Higher Education**

In 1971 a miscellaneous assortment of more than 200 units provided postsecondary education outside the university system to nearly 52,000 students. Some 88 percent were being trained as teachers; about 3 percent were engaged in higher studies in the plastic and performing arts and, although not necessarily training for teaching work, graduates in this area were considered qualified for teaching positions. A little less than 9 percent were training in nonteaching specialties. Schools in this sector, many of them operated by government agencies for training their own technical personnel, offered programs of varying length for agricultural technicians, social workers, paramedical specialists, archivists, museum curators, and broadcasting technicians.

Chief among the teaching institutions were the four-year units for the teaching of secondary teachers collectively denominated as the Higher Institute of Secondary Teacher Training and the five-year course of study at schools of the National Institute of Language Training. There were also shorter courses of study for teachers of kindergarten, domestic sciences, and physical education.

Extrauniversity enrollments soared from 27,000 in 1969 to 38,000 in 1970 and to nearly 52,000 in 1971. Detailed data are not available, but the sharp increase apparently reflected the coincidental phasing out of the secondary-level schools for the training of primary teachers and the substitution of two-year secondary study courses for individuals who had completed secondary studies. The enrollment increase of 25,000 between 1969 and 1971 constituted only a small fraction of the more than 200,000 who had been enrolled in the old normal schools, but in the late

1960s there was an oversupply of primary teachers, and only a small fraction of the normal school graduates were entering the teaching profession (see *The Teaching Profession*, this ch.). The new institutions, which were to be devoted initially to the training of teachers in the elementary (*elemental*) cycle of the new basic education program, were to be known generally as teacher training institutes (*institutos de formación docente*) to distinguish them from the four-year professorship institutes (*institutos del profesorado*).

Because so large a proportion of the extrauniversity students are training for careers in the female-dominated teaching profession, in 1970 some 85 percent were young women. They tend to be somewhat younger than university students. Because they are for the most part training with specific careers in sight, they are more often full-time students, and they tend to associate themselves with activist causes far less than do students in the universities.

## EDUCATIONAL REFORM

A 1968 resolution of the Ministry of Culture and Education initiated what was described as a basic and integrated reform of the educational system. The reform was to affect all levels of schooling but was focused principally on the primary and secondary programs. The resolution was for the most part stated deliberately in terms of general goals rather than specific projects, but at the forefront was to be a redistribution of the twelve years of regular education below the university level from the existing seven years of primary and five years of secondary classes to a program made up of nine years of basic schooling followed by three years at the next higher level. The reform called also for extending the period of mandatory school attendance to include all nine years of basic education, increasing the optional kindergarten attendance and making it available to more children of working-class families, and stimulating earlier enrollment in the basic, or primary, classes to a point where 95 percent of all children six years of age would be enrolled by 1975. The reordering of primary and secondary schedules was remarkably similar to changes being implemented for similar reasons during the early 1970s in the school systems of Peru and Bolivia.

The nine-year basic program was to consist of five-year elementary and four-year intermediate cycles. The elementary curriculum was to be general in content and standard for all students. The curriculum during the intermediate years was to include some specialized courses, but the flow between the two cycles was to be unbroken.

It was recognized that a large number of students would leave school after completion of the ninth grade, but by making attendance during the first nine years mandatory and by making the educational process during these years a continuous one, it was hoped to defer by two years the sharp attrition of students completing the seventh and last year of the currently existing primary school. In addition, proponents of the change

pointed out that students continuing their education beyond the basic, or primary, level would benefit from a two-year respite in facing the necessity of determining what kind of secondary school to attend and whether or not to plan for still further study at the university level.

Elementary school was to be divided into a three-year and a two-year cycle with automatic grade promotions within the cycles. Intermediate school was considered as representing a critical period of transition between the general introductory studies of elementary classes and studies at the higher levels. In it four or five teachers in each grade would teach broad areas of study divided into social sciences and languages, natural sciences and mathematics, politicoeconomic studies, and artistic expression and sports. It also was to be divided into two cycles with automatic promotions within the cycles.

The old secondary schools were to give way to middle (*medio*) units, providing a minimum of three years of education to all young people continuing beyond the intermediate level. It was described as a polytechnical level, but the word was broadly defined to include studies of all kinds relevant to "knowledge and human occupations" and would therefore include general programs leading to university entrance. It would, however, place greater emphasis on more comprehensive programs of technical education. The current baccalaureate and technical secondary schools were to coexist with the new middle-school units until accumulated experience indicated the most appropriate manner of integrating them into the new system. At the time the old secondary-level normal schools were to be discontinued, and future teachers for the nine-year basic education program were to be trained in two-year courses of study in extrauniversity institutions of higher education. Other, less specific, goals of the reform involved such matters as taking greater advantage of the educational value of practical work, a change in teaching methods to place greater emphasis on education rather than mere instruction, a revision of the curricula designed to promote a smoother flow of students from grade to grade throughout the twelve years of basic and middle schooling, and a better correlation between the educational program and the needs of society.

The educational reform program commanded considerable attention in the Argentine press and in international journals concerned with education during 1970 and 1971, but the program's progress largely disappeared from the news after 1971. By that year the normal-school phase of the reform had been substantially implemented, but in 1973 the most recent official statistics available on school enrollments continued to be arranged in terms of the old primary-secondary organizational structure.

## LITERACY AND ADULT EDUCATION

In the early 1970s Argentina had probably the highest rate of literacy in Latin America and one of the highest in the world. Census data

showed it to have risen from 86.4 percent of the population aged fourteen years and older in 1947 to 91.4 percent in 1960. A 1969 survey showed it at 92 percent, and in 1970 the minister of culture and education reported illiteracy reduced to 6 percent. In the early 1970s it appeared that literacy—at least by the marginal international definition of it as ability to read and write a simple paragraph had been reached by almost all adults.

The 1960 census had shown men to have achieved a slightly higher incidence of literacy than women and the achievement of literacy among urban dwellers to have been considerably greater than that among people in the countryside. The male literacy rate was 92.02 percent (94.97 urban and 83.42 percent rural); the rate for females was 89.75 percent (92.55 percent urban and 79.13 percent rural).

Electoral rolls, which are kept up to date on a year-to-year basis and which include a coefficient of literacy, indicated that by the early 1970s women—at least in urban localities—had equaled or surpassed men in literacy. In addition, in 1971 National Civil Registry reports showed that illiteracy among registered voters was above 20 percent in the provinces of Corrientes, Chaco, and Santiago del Estero and between 15 and 26 percent in six other provinces.

Some authorities contend that the official figures for literacy are unrealistically high in the sense that many counted as literate have dropped back into functional illiteracy because of inadequate schooling through lack of use of learned skills. By the early 1970s, however, virtually all children had access to some schooling, and the estimated 14,000 illiterates over the age of fourteen who were being added to the population annually resulted more from premature abandonment of classes than from never having attended school. More than one-third of the country's literacy centers were closed in 1968 as the adult education program was being increasingly concentrated on forms of adult education more extensive than simple literacy training.

The principal thrust of adult education is directed not at giving the rudiments of academic education but at improving practical skills, particularly in industry and agriculture, and in developing middle-grade managerial cadres. The typical adult student is a young employed person studying at night. The student is as likely to be female as male because of the increasing number of employed women.

Courses are conducted by national, provincial, municipal, and private authorities. They are held in regular schools under the direction of members of the regular teaching staffs during evening hours; in schools devoted exclusively to adult education, which hold three sessions daily; and in schools attached to the armed forces, hospitals, and prisons. There are also company schools conducted in factories for the benefit of employees, although there is no systematic apprenticeship program to complement technical school education.

In 1970 some 461,000 individuals—a little more than one-tenth of the country's school population—were enrolled in adult education classes,



not including literacy courses. Nearly 113,000 were in post-school-age primary school night classes, and more than 348,000 were in other units denominated *parasistemática*, which were not considered to be a part of the regular school system.

In 1970 less than half the students were males; men made up more than two-thirds of the total in the primary-level classes, but females were in a large majority in the *parasistemática* courses. Most were in privately operated institutions listed as private academies. In general, courses of study paralleled those offered in technical and vocational schools of the regular system.

The 1970 enrollment constituted more than 8 percent of the total school population for that year and a gain of some 38 percent over the enrollment in 1960. The large number of adult students and the healthy increase in enrollments during the 1960s reflected a high level of interest by young adults in further education. In one 1960s survey of automobile workers, it was found that more than one-third of the younger personnel and 17 percent of those thirty-five years of age and older looked forward to further schooling as a means of improving their status.

The high proportion of female students in the *parasistemática* schools is attributed in part to the scanty matriculation of females in technical schools in the regular system where a traditional prejudice against enrollment of women is only gradually being overcome (see The Educational System, this ch.).

The active Argentine National Directorate of Adult Education in the early 1970s was one of two national educational authorities in Latin America working in cooperation with the Organization of American States on an adult education project for the analysis and evaluation of adult schooling systems in the region. The project called for cooperation with individual countries in research and planning and the sponsorship of basic and advanced training of high-level personnel in administration, planning, and research in the field.

## THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Between 1940 and 1970 the number of teachers in the educational system tripled, and the number of students increased by 123 percent. In 1970 the number of students per teacher was about twenty in kindergarten classes, eighteen in school-age primary classes, seven in secondary schools, twelve in institutions of higher education, twenty-six in adult literacy classes, and twenty in adult education.

During recent years the student-teacher ratio has declined in schools of all kinds at all levels, and in 1970 the general average was probably the lowest in Latin America. The statistics, however, were misleading to the extent that a large proportion of the instructional personnel at the secondary and higher levels and in the adult programs were employed on a part-time basis. Nonetheless, there were a great many teachers, and

those in the public system made up by far the largest single occupational element in the civil service.

At all levels, and in both public and private schools, a high degree of qualification was characteristic in the sense that virtually all had attended the proper kind of school for the proper number of years. Data available in the early 1970s indicated that Argentina was alone among the Latin American countries in having a corps of primary teachers among whom there were none without the requisite academic or other qualifications. Teachers at the higher education level had the same maximum qualification record, and in 1967 only 3 percent of the secondary-level teachers were listed as not qualified. Qualitatively, however, the degree of excellence in background was limited; for example, in the universities some professors appear to have been considered qualified on the basis of having received an undergraduate degree in the discipline taught.

A study of the teaching profession in Argentina notes that "teaching has always been a woman's job, a supplement to the overloaded budget of middle class families." It is one of the few professional occupations open to females, and the number of women in that profession almost doubled between 1950 and 1970 while the number of men increased only marginally. Only in technical secondary schools and universities did men remain in a majority, and even in these institutions the rate of increase of women teachers was the faster of the two. In 1970 they made up 76.4 percent of the personnel in the teaching corps as a whole.

At no level of education was there an overall teacher shortage in the late 1960s and early 1970s, although in secondary schools demand exceeded supply for personnel teaching the exact sciences, foreign languages, and physical education. In some of the less desirable posts in remote parts of the interior, the shortage in these specialized fields was acute.

In general, however, the country has more teachers than it can use. In the late 1960s it was estimated that 100,000 people qualified for teaching positions, particularly at the primary level, did not hold teaching jobs. This oversupply contributed as much to the decision in 1968 to phase out the normal schools for preparation of primary teachers as did dissatisfaction with curriculum (see Educational Reform, this ch.). In 1968 the nearly 204,000 students enrolled in these normal schools had outnumbered the teachers employed in primary schools of all kinds.

Preprimary and primary teachers are usually full-time personnel, but teachers at the secondary level are employed on a schedule of hours that ranges from as few as five to as many as forty during a five-day week. Part-time personnel sometimes occupy two or even three positions. In 1970 there were officially reported to be nearly 113,000 secondary teachers, but the figure reflected assignments rather than individuals; the unreported actual number of teaching personnel must have been substantially smaller.

Personnel teaching specialized secondary courses are frequently professionals and businessmen devoting a few hours weekly to teaching

assignments. So many were engaged in this fashion during the early 1970s that they were commonly referred to as *profesores taxímetros* (taxicab professors). The terminology is not inappropriate; well over half of the secondary enrollments were in Buenos Aires and a few other major cities, and the part-time teachers must have found it necessary to use taxis in hurrying to their school assignments.

The university teaching corps suffered a severe blow when more than 1,000, including a high proportion of full-time personnel, were dismissed after government intervention in the universities during 1966. Many or most left the country in a virtual diaspora, although some found employment in the several private research institutes and foundations that had sprung up during the 1950s and 1960s. The crippled faculties functioned with increased proportions of inadequately trained part-time personnel. Teachers were reportedly often late or absent from classes, and there was a tendency for fieldwork, laboratories, and other forms of instruction to replace direct teaching. Inadequate budget allocations during recent years, however, meant that little money was available for purchase and maintenance of instructional aids.

The resulting decline in the quality of instruction during the late 1960s and early 1970s was an important contributing factor to the rising tempo of student unrest during those years. The increasingly critical situation of the universities culminated in a second government intervention in the universities early in 1973 and an undetermined but probably considerable number of dismissals of professorial personnel. The dismissed teachers appeared for the most part those believed to have been too closely associated with previous governments but appeared also to have included a large proportion of the remaining professional scholars. During immediately preceding years educators had complained that the universities could not fulfill their roles as centers of research and learning without developing a stronger nucleus of adequately prepared full-time professors. The trend in late 1973, however, appeared to be in exactly the opposite direction (see *The Educational System*, this ch.).

The Teachers' Statute of 1956 provided teachers at all levels with guarantees of seniority and tenure, freedom of assembly, right of appeal against inequitable administrative action, and equitable job assignments, including assignment to desirable urban localities after service in the countryside. These guarantees have not always been observed, however. Salaries have remained low at all levels, and the part-time university professors have received little more than token payments.

A 1972 study of teacher income as compared with the costs of living in ten major world cities found incomes of Buenos Aires teachers to be lowest or next to lowest in terms of all of the nine major consumer expenditure categories that were included in the study. In 1971 the National Development Council had stated the need for raising the real salaries of teachers at rates averaging 50 percent more than those of other civil servants during the 1971-75 period, but a nationwide strike was called by

teacher unions in 1972 on grounds that an announced 15 percent increase was insufficient to place salaries on a level with the minimum wage of skilled workmen.

At the beginning of 1972 the \$3,339 (for value of the new peso—see Glossary), monthly basic salary of a full-time university professor was equal to more than nine minimum wages, 82 percent that of a top-ranking public official, and 55 percent that of a supreme court justice. Most of the university teachers remained part-time personnel, however, and for these people nonsalary considerations were the more important determinants for acceptance of professorial appointments.

## CHAPTER 6

### LIVING CONDITIONS

The quality of living conditions experienced by Argentines during 1973 was distinctively different from that experienced by most other peoples of Latin America. Only in neighboring Uruguay was there significant similarity in the patterns of living that for the most part were more readily comparable with those of North America or Western Europe.

Within the country, the patterns differed by locality and by economic status, but the differences were less significant than those encountered in other Latin American states. The range in income between the rich and the poor was less pronounced than elsewhere in the region, and even the poorest Argentine had access to a relatively wide variety of goods and services. City dwellers for the most part lived more affluently than country people. A larger proportion of the Argentine population lived in cities and towns than in any other country of the region, with the exception of Uruguay. Moreover, the difference between the conditions of living in countryside and in town was minimized by the fact that the small rural population participated in the national life and was integrated in the market economy to an extent unmatched elsewhere.

During the 1960s and early 1970s rampant inflation had not prevented the continued expansion of already comprehensive health and welfare programs, although administrative cumbersomeness and mismanagement of the latter had caused substantial hardship to beneficiaries. This inflation, however, had a profound effect on consumption patterns. The rapid and sustained erosion of the currency encouraged people to spend as much as possible in the shortest possible time. This disincentive to saving, coupled with the highest per capita income in Latin America and the availability of a relative abundance of goods and services, in 1973 made Argentines consumption oriented to a degree not encountered elsewhere in the region.

Foodstuffs and wearing apparel were the principal consumer goods. Argentines did not spend relatively more for food and clothing, but their relative affluence made them the best and most nutritiously fed and among the best dressed people in Latin America. Their demand for food, in particular, was selective and inelastic; the rise in price of a favored foodstuff, such as beef, simply meant a reduction in the purchase of something else. A remarkably large proportion of disposable income,

however, was devoted to general expenses, in particular to the acquisition of a variety of durable and semidurable consumer goods and to a rich assortment of recreational purposes.

A variety of factors had combined to produce a housing shortage of epic proportions, but housing was the only conspicuously unsatisfactory aspect of day-to-day living in 1973. Not everyone shared equally in the good things of life, and inflation and political instability clouded future prospects. In general, however, the Argentine people were living well, if uncertainly.

## DIET AND NUTRITION

Argentina's generally ample and nutritious diet is highest, or next to the highest, in Latin America in per capita consumption of meats, dairy products, sugar, fats, oils, and fruits. Green vegetables, cereals, tubers, pulses, nuts, and seafood are readily available in quantity, but demand for them is limited. A major net food exporter, the country shipped out 15 percent of the value of foods produced and imported only 2 percent of the food consumed during the late 1960s; most of the imports were such specialties as coffee, tropical fruits, and canned luxury items.

No cultural taboos inhibit the use of naturally nutritious foods. There is, however, a general tendency to place great emphasis on meat—particularly beef—and to overemphasize the value of quantity in food consumption. There is also a tendency to attribute high value to food as symbolizing hospitality and as a means of personal and daily satisfaction.

Because of lower rural incomes and imperfect food distribution in the countryside, rural diets are generally less satisfactory than urban ones, and there are pronounced regional variations. In the northern provinces, diets are sometimes deficient in protein, vitamins—riboflavin, in particular—and iodine. In 1971 malnutrition in San Juan Province was cited as the most important primary or associated cause of death among young children; and in the chronically depressed province of Tucumán, people living around the sugar mills depend to a large extent on sugarcane, starches, and cheap cereals. A high rate of rejection of military recruits in Patagonia has been attributed in part to protein and mineral deficiencies in the diet. In general, however, the quantity and variety of foods produced, the relatively high per capita income, the large proportion of the population residing in urban localities where well-stocked markets provide access to food of all kinds, and the high value placed by most people on food combine to make the difference in nutritional values between the best and the worst fed people much less than that in a majority of the Latin America countries.

Although statistical data on per capita food consumption in calories and proteins vary somewhat, all data reported in the late 1960s and early

1970s showed intakes higher than in any other country of Latin America, with the possible exception of Uruguay. A set of calculations for 1967 showed the per capita total to include 3,360 calories, 100 grams of protein, and 121 grams of fats and oils. A high proportion of complete (animal) protein was indicated by the low intake of supplementary high-protein foods such as pulses and nuts.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s there was some rationing of foods, and there were complaints about shortages and fast-rising food prices. In fact, however, during the 1960s the availability of food appears to have improved. According to United Nations figures, between the 1960-62 period and 1969 the net food supplies per capita increased in cereals, potatoes, starches, sweets, pulses, nuts, meat, fats, and oils. Among the food categories reported, only the per capita supply of milk declined. The reported per capita calorie supply increased from 2,810 to 3,160 per day, and the grams of protein from eighty-two to 105.

Beef is the mainstay of the Argentine diet, and the workingman feels deprived without it. According to National Meat Board data, per capita intake reached more than 200 pounds annually in 1969 before declining radically in the early 1970s. The recorded decline, however, was the result of intermittent consumption bans imposed to increase supplies available for export, and there is evidence of a substantial increase in black-market beef from clandestine slaughterhouses and from licensed installations exceeding their quotas. The demand for beef is highly inelastic; between 1948 and 1973 it is calculated that the amount of work required to earn enough money to purchase a given amount of beef almost quadrupled, but consumption did not decline significantly.

Between November 1968 and February 1971 the price of beef more than doubled, while the price of other meats rose by an average of only about one-third. In 1971, however, beef consumption was six times that of ham and ten times that of mutton. Mutton is consumed in quantity only in Patagonia, where beef is rarely marketed. Other kinds of meat are largely ignored in all regions, although in 1972 a firm already exporting horsemeat to Europe asked permission to market it domestically for human consumption.

During 1971 poultry consumption—principally of chicken—was about one-sixth that of beef. Poultry and eggs are eaten principally in Buenos Aires and only rarely outside the Pampa provinces. Freshwater fish are plentiful, and the waters of the continental shelf are among the world's richest in seafood. In the early 1970s, however, the annual per capita consumption was only about four pounds.

The substantial consumption of fruits increased from 179 pounds per capita in 1960 to 272 pounds in 1971. Citrus fruits made up more than half of the total, followed in order by bananas, table grapes, pears, apples, and peaches. Nearly all of the increases resulted from a sharp rise in citrus consumption, most of it absorbed by the soft drink industry. Argentines show a marked preference for fresh fruits over canned prod-

ucts, a preference the opposite of that in many Latin American countries, where canned fruits are relatively scarce and correspondingly prized.

The variety of the country's soil and climate permits almost all kinds of green vegetables to grow abundantly. But even though per capita consumption had increased during the 1960s, in the early 1970s they had yet to become popular diet components. The most important vegetables are onions, carrots, and squash. Lettuce and tomatoes are grown, but salads are not popular. Much of the onion, garlic, and tomato output is used in the preparation of Italian-style dishes using a semolina base.

Wheat is eaten principally in the form of bread or the semolina products that became popular during the influx of Italian immigrants after the middle of the nineteenth century. Semolina, corn, and rice are inexpensive and of particular importance to lower income families. On Sundays, however, spaghetti is a traditional favorite on the tables of the well-to-do as well as the poor.

Milk consumption varies substantially by region. In nearly one-half of the provinces the amount was reported in 1972 to be below the minimum requirement for a balanced diet, and in some northern provinces it was only about one-fourth of the national average. A downward trend during the 1960s was attributed to competition from the growing soft drink industry and to price controls that discouraged production. Between 1970 and 1972, however, an increase in fresh milk consumption from seventy-four to nearly eighty quarts per capita was accompanied by a general increase in use of milk products. The per capita intake was about eighteen pounds of cheese and 3.5 pounds of butter in 1970. Small amounts of powdered, condensed, and evaporated milk were also consumed.

*Yerba mate* (Paraguayan tea) is the traditional Argentine beverage, and the people are light tea and coffee drinkers. Consumption of the traditional beverage, however, declined steadily from 1925 to 1969 before turning upward slightly in 1970. The decline was associated with urbanization and a tendency to downgrade *yerba mate* (or *mate*) as countrified. The upturn in 1970 coincided with the mounting of an intensive advertising campaign encouraging its use.

Bottled nonalcoholic beverages of many kinds are increasingly popular and aggressively marketed. In 1973 they were placed under price control as items of necessity; previously they had been heavily taxed as luxury items. The fairly substantial consumption of beer—estimated at fourteen quarts per capita during 1972—is of the light lager and pilsner varieties and takes place principally during the summer months. Argentina is one of the world's major wine producers, however, and wine is the most popular alcoholic beverage. Red wine is preferred to white, and small amounts of heavily watered wine are often served to children. Per capita consumption increased from eighty-two to ninety-three quarts annually between 1966 and 1970. The real cost increased somewhat during that period, but during the early 1970s the price of the cheapest wine remained competitive with that of soft drinks.



Breakfast is customarily light and usually consists of rolls and coffee, which are sometimes supplemented by a piece of fruit. Country people, who rise early to go to the fields for hard manual labor, often eat a heavier meal, including a serving of meat. Lunch and dinner are both hearty and for prosperous urban families may include a soup, an order of cold meat, a main course of meat with potatoes and green vegetables, a salad, and a dessert. Lunch and dinner menus for these families are approximately the same. For working-class people in the cities and for most country people, both lunch and dinner have fewer courses. Lunch for the urban worker may consist of a pizza purchased at a company restaurant; the farmworker's lunch, served to him in the field, may be a single rice-and-meat dish. The typical meal of the small indigenous population near the Bolivian border consists of corn, boiled with potatoes or beans, and a few pieces of tripe or dried beef. In towns and, to a lesser extent, in the countryside, the waiting period between lunch and dinner is frequently broken by an afternoon tea so substantial that it assumes the proportions of a fourth meal.

Breakfast and lunch hours are generally within the range of those that are customary in the United States. Because of the prevalence of the hearty afternoon tea, however, the dinner of the urban resident is usually eaten at 9:00 or 10:00 P. M.

There are many fine restaurants, and dining out is a popular recreation. The national haute cuisine is essentially domestic in nature, however, and the excellence of fare tends to be rated in terms of its capacity to satisfy the discriminating appetite rather than of the subtlety of its concoction. A majority of the national dishes are based on meat, usually beef, and perhaps the most popular is the *asado* (a beef roast or barbecue). Also popular are *bife a caballo* (literally, beef on horseback—steak topped by a fried egg), *churrasco* (grilled steak), and *parillada* (mixed grill). When a superior cut of beef is not available, *ossobuco* (a stew made of beef shank) is frequently served. It includes onion and garlic flavoring, enlivened with sherry or white wine. A Buenos Aires workingman's lunch may consist of a pound or more of baby *bife* cooked over a charcoal fire in a grill improvised out of a tar bucket topped by reinforcing rods, and a quick meal may consist of *bife de lomo* (hamburger or a steak sandwich).

Mutton is usually barbecued, and a popular poultry dish is *puchero de gallina* (chicken stew)—consisting of a mixture of pieces of chicken, sausage, corn, and squash. Fresh fruits and cheeses are the most common desserts. Among the prepared deserts are ordinary pastries, rice pudding, and *dulce de leche* (a concoction of milk and sugar).

Rural diets are less varied than urban ones, and the canned and packaged foods that are commonplace in urban centers are considered delicacies in the countryside. In urban centers the demand for pre-prepared foods has resulted in mass production on a scale that makes possible their exportation to neighboring countries. In 1970 one Argentine firm

that was said to maintain the largest chain of food outlets in South America marketed a line of some forty pre-prepared products. Frozen foods, however, have been slow in making an appearance. Freezers are almost unknown, and refrigerators customarily have very small freezing compartments.

The increase in demand for easily prepared foods reflects the changed circumstances of current-day living. The pace of life has quickened, and a severe housing shortage has progressively reduced the area available to the housewife for cooking purposes. In addition, in fast-changing Argentina an increasing number of urban housewives have been reared in atmospheres in which the cooking was done by domestic servants, and their unfamiliarity with cooking skills makes pre-prepared dishes particularly welcome.

## CLOTHING

Argentines, in the countryside as well as in town, are generally among the best-dressed people in Latin America, and a relatively high proportion of the family budget is devoted to the purchase of wearing apparel. Some distinctive or traditional dress can still be encountered in rural areas. A popular costume of the ranch country and some other areas consists of any of several kinds of jacket and a sweater or poncho worn with long trousers called *bombachas* tucked inside boots and ballooning halfway between knee and ankle. The poncho serves as the conventional overcoat among rural people north and west of Córdoba and is frequently seen farther to the south. Also worn is a large woven scarf (*bufanda*), which virtually covers the shoulders. A colorful garment used by both sexes, it is often worn at rural affairs. In addition, bowler hats and ponchos, like those of the Bolivian Indians, are worn in parts of the Northwest Andes.

Customary dress in the cities and in much of the countryside is similar to that worn in Western Europe and North America. The difference, if any, lies in the degree of conservatism usually displayed in the selection of apparel. In the late 1960s and early 1970s trendy fashions were beginning to be seen in Buenos Aires, but even elevator operators continued to wear coats and ties, and until 1954 a police order had prohibited men from appearing on the city's streets in shirt sleeves.

Urban men wear medium-weight woolen suits during the winter months and tropical worsteds during the summer. Vests and sleeveless sweaters are worn during the colder periods, but heavy topcoats are not required. Good woolen materials are manufactured, ready-made clothing is available, and in 1971 tailor-made suits of fine quality cost between \$a500 and \$a700 (for value of the new peso—see Glossary). Good footwear is produced from lasts shaped somewhat differently from those in the shoe factories of North America. A large production of shoes reflects the Argentine's concern over being well shod and a tendency to replace rather than to repair used footwear.

Warm woollens with sleeves or jackets are worn by women during the winter months, and cottons predominate in summer. Ready-made clothing is of good quality and stylish, but taller women sometimes find it difficult to find properly fitting garments. Dressmakers are plentiful, and the quality of their work is excellent, but materials are fairly expensive. In 1971 good fabrics cost \$a80 or more per yard.

Women wear bright colors somewhat more frequently than in most countries of Latin America. Shorts are not worn on the street but are acceptable for beachwear. Buenos Aires has the reputation of being the "Paris of the Americas," and the propensity of women to spend extensively on clothing is not confined to the well-to-do. It is not uncommon for the working girl living with her parents to spend well over one-half of her earnings on her wardrobe.

Simple school uniforms are required in primary and secondary classrooms to avoid distinction in dress between the rich and the poor, and disciplinary measures are sometimes taken for failure to wear the prescribed garb. In the universities, a growing concern about social reform and a concept of an egalitarian society were sometimes reflected in a self-consciously drab and utilitarian form of dress. By the opposite token, however, urban teenagers with increasing frequency sported Italian-cut blazers or miniskirts and boots for leisure wear.

For the most part, the Argentine's acute consciousness of economic and social status is reflected in his clothing. Members of the urban middle class tend to copy the wardrobes of the elite. The urban white-collar employees make a point of dressing in a manner different from that of the manual workers. It is not unusual to see frayed shirts, stringy neckties, and threadbare but clean shirts worn by people of scanty means as symbols of their status as members of the middle class.

## HOUSING

According to provisional 1970 census data there were more than 6.4 million housing units in the country, an apparently comfortable number for a population of less than 24 million. A great many, however, were dilapidated or constructed of substandard materials. Others were single-room units, and some were occupied during only a part of the year. In the early 1970s Argentina suffered from a housing shortage generally recognized as alarming, even when measured in terms of the chronic shortage of housing throughout Latin America.

In late 1973 the extent of the shortfall was reported by a Buenos Aires newspaper to be more than 1 million and generally believed to be as high as 2.5 million units. The higher estimate was customarily quoted during the early 1970s, and official disclaimers of a shortage of that magnitude seemed based on absolute rather than relative figures. In 1968 an estimated total shortage of 2.3 million units had been broken down into an absolute deficit of 1.1 million units plus another 1.2 million that were

substandard or in need of major repair. Year-to-year data are questionable; construction progress is reported annually in an official publication, but the reporting area includes only Buenos Aires and certain municipalities of the interior. In general, during the early 1970s the shortage seemed to consist less of absolute shortages in the sense of numbers of people unable to find housing than in the excessive number of substandard and run-down units.

For the most part, the shortage affected families with the least money to spend. In 1970 it was estimated that 80 percent of the shortage was sustained by lower income groups representing a little over one-half of the population. For top income earners there was little if any shortage. A comfortable surplus of 80,000 unsold first-class new apartment units was reported available in Buenos Aires. Virtually all of the absolute housing deficit occurred in the cities, largely a consequence of the failure of housing construction to keep pace with the flow of urban migration. It was, however, officially estimated that during the late 1960s some 49 percent of rural as compared with no more than 10 percent of urban housing was below minimum acceptable standards.

The tripling of the housing shortage that is believed to have occurred between the end of World War II and the early 1970s is a legacy of the sustained urban migration of that period coupled with a chronic insufficiency of construction credit that resulted from the continued inflation. It also has been generally attributed to a 1943 freeze on urban rentals that remained in force in 1973 after periodical upward adjustments. Legislation enacted in 1970 calling for the gradual freeing of rents by 1975 was later withdrawn. In 1971 it was officially reported that rents were frozen on 470,000 apartments and single-family dwellings, including 140,000 in the Federal Capital, where they made up about 20 percent of all apartments and single-family units.

Some three-fourths of the country's housing counted in 1970 consisted of "conventional" dwellings, determined by such criteria as construction of permanent materials and possession of direct access to a street. The remainder were impermanent or substandard structures of various kinds. Probably the most numerous and certainly the most notorious of these were the improvised shacks clustered in suburban squatter slums called *villas miserias* (literally, misery towns).

No one knows exactly how many *villa miseria* shanties exist. Data published in 1973 and attributed to an official source indicated that in Buenos Aires alone, some 500,000 people were housed in nearly 400 improvised communities. Other estimates indicate a somewhat smaller total for Buenos Aires, but they can also be found on the outskirts of every major urban center. A single flash flood in the city of Mendoza in 1970 carried away some 500 of these ramshackle dwellings.

Eradication of the *villas miserias*, peopled for the most part by migrants from the interior, is a perennial aim of government housing authorities. The shantytowns are unsanitary and often reputed to be centers of vice and crime, but a late 1960s survey of selected *villas miserias*

showed that only about 4 percent of the heads of families were unemployed and that incomes compared favorably with the metropolitan average. A large majority of the family heads were employed in industry and construction, and most of the remainder worked in offices. The pattern appeared to be one of a citizenry far more responsible and orderly than that of the central city slum tenements.

In 1973 data from the 1970 census on forms of tenancy had not yet become available. In 1960 some 57.5 percent of the country's housing units of all kinds were owner occupied, 27.2 percent were rented, 15.3 percent were occupied under other forms of tenancy, and in 0.5 percent of the units the form of tenancy was unknown. A large proportion of the units inhabited under other forms of tenancy were dwellings of farm and ranch workers, who made up a high proportion of the agricultural labor force. Single-family units continued to predominate during the early 1970s, but the popularity of apartment living was increasing. In Greater Buenos Aires during 1971 building permits were issued for single-family dwellings with 67,500 rooms and for multifamily dwellings with 46,600 rooms. Between 1967 and 1971 there had been a progressive increase in the number of permits for multifamily units, and the number for single-family units had progressively declined.

The average family is small. In 1960 the reported average occupancy per urban housing unit was 3.5 people; for rural units it was 4.3. In urban localities the occupancy rate per room was 1.3, and in rural places it was 1.7. Argentina did not suffer the crowding that was experienced by most of Latin America, but the small size of the average family created a need for a relatively large number of housing units for the size of the population. Young urban couples were reported to be deferring marriage because of inability to find places to live (see ch. 3).

Building materials in use vary somewhat by geographic region, but in the country as a whole kilned brick is the most common material used for exterior walls, although in the countryside a majority are made of adobe or adobe brick. In both country and town, wood is frequently, and stone occasionally, used. But the absence of trees in much of the Pampa and Patagonia, and of stone in the Pampa, places a regional limitation on the use of these materials. Urban floors are usually made of wood or concrete, but floors in the countryside are often earthen. Roofing is customarily of concrete, of ceramic tile, or of metal, but thatched roofs are common in the countryside. The *villa miseria* hovels are constructed with dirt floors and walls and roofs of any scrap material found readily at hand.

Even the poorest urban family dreams of owning a brick-and-mortar house. The term *brick-and-mortar* is used to differentiate kilned material from the sun-dried adobe brick that is fixed in place by more of the same mud used to make the brick. Prefabricated housing is becoming fairly common, however, and is considerably less costly to build than brick housing of the same dimensions. More expensive prefabricated units that include a considerable amount of brickwork are also appearing.

The traditional house of the rural poor, simple in construction and forlorn in appearance, is known as *rancho* (hut). The traditional *rancho*, however, is very practical. Essentially, it is a quadrangular structure, fashioned with adobe walls, earthen floor, and a peaked or gabled roof of straw and mud. As additional units are required to house an enlarged family, they are added to form a square around a central patio. Kitchens, latrines, and storage rooms are usually separate units. In localities where stone and wood are available, they are occasionally used, but adobe is universally the preferred material. In addition to being cost free and ready at hand, it offers superior protection against heat and cold.

The Federal Capital has been virtually rebuilt since the beginning of the twentieth century, and few old buildings remain. Unlike the typical Spanish colonial city with its maze of narrow thoroughfares, the Federal Capital is laid out geometrically with streets separating square blocks measuring approximately 130 yards on the side. There are two basic diagonal routes, and many streets have been widened into major thoroughfares. The sixteen-lane Avenida 9 de Julio is said to be the widest street in the world.

Although parks are numerous, little available building space remains, and in 1970 the city's population was approximately what it had been twenty years earlier. New construction usually replaces earlier building on the same site, and much of the area is occupied by commercial structures. In general, both the wealthy and the poor have tended to move to the suburbs of Greater Buenos Aires.

Greater Buenos Aires is made up of a complex of cities and towns located on roads and railroads feeding into the Federal Capital. It is in this area of fast growth that most of the *villas miserias* and many of the low-cost public housing projects are located. It is a measure of the severity of the housing shortage that early in 1973 squatters forcibly occupied the units of a new public housing project in the satellite city of La Matanza.

Along the Río de la Plata estuary north of the Federal Capital, well-to-do families live in the Greater Buenos Aires suburbs of Olivos, San Isidro, and Martinez. In this area, elegant modern homes are interspersed with many tall apartment buildings, some with penthouse swimming pools. Although Buenos Aires has relatively fewer high-rise apartments than many Latin American cities, hundreds—ten stories or more in height—sprang up during the 1960s and early 1970s.

Housing patterns differ in the major cities. Fast-growing Córdoba and Rosario are modern cities with modern houses and broad streets showing little evidence of the past. Their quick growth is evidenced by circlets of *villas miserias*. Mendoza has little in the way of large and pretentious houses. Its tree-lined streets are flanked by modern single-story houses, and it maintains a small-town atmosphere. The colonial city of Salta has acquired a few modern blocks of apartment buildings, but there are also many old baroque houses built in the Spanish-Moorish

manner. A former governor of the province did much to preserve the colonial atmosphere by freeing all new housing built in the colonial style from taxes.

The resort city of Mar del Plata is a metropolis of hotels. Its population (less than 200,000 in 1970) increases tenfold at the height of the summer tourist season, and 1,200 hotels fringe its twenty-five beaches.

According to 1971 Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) estimates, some 65 percent of the country's population lived in housing units with direct running water connections, and another 6 percent had easy access to a nearby public supply. In rural localities, 13 percent had direct and 3 percent had easy-access facilities. In the early 1970s, however, over one-half of the Buenos Aires water system was more than sixty years old, and 60 percent of the inhabitants of Rosario, Santa Fe, and the La Matanza district of Greater Buenos Aires were without direct or easy access to piped water. The PAHO also estimated that in 1971 some 45 percent of the urban population but no rural people were served by sewerage systems. The proportion of the Argentine population with access to sanitary services was somewhat above the average for Middle and South America, but the 1971 PAHO estimates indicated that, among countries of the two regions, eight had a higher proportion with piped water and six had a higher proportion with sewer connections.

In 1973 the most recent data available concerning lighting were from the 1960 census, which had showed 84 percent of the urban and 19 percent of the rural homes as being served by electricity. Almost all of the remainder used kerosine lamps. Most of the heating was supplied by oil and coal or wood fires. In the cities, central heating had made an appearance, however, and many homes had electric or gas heaters. Cooking with gas stoves was common and, even in rural areas, bottled gas was sometimes used.

In the early 1970s the limited amount of private capital entering the housing construction area of investment was directed almost entirely toward middle and upper income families, and low income groups who could not afford the market rate of interest depended on government assistance. The National Mortgage Bank, whose operation had been hampered by a heavy portfolio of low-interest and long-term mortgage loans, was the principal source of housing capital. A bureau within the Ministry of Labor was authorized to grant loans to workers through their several pension funds. The bureau had also given unrealistic terms, such as forty-year loans, and had concentrated its activities in the Buenos Aires area. In 1972 a new public credit agency was added and was called the National Housing Fund; its capital was to be drawn from a tax of 1.5 percent on the sale of cattle, a 2.5 percent levy on wages and salaries, and a one-time tax on all houses above a certain value. In early 1973 it was reported that this fund had caused an upsurge in construction activity through its contribution of funds for the construction of 35,000 low-cost housing units.

Housing cooperatives were established soon after the beginning of the twentieth century and had some 75,000 members by the early 1970s. These associations too have been handicapped by inflation, and rent controls have provided a major obstacle. They had rented apartments to members and fixed mortgages on their homes at rates that by 1970 were wholly out of proportion to the current rental yield. In addition, many had been poorly managed, causing small investors to lose their savings. Some twenty-four savings and loan associations with about 60,000 members had also been mismanaged, and inflation and fraudulent bankruptcies had considerably reduced their popularity. Finally, commercial banks offered a source of capital for housing, but their terms were relatively short and required monthly outlays far beyond the means of lower income families.

Successive governments have unveiled plans for combating the housing shortage and, in particular, for eradicating the *villas miserias*. The most ambitious of these schemes was announced in mid-1972 when the Ministry of Social Welfare called for the construction of 500,000 units by mid-1975. The funds required, estimated at \$1.3 billion, were to be provided by the National Housing Fund. In order to meet the goal it would be necessary to more than double the rate of construction during 1968, the highest for any year on record. But during the later months of 1972 the frequency with which government spokesmen emphasized and reiterated the proposal indicated the seriousness with which the plans had been made.

Initial stages of the program called for construction of 40,000 units (later to be increased to 70,000) for applicants who already were owners of plots of land. Some 53,000 units were to be constructed for persons with scanty resources (*personas de bajos recursos*), and 134,000 units were to be built in the form of suburban nuclei replacing the *villas miserias*. The government, in announcing the schedule, referred to these shantytowns not as *villas miserias* but as *villas de emergencia* (emergency towns).

## PATTERNS OF LIVING AND LEISURE

### Holidays and Business Hours

Legislation enacted in 1955 distinguishes between seven national holidays established for all working people and ten nonworking days that are compulsory for public employees, bank personnel, insurance companies, and related occupations (see table 9). Observation of nonworking days is optional for employers of personnel in other areas of employment.

In addition, there are regional civic and religious holidays observed by all or part of the local community. For example, November 10 (Day of



Table 9. *Holidays Observed in Argentina*

| National Holidays <sup>1</sup>           | Month    | Day |
|--|----------|-----|
| Labor Day .....                          | May      | 1   |
| Anniversary of the 1810 Revolution ..... | May      | 25  |
| National Flag Day .....                  | June     | 20  |
| National Independence .....              | July     | 9   |
| Death of General San Martín.....         | August   | 19  |
| Columbus Day .....                       | October  | 12  |
| Christmas .....                          | December | 25  |

| Nonworking Days <sup>2</sup>               | Month        | Day |
|--|--------------|-----|
| New Year's .....                           | January      | 1   |
| Epiphany .....                             | January      | 6   |
| Shrove Monday and Tuesday (Carnival) ..... | Variable     |     |
| Holy Thursday .....                        | ....-do..... |     |
| Good Friday .....                          | ....-do..... |     |
| Corpus Christi .....                       | ....-do..... |     |
| Assumption .....                           | August       | 15  |
| All Saints' .....                          | November     | 1   |
| Immaculate Conception .....                | December     | 8   |

<sup>1</sup>Total of seven days.

<sup>2</sup>Total of ten days.

Source: Adapted from U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Labor Law and Practice in Argentina* (BLS Report No. 334), Washington, 1969, p. 41.

Tradition) and November 11 (Day of Saint Martin of Tours) are observed in Buenos Aires; on July 6 Córdoba celebrates the founding of the city, and between September 13 and 16 the Festival of the Savior and the Virgin of the Miracle is celebrated by the people of Salta. December 31 is a bank holiday, and most collective labor contracts prescribe that the day of observance designated for workers in the particular industry be recognized as a paid holiday. For example, August 4 is bakers' day, and November 6 is the day of bank employees. These occupational days are taken seriously; on printers' day the newspapers do not appear, and on gastronomic day the restaurants close their doors.

Sunday is the only weekly day of rest, but employed persons are granted annual vacations based on length of service. After a year's employment persons with one to five years of service receive twelve days, those with service between five and ten years receive fifteen days. Persons with service between ten and twenty years receive twenty days, and thirty days are given those who have served twenty or more years. Vacations are usually taken during the summer months of January and February or during the three-week school holiday in July.

Stores are customarily open from 8:00 A.M. to 6:30 P.M., from April to September, and open and close one hour later, from October through

March. On Saturdays, many are open only during the morning. Government offices are open only half-days in part to permit workers to hold second jobs. In winter government office-hours are from 12:30 P.M. to 7:30 P.M. and in summer, from 7:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. Banks are customarily open from noon to 4:00 P.M., but hours vary in the cities of the interior, sometimes according to season. Foreign diplomatic and consular offices are usually open from 9:00 A.M. to noon and from 1:30 to 5:00 P.M. Government offices, banks, insurance offices, and many business houses remain closed on Saturdays.

Urban restaurants and places of entertainment frequently remain open until 2:00 A.M. or later. Residents of Buenos Aires, in particular, enjoy nightlife. Dinner is eaten at a late hour, and curtain time at the theaters is 10:00 P.M. or later. The fact that crowds of people are in the streets and plazas well into the early morning hours has made the Federal Capital traditionally one of the safest central cities in the world.

In the early 1970s some shop owners and officeworkers were still being released for two to three hours at midday to enjoy the traditional siesta, although the practice was dying out. In the major urban centers many of those released for a noontime siesta found themselves spending most of that time traveling uncomfortably to and from their homes in distant suburbs.

### **Consumption Patterns**

Argentines spend the largest portion of their disposable income on food, clothing comes second, and housing and household equipment comes third. In all other aspects, however, Argentine consumption patterns are quite different from those in other Latin American countries, with the possible exception of Uruguay.

There are many reasons for the uniqueness of the Argentine pattern. Most of the population participates fully in the market economy, and nearly all of it participates to some extent; there is almost no subsistence agriculture. Argentina produces a greater variety of consumer goods and services per capita than the other countries, and there is more income per capita available for their purchase. In 1970 Argentina was listed as the only country of Latin America with a gross national product (GNP) per capita in excess of the equivalent of US\$1,000.

In Latin America, Argentina comes closest to being a middle-class country, and it has developed largely middle-class spending habits. A large proportion of the blue-collar workers "rub elbows" with white-collar or professional workers, and blue-collar incomes are frequently higher. In general, incomes are more evenly distributed than in any other country of the region.

Argentines are consumption oriented. The concentration of so much of the population in large cities means that most people have well-stocked markets readily available to them. A well-developed and sophisticated advertising industry guides consumer choices, a large proportion

of goods and services are purchased on credit, and the use of credit cards is widespread. Moreover, in 1973 most of the heads of families had grown to maturity under inflationary conditions and had learned from their own parents the importance of disposing of income before inflation eroded its value.

Consumption patterns during 1973 were considerably influenced by government controls of various kinds designed to conserve foreign exchange and slow the inflationary process. By the middle of the year some eighty-six different family consumer items were subject to maximum price limitations, and a reduction or prohibition of various luxury imports was expected to bring about an alteration in spending patterns.

It was estimated in 1970 that a working-class family in Buenos Aires spent 59.2 percent of its income on food, 18.7 percent on clothing, and 9.0 percent on housing and household equipment. Some 13.1 percent remained for other expenses and savings. Proportions of income expended by higher income families were probably progressively lower for food and clothing and higher for housing and household equipment and for miscellaneous items.

Although the proportion of income spent on food in Argentina seems fairly moderate when compared to that in many other Latin American countries, it appears generous when considered in terms of the relatively high per capita income. There is a general tendency in Latin America for the proportion expended on food to vary inversely with the amount of disposable income, but a "good table" is important to Argentines, who continue to show a willingness to pay for it despite a relative increase in the price of foodstuffs during recent years. According to one study, a market basket of edibles that would have cost a construction worker 19.1 hours of work in 1966 had risen in cost to 22.7 hours in 1972. The demand for food is inelastic, however and price increases tend to result in the curtailment of other expenses rather than in mealtime austerity (see Diet and Nutrition, this ch.). In particular, an increase in the price of beef can result in sudden strains on the family budget.

Argentines are probably the best-dressed people of Latin America and spend relatively large sums of their income on wearing apparel (see Clothing, this ch.). The relative cost of clothing, however, has been decreasing; an outfit that would have cost the construction worker thirty-eight hours of work in 1966 had declined to a cost of twenty-six hours in 1972. The proportion spent on housing and household equipment is relatively low and, between 1960 and 1973, it increased in cost at rates below the general rise in the cost of living for the working-class family in Buenos Aires (see Housing, this ch.).

It is in the amount of income devoted to expenses other than food, clothing, and housing that the pattern of consumption differs most sharply from that elsewhere in Latin America. In many other countries, the families of unskilled workers have little if anything left to spend after the costs of these essentials have been met, but nearly all Argentines spend substantial amounts on miscellaneous items.

In particular, a large proportion of income is used for the acquisition of durable and semidurable consumer goods, largely of domestic manufacture. Automobiles are a case in point. The more than 1.3 million automotive passenger vehicles registered in 1969 constituted more than one-fourth of the registration for all of Latin America. Automobiles are beyond the means of most workers in the plants that manufacture them, but many purchase motorized bicycles and scooters. The proportion of the population owning television sets and radios is probably the highest in Latin America, and there is a relatively heavy demand for a wide variety of items, such as cameras, electrical and electronic equipment, and sports equipment, and for such household conveniences as refrigerators, washing machines, and air conditioners.

Substantial amounts are spent on various forms of recreation; in particular, professional sporting events are well attended, and an estimated one-fourth of the population enjoys extensive summer vacations. Per capita consumption of newsprint is the highest in Latin America, and the National Directorate of Tourism reported 150 million copies of magazines marketed annually in the early 1970s. Cosmetics and toiletries find a ready market and, on a per capita basis, Argentina is said to be the world's second largest user of deodorants. With only about 7 percent of the population of Latin America, Argentines in 1971 were calculated to have accounted for some 17 percent of all private consumption expenditure in the region.

### Recreation

The scope of recreational activities available to Argentines varies as much in accordance with the size of the locality in which people live as it does in accordance with the amount of money they have available for this purpose. For the one-third of the population that resides in and about Buenos Aires, the variety is almost limitless, and for people of the provincial cities, it is scarcely less extensive. Inhabitants of rural localities and small towns have less to occupy their spare time, but these represent a small portion of the total population. In general, extensive urbanization, a relatively high per capita income, and a disposition to spend substantial amounts on leisure activities give the Argentine people a rich recreational life.

Sports, particularly those involving team play, occupy an important role. Organized competitions first became popular late in the nineteenth century, largely under the influence of the Anglo-Argentine community. The Buenos Aires Cricket Club in the 1880s was an immediate success. Clubs were also established for rowing and sailing along the waterways of the Paraná River delta to the north of the city. Before the end of the century the first public swimming pool was opened in Buenos Aires.

The most popular sport introduced before the end of the nineteenth century, however, was soccer. Imported by British sailors, it quickly attracted devotees, Professional soccer developed in 1931, and during the

early 1970s the game was played throughout Argentina, in towns and villages as well as in the cities. In Buenos Aires alone there were more than twenty stadiums, six of which seated 60,000 to 100,000 spectators.

In the 1920s Luis Firpo gained immortality in the boxing world as the "Wild Bull of the Pampas," and in 1970 Carlos Monzón won the world middleweight title. By the 1930s basketball had been accepted enthusiastically and in some parts of the interior was destined to exceed soccer in popularity. Fencing and gymnastics had acquired devotees, women had begun to engage in organized competitions, and interest in athletic competitions in cities of the interior had begun to rival that in Buenos Aires.

Automobile racing was introduced during the 1930s; circuit and rally competitions quickly became popular, and the Buenos Aires Autodrome was the site of the 1973 Formula 1 World Competition. Cycling was introduced at a later date. By the early 1970s boating of all kinds had long been popular, and Argentina had produced a single-scutt world champion. Swimming and track were considered primarily a means of relaxation, but in 1973 Horacio Iglesias became the world's champion professional marathon swimmer for the fourth time.

Cricket and rugby were for many years monopolies of Angol-Argentines and the British colony, but rugby was eventually taken up by local clubs, and in the early 1970s accounts of rugby matches were reported in the Buenos Aires press with a prominence rivaling that of soccer. The name of Roberto Di Vincenzo had long been prominent in the golfing world, baseball had taken root, and both men and women were competing in field hockey and volleyball. The country had produced international-class billiards players, and the existence of more than thirty sky-diving clubs gave testimony to the variety and sophistication of the national interest in sports.

In 1924 Argentina competed for the first time in the Olympic games and emerged with medals in polo and marksmanship. In 1936 for the first time an Argentine woman was an Olympic medal winner.

Argentine horseflesh is world famous, and equestrian sports rank second only to soccer in national popularity. Under certain circumstances the army's Riding and Veterinarian Command provides cost-free stud services in order to improve the quality of the herds. Argentine horsemen regularly dominate the international polo circuit, and the Argentine Open Championship and the Americas Cup, held regularly in Buenos Aires, are premier occasions in the polo world. Horse shows are popular among the well-to-do, and in 1972 more than 4 million Buenos Aires bettors patronized the hippodrome at El Palermo Park and the turf track at San Isidro. In towns and villages of the interior racing may take the form of a *cuadrera*, an event in which two horses are ridden bareback along a straight track.

*Pato*, the country's only notable indigenous form of athletic competition, is an exciting mixture of polo and basketball. In it, mounted teams

of adversaries struggle for possession of an inflated leather bag—originally the body of the duck (*pato*)—in order to carry it down the playing field and toss it through a goal.

Buenos Aires is believed to have more sports grounds than any other city in the world. The establishment of the National Institute of Physical Education as a university-level entity of the regular public school system has led to the development of a highly trained corps of professional instructors. A few decades ago athletics were for the most part casual affairs of concern only to the contestants but in the present day, spectators have become as deeply committed to the success of their favorite teams.

As spectator sports were gradually attaining the popularity that was to make them the country's most important recreational outlet, amateur and professional leagues playing regular schedules involving international as well as nationwide competition developed. The sponsoring organizations were sports clubs. At first these institutions were confined to Buenos Aires, but they soon became important in cities and towns of the interior. The international reputation enjoyed by Argentine athletes and athletic teams is in large measure a consequence of the opportunities offered by the clubs.

In addition to sponsoring teams of various kinds, many of the sports clubs maintain restaurants and facilities for meetings and entertainment. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the Hurlingham Polo and Golf Club, located in Greater Buenos Aires and catering primarily to the British colony and Anglo-Argentines, was reported to have 50,000 members. The Gymnastics and Fencing Club of Buenos Aires charged a modest annual fee to its 15,000 or more middle-class members and maintained both a downtown headquarters with library, ballroom, and roof garden and a suburban center in Palermo Park that had swimming pools, sports fields, and a three-storied clubhouse.

At the top of the social scale was the Jockey Club, a gathering place for the elite and one of the world's most famous of its kind. Its clubhouse was destroyed by a mob in 1953, but the organization survived; membership in it remained a cachet of social distinction and a vehicle for possible advancement in business or politics. In general, however, the Argentine men's club as an institution has continued to be associated primarily with sports and has never achieved the significance that it has attained in parts of Europe and North America. With a few exceptions, the club is less a center of social life than a place to go for a meal, for a weekend, for a game of tennis, or for *bochas* (a form of bowling).

Social life centers more on the cafe table than the club. The *peña* (literally, a group of friends) usually takes place in a cafe and is undoubtedly the most popular urban social institution. It is a meeting—often regularly scheduled—of friends to discuss a shared political, philosophical, artistic, or other interest. Less organized than the *peña*, the *tertulia*

(gathering or circle) is simply a meeting of friends for a glass of wine or a cup of coffee in one of the many urban cafes and bars.

Most public gatherings are predominantly male affairs. Women are seldom seen at the clubs except at weekend family outings, they do not participate in the *peñas* and *tertulias*, and relatively few attend athletic contests. Outside the home, they gather most frequently at meetings of religious and charitable organizations, at card clubs, and at afternoon teas. Bridge-canastas of upper class urban women are reported frequently in the press. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, the rising level of female education and the growing number of working women was gradually bringing about an increasing degree of female participation in recreational activities outside of the home.

Argentina has relatively few of the colorful local religious festivals that provide entertainment for country and town people in many other Latin American countries. Among the best known is the Procession of the Miracle in the city of Salta where festivities, accompanying the carrying of the image of the Virgin Mary through the streets, attract many visitors. Carnival, occurring on the Monday and Tuesday preceding the beginning of Lent, has ceased to be a major attraction in the large cities. It remains, however, the principal recreational event of the year in many smaller localities, particularly in the Northwest Andes.

Dining out is a popular diversion. The generally shared fondness for good food makes festive meals both inside and outside the home important recreational occasions for the gathering of family and friends. Nightclubs and discotheques are available for urban people who can afford them, and for people of limited means dance halls may provide the most popular form of diversion after the cinema.

People who can afford to do so take extensive summer vacations. The most popular resort is the seaside of Mar del Plata, where an estimated 2.4 million tourists vacationed during the 1971-72 season. The mountain lakes of the southern Andes, the Córdoba hill country, and the beaches of nearby Uruguay also attract throngs of visitors. Extended vacations are not only for the rich. In many instances people go to holiday hotels and camps maintained by the labor unions where exceptionally low costs enable families to enjoy a week or more in the hills or at the seaside for little more than it would have cost them to remain at home. In addition to maintaining vacation facilities, unions play a recreational role by sponsoring dances and other social events.

Almost everyone in Argentina seems to enjoy an occasional wager. Weekly lotteries conducted by the national government and some of the provincial administrations attract less attention than those in many of the other Latin American countries, possibly because of the variety of other forms of gambling available. During 1972 about a \$2.5 million was realized in the gross earnings by games of chance operated by the central government. Of this total, about 15 percent came from the lottery; 25 percent, from betting at the Buenos Aires racetracks of San Isidro

and Palermo; 28 percent, from a pool of professional soccer scores; and 32 percent, from proceeds at casinos.

Proceeds from the recently established, but very popular, soccer pool were based on the outcome of forty-one major matches. Casino proceeds came from eleven government-operated establishments, over one-half of the total from the casino at Mar del Plata, which is said to be the world's largest. In addition to the officially sanctioned forms of gambling, there were numerous informal ones available. Outstanding among those was the *quiniela*, an equivalent of the numbers game in the United States, which was reported in late 1973 as likely to come under official auspices.

Buenos Aires offers the richest cultural fare of any city in Latin America. It has more than fifty major art galleries and museums, three symphony orchestras, and a variety of ballet troupes and opera companies. The ornate Colón Opera House played to nearly 250,000 people during the 1970 season, and the eleven-storied building of the San Martín Municipal Theater houses three separate stages. More than forty legitimate theaters produce plays by Spanish and Argentine authors as well as Broadway and European offerings. It is possible to see Broadway plays simultaneously produced in New York and at the same time to find the best in European and Argentine theater available. It is said to be possible to attend the theater nightly for a month in Buenos Aires without seeing a repeated performance. Competent domestic theatrical companies perform in basements and churches or on the street, and many open-air summer concerts are offered free of charge. Cultural fare of almost corresponding variety and quality is available in major interior cities such as Córdoba, Rosario, and Mendoza.

Motion picture attendance has declined sharply. In 1960 the average Argentine attended about seven films annually, and the country ranked high among Latin American states in attendance. But by 1969 the average had fallen to about four per year. The fewer than 20 million paid admissions in the Federal Capital during 1971 were little more than one-fourth of those recorded in 1957. Data available in the early 1970s indicate that about one-half of the current motion picture attendance was in the Federal Capital, one-fourth was in Greater Buenos Aires, and one-fourth was in the interior. The lopsidedness of these proportions seems extreme, but the far greater popularity of films in the Buenos Aires area is evident.

Attendance has declined with the increasing popularity of television and the imposition of fairly rigid censorship regarding the showing of films involving crime, sex, and violence. It may also have been adversely influenced during the early 1970s by restrictions intermittently imposed on the importation of films.

Distributors customarily import seven or eight copies of major pictures for simultaneous release in Buenos Aires and in first-run theaters in cities in the interior. Films from the United States are the most frequently shown, followed in order by those from Italy and Great Britain;



a minimum proportion of domestically produced films must be shown in each theater. It was noted in 1972 that box office earnings of four burlesque music halls in the Federal Capital matched those of thirty-two first-run motion picture theaters.

## HEALTH

### Administration of Health Program

Isolation from Europe during the years of World War II had the effect of weakening the previously dominant influence of France on Argentine medical practices. Since then the United States has emerged as the principal source of inspiration, but French, British, West German, and Swedish influences have remained of importance. Most hospital, medical and dental instruments and supplies, and pharmaceuticals are locally manufactured, although some of the more complex and highly specialized items continue to be imported.

Budget allocations for the public health program fluctuated within a narrow range of between 6 and 7 percent of the total during the years 1968 through 1972. For 1973, however, they declined sharply to approximately 4.8 percent, and the subsecretary of public health stated that far larger allocations would be required in the future. Much of the program cost is defrayed by deductions from the pay of employed and retired persons. Inoculations are administered without charge. Indigents are, however, entitled to free hospitalization, and schoolchildren receive compulsory physical and dental examinations. Many schools have organized medical and dental clinics of their own.

In 1973 Argentina had yet to establish a comprehensive national health program, but health authorities had acknowledged publicly that the maze of official, semipublic, and private groups concerned with the administration of medical care involved a great deal of confusion, duplication of effort, and unnecessary expense. For example, a so-called decentralization law of 1972 had the effect of granting a degree of autonomy to no less than ninety-two public health dependencies in the Ministry of Social Welfare. In addition, in mid-1973 a decree was issued providing for the establishment of the National Health Council in which government, labor, and management were to be represented. This move was intended to lead to the eventual establishment of the National Health System (Sistema Nacional de Salud) and a career public health service tentatively designated the National Medical Career (Carrera Médica Nacional).

The core of the public health program during the early 1970s was a system of state and municipal hospitals and outpatient facilities. Although many of these were modern and staffed by highly competent personnel—a large proportion of whom worked part time and also maintained private practices—they suffered badly from overcrowding, understaffing, and chronic shortage of funds. It was estimated by the Sec-

retariat of Public Health in 1970 that an expenditure of \$a5 million pesos would be required in order to bring the state hospital services up to date. These institutions were designed to provide free care to those unable to pay and who were not participants in any other medical program. But in practice they provided much of the country's medical care. In particular, the generally effective programs maintained by the labor unions were accused of referring members with paid-for health insurance to the cost-free state facilities.

During the early 1970s private hospitals and clinics were less crowded and had higher standards than the public establishments. In particular, several small private hospitals in Buenos Aires were less crowded and had higher standards than the public facilities. The British Hospital, for example, provided treatment for most kinds of medical and surgical care at modest cost and furnished free service to persons of British descent who were unable to pay. Many business enterprises underwrite care in private hospitals for their personnel.

The wealthier labor unions operate excellent hospitals and clinics, and most unions sponsor obligatory medical insurance schemes funded from payroll deductions. These provide a wide range of services, either at no cost or at very substantial reductions from regular charges. In addition, some unions operate pharmacies or have made arrangements permitting members to purchase drugs at reduced prices. Charges of incompetent or unethical management of union medical funds have frequently been heard.

There are also a great many private and cooperative medical plans that for the most part are inexpensive and efficiently operated. In 1972 it was estimated that 2,500 mutual associations had a membership of about 4.5 million. A choice of physician and hospital is usually offered, and some associations maintain their own facilities.

In 1970 the National Social Works Institute (Instituto Nacional de Obras Sociales—INOS) was established to ensure the extension of medical coverage to all wage and salary earners. The costs of coverage were to be covered by a fund supported by employer and worker contributions and were to be open to dependents on the basis of an additional worker contribution. Provisions were also made for contributions by pensioned and retired persons. Membership was to be generally obligatory and was expected to cover between 5 and 6 million workers and their dependents.

The new plan would afford medical protection to some workers not previously covered, but a large majority of the working population already belonged to other funds, and mandatory membership in the INOS program appeared to mean either paying for both or resigning from the program in which membership was already held. The legislation was couched in general terms, and its meaning was not altogether clear. But in 1972 the Argentine Confederation of Mutual Societies complained that official policy based on the current interpretation of its provisions

threatened the very existence of the societies. In 1973 as well, letters to the press from members of private funds indicated that the relationship between these funds and the official program had not yet been satisfactorily resolved.

### **Medical Personnel and Facilities**

Argentina has a more than ample supply of physicians and dentists. Its supply of nursing personnel is inadequate, but it is more nearly satisfactory than in most countries of Latin America. According to PAHO data issued in 1971, there were 53,684 doctors. The fact that this figure represents an upward revision of more than 8,000 from previously issued statistics for 1969, however, casts some doubt on the reliability of all health personnel statistical data. It represents a ratio of 22.4 per 10,000 of the population for 1969 as compared with reported figures of 13.5 for 1960 and 8.4 for 1930.

Revised PAHO data for 1969 show that there were 12,954 dentists, or 5.4 per 10,000 population. The proportions were somewhat higher for both doctors and dentists than those of the United States for the same year and far higher than those of any other Latin American country. The fact that a customarily reliable Buenos Aires publication estimated the substantially smaller figures of 40,000 doctors and 11,000 dentists in practice during 1972 suggests that these PAHO data may have included personnel who had emigrated or were no longer in practice. By whatever standards, however, in the early 1970s Argentina had one of the world's largest resources of medical and dental personnel in relation to the size of its population. According to one source, in 1970 it ranked first in the world in availability of doctors.

The ample supply of doctors and dentists is unevenly distributed by geographic region. In the mid-1960s the proportion of doctors per unit of population in Buenos Aires was reported to be about twelve times that of Formosa Province; about three-fourths of all doctors in the country were in practice in the Federal Capital and the provinces of Buenos Aires, Córdoba, and Santa Fe. About one-half of the country's dentists were believed to be practicing in the Buenos Aires area. The concentration of medical personnel in major urban centers is characteristic of Latin America, however, and a survey of fifteen Latin American countries during the late 1960s found the proportion of Argentine physicians in practice outside the capital city and major urban centers to have been much higher than in any other country among those surveyed.

The largest of the country's nine medical schools is a part of the University of Buenos Aires, which also maintains a school of public health. The medical course is of six years' duration and is open to holders of the baccalaureate certificate from secondary schools. New medical graduates are required to complete a one-year's internship; prospective public health doctors must undergo further training in their fields of specialization. Dentists are trained at the University of Buenos Aires and several

other dental schools in five-year courses that include practical work during the last two years. Argentina is like other Latin American countries in that its university curriculum does not provide premedical and pre-dental courses of study at the undergraduate level (see ch. 5). In 1971 there were nearly 29,000 students enrolled in medical schools and over 5,000 in dental schools. A little more than one-half of the dental students and nearly one-fourth of the students in medical schools were women.

Medicine vies traditionally with law as the country's most respected profession, and an impressive number of Argentine doctors have achieved world renown. An informal count conducted in 1972 found that there were no fewer than twenty-eight Argentine medical societies, including those representing such highly specialized fields as metabolism, microbiology, toxicology, and endocrinology.

In spite of their enviable status during the early 1970s, physicians were for the most part a dissatisfied lot, and their accumulated grievances led to a widely supported strike of several days' duration in 1972. Several important pieces of health legislation since 1970 had been enacted without their consultation or approval, and they were reported by the press to believe that the national health program had become a stalking-horse behind which labor union interests were being favored at the expense of the medical profession and the country's health. In addition, under the current program most medical charges were fixed by law, and the doctors felt that they were inadequately paid and without effective means of recourse.

Enrollments in the medical schools had been on the decline since the early 1960s, and medical school graduates were leaving the country in large numbers to seek practices abroad (see ch. 3). Dissatisfaction undoubtedly contributed to the decision to emigrate, although the excess supply of doctors over the effective demand for them probably provided a more compelling motivation for this exodus.

The dental profession also has a respected place in society, and a dentist, Héctor Cámpora, served briefly as elected president in 1973. Its relatively high status relates to the fact that the profession is much further advanced than in the many Latin American countries where dentistry is largely limited to extractions. The Argentine population is more generally aware of the importance of oral hygiene; and orthodontics, repair work, and preventive dentistry are important. In the early 1970s dental school enrollments remained stable, and mass emigration similar to that of physicians had not become apparent.

According to the revised PAHO data for 1969 there were 14,471 graduate nurses and 25,754 nursing auxiliaries in the country. These figures represented six graduate and 10.7 auxiliary nurses per 10,000 of the population. The proportions were higher than the 2.3 graduate and 9.2 auxiliary health personnel for South American countries but far below the 34.8 graduate and 53.0 auxiliary personnel listed for the United States and Canada for 1969. Moreover, according to one study in the

early 1970s there were not more than 300 university-level graduate nurses and a slightly larger number with lower but acceptable qualifications.

Argentina, as well as most other Latin American countries, in the early 1970s had not fully recognized nursing as a profession, and the salaries paid did not encourage potential students. According to a 1969 survey of major Buenos Aires firms it appeared that on a salary base of 100 for an unskilled office worker, a nurse (degree of qualification unspecified) received 107, a food checker received 115, and a cafeteria assistant received 120.

In 1969 there were about 134,000 hospital beds in the country. Approximately 73 percent were in public facilities, 4 percent were in social welfare institutions, and 23 percent were in private hospitals. As reported for 1966, roughly 72 percent were in general hospitals; 18 percent, in mental hospitals; 5 percent, in tuberculosis sanitariums; and 5 percent, in specialized institutions of other kinds. The availability of beds per unit of population in the mid-1960s ranked with that in Uruguay as the highest in Latin America and was nearly twice the average for the region. In public sector hospitals only, the average stay in 1970 was thirteen days, and the average bed-occupancy rate was about 60 percent of capacity. The length of stay was longer and the rate of occupancy somewhat lower than world averages.

During the early 1970s there was a tendency to reduce the number of large and, in some instances, obsolete national, provincial, and municipal hospitals and to place greater emphasis on the smaller private hospitals, trade-union clinics, and cooperative units. Availability of care was irregular by region. In the mid-1960s the number of hospital beds available per unit of population in Buenos Aires exceeded that of Formosa Province by more than forty to one. As in the case of medical personnel, however, the regional unevenness of distribution of hospital beds was less than that in most of Latin America. A PAHO report on bed availabilities in sixteen countries showed that in 1969 Argentina ranked highest by a substantial margin in relative availability of beds in hospitals outside the capitals and major cities.

In addition, a variety of clinics and health centers provide outpatient services to expectant mothers, infants, and mental, dental, and other patients. In 1967 more than 3,000 of these provided services to more than 5 million patients who paid an average of three visits.

About 350 pharmaceutical laboratories were registered in the country during the mid-1960s; some of them only packaged products. About one-half of the firms accounted for over 90 percent of the total output and sales, and most of the larger establishments were affiliated with United States and European producers. There were about 6,000 retail pharmacies in the country. During the early 1970s pharmaceuticals were subjected to various price control measures. In 1971 for example, the government ordered a 50-percent rollback in the prices of fifty major prescription drugs. The druggists' trade association secured a partial reci-

sion of this order, but drug prices were reported to be generally reasonable. In mid-1973 the subsecretary of public health, however, announced that pharmaceuticals represented 40 percent of the direct cost of all medical care and that control of their prices was necessary.

### **Health Hazards and Preventive Medicine**

In the late 1960s and early 1970s the three main causes of death were heart ailments, malignant tumors, and infectious diseases. Heart disease in all forms was responsible for about 14 percent of all deaths.

The Argentine Council for the Recovery of Heart Patients has estimated that 1.5 million people and 40 percent of all retired people suffer from some form of chronic heart ailment; the annual toll is estimated at about 80,000. One of the most serious forms of heart ailment is Chagas-Mazza disease, spread by an insect called the *vinchuca*, which thrives on unsanitary conditions in homes. In the early 1970s about 1.8 million people were estimated to be affected by the disease, which injures the heart and sometimes causes death.

Malignant tumors caused about 30,000 deaths annually—lung cancer predominating—and their incidence was increasing. Reported deaths per unit population in 1972 were almost triple those of sixty years earlier. It is probable, however, that this increase was in part a reflection of urbanization during that period and of improved diagnosis and reporting of cancer fatalities. The most serious of the infectious diseases, polio and tuberculosis, were both on the decline. The latter, however, kills 5,000 persons annually.

Other major causes of death were pneumonia and digestive maladies including gastritis, duodenitis, enteritis, and colitis. Health services are relatively less adequate in certain areas where impure water supply contributes to high rates of incapacity and death from such illnesses as infant diarrhea, typhoid, paratyphoid fever, and intestinal parasites.

A salubrious climate, good nutrition, and generally superior health and sanitary conditions contribute to higher longevity rates and lower infant mortality rates than in most Latin American countries. Since Argentina is the second most heavily urbanized country in Latin America, the urban health hazards of heart disease and cancer are the most prevalent. Respiratory ailments are far less in evidence than in the less developed countries. In general, this pattern resembles that of North America and Europe rather than that characteristic of Latin America.

Improvement of mother and infant care, including prenatal assistance and care to children during the first five years of life, was given priority among pressing health needs in 1965 by the National Development Council. More maternal and child-care centers were required, and there was an urgent need for health education in the more remote parts of the interior where folk practitioners (*curanderos*) still frequently attended maternity cases.

Reported incidence of infant deaths declined during the early 1960s but edged upward from 54.2 per 1,000 live births in 1965 to 65.7 in 1971. The increased 1971 figure remained well below the Latin American average, however, and mortality between the ages of one and five years was reported to have declined from five to 2.6 per thousand between the 1950-52 period and 1967.

Moreover, a 1968-72 study sponsored by the PAHO indicated a substantial improvement in reporting infant and early childhood deaths during the late 1960s and early 1970s. In early 1973, however, public health authorities once more pointed to the need for reducing the unnecessarily high incidence of infant mortality that was attributed to socioeconomic conditions and the need for more organized medical care.

A campaign to eradicate malaria, in progress since 1959, was still active during the early 1970s. In 1971 about 1.1 million blood smears were examined, and 518 were found to be positive. Only two of these had occurred in attack-phase areas of the country. The fact that the balance had been reported in consolidation and maintenance-phase areas (localities in which the campaign was in more advanced stages of progress) was attributed to inadequate surveillance and caused program authorities to review their surveillance program. The campaign included a semi-annual DDT spraying of houses in the attack-phase area—confined to a portion of Misiones Province—and spraying in consolidation and maintenance areas. Malaria was considered eradicated in areas containing slightly over one-half of the 2.9 million people living in northern portions of the country.

The last serious outbreak of smallpox occurred in 1957 when 335 cases were reported. Isolated cases were reported annually during the early and mid-1960s, but none were recorded in 1968 and 1969. A small outbreak of twenty-four cases in northern Misiones Province in 1970 was controlled, and all cases were traced to a single carrier from Brazil.

An antituberculosis campaign initiated during the 1950s, reduced the number of cases reported from about 100 per 100,000 inhabitants in 1957 to 67.3 in 1969. The campaign is focused on the search for new cases and the inoculation of persons exposed, especially in areas where unsanitary living conditions render the inhabitants particularly vulnerable to infection.

Even though a 1956 epidemic claimed the lives of some 7,000 children, the incidence of poliomyelitis had declined during the late 1950s and early 1960s. From eighty cases reported in 1967, however, it soared to 462 in 1971. This upsurge was attributed to faulty vaccine and a lack of awareness of the importance of immunization. A national school holiday was declared in order to administer oral vaccine to all children under the age of fourteen.

In 1971 the subsecretary of public health listed eradication of leprosy as among the most important of the health programs. The record of achievement in controlling this disease had, however, been a good one.

Between 1966 and 1971 the number of new cases reported annually had declined from 921 to 540. In 1967 the number of cases on the active register in areas reported (eight provinces only) was 9,627. Of these 63.6 percent were under surveillance.

About one-fourth of the national territory was originally infested with *aedes aegypti*, the carrier of yellow fever. Its eradication, however, was reported completed, and the campaign became one of vigilance after a small outbreak of some fifty cases in 1966. The Northeast Region is considered a natural focus area of plague, but during the early 1970s no cases had been reported since the 1950s.

## WELFARE

The first public welfare legislation was enacted in 1904 to cover public employees. Commercial and industrial workers were added in 1944 and 1946, respectively, and in 1956 the foundation for covering most of the working population was completed by including rural workers and domestics.

During the early 1970s the country's social security program was constructed on the basis of several retirement and pension funds (*cajas*) representing several areas of employment and under supervision of the National Social Security Institute. Legislation enacted in 1967, with strong labor union support, had called for the consolidation of the thirteen existing occupational funds into three groups representing private sector employees and workers, state and public service personnel, and the self-employed.

In most occupational categories, eligibility for pensions begins at the age of sixty for men and fifty-five for women, after thirty years of service. Earlier retirement is prescribed for teachers and, under certain circumstances, when work was performed under unhealthful conditions or if a reduced pension was accepted. The full pension amounts to 82 percent of the average of the regular wages for the last five years. Family allowances are paid for spouses who are not wage earners and for children under the age of eighteen. The family allowance and a year-end bonus (*aguinaldo*) equivalent to a month's pay are considered part of the regular wage or salary.

Benefits to survivors are calculated at 75 percent of the amount that would have been payable to the insured worker, above an established minimum. One-half of the amount is payable to the surviving spouse, and the remainder is divided equally among other eligible relatives. In early 1973 it was announced that reduced pensions would be paid to all persons over the age of sixty (with priority to those over age eighty) who had not participated in a pension plan and who had no other means of support.

Disability benefits are payable on the basis of the number of years employed, and employers are solely responsible for paying comprehensive work accident benefits including compensation to survivors in cases



of death. Maternity benefits, for which employed women are eligible, are funded by small contributions from employers and workers. An unemployment insurance plan that was announced in 1970 had not been implemented in 1973. Some labor unions furnish assistance in such matters as medical expenses to unemployed members, and employers must pay discharged workers a severance indemnity of one month's wages per year of service up to a maximum of ten years.

In 1972 the national social security funds had 5.5 million members, and 1.5 million people were receiving benefits. Some 70 percent were direct beneficiaries. In 1971 private sector personnel contributed 60 percent of the revenues of the funds and received 55 percent of the benefits. Public sector personnel contributed 27 percent and received 35 percent, and self-employed persons contributed 13 percent and received 10 percent.

Argentina is one of no more than three or four Latin American countries in which more than one-half of the working population is enrolled in the social security program. During the 1960s and early 1970s, however, the program was in serious trouble, and nonpayment of stipends to pensioners was reportedly making it necessary for many to continue working long after reaching retirement age. Alleged misuse of the several funds by the labor unions, which had been largely responsible for the funding, resulted in the state's assuming charge of their administration, but successive governments were only successful to a limited degree in eliminating these abuses.

Employers (including the public administration, which was the country's largest employer) were often delinquent in making their contributions. The government frequently found it necessary or expedient to divert pension funds to meet day-to-day costs of running the country. The bureaucratic processes involved in administration of the program were so cumbersome that applicants often found it necessary to employ the services of middlemen (*gestores*) in filing their pension claims. At one time, for example, applicants were required to present a police certificate confirming that they were alive. When made, payments were often delayed or based on peso values badly eroded by inflation. As a consequence, spokesmen for pensioners in 1970 selected as a bargaining position in talks with the government the demand for reestablishment of the "82 percent-75 percent basis" (for payments to pensioners and survivors). At the same time, the sum total of annual contributions was becoming increasingly unwieldy. In 1972 social security receipts of \$a6.8 billion were the equivalent of about 40 percent of the central government's budget for that year, a proportion noted in the press.

By 1970 the social security program had reached a state of near collapse in which, a periodical estimated, between 100,000 and 200,000 people eligible for pensions were for one reason or another not receiving them. It added that the unpaid stipends were more or less offset by as many as 100,000 pensions being paid to individuals who had forfeited

the right to them or to persons who had died. An effort was begun at that time to improve administration of the funds and, during 1971 and 1972, the volume of critical commentary in the Buenos Aires press abated. Late in 1973, however, it was officially announced that \$a6 million were being allocated for the issuance of checks to 500,000 pensioners that had been overdue since early in the year.

Traditionally, private welfare had been administered by the Roman Catholic Church, business and civic organizations, and the Society of Philanthropy—an organization dating from the early days of the republic and operated by women of the aristocracy. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, however, these organizations were overshadowed by the Eva Duarte de Perón Foundation.

Begun in 1948 on a modest scale with the personal funds of the wife of President Juan Domingo Perón and with a scattering of voluntary contributions, the foundation soon found other and richer sources of revenue. Contributions were exacted from employers, workers, and the labor unions. It also received regular government allocations, including 20 percent of the income from the national lottery and some of the proceeds from a state monopoly on the importation of drugs and medical equipment. The government, however, chose to regard the organization as private and exercised no direct control over it.

No accounting was ever made of its receipts and expenditures, and Eva Perón distributed the funds as if they were her own. It did, however, aid in caring for the destitute and building schools, hospitals, playgrounds, and summer camps. While effectively using the foundation for the propagandizing of her husband's cause, Eva Perón worked tirelessly, and her program was heartwarming to those whom she befriended. In her famous book *La Razón de mi Vida* (Purpose of My Life) she explained that the very extravagance of some projects was deliberately planned in order to bring some elegance as well as comfort into the lives of the poor. After the overthrow of Perón in 1955 the Eva Duarte de Perón Foundation was terminated. The organization was revived in 1973, but it no longer could count on the almost limitless funds it had once enjoyed, and it no longer had the charismatic leadership of Eva Perón.

The organization's termination in 1955 did not result in the reappearance of private welfare in its traditional form. The social security program was becoming increasingly comprehensive, and business firms and labor unions were engaging in a wide variety of welfare projects on behalf of the working people. With the growth of public welfare activities, moreover, government authorities appear to have felt increasingly that the state rather than private organizations and individuals should be responsible for welfare matters. In 1972 the enactment of Law 19409 dealt a significant blow to private welfare by sharply limiting the amount of tax exemptions granted for contributions to private charity.

## CHAPTER 7

### ARTISTIC AND INTELLECTUAL EXPRESSION

The political and economic nationalism that was so prominent an issue in the elections of 1973 was paralleled in artistic and intellectual expression by emphasis on the propagation of a national culture. This trend was manifest in the criticism of those who looked abroad for cultural inspiration, in a rise in the popularity of folklore, and in a determination to spread to a wider audience the benefits of the performing arts. The newly appointed director of Buenos Aires' prestigious Teatro Colón, himself a folklorist, asserted that the theater would heavily favor Argentine composers, singers, dancers, instrumentalists, conductors, and opera directors. Furthermore, he stated that prices would be cut.

The definition of a national tradition has consistently been a theme of controversy among men of letters since the establishment of the nation. The country's cultural history is more precisely a history of personalities than of movements for although creative activity is vigorously pursued and applauded, one of its most outstanding characteristics is its heterogeneity. Within that broad spectrum, however, two divergent trends—one European oriented, the other uniquely Argentine—have become increasingly pronounced over the last century.

European recognition remains the aspiration of those writers, musicians, and artists who feel that cultural nationalism is obsolete, and many Argentines, such as composer Alberto Ginastera and experimental graphic artist Julio le Parc, have been in the vanguard of international trends. In literature, interest in stylistic innovation and perfection, inspired particularly by Jorge Luis Borges, remains strong, but younger writers have placed greater emphasis on the social relevance of their work. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the novel and the short story made generous use of satire and irony in lamenting man's inhumanity to man and in expressing the anguish of individual isolation and helpless frustration in the midst of a regimented mass society.

In the academic disciplines Argentina's greatest contributions to its Latin American neighbors in the nineteenth century were in education and jurisprudence. The field of jurisprudence has suffered since 1930 from compromises with authoritarian governments, and scientific investigation has been slowed by the emigration of trained talent. The study of sociology gained momentum in the 1960s through a reorientation toward national problems, and economics, stimulated by the theories of Raul Prebisch, has also become an increasingly popular discipline.

The attitude of the government toward free expression in literature and the arts has varied, as has the response of the intellectual community to government intervention in intellectual activities. The rule of Juan Manuel de Rosas stimulated some of the most brilliant political and social criticism in the nation's history, but the tactics of authoritarian governments since the 1930s have generally caused a stagnation of cultural activity. A great exodus of intellectuals took place in the early 1950s and again in the late 1960s. Censorship in the late 1960s was based on traditionally moral as well as political and social considerations. Citizens accommodated themselves in various ways. Many theatergoers traveled to Montevideo, Uruguay, to see uncut works, and writers presented their social criticism in symbolic rather than specific terms.

Cultural institutions have proved durable despite the vicissitudes of political life. The private Torcuato di Tella Institute, founded in 1960, continued in 1973 to provide instruction, scholarships, and awards in the visual arts; audiovisual experimentation; advanced musical training; as well as instruction in economics, social sciences, neurological sciences and public administration. The government—subsidized Bariloche Foundation, established in the 1940s for experimentation in nuclear physics, has branched into other areas of the natural and social sciences.

Argentines in general have shown great appreciation of creative works. Per capita purchase of books and circulation of newspapers and cultural magazines are extremely high. The many theaters, concert halls, art galleries, and museums in Buenos Aires and some provincial capitals are well attended. Radio and television have done much in recent years to expose the more isolated provinces to cultural activities.

## PRE-COLUMBIAN CULTURAL MANIFESTATIONS

Little remains of the arts and crafts of the pre-Columbian peoples of Argentina because of climatic conditions and because of the absence of certain durable materials. Basket weaving, the most ancient of the home industries, is estimated to have been practiced in South America as early as 5,000 years ago. Remains of this prehistoric work in the present territory of Argentina, however, have been preserved only in very dry areas, such as La Puna and other high regions of the Northwest Andes. Many prehistoric peoples left remains of simple, undecorated ceramics throughout the country, and there is evidence that weaving was widely practiced, but only among the Indians of the Northwest Andes was a high level of technical skill and artistry developed.

The indigenous population of the country consisted largely of peoples peripheral to ethnic groups that had their greatest centers of concentration and civilization elsewhere. The Indians of the Northwest Andes, for example, belonged predominantly to the Quechua and Aymara groupings of the Andean highlands and participated to some extent in the Inca civilization. The ruins of roads and of stone buildings similar to those of the Incas remain. Weaving implements and techniques also indicate Inca

influence. The practice of weaving is estimated to have extended to this area around A.D. 500. Fibers were made of the wool of the llama, alpaca, and vicuña and were brilliantly colored with natural dyes.

Ethnic groupings of Santiago del Estero, Tucumán, Salta, and Jujuy provinces have been distinguished by ceramics of varied and complex forms, but the area of the Northwest Andes is the site of the most unusual ceramics. The Diaguitas (Calchaquians) who inhabited this area produced plates, pitchers, and burial urns painted or engraved with anthropomorphic and zoomorphic designs as well as geometric figures.

Next to the Diaguitas, the Araucanians, who migrated over the Andes from Chile and eventually occupied the eastern plains, were the most artistically productive of the aborigines who lived in the area of present-day Argentina. They produced simple ceramics and treated cloth, hides, and ostrich plumes, all of which were traded for the products of neighboring peoples.

The aborigines of the Chaco forests and the Littoral, who belonged generally to ethnic groupings found in greater concentration in Paraguay, Uruguay, and southern Brazil, were nomadic peoples; and with the exception of some woven products and the ceramics of the Chacos-antiaguina group, little evidence remains of their pre-Columbian culture. The various indigenous tribes of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego were also nomads who left few artifacts other than simple ceramics and primitive weapons. Since colonial times traditional arts and crafts have predominantly reflected the early Spanish influence.

## THE COLONIAL PERIOD

Long neglected by Spain, the colony of La Plata (present-day Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay) did not experience the early development of aesthetic and intellectual activity that took place in Mexico, Peru, and other centers of settlement and colonial administration.

Among the Roman Catholic religious orders that transplanted Spanish cultural traditions in Latin America, the influence of the Society of Jesus was particularly notable in the music, art, and architecture of the colonial period. Most of the churches constructed during that period, which are still standing, including those of San Ignacio, San Francisco, San Telmo, and La Merced, were designed by the Jesuit architects Juan Bautista Primoli and Andrés Bianchi.

## ARTS AND CRAFTS

Because it proved expensive to transport church furnishings and religious works of art, the Jesuits, particularly in the littoral, northwestern, and central regions, taught the Indians the fundamentals of painting, wood carving, stone carving, and pottery making. One of the most widespread art forms was the carving of small wooden figures of the saints.

In these figures, collectively referred to as imagery, the influence of Roman and classical Andalusian sculpture is combined with indigenous forms.

The colonists used the abundant and varied native woods in the construction of houses, furniture, and chests. Baroque decorative styles may be seen in some pieces of furniture from this period, particularly the chests. After the introduction of horses and cattle in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, criollo (person of Spanish descent born in Spanish America) craftsmen began to employ leather and horn in supplying the needs of the gaucho. Using silver from Peru and Bolivia, the colonists made plates, *yerba mate* (Paraguayan tea) cups, candlesticks, and other objects. By the end of the eighteenth century there were some fifty master silversmiths in Buenos Aires working in baroque, rococo, and European neoclassical styles.

Cloth and basket weaving continued to flourish after colonization, but the pre-Hispanic ceramic tradition suffered deterioration in the quality and texture of the clay as well as in the form and decoration in the Indo-Hispanic hybridization. The production of traditional Spanish ceramics was not developed in the colony.

### Intellectual Development

The Academy of Maximo, established in 1613 in the city of Chile by the Society of Jesus, was transferred in 1614 to Córdoba. This university, long the only center of higher learning in the colony of La Plata, comprised a college of theology and a college of arts.

The University of Chuquisaca, founded a century after the University of Córdoba, became especially noted during the colonial period for its curricula in law and literature. After the middle of the eighteenth century, the study of Spanish law, especially the Law of the Indies, was promoted to counter the prevailing stress on Roman and canon law. A number of those who later became spokesmen for the independence movement were serious students of the legislation governing the Indies. Mariano Moreno, for example, who received his doctorate in law at the University of Chuquisaca, had a profound knowledge of Spanish legal codes and a familiarity with the works of European philosophers. In general, however, the newer disciplines of linguistics, geography, and history fared better than those of politics and philosophy, for the Roman Catholic Church confined intellectual pursuits largely to Scholasticism or to disciplines other than those to which social and political critics generally were attracted.

The Jesuits imported La Plata's first printing press, and in the early eighteenth century they published educational books at the University of Córdoba. The Law of the Indies prohibited the printing or sale of books dealing with the affairs of the Indies without the authorization of the Spanish department of colonial affairs, the Council of the Indies

(Consejo de las Indias), but there is evidence that many prohibited books were circulated in the colony.

An era of intellectual renovation and liberalism was inaugurated in 1778 when Juan José de Vertiz y Salcedo became viceroy. He energetically promoted education, journalism, the theater, and the practice of medicine. The Foundling Hospital was established in Buenos Aires, and the disused printing press at the University of Córdoba was transferred to it to provide revenue for the hospital. Another source of income was a theater that Vertiz y Salcedo founded despite protests from the church; he again clashed with the church in his permissiveness toward the practice of indigenous dances such as the fandango, but he was overruled by the king.

The cultural activity in the last three decades of the colonial period (1780 - 1810) was marked by the emergence of a number of renowned poets. The most outstanding was Manuel José de Labarden, author of "Siripo," a tragedy, and "Oda al Paraná" (Ode to the Paraná). Vicente Lopez y Planes and Pantaleon Rivarola gave poetic expression to the successful criollo resistance against the English invaders (see ch. 2). Other literary figures of the period included Domingo Azcuenaga, author of numerous fables, and Joaquín Araujo, who described administrative, political, and economic conditions in La Plata in *Guía de forasteros* (Guide for Foreigners).

## THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD

Although the revolutionary surge that swept all of Latin America was largely in response to ideas of the Enlightenment, the liberalization of colonial administration that had taken place during the latter half of the eighteenth century had also contributed to the craving for greater freedom of thought and action. In La Plata, Spain's strongest links with the colony—the viceroyalty and the Roman Catholic Church—helped to set the stage for revolution. During the last three decades of Spanish domination, the viceroyalty founded educational institutions in which the ecclesiastically oriented scholastic philosophy came under attack; it also established the press and the tribunal of commerce, through which arguments for the liberalization of trade were presented. Members of the clergy, too, were slowly moved by the new philosophical approaches and pursuits and gave qualified acceptance to the principles of natural law. Many of the foreign books that made their way into the colony illegally were circulated within the monasteries. When the Revolution of 1810 took place, a great majority of the clergy embraced the revolutionary cause.

In this atmosphere of intellectual ferment, the ideas of the French and American revolutions met wide acceptance. The leaders of the independence movement, however, were pragmatic men; they did not accept uncritically the themes of the Enlightenment. They embraced the

principles of natural law in the political and social realms, but their theoretical liberalism was tempered by their aristocratic heritage and by their evaluation of the Latin American situation. They feared that the rupture with the Spanish crown might prove too abrupt to a people inexperienced in the exercise of liberty. Thus, José de San Martín preferred liberal monarchy to republicanism, believing that the Hispano-American leadership, unsupported by the tradition of the crown, would be overcome by popular anarchy. In fact, the twenty-eight delegates (including San Martín and Manuel Belgrano) who signed the Declaration of Independence at the Congress of Tucumán in 1816 demonstrated their monarchist sentiments by naming the royalist Juan Martín Pueyrredón as supreme director and continuing the futile search for a king, which had been under way since 1810.

Although there was substantial contraband trade with England, La Plata's legal trade was limited to Spain. Because the colonists felt themselves seriously disadvantaged by the restrictions, the desire for liberalization of trade was a prime motivation for the revolution. Thus, the principles of laissez-faire economics enunciated in Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* had great appeal.

The outstanding proponent of economic liberalism during the revolutionary period was Mariano Moreno. A follower of Belgrano, Moreno adopted his campaign for freedom of thought, freedom of commerce, and encouragement of agriculture. The most influential of his works was *Representación de los hacendados* (Memorial of the Landowners), in which he applied the principles of Anglo-French political economy to the plight of landowners and merchants of La Plata and attempted to gain support for the cause of agriculture from other segments of the society. Less than a year after the appearance of this treatise, the triumphant revolutionists established free trade.

The themes of Americanism and anticlericalism that became so prominent in later years had no significant role in the thought of the revolutionary period. In fact, in the prologue to his Spanish translation of *Social Contract*, Moreno spoke apologetically of Jean Jacques Rousseau's rejection of religion.

## EVOLUTION OF A NATIONAL CULTURE

### Intellectual Expression

After independence was established, President Bernardino Rivadavia attempted to bring about a cultural renaissance, in part by reorganizing free public instruction and university studies. But his endeavors were largely nullified by a bitter struggle for predominance between two irreconcilable cultures: the rugged self-sufficient conservatism of the rural caudillos (regional political strong men) and the gauchos who served them, and the more liberal European-oriented culture of the *porteños* (people of the port) of Buenos Aires.



## The Era of Romantic Liberalism

The cycle of anarchy and tyranny that developed led the spokesmen of romantic liberalism to a profound questioning of the foundations and manifestations of national life. They concluded that political independence had not freed the society from the Hispanic influences that inhibited the realization of civilization as they conceived it. They proposed to reject their Hispanic past rather than to build upon it and to base their nation on adaptations of European and Anglo-American political models.

The long dictatorship (1832-52) of Juan Manuel de Rosas, which represented the victory of the caudillos over the *porteños*, became the target of some of the most brilliant political and social criticism in the nation's history. The goal of overthrowing the regime was the cause that united the most outstanding literary figures of the period in the Association of May. Most of these writers spent long periods in exile in Europe, the United States, and Latin American countries where they encountered the ideas of utopian and revolutionary socialism and the manifestations of the industrial revolution.

Esteban Echeverría, founder of the Association of May, spent many years in France, where he was strongly influenced by the utopian Christian socialism of Claude Henri de Rouvray, Comte de Saint-Simon. This influence is exemplified in Echeverría's *Dogma socialista* (Socialist Creed), the creed of the Association of May. Less a man of action than Juan Bautista Alberdi and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, whom he inspired, Echeverría rejected the application of Saint-Simon's socialism to Argentina on the grounds that his countrymen were not prepared for it. Basically a romantic poet, he is best known for his long poem *La cautiva* (The Captive) and his short story "El matadero" (The Slaughterhouse).

In contrast with the somewhat unstructured idealism of Echeverría are the highly systematized writings of Alberdi, the greatest of Argentine legal philosophers and an original member of the Association of May. Less influenced by romanticism, he preferred the social and economic utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham and James Mill. Though Alberdi traveled extensively and at times asserted that Argentina was only a dismembered part of Europe, he developed a profoundly Hispanic-American historical interpretation of political realities and a clear analysis of the central problems of Argentina. His *Bases y puntos de partida para la organización política de la república Argentina* (Bases and Points of Departure for the Political Organization of the Argentine Republic), written in haste after he received news of the impending overthrow of Rosas, served as the basis for the federal Constitution of 1853. One of his most noted principles was embodied in the motto "To Govern Is To Populate," meaning that the open spaces of the country could only be developed in an orderly way with an influx of European immigrants.

Although the thought of Sarmiento identifies him with the "generation of 1837," his humble background in San Juan and his failure to receive a

scholarship to study in Buenos Aires denied him direct contact with the Association of May. In exile in Chile, he wrote the classic *Facundo* (Civilization and Barbarism, The Life of Juan Facundo Quiroga), in which he condemned the influences of the Pampa and the caudillo system that Rosas represented.

After the downfall of Rosas, Sarmiento was appointed Argentine minister to the United States; while holding that post he met Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and the noted educator Horace Mann, by whose ideas he was strongly influenced. His insatiable thirst for knowledge and his own early difficulties in securing an education directed the great thrust of Sarmiento's career toward expanding educational opportunities. As president from 1868 to 1874, he built and opened schools at such a rate that by the end of the century illiteracy had been almost eliminated. He spoke then of education as a force for equalizing races and classes. In later years, however, he adopted a racial theory of social evolution and diagnosed the "decadent" state of his society as resulting from its racial components of Spanish, mestizo, Indian, and Negro.

#### **Positivism and Its Interpreters**

Many disillusioned Argentine intellectuals of the second half of the nineteenth century rejected utopianism in favor of Auguste Comte's and Herbert Spencer's positivism, a philosophical system based on a belief that social evolution is governed by laws analogous to the laws of physics and that these laws can be integrated into systems of knowledge rooted firmly in empiricism. Comte posited social evolution as a series of stages: military-theological, critical-metaphysical, and scientific-industrial. Positivists looked to the United States for inspiration for material advancement, continued the trend toward secularization of society, explained the subjugation of the indigenous races of the New World as survival of the fittest, and provided a rationalization for the status quo since progress was assumed to be evolutionary and inevitable. The focal point of Comtian positivism in Argentina was the Paraná School, founded by Sarmiento in 1870. The adaptation of the philosophy that developed in the school may be considered in its emphasis upon the individual as a continuation of Sarmiento's teachings, in accordance with which the definition and application of positivism were to depend ultimately upon the interpreter.

J. Alfredo Ferriera, who studied and taught at the Paraná School, was among the first Argentine interpreters of positivism. He saw it as an approach used for discarding the intellectual restrictions of the Spanish heritage, a task that Echeverría, Alberdi, and Sarmiento had advocated but had not accomplished. One of the means to this end, set forth in his *Bases para un plan de estudios de educación primaria* (Bases for a Plan of Study for Primary Education), was the substitution of the methods of observation and induction for the theoretical acquisition of knowledge.

Agustín Alvarez reflected the positivist influence in his confidence in scientific method and advocacy of moderate policies. The influences of Charles Darwin's theory of biological evolution and of the social evolutionary theories of Comte and Spencer are evident in his book *Sud America, la historia natural de la razón* (South America, Natural History of Reason). He wrote numerous books on social ethics, politics, and education and, as founding vice president of the National University of La Plata and one of its most popular professors, he was a source of inspiration for the youth of his time.

José Ingenieros, a prodigious reader and prolific writer, had more than 500 titles to his credit when he died at the age of forty-seven. His most widely read book, *El Hombre mediocre* (The Mediocre Man), influenced the thought of a whole generation. Ingenieros' idealistic appeal to university youth greatly influenced the student movement for university reform in 1918. He achieved a modification of social evolutionary thought by incorporating into it the new disciplines of psychology and psychiatry.

Among the many other spokesmen of positivism and its variations were Carlos Octavio Bunge, who made important contributions to the fields of sociology and social psychology, and Alejandro Korn, who was most noted for his positivistic treatment of the history of philosophy.

The social philosophers, including Luis María Drago, Ernesto Quesada, and José María Ramos Mejía, who became known as the generation of 1880, leaned more and more toward political and social conservatism. Like many of their predecessors, they welcomed European immigrants and capital. They identified with the oligarchy, for they regarded civilization as the end product of personal effort and wealth as the manifestation of effort.

#### **Gauchosque Literature**

The positivists, like the romantic liberals before them, were looking to European philosophies and European culture for their inspiration, but other literary figures were early exponents of a trend that was to gain significance in several Latin American countries during the first half of the twentieth century. They turned to a reevaluation of their own society, of elements that were uniquely Argentine, and found a basis for national pride and values through which a regeneration might be inspired.

The most outstanding writer to take this approach was José Hernández. He had lived for many years among the gauchos and had gained great insight into their way of life and thought. He treated sympathetically their heroic struggle to preserve the land on which they worked. His epic poem of the Pampa, *Martín Fierro*, is the most widely read example of the literature that has become known as gauchosque.

Among the writers who followed the lead of Hernández in adopting the gauchosque theme was Ricardo Güiraldes. In his novel *Don Segundo Sombra* he described the problems and pleasures of a boy reaching

manhood through the rigors of gaucho life. After the death of Güiraldes, Benito Lynch became the most outstanding of the gauchosque writers; his novels, particularly *El romance de un gaucho* (The Romance of a Gaucho), reflect tragic and comic aspects of gaucho life in the colloquial language of the Pampa.

### Synthesis and Divergence

The early twentieth century witnessed the continuation or the parallel development of a great variety of literary trends. Neoclassic and neo-romantic poets and novelists, adopting both European and national themes, continued to be popular. Leopoldo Lugones (a follower of the Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío, an Argentine resident for several years) introduced to his country the literary movement known as modernism, marked by simplicity of style. Other literary figures synthesized various styles. Rafael Alberto Arrieta merged modernistic simplicity with a classical conception of poetry. Arturo Capdevilla combined romantic and modern styles in his poetry, and Alfonsina Storni united the styles of romanticism and symbolism.

While the positivists of the "generation of 1880" were justifying the privileged status of the oligarchy, others, such as Ingenieros and Bunge, became concerned about the plight of the newly emerging proletariat and found in the evolutionary theories of Comte and Spencer a basis for a qualified acceptance of Marxist socialism. Juan Bautista Justo, founder of the Socialist Party in Argentina, took the ideals and aspirations of his doctrine from Marx, but in his book *Teoría y práctica de la historia* (Theory and Practice of History) he interpreted social inequality in terms of biological rather than economic causes.

### Nativism and Nationalism

Another trend that developed in this period was a vigorous appeal to nationalism. This sentiment found expression in the criticism of what Argentina had become and in the appeal to a reorientation toward the elements that the original advocates of intellectual emancipation had rejected. Thus, Manuel Galvez, in condemning the denationalizing effect of immigration and the materialistic Anglo-American influence, looked for a spiritual rebirth through a return to Spanish values and to the traditionalism that had survived only in the provinces.

Ricardo Rojas maintained that native and foreign forces rather than civilization and barbarism were contending and that the white man's prejudice against the Indian and the early patriots' mistaken view of Spanish character were responsible for the lack of continuity in national history. In his most famous work, *Eurindia*, Rojas urged the development of national self-consciousness through the cultivation of music, painting, and drama, a national aesthetic based on the fusion of gaucho and porteño cultures.

This early twentieth-century resurgence of nationalism, permeated with antiforeignism, heralded the emergence of a new era, culminating in the novels of Gustavo Martínez Zuviría, apologist of the military regime that seized power in 1943 and preceded Juan Domingo Perón. Under the pen name of Hugo Wast he wrote vitriolic attacks on democracy, communism, foreigners, and Jews. This trend paved the way for public acceptance of Perón's national doctrine of *justicialismo*. In an effort to develop intellectual support for his programs and practices, Perón prevailed upon a team of university men, under the leadership of Father Benítez, to provide his regime's ideological content. This flexible, vague doctrine sought a middle ground between collectivism and individualism and promised social justice for all. *Justicialismo* enjoyed a popular appeal that survived the initial period of Perón's power and was accompanied by a resurgence of enthusiasm for folklore.

The development of most forms of artistic and intellectual expression was hindered under the military regime that seized power in 1943 and under the subsequent Perón administration. Intellectuals who joined professional and business leaders in October 1943 in issuing a manifesto calling for freedom of the press and for effective democracy were dismissed from their positions and in some cases exiled. Among the first people to go were Alfredo Palacios—socialist leader, author of some forty-two books, and rector of the National University of La Plata—and Bernardo Houssay, the renowned physiologist.

The exodus of intellectual leaders continued until 1955 as all newspapers, except *La Nación*, and all universities were brought under government control and 70 percent of the university professors were dismissed, retired, or otherwise eliminated. A notable exception was Ricardo Levene, who retained his position as rector of the law school of the University of Buenos Aires and evolved a concept of national history in which the determining role of individuals was subordinated to that of institutions.

### Contemporary Trends

Among the most significant trends in contemporary intellectual life are specialization and professionalism. Academicians tend to confine themselves to a single discipline. Literary activity, once mainly the avocation of the aristocracy, became a profession in its own right after the middle class expanded.

The emphasis among academic historians has been on political revisionism; conflicting interpretations have developed to the Right and to the Left of earlier political and ideological interpretations and from European and provincial points of view. José Luis Romero approaches *La historia de los partidos políticos* (History of Political Parties) from the Marxist viewpoint, whereas Ibar Goren seeks to alter the derogatory interpretation of Rosas' rule. Guillermo Furlong, a Jesuit, in his *La historia de las ideas* (History of Ideas), reevaluates the independence

movement, emphasizing the influence of the Spanish clergymen Francisco Suárez and Francisco Victoria on revolutionary thought.

Historians have devoted relatively little attention to the country's political development since 1880, and the continuing popularity of biographies of early national leaders has indicated the perseverance of the cult of heroism. A notable innovation in historical studies in the last dozen years has been a shift from a focus on institutions to economic history and, to a lesser extent, social history. Many of the achievements and gaps in the literature are set forth in the seven-volume *Historia argentina contemporánea, 1862-1930* (Contemporary Argentine History, 1862-1930), published by the National Academy of History from 1965 to 1967.

Philosophical speculation continues to follow the currents of European thought. Phenomenology and existentialism have been gaining adherents through the works of Carlos Astrada, Francisco Romero, and Macedonio Fernández. Opposed to this trend has been a resurgence of neo-Thomism, expressed in the works of Nimio de Anguín, Octavio N. Derisi, and others.

The study of sociology has been stimulated by a movement toward an introspective reappraisal of Argentine social phenomena. The academic discipline has been complemented by the work of a number of outstanding novelists who have turned their attention to the frustrations of urban life and the character of Argentine society.

One of the country's most reputable scholars is Gino Germani, a World War II refugee from Italy. He took a leading role in organizing and developing modern sociological studies, especially at the University of Buenos Aires. He became a refugee once again after the coup d'état of 1966, leaving Argentina to live in the United States.

Contemporary studies in economics have demonstrated a preoccupation with Argentina's dependence on foreign capital, foreign markets, and foreign manufactures. The country has produced a number of outstanding economists, the most renowned being Raul Prebisch. As secretary general of the United Nations Economic Commission on Latin America and later as secretary of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, he became the principal spokesman of the developing nations in their quest for economic concessions from the more highly industrialized states. In accordance with the upsurge of nationalism in 1973, Rogelio García Lupo, director of the University of Buenos Aires Press (the country's most important academic publishing house) offered substantial awards for works that deal with "the visible or hidden forms of (national) dependence."

The universities had contributed a great deal to the development of the social sciences, but all disciplines suffered a setback after the occupation of the University of Buenos Aires by government troops in 1966 led to the resignation of more than a thousand faculty members. Many of these scholars left the country, but the Torcuato di Tella Institute provided refuge and employment for a number who stayed, thereby enhancing its own capabilities.

The country's earliest contributions to the natural sciences were largely in the field of medicine. Bernardo Houssay, who in 1947 won the Nobel prize for medicine, assembled an outstanding faculty in physiological studies at the University of Buenos Aires. The emigration of scientists, for both political and economic reasons, was a serious problem in the late 1960s, but by 1973 one institution, at least, had experienced a reversal of the brain drain. Carlos Mallmann, president of the Bariloche Foundation, reported that the research institute was receiving more applications from Argentines working abroad than it could accommodate. Some 40 percent of the foundation's 120 researchers had returned from jobs abroad.

The Bariloche Foundation, which was established in the late 1940s as a laboratory for experimentation in nuclear fusion, had been converted in the late 1950s into a physics institute and in the 1960s had branched into other disciplines. In 1973 its fields of inquiry included sociology, biology, natural resources, mathematics, and even music. Nearly 60 percent of its budget came from the federal government.

Literary life follows a variety of old and new trends in both style and content. Jorge Luis Borges, a member of the older generation of contemporary writers, is considered by many critics to be the most outstanding living literary figure in the Spanish-speaking world. Seeking the Argentine reality in the European Tradition, Borges has developed a uniquely subtle and simple style, in both poetry and prose, that many younger writers have attempted to follow. His familiar themes of time, space, chance, and change are developed within a unique universe of his own logic in his latest collection of short stories, *El informe de Brodie* (Brodie's Report), published in 1970.

Like Borges, most of his contemporaries within the intellectual elite have been concerned primarily with perfection of form. Another writer of that generation, however, the humanist Leopoldo Marechal, has had greater influence on the two most noted novelists of the succeeding generation, Ernesto Sábato and Julio Cortázar. Although the influence of Borges' style may be discerned in the works of these writers, they have been far more concerned with social issues. Sábato's *Sobre héroes y tumbas* (Concerning Heroes and Tombs) portrays the "decadence and corruption" of the oligarchy and, by extension, of the country. In *Los premios* (The Prizes) and *Rayuelo* (Hopscotch), Cortázar applies to life the imagery of a game. His characters fall into two categories: those who accept without question the rules of the game and those who assert personal anarchy in a world whose order appears absurd to them.

This reorientation toward contemporary issues has become even more pronounced among younger writers. One of the social themes that have been adopted by this generation is revolutionary Marxism, especially the Latin American variety advocated by Ernesto (Ché) Guevara, who was Argentine by birth. Christian socialism, however, is gaining adherents, and a smaller group is seeking a new humanism based on the Latin

American experience. The humanist group, according to its noted adherent Rafael Squirru finds some inspiration in Rojas' *Eurindia*, but its orientation is more closely aligned with the writing of the Mexican José Vasconcelos in *La raza cosmica* (The Cosmic Race) or that of the Peruvian Antenos Orrego in *Hacia un humanismo americano* (Toward an American Humanism).

The stress on *argentinidad* (Argentineness), which is particularly characteristic of the middle classes, continues to be evident in the great appeal of the gauchoesque literature, but a new dimension has been added with the appearance of a number of fictional and nonfictional works dealing with Argentine social and psychological themes. Among the most outstanding of these have been Eduardo Mallea's *La historia de una pasión argentina* (History of an Argentine Passion), in which character is analyzed in terms of the national experience, and *El hombre que esta solo y espera* (The Man Who Is Alone and Waits), in which Raul Scalabrini Ortíz depicts the loneliness of urban life. More recent best-sellers in this category have been *Los que mandan* (Those Who Lead) by José Luis Imaz, which analyzes the influence of modern caudillos on the contemporary power structure, and *El medio pelo* (The Fake) by Arturo Jauretche, which ridicules the Argentine pseudoaristocrat.

Creative writing in the late 1960s and early 1970s was characterized by stylistic experimentation and a tone of sometimes eerie, sometimes bemused pessimism, reflecting a perception of the creeping estrangement of man from man. Exemplary of innovations in style are Humberto Costantini's *Hablenme de Funes* (Tell Me About Funes), in which various accounts of Funes' life and death are related by his fellow musicians, and Cortázar's *Casa tomada* (Seized House), in which the narration is literally printed on the floor plan of the story's setting in such a way that the protagonists' expulsion from their home is made graphic.

The mood of the times is captured in the works of Adolfo Bioy Casares, Héctor A. Murena, and Manuel Puig. In *Diario de la guerra del cerdo* (Diary of the Pig's War), Bioy Casares' commentary on the destructive tendencies of mankind takes the form of a description of a war of extermination of the elderly. By 1973 Murena had published three novels of a planned cycle of seven, which he views as an "exposé of human stupidity." In these three installments Murena employs biting satire to lament the spiritual isolation of the individual, the relentless onrush of technocracy, and the corrupting tendencies of power. In *Epitalamica* (Epithalamic), for example, a grotesque dictator initiates a series of cruel and inhuman experiments on a passive population.

Puig's novel *La traición de Rita Hayworth* (Betrayed by Rita Hayworth) was a finalist in the Seix Barral contest in 1965 but, because of subsequent censorship problems, was not published until 1968. With deceptively simple language it presents sophisticated commentary on the formation of human values. A broader view of the contemporary human condition, rich in irony and in literary, historical, philosophical,



and social insights, is offered in Marechal's *Megafón; o, La guerra* (Megaphone; or, War).

Argentine poets, such as Alejandra Pizarnik and Leopoldo José Barlotomé, who have gained prominence within the last dozen years are not grouped about a movement and defy easy categorization. One critic has described the common thread in their work as "an emotional solidarity at the service of human dignity."

Argentina boasts the oldest literary magazine in continuous existence in Latin America. *Sur*, founded in 1931 by the essayist Victoria Ocampo, has served as a valuable vehicle both for the introduction to the Argentine intelligentsia of foreign ideas and for the launching of the literary careers of Argentines. It was one of the first periodicals, for example, to carry the works of Borges. It suspended regular publication in 1971 but continued to publish occasional volumes.

## The Performing Arts

### Theater and Motion Pictures

The most productive period of the native drama is generally considered to have been the early years of the twentieth century. The first important figures in dramatic expression, Gregorio de Laferrere and Roberto Payro, had gained prominence. The author who had the greatest impact on the theater in Argentina, and perhaps in all of Latin America, was Florencio Sanchez. Although he was born in Uruguay, he is claimed by Argentine critics as a native playwright because he wrote the majority of his plays in Buenos Aires. Sanchez was responsible for introducing realism to the theater of Argentina and Uruguay which, until that time, had been romantic or gauchoesque in nature. Basically a dramatist of social concern, he vividly portrayed the social ills that beset the rapidly growing cities of Buenos Aires and Montevideo. His themes were poverty of circumstances and poverty of spirit; his subjects, alcoholism, marriage, illegitimacy, racial intolerance, and the degeneration of the gaucho.

Sanchez had experienced poverty in his own life and considered it the source of all moral ills. His *M'hijo el doctor* (My Son, the Doctor), presented in Buenos Aires in 1902, and his two most popular plays—*Barranca abajo* (The Gorge Below) and *La gringa* (The Foreigner)—deal with the tragic inability of the gaucho to adapt to a changing society. This flourishing of the theater was short lived, but it was followed in the 1930s by the founding of amateur theaters and of the Argentores, an organization designed to protect the rights of playwrights. The Theater of the People, the National Theater of Comedy, and the Municipal Theater were promising institutions during the 1930s. Among the outstanding playwrights of the period were Samuel Eichelbaum, Roberto Arlt, and Armando Discepolo.

Under the Perón regime many professional theater groups ceased to function. The amateur theater continued to flourish, but the results of this stage in its development were not fully appreciated until later. The termination of Peronist rule in 1955 brought renewed vitality to the theater. The satirical political review, for example, which had been among the most popular forms of stage presentation in the 1930s and 1940s, was revived with vigor and generally thrived between the mid-1950s and the mid-1960s.

The amateur theater has continued to grow in importance, and an interchange of actors between amateur and professional groups has proved beneficial to both. The works of aspiring playwrights generally have been presented first by amateur groups because professional companies have been less willing to take the risk. Some of the outstanding contemporary playwrights, including Carlos Gorostiza, Agustín Cuzzani, and Osvaldo Dragún, started in the amateur theater. In 1973 the capital's leading theater, the San Martín Municipal Theater, canceled some plays of foreign origin in order to produce works of Argentine playwrights, such as Marechal's *Antigona Veliz*.

Since 1955 a number of theatrical companies have toured the interior. In Greater Buenos Aires there are twenty major theaters, some thirty lesser ones, and a variety of smaller companies that perform in churches or in open courtyards. Two of the country's more novel theaters are in the La Boca district of Buenos Aires. One, known as Caminito, is a short street shut off to traffic with a stage at one end. The other is an old bridge with a theater at one end and an auditorium at the other.

Since the early 1960s theatrical activity has felt increasing competition from motion pictures, television, and other forms of entertainment. The legitimate theater has been dominated by experimental groups, which have attempted both stylistic and thematic innovation.

After a slow start in the 1930s, motion picture production has become both prolific and highly sophisticated. The works of director Leopoldo Torre Nilsson, generally based on the novels of Beatriz Guido, have been acclaimed at film festivals all over the world. Hugo del Carril, Lautaro Murua, and David Kohn are also widely known in the field.

Jorge Della Chiesa and Mario David were among the promising newcomers in the early 1970s. Subject matter of Argentine films ranged from gaucho-style Westerns, musicals, and mysteries to serious drama. Although the development of the cinematic arts had been inhibited by censorship in the late 1960s, Argentine films were being widely distributed in the Spanish-speaking world and were increasingly being shown in United States cities with large Spanish-speaking populations. A satirical Argentine film entitled *Alliance for Progress* was shown in Washington, for example, in August 1973.

## Music

There is a considerable body of popular and folk music that is uniquely Argentine, but national characteristics are more difficult to distinguish in the serious music of the country. The outstanding composers of the first quarter of the century, Julian Aguirre and Alberto Williams, in accordance with the revival of nationalistic sentiment that was taking place, attempted to give musical expression to Argentine realities. Although an entire generation of composers, including Carlos Lopez Buchardo, Felipe Boero, Gilardo Gilardi, and Luis Gianneo, followed the lead of Aguirre and Williams, no definite Argentine school emerged and, in the mid-1960s, Argentine composers were participants in international currents of musical life.

Individualism was the aspiration of the generation, including Juan José Castro and Juan Carlos Paz, that rose to prominence in the 1930s. The only common trends to be noted in the works of contemporary composers resulted from coincidental influence from the same sources. Some of the most recent generation of composers, including Mario Davidovsky, Mauricio Kagel, and Hilda Dianda, were moving into the field of electronic music. The trend in the early 1970s was toward modernism, but all international currents were reflected by Argentine composers. Classical music continued to follow predominantly European trends and, although there was no movement to establish a school of traditional music, some contemporary composers had successfully combined classic and folkloric styles. Among these were Eduardo Falu, one of Latin America's most noted contemporary performers and composers of guitar music, and Ariel Ramirez, whose *Misa Criolla* (Creole Mass), synthesizing ecclesiastical and indigenous influences, has had great popular appeal at home and abroad.

The lack of an Argentine school of composers has not hindered the intrinsic quality of individual production. Castro won a coveted international award with the presentation of his opera *Proserpina y el extranjero* (Proserpina and the Stranger) in the La Scala Opera House of Milan. Alberto Ginastera gained international fame when his opera *Bommarzo*, banned in Argentina on moralistic grounds, was given its first performance in Washington, D. C. In response to the banning of *Bommarzo*, he refused to allow the Teatro Colón to present any of his works while the government of General Juan Carlos Onganía was in power. Ginastera's phantasmagorical *Beatrix Cenci* was the first opera produced in Washington's John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. In 1973 Ginastera was residing in Switzerland.

The guitar music of Falu was received enthusiastically by audiences in Europe, the United States, and Japan in 1967 and 1968; and in 1973 another young Argentine guitarist, Jorge Molinari, was captivating audiences in Europe and in the United States. Among the Argentine performing artists who have gained international acclaim is the pianist Marisa Regules. She entered the Buenos Aires conservatory at the age of

three and made her Argentine debut at five. A specialist in music of the baroque and romantic periods, as well as modern Hispanic music, Regules performed with the Buenos Aires, Paris, Tokyo, Prague, and Israel philharmonic orchestras and with several orchestras in the United States. She died in 1973 at the age of forty-eight.

Argentina is also noted for its enthusiasm for foreign music. Buenos Aires is one of the greatest international markets for music in the world. The city's famed Teatro Colón has presented such internationally known figures as Richard Strauss, Arturo Toscanini and Pablo Casals. The Teatro Colón, which has a seating capacity of 3,500 was inaugurated in 1908, and since 1931 it has been owned and operated by the municipality of Buenos Aires. It maintains four permanent groups—two orchestras, a chorus, and a dance troupe—and each season presents some 200 performances of operas, concerts, solo recitals, and ballet. The celebrated ballet troupe was killed in a plane crash in 1970 but is being reestablished.

In addition to the Teatro Colón, musical activities have been sponsored primarily by private entities, such as The Friends of Music (Amigos de la Música), the Argentine Mozarteum, and the Wagnerian Association of Buenos Aires. The Argentine Mozarteum, in addition to its many other activities, sponsors the Mid-day Concert Series, which have been presented free of charge in a centrally located theater in Buenos Aires since 1959.

Among the several permanent symphonic orchestras in Buenos Aires, the most prominent are the Philharmonic Orchestra of Buenos Aires, the permanent orchestra of the Teatro Colón, and the National Symphonic Orchestra. In addition, the Symphonic Orchestra of Radio Nacional, the official cultural radio station, presents free concerts, which must include at least one composition by an Argentine. Provincial and municipal governments, national universities, and various private entities in the provinces sponsor symphonic orchestras, quartets, quintets, and choruses, and the provinces of Santa Fe and Tucumán have their own annual music festivals.

## **The Plastic Arts**

### **Painting and Sculpture**

Trends in the technique and the subject matter of painting and sculpture have generally been derived from France and Italy and, more recently, from Mexico and the United States. Argentine artists have usually studied in Rome or Paris and, upon their return to Argentina, have applied to their work their acquired European framework. Like the country's musicians, artists have shown little inclination to associate themselves in schools. In general, painters and sculptors have been less oriented toward local themes than toward international ones. In the 1960s a number of Argentine artists had been prominent in the vanguard

of international trends, and Buenos Aires had drawn aspiring artists from all parts of Latin America.

Academic styles, generally of Italian inspiration, marked the work of painters throughout the nineteenth century. Carlos Morel was the first native painter of significance; Prilidiano Pueyrredón, who recorded the pastoral scenes of the Pampa, was generally considered the most outstanding nineteenth-century Argentine painter.

Martin A. Malharro was the first Argentine impressionist. He returned from Paris early in the twentieth century deeply engaged in the movement, which gained numerous adherents, such as Walter de Navazio, Ramon Silva, and Faustino Gruggetti, who combined impressionism with other techniques.

The first period of vanguard painting was initiated in the 1920s and 1930s by a number of Argentines returning from Paris. Among them were Emilio Pettoruti, who introduced cubism and futurism to his country; Xul Solar, whose fantastic imagery showed the influence of Paul Klee; and Juan del Prete, whose abstract work became the most notable antecedent of the next period of Argentine painting. Although the work of the first vanguard period did not appeal to public taste, it was supported by the Association of the Friends of Art during that organization's existence from 1924 to 1937 and by the periodical *Martín Fierro* and its contributors.

The second vanguard period, beginning in the 1940s, was characterized by abstraction, both geometric and concrete. The initiators encountered resistance or indifference from the artists of the earlier vanguard and intense criticism from the public. It was not until 1954, some ten years after this group's beginning, that the artists Tomás Maldonado, Arden Quin, Alfred Hlito, and others received favorable recognition.

By 1959 geometric abstractionism had been overtaken in popularity by lyrical abstractionism, or informalism. The geometric form had been executed according to rational or scientific principles of spatial relationships, but later informalism represented a return to subjectivity or emotionalism. Outstanding among the informalists were two winners of the Torcuato di Tella prize, the noted collagist Mario Pucciarelli and Clorindo Testa, who achieved extraordinary subtlety in his use of color.

The third and most recent vanguard period, which began in the early 1960s, was characterized by a rupture of the distinction between painting and sculpture and an overwhelming interest in aesthetic experimentation. Creative movements in the United States became a major source of influence for the new vanguard. Romulo Macció, influenced by Willem De Kooning, won the first international prize of the Torcuato di Tella Institute in 1963 for his action painting, which was characterized by audacious and spontaneous use of pigment technique and brush stroke. Pop art found adherents in Martha Minujín and Carlos Squirru, who have staged a number of "happenings." Exploration of the aesthetic functions of light and movement has been undertaken by the Argentine

group in Paris known as the Experiment in Visual Art (Recherche d'art visuel). Julio le Parc, one of the founding members of this group, won the first prize for painting in the 1966 Venice Biennale for his three-dimensional kinetic constructions.

In addition to the various vanguard movements that are encountering wide acceptance, the contemporary scene embraces a variety of still-vigorous older movements. Surrealistic elements, introduced to Argentina from Paris in the 1930s, are notable in the works of a number of younger painters, such as Roberto Aizenberg, Osvaldo Borda, and Victor Chab. The Mexican muralist tradition, which became significant in Argentina in the 1940s, is being continued by members of the Spartan (Expartaco) group.

Nineteenth-century sculpture was inhibited by the imposition of the traditional tastes of public authorities. Outstanding work in classical forms has been done in this century by Rogelio Yrurtia and Pedro Zonza Briano. Among the contemporary sculptors, Sesostris Vitullo and Alicia Peñalba have influenced European and Latin American sculpture with their use of pre-Columbian forms. Peñalba's works have added an intriguing touch to many of Buenos Aires' playgrounds. The simple geometric forms of Libero Badii and the hydraulic sculpture of Gyula Kosice have also gained recognition at home and abroad. The highly original work of Kosice has generally involved the use of Plexiglas in exhibitions using the interplay of water, light, and movement.

Technical competence in the rendering of art for its own sake has generally been more in evidence than social commentary in the works of Argentine painters and sculptors. Several artists, however, have made exceptionally effective use of the graphic media for expressing their views and concerns. Raquel Forner, inspired by the works of El Greco, has used the subtle distortion of human and vegetal forms in allegorical paintings on the suffering and destruction of war. Antonio Berni's original genre, known as figurative irreverence, became a vehicle for the expression of contempt for the sociopolitical status quo. Without deviating from the abstract geometrical patterns and austerity of color that have characterized most of his work, Fernández Muro expressed his condemnation of the murder of civil rights worker Medgar Evers in Mississippi in a mixed-media piece entitled *Shot in the Back*. One of the rare sculptural pieces of explicitly political content is Noemi Gerstein's monument of the unknown political prisoner, first exhibited in London in 1953.

The accelerated pace of current creative activity and experimentation in the plastic arts owes much to the many activities, including instruction, expositions, and the granting of scholarships and awards, of the Torcuato di Tella Institute's Center of Visual Arts. The National Museum of Fine Arts and the Buenos Aires Museum of Modern Art have been particularly active in promoting vanguard movements. There are more than seventy other galleries in Buenos Aires.

## **Architecture**

The turning point in architectural trends from the traditional, or academic, to the modern rationalist-functionalist may be traced to the early 1930s, when the needs of accelerated urbanization, the development of new techniques and new materials of construction, and the diffusion of foreign ideas created a climate favorable to fundamental change. The initial impetus for this transformation was provided by Le Corbusier, who visited Argentina in 1929, presented a series of lectures, and drew up the first proposals for city planning for Buenos Aires.

In 1945 several Argentine architects established in Tucumán the first South American school of architecture to emphasize contemporary trends. By the 1950s instruction in traditional design had given way to modern design in the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Buenos Aires as well as in most other schools in the country. Nevertheless, Argentine architects have not been in the vanguard of modernist experimentation. Their work has been noted less for audacity than for sobriety in materials and concepts.

Amancio Williams, generally considered the country's most imaginative architect, overcame difficulties of site in his celebrated house at Mar del Plata through the use of geometrically simple forms. An arched concrete slab bridging a brook supports the horizontal slab that constitutes the main floor level. The San Martín Municipal Theater in Buenos Aires, designed by Mario Roberto Alvarez and Macedonio Oscar Ruiz, is exemplary of the integration of painting, sculpture, and architecture. The architectural unit, comprising three vertical blocks of descending heights, incorporates works by eleven of the country's best known painters and sculptors.

## **Folk Expression**

### **Arts and Crafts**

The steady immigration, urbanization, and industrialization that took place between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries brought about a sharp decline in folk and traditional art. Difficult living conditions, the competition of industrial products, and the needs of commercialization have led most artisans either to abandon their art entirely or to discard the designs and techniques that are traceable to aboriginal and Spanish models. Not until the mid-twentieth century did interest revive in the aesthetic and practical values of traditional products; the government, in conjunction with some private citizens, initiated programs designed to make these products accessible to the general public and to offer incentives to the artisans to continue their work.

The pre-Hispanic ceramic tradition was totally lost with colonization; that which survived did not approach the previous level of artistic perfection. The criollo pottery industry, never highly developed, has

also declined in this century. Except for the black ceramics of the province of Córdoba and the *rojiza* (reddish) pottery of Corrientes Province, contemporary pottery is simple in form and generally devoid of decoration. Since the late 1960s a movement has been under way to reestablish the ceramic tradition through the study of ancient remains, to be undertaken in workshops and craft schools.

Weaving is an example of surviving cultural hybridization. Sheep's wool is now being used as well as the wool of llama, alpaca, and vicuña originally used by the aborigines. Artificial dyes are gradually replacing the natural ones, but of the various types of looms still in use, the majority are indigenous. Ponchos, *chuspas* (woven purses), blankets, bedspreads, rugs, skirts, belts, and other articles, decorated with floral and geometric designs, are produced in various rural areas. Traditional weaving, however, has declined because of the high cost of raw materials and the difficulties of marketing.

Basket weaving is still practiced throughout the country except in the southernmost reaches, where fibrous plants do not grow readily. In addition to baskets and other containers, hats, canoes, fences, and many other useful items are woven for use at home or in the community or for sale to collectors and tourists. Techniques and decorative elements vary considerably from one region to another. In some cases craftsmen have simply adopted and carried on the traditions of the indigenous peoples. The materials and techniques of the Kaaingua tribe, for example, are still employed with little modification by the criollos of the northeast region. In other cases the Spanish tradition has been transplanted, such as the braiding of palm fronds, a craft practiced by isolated artisans in Entre Ríos and Santiago del Estero provinces. The more common practices, however, incorporate both indigenous and Spanish technique and design.

Colonial craftsmanship in furniture succumbed to industrialization, but in some areas wooden bowls, trays, plates, spoons, and *yerba mate* cups are still made by hand. The most outstanding contemporary craftsmanship in wood is the making of stirrups, richly ornamented with engravings, and of musical instruments, such as guitars, harps, and tambourines.

Silversmithing, which had flourished in the latter years of the colonial period, declined until the mid-nineteenth century, when it experienced another upsurge of demand. Activity in this art diminished again, however, at the end of the century, and in Buenos Aires only a few master silversmiths remained in the early 1970s. Traditional techniques have survived in the making of *yerba mate* cups, spurs, and rings in a few isolated areas of the Northwest Andes region.

Skillful leathercraftsmen are still to be found in cattle zones. Leather goods are generally decorated with geometric designs, and the products of each province or region have their own characteristics. Horn is still used by artisans in the making of flasks, vases, and musical instruments,



which are decorated with relief drawings or adorned with silver. Wood carving of religious figures continued to be practiced in the northern part of the country throughout the nineteenth century, but in this century the handmade figures have been replaced by mass-produced images in plaster. In the 1960s ecclesiastical authorities indicated some interest in reviving this art.

In June 1963 the Cultural Division of the Secretariat of Culture and Education, with the technical assistance of the National Institute of Anthropology, organized a symposium on traditional arts and crafts; and the Associates of the National Institute of Anthropology, which has been active in investigative work, in 1967 sponsored the National Exposition of the Traditional Arts, in which more than 1,000 works were exhibited. As a result of these efforts and of the general revival of interest in uniquely Argentine cultural manifestations, traditional art objects and designs are beginning to appear in commerce and in the decorative art of metropolitan areas.

### Music and Dance

Folk expression has had a stronger influence in music than in arts and crafts. After the establishment of nationhood, traditional music, like traditional art, gradually came to exist only in the more isolated rural areas, but since the nationalistic fervor of the 1930s and 1940s, the country has shown sustained and enthusiastic interest in folklore. In spite of the considerable appreciation of classical music, folkloric music was more popular in the early 1970s, even in metropolitan areas.

The only Indian dance that has survived more or less intact from the pre-Columbian period is the *carnavalito*, which is danced by all the social classes in the northwestern provinces. Other dances originating with the Calchaquian culture of that region and revealing a mixture of Spanish and other influences include the *zamba*, *vidala*, *bailecito*, *gato*, *cueca*, and *gabnola*. The *chacarera*, dating from after the arrival of the Spaniards, and the gaucho dance *escondido* were once danced throughout the country but are now common only in the north.

The tango, a late arrival on the scene, drew its melancholy themes from the life of the slums of Buenos Aires, where it originated. African influences, which arrived by way of Cuba, combined with French and Spanish folk music in the tango. It attained universal popularity through the works of the composer and singer Carlos Gardel, and for several decades it has been generally considered the national dance. Aníbal (Pichuco) Troilo, an elderly accordionist, was particularly popular among tango fans in the early 1970s.

In addition to the many social clubs that feature folk music, the National Commission of Culture and the various provincial cultural commissions have been active in preserving and promoting it. Juan Draghi Lucero, who has published various studies and collections of folklore, including *Cancionero popular cuyano* (Popular Music of Cuyo) and *Las*

*mil y una noches argentinas* (A thousand and One Argentine Nights), has contributed to the revival of interest in this aspect of the national aesthetic tradition. Much of the best folklore is unknown beyond Argentine borders, although tours abroad by such groups as the Frontiersmen (Los Fronterizos) and soloists such as Atahualpa Yupanqui, composer of the popular "Mi Caballito Blanco" (My Little White Horse), are increasing in frequency.

## SECTION II. POLITICAL

### CHAPTER 8

#### THE GOVERNMENTAL SYSTEM

In 1973 Argentina returned, for the first time since 1966, to functional constitutional government. Elections in March elevated Héctor Cámpora, a supporter of Juan Domingo Perón, to the presidency. Perón returned to Argentina after eighteen years in exile and Cámpora resigned, paving the way for Perón's election to the presidency in September.

The Constitution of 1853, although amended subsequently, and even abrogated during Perón's first period in office (1946-55), continued in force. It was Latin America's oldest constitution and one of the few promulgated in Argentina since independence was achieved.

Between 1930 and 1973 dictatorships created by military coups were followed by short-lived constitutional governments that in turn were ushered out of office by new military juntas. Theoretically, the government has been based on the executive, legislative, and judicial branches but, in fact, the executive branch has dominated Argentina's government and society at large.

Throughout the history of Argentina, the legislative and judicial branches have taken a position secondary to that of the executive. The bicameral legislature, consisting of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, was elected in 1973, by direct vote, for the first time. Under the law that governed elections, voting for national and provincial offices in Argentina was secret and compulsory for all citizens in good standing between the ages of eighteen and seventy. Although, theoretically, the powers of the legislative branch are extensive, it has rarely taken the initiative in introducing important legislation. This initiative has usually rested with the executive. A series of independent courts headed by the Supreme Court constitute the judicial branch of government. In practice and theory the judicial system was founded largely upon European experiences.

Although there is an elaborate system of provincial and local governments, their powers have been limited, mainly because of the power of the federal government to intervene in the affairs of the provinces. In 1973 the provinces had not attained the kind of autonomy guaranteed under the constitution.

In addition to eight ministries, there are a relatively large number of autonomous agencies and state-owned enterprises. Argentina's civil service, historically noted for its large number of qualified civil servants, has recently taken important steps to take politics out of the criteria for employment. In 1973, however, their effectiveness remained to be tested.

## **THE CONSTITUTION**

The Constitution of 1853, under which the country was governed in late 1973, is similar in organization and content to that of the United States constitution, and many of its articles are almost verbatim translations from the United States document. This stemmed from the fact that many Argentine leaders greatly admired the United States document. It was framed, however, in accordance with the political and economic realities of Argentina.

Resulting in large measure from the efforts of Juan Bautista Alberdi, who was an outstanding diplomat and writer of the mid-nineteenth century and an exponent of the motto that "To Govern Is To Populate," the Constitution of 1853 reflected the economic liberalism and laissez-faire philosophy of the period following the Juan Manuel de Rosas regime (see ch. 2). The constitution provides for a representative, republican, federal system with the power divided between the national government and twenty-two provincial governments. Some powers, however, are delegated exclusively to the national government, whereas others are exercised concurrently by the central government and the provincial governments. Some powers are denied to the provinces, and all others may theoretically be exercised by the provinces.

Freedom of the press is guaranteed under the constitution but was curbed intermittently during the first Perón regime and during the military regimes between 1966 and 1973. Property is declared inviolable, and slavery is prohibited. Sentences may be handed down only after a trial based on law. Labor unions are guaranteed the right to organize, strike, and carry out their regular activities. European immigration is strongly encouraged. Aliens enjoy the civil rights of all citizens and automatically become citizens after five years of residence if they make no statement to the contrary. The constitution may be amended only by a convention summoned for that purpose by a two-thirds vote of the members of the National Congress.

## **STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF GOVERNMENT**

### **The Executive**

The authors of the Constitution of 1853 were determined to create a strong presidency in line with the Spanish tradition of the caudillo (political strongman) and succeeded in doing so. In 1973 an absolute majority

(50 percent plus one vote) was needed for the election of the Argentine chief executive. If none of the candidates received this majority a second election would be held in which the top two or three candidates would run.

According to the constitution, the president is elected for four years and may not be reelected immediately. He must have been born in Argentina or, if born abroad, be the child of native-born Argentine citizens. Both the president and vice president are required to profess the Roman Catholic faith, and both must be at least thirty years old. The vice president is elected at the same time as the president and may succeed him to the presidency in case of his illness, absence from the capital, death, resignation, or removal from office. If the vice president is incapacitated, those eligible are the president pro tempore of the Chamber of Senators, the president of the Chamber of Deputies, and the president of the Supreme Court, in that order. When the presidency is filled by one of these three, the constitution requires that a new election be called within thirty days.

Argentina's president has extensive constitutional powers, including the general administration of the country, execution of its laws, wide appointment powers, the conduct of foreign affairs, and the power to approve or veto all legislative acts of the congress. Members of his cabinet and other executive assistants may be removed at the president's will. The president nominates bishops of the Roman Catholic Church from a list of three names proposed by the Senate and, with the consent of the Supreme Court, approves or withholds approval of all papal decrees, councils, bulls, briefs, and rescripts. With the exception of judges and members of the diplomatic corps, who must be confirmed by the Senate, the president is the sole judge of the qualifications of his appointees.

According to the constitution, the chief executive is also commander in chief of the armed forces, but during the 1960s the military officers arrogated some of the veto power. In fact even while the country was under military rule between 1966 and 1973, the presidency and the position of commander in chief of the armed forces was not always held by the same person. The president may not formally declare war, but he can use his military and diplomatic powers in such a manner as to virtually force congress to do so.

The number of cabinet members appointed by the chief executive has ranged from five to eight during the 1960s and early 1970s. Ministers are responsible to the president for their actions and have the right to attend sessions of congress and take part in the debates but do not have the right to vote. In mid-1973 the cabinet consisted of the following seven ministries : interior, foreign relations, economy, justice, culture and education, national defense, and labor and social welfare. Traditionally, the president and his ministers have had almost complete control of the government administration, as there were no formal appointment or dismissal procedures for government employees.

The chief executive's broad legislative powers are explicitly sanctioned and, in most cases, he takes the initiative in introducing legislation to congress. In the past, congress has usually awaited the introduction of an administration bill and then has given the president's policies legality by means of the formal legislative process. The Argentine president also enjoys veto power but does not have the pocket veto. In 1973 the legislature was more active than it had been previously in initiating new legislation.

The president's judicial power is exercised by his right to appoint members of the federal judiciary and, subject to senatorial confirmation, to grant pardons and to commute sentences. Of even greater importance are his powers to declare a state of seige and to suspend most of the civil liberties guaranteed under the constitution. From 1966 to 1973 the power to declare a state of siege was used frequently.

### The Legislature

The Argentine National Congress was reinstated in March 1973 after being suspended in 1966. It consists of a Senate, with a minimum of two members from each province and the Federal District (a total of sixty-nine); and a Chamber of Deputies whose members are elected directly—one for each 85,000 inhabitants in the provinces and in the Federal District—a total of 243. Each province has a minimum of two deputies but no maximum number. The senators from the provinces are elected by the provincial legislatures. Before 1973 the two senators from the Federal District were elected by an electoral college chosen for that purpose, but in 1973 they were elected by direct vote.

Senators must be thirty years of age, must have been citizens for six years, and must be natives of the province from which elected or must have resided there during the two preceding years. Senators serve for nine years, and one-third are elected every three years. The vice president presides over the Senate and votes only in case of a tie. Deputies, with the senators sitting in judgment, have the exclusive right to impeach the president, vice president, ministers, or members of the Supreme Court. Two-thirds of the members must vote that there are grounds to proceed with impeachment proceedings after a preliminary investigation has been made.

Deputies must be twenty-five years of age. They must have been an Argentine citizen for at least four years, and must have resided for at least two years in the province in which they seek election.

Under the constitution both chambers meet from September 30 until May 1 of each year. In 1973, however, congress convened in March. The president may call special sessions, which deal only with matters specified in the call. Each chamber makes its own rules, and parliamentary immunity for opinions and speeches is granted.

Bills may be introduced in either house, then are sent to appropriate standing committees for consideration and amendment and returned to

the floor of the house for debate and a final vote. In order to become law, the bill must be approved by both houses. In case of disagreement between the two chambers however, there is no conference committee; there is a complicated system under which the bill is shuttled back and forth between chambers. Bills not returned by the executive are considered passed after the expiration of ten working days. Initiative for laws relating to taxes or recruitment of troops is reserved for the Chamber of Deputies.

Members of congress enjoy a number of privileges such as immunity from arrest, which can be lost only by a two-thirds vote of the member's house. Although members of congress do not have individual offices, each party is given space in the legislative building in proportion to the size of the party. Also a number of employees are paid by congress to help the party caucuses. Just before its suspension in 1966, congress had a staff of approximately 2,000 career employees. In addition to monthly salaries, members of congress receive pensions, free postage, telegram and telephone service, free transportation to and from their districts, and free license plates for their cars. They also receive free medical service, pay lower prices in restaurants especially established for them, have access to information service through the Library of Congress, and are paid an allowance for apartment rental in Buenos Aires.

### **The Judicial System**

Judicial power is vested in the Supreme Court and a series of lower courts set up by the National Congress. Under legislation passed by congress, the national territory is divided into several federal judicial districts, each of which is assigned to at least one justice. These districts are the courts of original jurisdiction. Until 1902 all appeals were carried directly to the Supreme Court. Later, an intermediate level of courts was established. These appellate courts serve basically the same function as the United States circuit courts. Each province has its own judicial system, including courts of first instance and appellate courts.

The jurisdiction of the federal courts is dependent upon the subject matter of cases and the persons involved. Federal courts have jurisdiction over cases involving the constitution, laws or treaties of the nation, cases in admiralty and maritime jurisdiction, foreign diplomats, suits in which the nation is a party, and suits between two or more provinces or between one province and the citizens of another.

The judicial system incorporates European theories and practice except in the area of constitutional law, where practices are similar to those followed in the United States. The five justices of the Supreme Court are appointed for life by the president, with the consent of the Senate. The same applies to judges of the appellate courts and courts of original jurisdiction. Historically, judges have been appointed for political reasons and have received very low salaries.

The Supreme Court selects its chief justice for a three-year term from among its own members. Although the Supreme Court has declared legislation or acts of the executive branch to be constitutional, the practice of judicial review is not carried out as extensively as in the United States. In general, the requirement that all judicial actions be presented in writing makes the process a lengthy one. Most cases are read rather than heard by a judge. The jury system, although mentioned in the constitution, is rarely utilized except in a few provinces, such as Buenos Aires and Córdoba.

### Autonomous and State Agencies

In addition to the ministries, which make up the president's cabinet, Argentina's government has a relatively large number of state enterprises and state-owned limited companies. The government is playing an increasing role in the country's economy in the fields of natural resource development, utilities, transportation, and communication. The government plans to increase efficiency and productivity in the public sector and to reduce and eventually eliminate its budgetary deficit. The most important state enterprises are the State Oil Fields (also referred to as the National Petroleum Company), the Water and Electric Power Board, the State Gas Company, the State Coal Fields, the Argentine Railways, the Argentine Airlines, the Underground Railways, the General Port Authority, National Telecommunications Company, and the State River Fleet. Among the state-owned limited companies are the Greater Buenos Aires Electrical Services, the Argentine Steel Institute, the New Hydroelectrical Company, the Mosconi Petrochemical Corporation, the Bahía Blanca Petrochemical Corporation, and the Sierra Grande Iron Ore Company.

Although public policies have influenced industrialization patterns, the government has played a modest role in direct management and ownership of manufacturing ventures. After several years of the first Perón regime, less than 10 percent of gross manufacturing output was generated by firms totally or partially public-owned and -managed. Government participation has been highest in petroleum refining (as well as oil extraction), where the state company, the State Oil Fields, has played a major role since the 1920s. The armed forces has showed interest in iron and steel, shipyards, other transport equipment, and explosives since the late 1930s. Using property confiscated late in World War II from German nationals, the Perón regime encouraged these interests. Particularly since 1959, the public sector has divested itself of manufacturing activities although the major company in crude steel production, Argentine Joint Iron and Steel Company (Sociedad Mixta Siderúrgica Argentina—SOMISA), is still in that sector (see ch. 13).



## PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Argentine Constitution of 1853 divides power between the national government and the twenty-two provinces. Under the constitution, the provinces retain many powers, although realistically these powers are limited. An important way of measuring the limitation of sovereignty in the Argentine provinces is to examine the federal government's power to intervene in order to: "guarantee the republican form of government, repel foreign invasion, and at the request of the constituted authorities, to support or re-establish those authorities, should they have been deposed by sedition or invasion by another province." Thus, the president or congress may remove all government officials in a province and replace them with a federal appointee or intervenor responsible only to the president or congress. A very large number of interventions have been ordered to "guarantee the republican form of government."

Because the judiciary has declined to define the concept of republicanism, the one who decides upon intervention is empowered to define republicanism. From 1966 to March 1973 the provinces were directly controlled by intervenors, appointed by the president, who exercised both executive and legislative power in his name. In October 1973 the intervenors were removed by the federal government.

Under the constitution, the twenty-two provinces "retain all power not delegated by the national constitution to the federal government." They elect their own legislatures and their own governors, who are "regents of the federal government for the execution of the constitution and law of the nation." The provinces may form economic, but not political, agreements with each other. The provincial constitutions are similar, although more detailed, than the federal, and they usually include a bill of rights and amendments. Amendments are made in the same manner as those to the federal constitution in the national government.

The chief provincial executive is the governor whose method of election and term of office is similar in all provinces. The minimum age requirement is thirty years and the term of office four years. In no province is the governor eligible for immediate reelection. In most, he is chosen by a direct vote of the people, but in a few provinces there are electoral colleges similar to those used before 1973 to select the president.

The governor of each province is the chief executive and enjoys extensive authority. He has almost unlimited power of appointment and removal and is the commander in chief of the local militia. He has the authority to call special legislative sessions and to introduce and veto bills. Executive decrees may also be issued by the governor. He may pardon offenders of provincial laws and is responsible for the preparation and execution of the provincial budget. Finally, as the direct agent of the national government, he is charged with the enforcement in his province of all national laws.

The structures of the provincial legislatures vary greatly. In most cases only those provinces with a population of more than half a million

people have bicameral legislatures; thus, almost two-thirds are unicameral. The term of office is usually four years in the lower house (also in the unicameral legislatures) and six years in the Senate. Most legislative sessions are of four- and five-months' duration. Provincial legislative powers are limited compared to the powers of the national legislature. Their activities tend to center on taxation, approval of the provincial budget, and the promotion of education and health-related activities. From 1966 to 1973, however, even these limited activities were in the hands of the military government.

In most provinces, the governor appoints the mayors of the provincial cities. In Buenos Aires, the mayor is appointed by the president. Beneath the mayor's office is an elected council—a system that often creates conflict between the electees, who feel they represent the people of the city, and the mayor, who is considered a representative of the governor's office. In some small towns a commission (*comisiones de fomento*) made up from three to five persons is appointed by the governor.

### THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

When the Saenz Peña Law (named after the president who was elected in 1910) was passed in 1912, a system of limited voting to give minorities representation in the legislature, secret balloting, and compulsory voting and registration were introduced in Argentina.

Specifically, the law stated that two-thirds of each province's representatives in the Chamber of Deputies should come from the party with the largest vote, and the remaining one-third should come from the second strongest party. As a result Argentina held its first bona fide national election in 1916 (see ch. 2).

From 1930 to 1955 virtually no bona fide elections were held in Argentina. Under Perón, a peculiar system had developed when votes were probably counted as cast, although the opposition was not allowed to carry on an effective campaign. Perón created a situation in which he could afford to have the votes honestly counted because he was sure of the results. After his fall in 1955 and until 1973, elections—when conducted—were fair except that the largest party had been disenfranchised.

In 1963 the Saenz Peña Law was replaced by a combination of earlier electoral practices, decrees of several governments since 1955, and a system of proportional representation for political parties. Proportional representation was provided for with the condition that a party had to gain at least 3 percent of the votes to obtain a seat. Until March 1973 presidential candidates were required to obtain an absolute majority of votes from the Electoral College to gain office. Failure to obtain this majority would send the voting into the National Congress, where the president would be chosen in basically the same manner as described in the constitution. The Electoral College, however, was abolished in 1973 and was replaced by a system of direct voting.

Voting, which takes place on a Sunday between 8:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M., is compulsory for all citizens between the ages of eighteen and seventy. Exceptions are based on conditions, such as age, distance from polling places, and insanity. Eighty-five to 90 percent of those eligible vote in most elections. Recognized political parties are entitled to have poll watchers at the polling place where detailed regulations safeguard the secrecy of the ballot. Each precinct processes a maximum, in volume, of 250 voters, except those located in cities with more than 30,000 inhabitants, where the maximum number to be processed is 300.

The Electoral Department of the Ministry of the Interior appoints a federal judge (called an electoral judge), and an electoral board to administer the elections. The electoral judge is responsible for the registration list, adjudicating electoral crimes, and determining the eligibility and actions of political parties. The electoral board names polling place officials and determines any irregularities that arise regarding voting.

Before the actual voting takes place, the president of the polling place checks the registration card of each voter; party representatives also check if they wish. Each party prepares a ballot that must be approved by the proper officials. When the voter enters the polls, he is given an envelope. Inside the voting booth he finds a stack of each party's ballots. He picks whichever he chooses to use, votes, and puts the ballot into the envelope—which he seals—and deposits the envelope in the ballot box. At 6:00 P.M. the president of the polling place checks the ballots for any irregularities and gives them to the electoral board for counting. Officials and party representatives may be present. The results are telegraphed to the National Electoral Chamber, and the ballots are carried to the District Electoral Board. Members of political parties are permitted, according to law, to accompany the polling officials.

## THE CIVIL SERVICE

Because of Argentina's comparatively well-developed educational establishment, the civil service system includes a large percentage of well-trained persons. Traditionally, civil servants have been appointed for political reasons, but some attempts were made by members of the military to separate the system from politics in the late 1960s. For example, the Central Bank of Argentina requires that most appointees take a civil service examination. In 1958 an agency was established to control the abuses of political patronage. In the same year, a classification system was drawn up and put into effect.

Several administrations after 1955 tried to reduce the number of employees by dismissing and pensioning them, but they never fully succeeded. Many government employees had other jobs and did not devote their best efforts to their government work. In the early 1960s plans were announced to rationalize management and to reduce the number of government workers to less than 1.5 million. The Superior Institute of Public Administration was set up as a decentralized organization reporting

to the president. Its two main functions were training of staff and re-searching administrative issues. A managing committee, made up of a president and eight members, was appointed by the president.

In 1973 it was questionable whether the institute's programs in training and research in public administration would bring about the desired results of more effective utilization of manpower, improve public service at the national and provincial levels, and cut down on the number of government employees. One of the first tasks of the institute was examination and revision of all training schemes, bringing them up to date, deciding on the nature and scope of specialist retraining programs, and determining whether such courses should be run by ministries or by outside organizations.

In 1973 a number of new laws designed to protect civil servants were passed. One referred to an employee's loss of security and stability of employment when a ministry was reorganized, posts were abolished, or organizations declared redundant. Under the new law employees would collect salaries for twelve months until they were placed in new posts or found other employment. These employees were to have priority when existing vacancies occurred. Another law discussed the right to appeal decisions and guarantee of rank and career status when the rights of the employee had been, or appeared to have been, affected. This new structure, set out by the laws, stated its purpose to be, that of improving the level of both the qualifications and the aptitude of the staff, to form a group of suitable persons who had reasonable expectations of progress in their careers, to serve an efficient and dynamic administrative organization that could "take on the full responsibilities proper to the effort called for by a country in rapid development."

The new promotion system introduced grading by numbers, rather than by letters, even though it kept the same method of classifying staff. The differences were most notable in the manner of payment for work. Long service would be rewarded according to a coefficient that would vary with length of employment. There would be additional payment for educational qualifications—university, secondary, or technical— which would be a fixed percentage of the basic salary. Details concerning promotions, examinations, and administrative careers were drawn up, and rules for qualifying staff based on work and responsibilities, set down.

## CHAPTER 9

### POLITICAL DYNAMICS

After having ruled Argentina for seven years, the armed forces, in 1973, paved the way for free elections and voluntarily turned over the reigns of government to a new civilian head of state. These developments contrasted sharply with trends elsewhere in Latin America, where the last decade had seen more than a dozen duly elected governments toppled by the armed forces. Moreover, the most prominent beneficiaries of the return to democratic process—the labor-based Peronist movement—composed the very group whose exclusion from that process had been the major goal of the military for almost two decades.

The universal suffrage that was granted by the government of Roque Saenz Peña in 1912 had actually enfranchised only about 40 percent of the adult male population, as the remainder, concentrated in the working class, had not acquired citizenship. Until 1943 competition for political power and economic advantage had centered on the struggle between the middle class, represented mainly by the Radical Civic Union (Unión Cívica Radical—UCR, commonly known as Radical Party), and the landowning oligarchy. The so-called *descamisados* (literally, shirtless ones)—a rapidly growing proletariat, generally the offspring of European immigrants, who had migrated to the urban areas from the interior—had virtually no voice in the political process; and the older, organized sector of the urban working class had been represented only by the relatively weak Socialist Party.

The military faction that came to power in 1943, a group of young, predominantly middle-class colonels, aspired to the establishment of a corporate system providing representation for traditional functional groups, such as the Roman Catholic Church, the military, landowners, and businessmen. But, with more foresight than his colleagues, Colonel Juan Domingo Perón saw the desirability and potential advantage of drawing new groups, and particularly the proletariat, into that corporate structure. With this newly mobilized constituency, he was elected to the presidency in 1946.

Between the overthrow of Perón in 1955 and his triumphal return to power in 1973—first through the election of his loyal supporter Héctor Cámpora in March and, after Cámpora's resignation, through the election of Perón himself in September—the major issue confronting the political system had been the legitimacy of the participation of the Peronists. This group, which refused to be dissolved or absorbed by the

other parties, retained control of the labor movement and of about one-fourth to one-third of the electorate. All other parties and interest groups splintered over the question of whether or to what extent they would collaborate with the Peronists, and the Peronists themselves split over the issue of collaboration with other groups.

Since its emergence as a major political force in 1930 the military has interacted with contending civilian groups and has generally been highly factionalized. The faction that prevailed from 1930 until 1943 was aligned with the landowning oligarchy. The faction that gained control in 1943 and later gave its support to Perón favored the industrialist over the landowner. From the overthrow of Perón in 1955 until 1966 factionalism was based on degrees of opposition to Peronism and of tolerance for constitutional government. The latter issue became moot when the faction alleged to advocate constitutionalism seized control of the government in 1966 and announced that its tenure would be indefinite.

Economic stagnation, continuous over two decades, and prolonged military rule (1966-73), which excluded all parties from overt competition for power, ultimately served to promote cooperation between the hard-core Peronists and many civilians who had previously opposed them. Furthermore, a large body of socially conscious youth of all classes who had never voted before swelled the ranks of the Peronist movement after outbursts of violence, beginning in 1969, pitted workers and students against the armed forces and the police. Supporters of the new government ranged across the ideological spectrum from some Marxist guerrillas to conservative businessmen, who saw Perón as the only leader strong enough to stabilize the country and protect them from the guerrillas.

Loyal opposition was provided by the Radical Party, reunited after almost two decades of severe factionalism, and several coalitions of minor parties. Extra legal opposition took the form of continuing assassinations and acts of sabotage perpetrated by clandestine groups of both Right and Left. The mood of the armed forces was not readily apparent, but it was generally believed that Perón was being careful to avoid offending them.

## **THE SOCIAL BASES OF POLITICAL COMPETITION**

The dynamics of Argentine politics derive from changing socio-economic patterns, historically conditioned attitudes, and the timing and manner of entry of social groups into political life. The landed oligarchy ruled until 1916; the urban-based, middle-class Radical Party was dominant from 1916 until 1930; the military intervened in 1930 in alliance with the oligarchy; and Perón gave the laboring class a favored political position after 1943. After overthrowing Peron in 1955 the military intervened

intermittently as a political arbiter on the pretext of preserving the constitution.

From the time of its founding until 1916 the country was governed by an oligarchy that monopolized all political and economic power. The oligarchy owned the land and its produce; its members governed the country; and it rigidly maintained the social traditions on its estates, in its homes in Buenos Aires, and in exclusive clubs. Its policies denied popular participation in government and created a dual division in society. There was a division between the mass and the elite and also between the European-oriented *porteños* (people of the port) of Buenos Aires and the rural masses who populated the interior and gave allegiance to *caudillos* (regional political strong men).

The transfer of political dominance from the oligarchy to a rising middle class in 1916 did not reflect either the rural-urban or the mass-elite division. The strength of the middle class grew out of the migration from Europe, numbering in the millions, which began in the 1850s. Because of greater opportunity in Buenos Aires and a land tenure system that made colonization difficult, the immigrants remained in or near the capital. The magnitude of this migration is best demonstrated by the fact that for about fifty years (1870 to 1920) four out of five persons living in Buenos Aires were immigrants.

The predominance in the capital of foreigners excluded from the traditional political system generated the need for a new vehicle of representation. They were the people who founded the Radical Party in 1890, an urban-based, middle-class party of merchants, shopkeepers, clerks, professionals, and some young military officers who challenged the rule of the oligarchy and its European orientation in commerce and culture. In 1916, benefiting from the institution of universal suffrage, they elected a president and a majority in congress.

The Radical Party, which ruled for fourteen years, failed to make any significant change in the economic structure of the country. Its accession to power, however, represented the end of limited democracy and the beginning of mass democracy and of the incorporation of immigrants into the political process. The party remained in power during a period of economic growth and prosperity but was forcibly removed from office in 1930 after Argentina felt the effects of worldwide depression.

In the early twentieth century, while the elite had been enjoying a period of rapid economic growth, its members had been willing to permit a degree of democracy in accordance with European democratic traditions to which they publicly subscribed. After the depression checked economic growth, however, and after their experience with democratic government, they became less tolerant of challenges to their privileged status. Thus, the military coup of 1930 led to the *Concordancia*, an alliance formed in 1932 between the military and the traditional elite.

The Concordancia governed until 1943. It was somewhat repressive, but more important for the nation during the period were the sharp increase in industrialization, mass internal migration to Buenos Aires, and skepticism about government in general. These factors created the conditions that permitted the rise to power of another military faction, of which Perón emerged as leader.

Perón initially enjoyed considerable support from women, the military, the Roman Catholic Church, and industrialists. But the key factor in his rise to the presidency was support from labor. Between 1930 and 1943 depressed economic conditions caused the migration of 40 percent of the rural population to the capital. Before 1936 approximately 8,000 people migrated to Buenos Aires every year; between 1936 and 1943, about 72,000 migrated annually; and from 1943 to 1947 the figure jumped to 117,000 a year. The migrants constituted 16 percent of the population of Buenos Aires in 1936 and 37 percent in 1947. They exhibited the characteristics of a rootless group without any strong allegiances or ties.

The absence of a strong political party articulating the desires of the labor unions generally and of the migrants in particular left the working class available for a spokesman; Perón filled this role. Between 1943 and 1946 he courted labor leaders and helped to organize and increase the size of their movement. In 1945, when an army group arrested Perón, a mass demonstration by his followers—led by Eva Duarte, an entertainer who a few weeks later married Perón—so cowed the group that he was released. After this event the army announced that it would guarantee free elections and that political parties would be permitted to operate.

Perón was announced as a presidential candidate. Two coalitions were formed: an alliance of members of the traditional parties—Radicals, Socialists, Communists, and Progressive Democrats—who opposed him; and his supporters—“collaborationists” Radicals, nationalists, several conservative groups, nascent labor organizations, the armed forces, and the church, united under the newly formed Labor Party (Partido Laborista) ticket. Perón gained 54 percent of the vote in an election considered to be relatively free, and his party gained two-thirds of the seats in the National Congress.

Perón pursued a policy of economic and social reform designed to make Argentina a modern nation-state. He nationalized the Central Bank of the Argentine Republic and most of the insurance industry. Foreign-owned (mostly British) railroads and utilities were purchased. Wages were increased, and the real income of laborers rose by about 35 percent. The Argentine Trade Promotion Institute (Instituto Argentino de Promoción del Intercambio—IAPI) was created. It set standard prices for farm produce, buying at low prices and selling at high prices to a Europe suffering from the destruction of World War II.

Perón's administration enjoyed popular support in its first years. The workers felt that they had gained, with Perón's aid, rights that gave them a sense of pride and identification with the nation that they had not previously enjoyed. Perón's activities were, in the main, legal. The 1949



Constitution, ratified by a freely elected constituent assembly, gave extensive powers to the president. His acts also were approved by the freely elected Peronist congress. Nevertheless, Perón's tactics increasingly placed him in disfavor with various segments of the population. In 1947 he had the Supreme Court justices impeached and replaced with his own men. The lower courts were purged, and the offices were filled by Peronists. Newspapers and radio stations were purchased or taken over by the state. The armed services were brought into line under the government, dissident officers imprisoned or ousted, and Peronists promoted. Labor leaders had to choose between the "carrot and the stick"; those who failed to cooperate with the government were voted out of office or removed by other means.

Perón's economic nationalism proved successful during his first administration, but during the 1950s the country suffered from severe economic problems. Agriculture declined because of the low prices offered by the IAPI; little of lasting significance was accomplished for rural labor; commerce and small industry were hurt; and capital became scarce. The economic decline caused Perón to sign contracts for investments by foreign, mainly United States, oil companies, something he had publicly opposed for ten years.

The principal political issue of post-Perón Argentina became the reintegration of labor into the political system. General Eduardo Lonardi, who assumed office after Perón's removal, was ousted after eighteen weeks because of his conciliatory attitude toward the Peronists. The government of General Pedro Aramburu that followed enacted the first minimum wage law in the history of the country and returned the government to civilian rule, but it repressed the Peronists. The armed services permitted two elected governments to hold office from 1958 to 1962 and from 1963 to 1966 but intervened against both. By their standards the two civilian governments were judged undesirable—principally because their attitudes toward Peronism were not sufficiently hostile (see ch. 2).

Until 1973 civilian parties and interest groups remained fragmented and subordinate to military authority. The middle class had failed to govern successfully. The laborers, or Peronists, were feared by other groups. The traditional elite retained great economic power but not enough to exercise its former influence on authoritative decisionmaking. The institutional power of the military and its willingness to intervene in politics allowed it to exercise a veto power over policies and, ultimately, over who would be permitted to govern.

## **POLITICAL FORCES AND INTEREST GROUPS**

### **The Economic Elite**

Land policies adopted throughout the nineteenth century favored the growth of a small group of landholders with vast holdings who, because

wealth in Argentina during this period was derived from agriculture, controlled not only the economics but also the politics of the country. Until the end of the century no group challenged their wealth, power, or status.

In 1866 they founded the Rural Society, which became the most influential class organization in the nation. Its institutional status was outranked only by that of the Roman Catholic Church. Its members belonged to the oldest and richest families and were the most powerful social and economic personages in the nation. They lived in the city of Buenos Aires; most belonged to the Jockey Club and many to the more exclusive *Círculo de Armas* within that club. The Rural Society was not an expressly political group, but its members, because of their status, exercised widespread influence individually and collectively.

Politics in the last half of the nineteenth century did not concern most citizens; for all practical purposes it was the fiefdom of a limited number of powerful families that, apart from regional rivalries, were in basic agreement on their government's form and objectives. Until 1916 the oligarchy determined who would be president by agreeing on a candidate and then having him elected.

The election of the middle-class Radical Party candidate for president cost the oligarchy the prime political office, but its hold on economic power and social status remained. Radical Party politicians held office, but they did little to alter the manner in which the landowners conducted what was basically an agricultural economy. Perón has been the only president whose policies clearly opposed the interests of the landowners. The military governments that followed that of Perón reversed Perón's policy of favoring the industrialists and adopted various measures favorable to the landowners.

In the twentieth century the landowning families have become increasingly involved in industry and commerce. They have formed organizations that espouse the preservation of capitalism. Their organizations have invited speakers, distributed propaganda, withheld advertising from media they disliked, infiltrated labor unions and workers' groups, exerted pressure on the government, and organized students. Among these organizations have been the Alliance for Liberty and Progress (*Alianza para la Libertad y el Progreso*) and the Coordinated Action of Free Enterprise Institutions (*Acción Coordinadora de las Instituciones Empresarias Libres*).

Since the first administration of Perón, who provided them with financial backing and tariff protection, industrialists as a group have also exercised considerable influence on politics. During the early years of Perón's first administration they often found themselves on common ground with organized labor in opposition to the interests of the traditional landowning elites. Like the landowners, they have also had allies within the military establishment. The argument that domestic industrialization is essential to relieve the country from some of the external

pressures it is subject to finds sympathetic ears among a number of the more nationalistic officers.

Issues such as the value of capitalism and order have on occasion aligned the industrialists with the landowning elite, and businessmen's associations in the 1960s tended to support the Radical Party. An accord between the General Confederation of Labor and the General Economic Confederation, a management group, reached after the election of Cámpora in 1973, on approaches to arresting inflation indicates, however, that some areas of common interest between the onetime allies are still recognized (see ch. 13).

### **The Roman Catholic Church**

Ecclesiastical issues were not prominent in the early history of Argentina as they were in many other Latin American countries. Such issues did gain prominence toward the end of the nineteenth century, however, and remained the major political concern of the Roman Catholic Church until the late 1960s, when they were eclipsed by broader social issues.

The country's first constitution declared Roman Catholicism to be the state religion and guaranteed various perquisites of the institution. The most important dispute between church and state regarded patronage, but by the mid-nineteenth century a tacit agreement had been worked out whereby the pope confirmed the appointments made by the president to the upper levels of the national church hierarchy.

The church was widely criticized for its subjugation to the rule of Juan Manuel de Rosas but was not persecuted by the constitutional governments that succeeded this caudillo. On the contrary, the Constitution of 1853, which is still in effect, maintained Roman Catholicism as the state religion and required that the chief executive be a member of the church. In 1884, after three decades of relatively serene church-state relations, the abolition of religious instruction in public schools led to the establishment of the first Roman Catholic political party, Catholic Union (Unión Católica). It was short lived, however, as were several others that were formed over the next four decades.

The church did not notably intervene in the competition between the Conservative Party and the expressly secular Radical Party in the first three decades of the twentieth century but did not hide its approval of the coup that toppled the then senile and reputedly corrupt Hipólito Irigoyen (1916-22, 1928-30) in 1930. Though the conservative regimes that held sway between 1930 and 1943 were by no means hostile to the church, the church did not achieve its major goal, that of reinstating religious instruction in the public schools, until after the corporatist-oriented "revolution" of 1943.

The church indirectly endorsed Perón in the election of 1946, but by 1951 its support was waning. Thereafter, the relationship between the church and the Perón government became increasingly strained. In 1954

Perón legalized divorce and prostitution and jailed a number of clergymen, and in 1955 religious education in the public schools was discontinued. Finally, mobs of Perón's supporters burned a number of church buildings in Buenos Aires. The church retaliated by excommunicating on June 15, 1955, "all those who have trampled on the rights of the Church" and organizing, in defiance of a government ban, a massive procession on Corpus Christi Day that attracted even non-Catholic opponents of the government. Many observers believe that the opposition of the church was the final catalyst in the chain of events leading to the overthrow of the Perón government in 1955.

The post-Perón military government repealed the Peronist laws authorizing divorce and prostitution. The church has remained a force to contend with, but factionalism among both clergymen and laymen has been such that the hierarchy has generally remained relatively aloof, while Catholic parties and political groups have sprung up across the ideological spectrum. The Christian Democratic Party made its electoral debut in 1957; it received about 5 percent of the total vote at that time, a percentage that remained relatively constant through 1965. From its beginnings it was split into two major factions, one composed predominantly of upper middle-class professionals who were staunchly anti-Perón and the other of a somewhat younger, lower middle-class group that hoped to find common ground with the Peronists. The former faction prevailed initially, but the latter gained dominance in 1961. Since 1966 the party has virtually disintegrated.

Another group of politicized Catholics has been designated the Roman Catholic nationalists. Although they formed a number of parties beginning in 1956, their influence has generally been exerted through appointive rather than elective positions. In general, they have advocated a corporatist pattern modeled on that of Spain since the Spanish civil war of the 1930s. They favored in particular the government of General José F. Uriburu, which toppled that of Irigoyen in 1930, the government of General Lonardi, which toppled that of Perón in 1955, and the government of General Juan Carlos Onganía, which toppled that of Arturo Illia in 1966. The voice of Roman Catholic nationalism under the Onganía government was expressed through the Athenaeum of the Republic (Ateneo de la República), which described itself as a study group. Between January 1967 and June 1969 most of the important political appointments went to members of the athenaeum.

A third sector of Catholic political activists, of more recent origin, has been referred to as the Catholic Left or "Third World" sector. The three groups most prominently identified with this orientation have expressed themselves through ideological journals. The former leftist faction of the Christian Democratic Party is centered on *Comunidad Nacional*. The publishers of *Tierra Nueva* come predominantly from the Catholic University Youth. Those centered on *Cristianismo y Revolución* are considerably more militant than the other two groups. Their

hero-martyr is the Colombian guerrilla-priest Camilo Torres. None of these groups has a large following of its own, but each has attempted to infuse something of its own ideology into the Peronist movement.

One of Onganía's first initiatives in the presidency was the signing of a concordat—the first in the nation's history—whereby the Vatican gained control of the selection of bishops and archbishops. Despite what was initially perceived as the heavy clericalist overtones of the Onganía government, the church hierarchy by 1969 appeared to have moved into a position of moderate opposition to the government. Furthermore, an increasing number of parish priests were openly sympathizing with striking workers and students. It was the first time in the country's history that an openly clerical stance on the part of the government had failed to suffice to win the support of the church.

The attitude of the church hierarchy toward the resurgence of Peronism in 1973 appeared to be one of cautious optimism. The "Message to the Argentine People" issued by the episcopate in June 1973 called for tolerance, conciliation, and national unity.

### The Armed Forces

The armed forces have been an omnipresent force in Argentine politics since 1930. Of the eighteen presidents the country has had since that time, eleven have been generals, and every chief executive for the three decades before the elections of 1973 either gained or lost power by force of arms. The roots of this role for the military lie in the paternalism of Spanish colonial society, which extended to the newly independent government. Leaders from Buenos Aires and other provinces developed their own armies to guard their property and their power. By the mid-nineteenth century the country was united, and by the end of the century a professional army had been developed. The armed forces are a representative group of the society. A compulsory service law was passed in 1895, and the army has become increasingly middle class as the nation has developed a middle-class society. A large number of recruits are from immigrant families, reflecting the huge immigrant population. This large foreign-born sector came principally from countries with non-democratic political traditions.

Military coups have often been initiated by career officers belonging to relatively secret societies. Minor revolts in 1890, 1893, and 1905 were led by officers of a secret society sympathetic to the Radical Party. The first successful military intervention occurred, however, in 1930. It was prompted by the adverse effects of the worldwide depression on the country's economy and by dissatisfaction with President Irigoyen. In addition, General Uriburu, who led the coup, was impressed with the Italian system of the corporate state. As he was unable to convince the traditional elite and some sectors of the military of the desirability of the corporate state, an agreement was reached to hold elections in 1932. General Augustín P. Justo, former minister of war and a member of a

powerful family, easily won the election (which the Radical Party denounced as fraudulent). He represented the alliance between the elite and the army known as the Concordancia.

In 1943 the United Officers' Group (Grupo de Oficiales Unidos—GOU) executed its coup. It was a secret society led by a group of young middle-class colonels inspired by the Italian and German systems and determined to regenerate Argentine values and lead the nation toward greatness. The GOU leader, Perón, was elected president in 1946 and instituted a vigorously nationalistic program.

While Perón was in power, factionalism in the military centered upon support for or opposition to him. Resentment of the political role of Perón's popular wife, Evita, and of the dramatically enhanced power of labor, among other things, gradually swelled the ranks of his opponents; and in 1955 the army and navy joined in overthrowing him.

In the years that followed, those who had openly supported Perón to the end either retired or were purged, and factionalism came to be based upon degrees of opposition to Peronism and degrees of toleration for constitutionalism and the democratic process. By 1962 the several factions had coalesced into two major sectors—the *colorados* (reds) and *azules* (blues). The *colorados* were reputedly adamantly anti-Peronist, often equating Peronism with communism, and favored outright military rule for an indefinite period. The *azules* tended to be more nationalistic, more outspokenly Roman Catholic, more admiring of Francisco Franco of Spain, and more interested in industrialization than the *colorados*. They were reputedly more sympathetic toward civilian rule and willing to tolerate elections as long as the Peronists were excluded from them.

Differences between these two groups led to armed confrontation in September 1962 and again in April of the following year. The *azules* emerged from these conflicts in complete control of the armed forces. Ironically, the elections that the *azules* permitted in 1963 brought to power a government that favored the *colorados*, and it was the leader of the *azules* who deposed the civilian president in 1966 and ushered in a seven-year period of military rule. During that period the two factions dissolved, as economic issues, for a time, superseded political ones.

## Students

The university reform movement, which spread throughout Latin America in the first half of the twentieth century, had its first victory at the University of Córdoba in 1918. Seeking, among other things, to make higher education available to the poor, to make the universities more responsive to the needs of students and faculty, and to protect academic freedom, the students organized strikes, boycotts, and demonstrations. President Irigoyen ultimately acceded to virtually all of their demands. With the exception of the period of Perón's presidency (1946-55), when university autonomy was suspended, all administrative

bodies in the university system between 1918 and 1966 were composed of professors, students, and alumni in more or less equal numbers.

The students' activism in the quest for educational reform spilled over into other areas as well, but student organizations have been considerably less effective in their support for political and socioeconomic reform for the society at large. They have generally been strongly antimilitarist since the military became heavily involved in politics in 1930, but they have opposed most civilian governments as well. They have often advocated alliances with labor but were adamantly opposed to the government under which labor first acquired significant political power, that of Perón. Such ambivalence or negativism has often left them politically isolated.

Between 1918 and 1950 student organizations, and particularly the nationwide Argentine University Federation, were dominated by a group known as the Reformists, which claimed descent from the reform movement of Córdoba. The Humanists, a Roman Catholic group somewhat more conservative than the Reformists, began to give the Reformists some competition in 1950. The Humanists gained their greatest strength at the University of Buenos Aires, where their candidates were elected as rectors in 1962 and 1965.

Factionalism within the student movement has been rampant since 1955, and by 1973 some 800 groups, with varying levels of organization and commitment and with ideologies ranging from revolutionary Marxism to fascism, could be identified. After the purging of the universities in 1966, a number of these groups went underground and began to engage in guerrilla activities. At least five such groups had been identified by 1971 (see ch. 15). The *cordobazo*, an outburst of violent opposition to military rule that took place in Córdoba in 1969, contributed to the forging of a new alliance between labor and students, and by 1972 a majority of the members of student organizations were identifying themselves as Peronists. Unlike most of their trade union allies, however, their ideological leanings tended to be Marxist.

## Labor

The Socialists, anarchists, and Communists who initiated the labor movement at the beginning of the twentieth century derived their ideology from Europe and their membership from recently arrived immigrants. Early efforts at gaining favorable legislation were rebuffed, and labor leaders were deported. The Socialist Party supported labor, but the stronger Radical Party, which presented itself as pro-labor, did not in fact support pro-labor legislation, and such legislation was practically nonexistent until the mid-1940s.

In 1930, after the military coup, labor leaders founded the General Confederation of Labor (Confederación General de Trabajadores—

CGT). During the 1930s the Socialists held positions of leadership in the CGT and used their positions to defend labor and condemn fascism. During the same period the Communists had some success in organizing lower class and construction workers. They collaborated with the socialist-led CGT in its antifascist campaign, for the first time identifying the working class with Argentine society. Previously, organized labor had been considered by many an outcast group made up of radical foreigners.

By 1943 there were approximately 547,000 organized laborers, 331,000 of whom were members of CGT unions. At this time Perón became involved with labor leaders, hoping to gain support, in particular, from the huge influx of rural migrants into Buenos Aires. The migrants distrusted the oligarchy, the middle class *porteños*, and the foreign capitalists. Poor and rootless, they lacked protection and association with larger groups when they arrived in the city. They were looked down on socially by the *porteños* and, as an economic group, their needs were not sufficiently met by the socialist-led CGT.

This indigenous labor group first came under the influence of Perón and subsequently was controlled by him. Perón undermined socialist and communist influence on this group by appealing to its nationalism. He had himself appointed secretary of labor and social security and enforced laws for paid vacations, protection against arbitrary dismissal, and a pension system. He won increased salaries for labor, appointed labor leaders to government office, and helped in labor's organizational efforts. In two years labor gained more under Perón than it had from a half century of association with the Radical and Socialist parties.

Perón's influence in the CGT alienated many socialist and communist leaders, who identified him with government intervention in labor disputes and limitations on the right to strike. Thus, the CGT split, the socialist and communist unions breaking off into open opposition to Perón. This faction participated in the September 1945 March of Constitution and Liberty against the influence of Perón. The next month, however, when it seemed that growing resentment toward Perón from many sectors of society would lead to his ouster, the CGT filled the principal plaza of Buenos Aires with his supporters.

Union membership, recruited largely from the recently arrived migrants, increased during Perón's presidency to over 3 million. Loyal labor leaders were made members of the cabinet. The first lady, Evita, organized a large-scale welfare program for working-class families and has been regarded by many Argentines as a saint since her premature death in 1952.

After Perón was overthrown by the military in 1955, Peronism remained the dominant ideological force in the labor movement. He had given laborers a dignity they had not known, placing labor leaders in high public office and making them feel that they were respected members of society. Furthermore, labor's real income had increased during



the Perón era from 30 percent to 53 percent of the gross national product (GNP). These factors, plus the attitude of subsequent military administrations, intensified labor's efforts to maintain the position it had won as a respected and powerful sector of society.

## **POLITICAL PARTIES**

### **The Peronist Movement**

A few days after the pro-Perón demonstration of October 1945 the Labor Party was founded as an independent political counterpart of the CGT. Its leaders supported Perón and nominated him as their presidential candidate. After the election this group merged with two others that had supported Perón to form the Peronist Party (Partido Peronista), and Evita organized the Women's Peronist Party (Partido Peronista Femenino). These were mass parties and, unlike all of the other major parties, drew a considerable number of their officers from the lower class. The labor movement itself, however, continued to serve as a more important power base for the government than did the parties, which served mainly as electoral vehicles.

After the overthrow of Perón, the two Peronist parties were outlawed, and some of their industrialist and provincial middle-class adherents were gradually absorbed by other parties, but the urban working class refused to give up political activism or to be absorbed. Just as the other parties splintered over how to deal with the Peronists, however, the Peronists themselves splintered over the question of how to deal with the rest of the political system. The underground central command remained in close contact with their exiled leader and voted or cast blank ballots in accordance with his instructions. A smaller group, less imbued with class consciousness and more willing to collaborate with other parties, became known as the neo-Peronists. Advocates of "Peronism Without Perón," this group lacked strong ties with the CGT and drew its greatest strength from the provinces. A number of parties were formed by this group, the most important being the Labor Party and the Popular Union (Union Popular) party. Despite such divisions, however, the Peronists, when granted almost complete participation in the elections of 1962 and 1965, demonstrated that Peronism remained the country's largest political movement, accounting for 34 percent and 37 percent of the vote, respectively, in those years. Those results, in turn, led directly or indirectly to the coups d'état of 1962 and 1966.

By 1966 the issue of independent local leadership versus continued deference to Perón himself had split the Peronists within the CGT. Further factionalism was generated in the late 1960s over the issue of the extent of opposition to or cooperation with the military government that would be practical.

## The Radical Civic Union

The Radical Civic Union (Unión Cívica Radical—UCR, commonly known as the Radical Party), founded in 1890, was the first party to challenge the oligarchy. It was a middle-class, urban party that had some union support. It advocated government control of oil and mining, government ownership of the railroads, and tariff protection. It was resentful of the European control of Argentine commerce and the European orientation of the oligarchy. One of its favorite slogans has been “God Is Indigenous and Radical” (Dios es criollo y Radical).

For much of its existence the Radical Party has been an opposition party. From 1892 through 1910 it instructed its followers to abstain from voting, charging that the elections were fraudulent and stating that it would not participate under such conditions. During the Perón era Radical Party members provided the only opposition, speaking freely in the National Congress, opposing the Constitution of 1947, and walking out when they felt that fraudulent practices had been adopted.

The Radicals have often split into factions as a consequence of competition among party leaders as well as differences over issues. Opponents of President Irigoyen split with his supporters in the 1920s, but the two factions were reunited after the 1930 coup. In 1945 the leftists in the Radical Party formed the Intransigent Renovation Movement (Movimiento de Intransigencia y Renovación—MIR). They advocated nationalization of industries and ownership of land by those who worked it. From 1948 until 1957 the MIR faction controlled the Radical Party.

In 1957 the Radical Party nominated Arturo Frondizi as its presidential candidate. Party members who opposed Frondizi united against him to form the People’s Radical Civic Union (Unión Cívica Radical del Pueblo—UCRP). Frondizi’s faction then adopted the name of Intransigent Radical Civic Union (Unión Cívica Radical Intransigente—UCRI). The split involved a battle for personal power; there was little difference in program between the two factions. During the campaign Frondizi adopted a program of agrarian reform, nationalization, industrialization, and an independent foreign policy. Supported by the Peronists, Communists, and splinter parties, he was elected president. The UCRP, which advanced no real program, fared poorly during the elections.

In 1962 elections for provincial governorships and for half the National Congress were held, in which the UCRI permitted the Peronists to run. The magnitude of Peronist victories led the military to intervene. Elections were permitted in 1963. The UCRI again gained the support of the Peronists, this time through a coalition with the Popular Union party. The coalition, which included four minor parties, split before the elections, and the Peronists were instructed to cast blank ballots. The shifting strategy of the UCRI and the Peronists contributed to a UCRP victory.

Beginning its campaign early, the UCRP presented an explicit program, stating it would make no deals and form no alliances. It was a heterogeneous, middle-class party with a strong grassroots organization that identified with the traditional Radical Party program of economic nationalism, state intervention, and an independent foreign policy. In addition, it advocated annulment of foreign petroleum contracts, credit expansion without inflation, examination of foreign exchange standby agreements with the International Monetary Fund, political amnesty, and subordination of military to political authority. It received 25 percent of the vote, a plurality that gained the presidency for the UCRP.

The 1965 elections for half of the Chamber of Deputies weakened the URCP. Its candidates gained 2.6 million votes, but the Peronist Popular Union party gained 2.8 million votes, an important factor in the decision by the military to intervene the following year. During the campaign the UCRI split again. Frondizi formed the Movement of Integration and Development (Movimiento de Integración y Desarrollo—MID), which gained 588,000 votes, while the UCRI, now opposing Frondizi, won 412,000.

After the Onganía government banned all political parties, the UCRP made no statement until the end of 1966, when its national directory declared its opposition to President Onganía and a former deputy stated that the country was militarily occupied. The deputy was immediately jailed.

In 1968 the UCRP published a manifesto stating that institutional methods of fighting the 1966 military coup were blocked. Frondizi, however, continued to criticize the government from abroad, and the UCRP leaders maintained contact among themselves. There was little harassment of Radical leaders, but their activities were limited. When overt partisan activity was once again permitted, in anticipation of the 1973 elections, Frondizi led his personal following in the MID into the Peronist coalition, but the remainder of the party was reunited in support of the candidacy of Ricardo Balbin of the former UCRP faction.

### Minor Parties

Fragments of the traditional minor parties were scattered among the coalitions that emerged in 1973 in a random pattern not readily explicable by reference to previous ideological or programmatic orientation. Coalitions of minor parties accounted for 29 percent of the vote in the elections of February but only 13 percent of the September elections.

The National Autonomist Party (Partido Autonomista Nacional—PAN) electoral vehicle of the large landowners as well as of those among the urban elite who wished to “Europeanize” the country, controlled the government completely from 1874 until 1916 and, in collaboration with the military, from 1930 to 1943. It changed its name to Conservative Party in 1914 and to National Democratic Party in 1930. The

party elected only three of its members to congress between 1943 and 1955 and thereafter, like most other parties, began to splinter, largely over the issue of how or whether to deal with the Peronists. One splinter, the Popular Conservative Democratic Party, appealed for Peronist support, while the National Federation of Parties of the Center remained adamantly anti-Peronist. Meanwhile, the Union of the Argentine People (Unión del Pueblo Argentino—UDELPA), established in 1963 as an electoral vehicle for General Pedro Aramburu, attracted votes from the usual constituency of the conservatives.

The Socialist Party, founded in 1896 under the leadership of the noted literary figure Juan Bautista Justo and patterned after its European counterparts, was the only group other than the Conservative and Radical parties to have a significant following between the 1890s and 1943. It attracted large numbers of immigrants and dominated the labor movement from 1922 until the rise of Perón. The universalist philosophy of the Socialists, however, lost its appeal as nationalism gained popularity in the 1940s, and the Socialists never regained their former influence with the urban working class. In 1959 the right wing of the party spun off to form the Democratic Socialist Party, and the remainder of the party became increasingly factionalized. Since 1955 socialist candidates have generally received from 2 to 3 percent of the vote.

The moderate, somewhat anticlerical Progressive Democratic Party (Partido Demócrata Progresista—PDP), formed early in the twentieth century, gained something of a new lease on life in the 1963 elections when it joined the UDELPA in sponsoring the candidacy of Aramburu. After the 1965 election to the Chamber of Deputies the PDP had nine legislators, and the UDELPA had five. Support for the PDP came from the more highly educated elite of the interior, represented principally by the cattlemen of Córdoba and Santa Fe provinces, and the residents of Rosario, who competed economically with the city and province of Buenos Aires.

The Argentine Communist Party was founded in 1918 as a division of the Socialist Party. By 1919 it had thirty-three branches, claimed a membership of 1,400, and published a newspaper; in 1920 it won 2,144 votes in a provincial election. After the 1930 coup the party was declared illegal and its members jailed. The party was made legal in 1943, shortly before Perón established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. Perón sought the party's support, which it at first denied. Recognizing his strength, it began to cooperate covertly with him and infiltrate the labor unions. Officially, the party continued its opposition.

Military influence in government after 1955 meant further suppression of communist activity. In 1958 the party's activities were banned, and in 1963 it was declared illegal. It was further fettered after 1966 by a decree-law fixing penalties for subversion and excluding Communists from public office. A special antsubversive court was given the task of determining whether individuals or groups were communist. Such determination could result in expulsion from occupations of public interest, such

as teaching and writing. This court was abolished by the new civilian government elected in March 1973, and the party was granted legal status.

### **MILITARY RULE, 1966-73**

The coup d'état of 1966 was reportedly planned in the war ministry with all the resources of the general staff and coordinated between the services in the manner of a contingency plan. The date was left open in anticipation of a provocative incident. The provocation that established June 28 as the appropriate date was a dispute between the war minister and the commander in chief of the army. When President Illia attempted to dismiss the army commander, troops occupied strategic positions in the capital, and he was deposed. Within twenty-four hours a junta comprising the three service chiefs had dissolved the National Congress and the provincial legislatures, replaced the elected governors and all members of the Supreme Court, and dissolved the political parties. The junta then conferred the presidency upon General Onganía and dissolved itself.

The "Message of the Revolutionary Junta to the Argentine People" had placed emphasis on the "fallacy of a formal and sterile legality," which had fostered a "vote-seeking system" that divided the country and mocked true democracy. It was obvious, however, that they did not favor in place of that vote-getting system a return to the form of caudillo rule that had been so prominent a feature of the country's political history. The determination of the military to rule as an institution, as opposed to allowing their chosen head-of-state to assume personal control, was manifest in establishment of the National Security Council, comprising the three service commanders and the five principal cabinet ministers, and the new Military Committee, including the defense minister and the three commanders, with direct access to the president.

The Onganía government set for itself the goals of economic growth and internal security. Its formula for economic growth was control of inflation; encouragement of savings; and stimulation of investment, domestic and foreign, in the productive sectors. Its formula for internal security was a ban on communist activity, a reorganization of security forces, and the purchase of new military equipment. Implementation of policy was carried out by a new team of administrators. The requirements for appointment to ministerial positions seemed to be noninvolvement in politics or government in recent years, technical expertise, and an anticommunist attitude. Retired military officers filled most of the provincial governors' offices. A reorganization of planning and management took place, designed to centralize policymaking and decentralize policy implementation.

The Onganía government initially gained strong support from conservative Roman Catholics through attempts to enforce a stern code of

public morality—in dress and hairstyles, entertainment, courtship behavior, and the like. But such policies, along with the military occupation of the University of Buenos Aires and the purge of students and faculty members considered subversives, alienated many of the sophisticated *porteños* and caused a large-scale emigration of the intelligentsia.

Opposition came also from a few priests, unemployed sugar workers in the province of Tucumán, and Peronist sectors of labor. In January 1968, when sugar workers were discharged in Tucumán, they marched in protest, accompanied by parish priests. The governor and the chief of police protested to the vicar general of the diocese, but he rejected their protest, stating that the church's presence was a "sacred right and not interference."

Labor represented the principal opposition to the government. In March 1967 the CGT called a twenty-four-hour general strike for better salaries and work codes. The strike was partially successful, but the government ordered demotions and the suspension of 16,000 railroad workers. Another strike was called later in the month, but the union's strength vis-à-vis the government was broken by a suspension of union rights. The entire CGT executive committee resigned in protest after the rights suspension, whereupon the government set up a twenty-man caretaker committee to administer the CGT.

There were increasingly frequent outbursts of popular discontent in 1969 and 1970. Violent strikes became commonplace, and clandestine leftist groups, composed generally of middle-class or upper class youth, engaged in bold acts of guerrilla warfare, primarily the kidnapping of executives of foreign corporations for ransom in the form of assistance to poor neighborhoods. Meanwhile, many who had supported Onganía's economic policies became concerned over his silence in regard to plans for restructuring the political system.

Onganía's main domestic base of support was the military. Although he had shown some skill in balancing opposing forces in that body, he failed to consult adequately those who had expected to have a voice in policymaking. In June 1970 the army's commanding general, Alejandro Lanusse, publicly criticized Onganía. Onganía responded by attempting to dismiss Lanusse, but Onganía soon found out that their power positions had shifted. The reconstituted Board of Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces announced its decision to "reassume the political power of the republic, with Lieutenant General Juan Carlos Onganía ceasing to serve in the post of President of the Argentine nation." The junta explained that the revolution that had been launched in 1966 was the responsibility of the entire military establishment and that the responsibility could not be delegated to any individual.

The choice of the service chiefs to succeed Onganía in the presidency was a little known officer who had no personal following in the command corps. Brigadier General Roberto Marcelo Levingston, a career intelli-

gence officer, was serving as military attaché to the Argentine embassy and as delegate to the Inter-American Defense Board in Washington at the time he was selected. But like Onganía before him, Levingston refused to play the conciliatory figurehead role that had apparently been intended for him.

Levingston rejected the “liberal” economic policies of his predecessor in favor of economic nationalism. A five-year plan outlined in December 1970 called for “Argentinization” of the economy and severe restrictions on the role of foreign capital. But by failing to open up the political system, he deprived himself of potential civilian support for his economic policies. In fact, his announcement in October that elections would not be held for another four or five years provoked a thirty-six-hour general strike. Then Levingston, with no obvious following of his own, made the same mistake that had been responsible for the downfall of his predecessor—the attempt to fire the commanding general of the army, Lanusse—and with the same consequences.

Levingston was forced to step down on March 23, 1971, and Lanusse himself assumed the presidency. He attempted to conciliate the contending forces around him by pursuing economic policies that amounted to a compromise between the “liberals” and the “nationalists” and by announcing that elections would be held in early 1973. He also announced that political organizations, including the various Peronist groups, would be granted legitimacy.

Lanusse attempted to ease the economic strain on labor and the consumer by granting wage increases amounting to 30 percent by June 1972, but he was also confronted by an annual inflation rate of about 80 percent, one of the highest in the world. Furthermore, despite the suspension of civil liberties, the government had been unable to curtail the activities of the various guerrilla organizations significantly. In August 1972 nineteen youthful revolutionaries were reported by the government to have been shot while trying to escape from the Trelew Naval Air Base in southern Argentina. Although the government issued a new clause for the penal code on the day of the shooting prescribing prison terms for journalists who quoted “subversive sources,” the account of the incident relayed by three survivors—that the prisoners had simply been lined up and mowed down by machineguns—was widely circulated, and the government’s credibility was strained. Many observers believed that such difficulties contributed to the willingness of the military leaders to return the country to civilian rule.

## PERÓN'S RETURN TO POWER

Perón himself was not allowed to run for the presidency in the elections scheduled for March 11, 1973, but he was allowed to return to Argentina from his exile in Spain for a brief, low-profile visit in November 1972, and he managed to forge a coalition of a dozen parties under his

leadership. The Justicialists Liberation Front (Frente Justicialista de Liberación—FREJULI) embraced three traditionally Peronist groups—the Justicialist Party, the Labor Party, and part of the Popular Union—as well as Frondizi's faction of the Radicals, the MID, the Popular Conservative Party, the Revolutionary Christian Party, and several provincial parties.

FREJULI's presidential candidate, Héctor Cámpora, was a dentist with little personal following; but he had many years of experience in the Peronist movement, a conciliatory manner, and a reputation for intense loyalty to Perón. In a field of nine candidates, Cámpora won almost 50 percent of the total vote. The nearest contender was Ricardo Balbin of the Radical Party with 21 percent, followed by Francisco Manrique of the newly formed center-right coalition, the Popular Federalist Alliance, with about 15 percent. The candidate supported by the military government, Brigadier General Ezequiel Martínez, on the ticket of the Federal Republican Alliance, obtained 2.9 percent.

FREJULI candidates also won 145 of the 243 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and forty-five of the sixty-nine Senate seats and swept the gubernatorial elections in twenty of the twenty-two provinces. The Radicals picked up twenty seats in the Chamber of Deputies and twelve in the Senate. The magnitude of the FREJULI victory was such that Balbin, who was legally entitled to a runoff election, merely conceded the presidency to Cámpora.

FREJULI's platform had reflected a combination of the traditional goals of the Peronist movement and the concerns commonly articulated by youthful activists. (Young people voting for the first time constituted about 21 percent of the country's 14 million registered voters.) It stressed opposition to dependence on external powers, whether capitalist or communist, and called for national liberation in economic, political, and cultural spheres. One campaign slogan called for "Political Sovereignty, Economic Independence, and Social Justice." Achievement of these goals was seen as involving state control of strategic industries and public services. The Radical platform, also stressing nationalism and calling for redistribution of wealth, did not differ greatly from that of FREJULI.

After his inauguration on May 25, Cámpora proved a more forceful executive than many had expected. Among his first acts in office were retiring the heads of the three military services and granting amnesty to some 600 political prisoners. He was also able during his brief administration to achieve sufficient cooperation with his economic program to bring about a decrease in the rate of inflation. Continuing guerrilla activity however, created a dilemma for the Cámpora government from the beginning. Many among the Peronist Youth and other youthful supporters of Cámpora had maintained contacts with the various guerrilla movements, and it was hoped that with the election of Cámpora the guerrillas would consider their mission accomplished and lay down their



arms. Most did, but the People's Revolutionary Army (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo—ERP), the largest and boldest of these groups, responded that although it would not attack the new government, it would fight on against the armed forces and foreign corporations. And it proceeded in May to extort the equivalent of US\$1 million in food, ambulances, and medical supplies from the Ford Motor Company for distribution in deprived neighborhoods.

Moreover, the leftist youth and the more conservative trade unionists, who had easily found common ground in opposition to military rule, began to vocalize their differences soon after the elections. A welcoming celebration for Perón on June 20, which drew a massive crowd, was disrupted by a battle attributed to extremists of the Left and the Right within the Peronist movement. Some thirty-five persons were killed, and hundreds more were wounded.

Four months after his electoral victory, President C ampora resigned, paving the way for new elections in which Per on himself would be a candidate. His resignation, along with that of his vice president, Vicente Solano Lima, was accepted by the National Congress; and Raul Lastiri, president of the Chamber of Deputies, assumed the duties of head-of-state.

C ampora had stated, upon resigning, that "my election was for no other reason than to restore to General Per on the mandate that was taken from his unjustly." Nevertheless, some observers perceived the changes in cabinet posts and other important positions that accompanied the resignation of C ampora as signaling a victory for the trade unionists within the Peronist movement over the more radical Peronist Youth. The youth group was reported to be particularly unhappy with the selection of Per on's reputedly conservative third wife, Mar a Estela, as Per on's running mate for the vice-presidency. Nevertheless, Per on continued to keep the channels of communication with the youth group open, and they in turn rounded up crowds of up to 80,000 for his campaign speeches.

With the exception of the number of candidates, the candidacy of Per on himself, and the margin of victory, both the contestants and the outcome of the elections of September 23 were similar to those of the March elections. Per on ran considerably stronger than had his stand-in, winning 62 percent of the vote. Balbin again ran second, increasing his total to 25 percent, and Manrique again ran third, although his total dropped to 12 percent. The fourth candidate, Juan Carlos Coral of the Socialist Workers' Party, gained less than 3 percent of the vote. Hundreds of thousands of Per on's supporters jammed the streets of Buenos Aires to celebrate his victory. Per on and Isabela were inaugurated on October 12.

Per on's platform, like that of C ampora, had stressed nationalism and social justice, and he had been careful during the campaign not to alienate the Marxists who adhered to the Peronist movement. Once inaugurated, however, Per on began a vigorous campaign to remove Marxists

from positions of public trust, and it became apparent that he would seek his power base considerably to the right of that upon which Campora's short-lived government had rested. Meanwhile, the violence that had punctuated national life for several years persisted.

## CHAPTER 10

### PUBLIC INFORMATION

Four major factors have contributed to an effective mass communications system, which has been instrumental in placing Argentines among the best informed and well-read citizens in Western Hemisphere. The extensive public school system and the resulting literacy rate of over 90 percent constitute the primary factor. As a consequence, the great majority of the people take an interest in the printed word and form a huge readership for the scores of newspapers, periodicals, and books printed throughout the country. The emphasis on literacy has historically been accompanied by the second factor: a strong tradition of freedom of expression. This element has allowed the media to develop openly critical editorial policies and a keen ability to assess political developments. The result of this dual legacy is a press that has been traditionally credible and well respected.

The third factor lies in the area of culture: for decades Argentina—Buenos Aires especially—has been regarded as a cultural mecca by many South Americans. Young writers and playwrights have come from throughout the continent, hoping to publish their stories and plays. Fine artistic talent has also arisen in Argentina, adding to the quality of cultural endeavor. The concentration of talent there has been combined with the fourth factor: a technically advanced, westernized, and wealthy economy in South American terms. The synthesis of these two elements is a well-developed broadcasting medium and cinema and a society where many can afford televisions and radios.

Additional influences on the mass media have been the legacy of imperial Spain; the impact of western and southern European cultures and political philosophies. Other influences were a strongly Roman Catholic population (over 90 percent); concern over North American relations with Latin America; and ideologies such as German national socialism and communism in its several manifestations.

The mass media are vital in shaping popular attitudes. Although the mass communication and political systems have often been closely tied and mutually supportive, genuine repression of the media has been the exception rather than the rule. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, when dailies were founded by two of Argentina's foremost presidents, newspapers have been a primary source of comment on government actions. During the last thirty years, the media have experienced various

forms of periodic repression, and they have clashed with both popular and unpopular governments but generally have managed to endure such periods of crisis.

Occasionally, a newspaper's frank appraisal of a political situation or support for an unpopular cause has resulted in censorship or expropriation. But such measures have varied with the regime and its popularity. The broadcasting media have not evolved editorially to the same extent and, although radios and televisions are found in many homes, the public tend to view these as entertainment media. In 1973 the government owned the majority of radio stations, and for this reason the influence of official opinion was more evident in the broadcasting media than in the printed word.

In September of 1973 Juan Domingo Perón returned to power, and there was speculation over the degree of control he might exercise on the mass media. His first term in office (1946-55) had ended with bitter feelings between the media and Peronist supporters; nevertheless, in 1973 the media in general heralded his return from exile with enthusiasm. Between the elections of March 1973 and those that elevated Perón to the presidency in September of that year, it became clear that nationalism would be a dominant and recurrent theme throughout the coming administration. Laws were passed limiting the activities of foreign news agencies, and quotas were established. The laws provided that radio devote 75 percent of its broadcasts to music of Argentine origin and that all media devote 50 percent of their news to national items.

## CULTURAL FACTORS

All forms of mass communication are well developed and play an important part in Argentine daily life. The history of publishing alone may be traced to the latter part of the eighteenth century when the first printing press was brought to Buenos Aires from a former Jesuit college in Córdoba. More important than an early establishment of the press were the later educational and economic developments of the mid-1800s and the results that followed in the twentieth century. The establishment of complementary traditions of a free, energetic press and a highly literate population yielded parallel growth and official encouragement beneficial to both.

Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, president from 1868 to 1874 and an author, governed by his maxim "To Rule Is to Educate." His intensive efforts in the field of urban primary education in the 1870s are reflected in the literacy rate of the present day (see ch. 5). Sarmiento was also the founder of the newspaper *La Prensa*. The organization of the Socialist Party in the 1890s and the proliferation of labor-oriented literature encouraged interest in the printed word among workers. Bartolomé Mitre, president from 1862 to 1868, strengthened freedom of the press while helping to found the newspaper *La Nación*. His statement that any

regulation of the press implies "slavery" has been used ever since by journalists in defense of their freedom.

By the end of the century there were in Buenos Aires several foreign-language newspapers serving the large immigrant population, including two English-language newspapers, the *Standard* and the *Buenos Aires Herald*. The prominence of these two newspapers indicates the historically important role the English language has played in Argentina. Newspapers have appealed to other ethnic groups, such as Italians, French, and Germans, as well as Jews, Syrian-Lebanese, Yugoslavs, and Japanese.

Argentina's book publishing industry and libraries are also important. As of the late 1960s the country maintained more public libraries than any other Latin American country. These were also thousands of school libraries and innumerable private libraries.

The importance of the written word in national life is highlighted by sheer volume of printed material. It is estimated that each year 144 million issues of popular magazines are read—an average of twenty-four per adult. The figure is even higher for newspapers, not counting a large number of technical and scientific journals. Argentina ranks as one of the three major publishing centers of the Spanish-speaking world, after Spain and Mexico.

The spoken word also plays a key role in mass communications. The theater, telephone, radio, cinema, and television are vital elements in the network of verbal communication. In the early 1970s Buenos Aires boasted over fifty functioning theaters, which drew both international performers and local talent. In addition to presenting literary themes, some theaters dealt with material of a political and social nature, thus informing and influencing theatergoers through a traditional entertainment medium (see ch. 7).

With a large reserve of acting talent, Argentina was able to take an early lead in the film industry. As early as the 1920s Argentina produced some of the first Latin American films and soon afterward, with Mexico, established a virtual monopoly in the Spanish-language motion picture business. There is a high ratio of films viewed per capita; the average number of visits to a cinema per year is fifteen. Television gained a similarly early lead and is a very popular form of entertainment in Argentina. Commercial television was introduced into Buenos Aires in 1950 and was a one-station, government-owned operation until 1960 when it was opened to private enterprise investment. Since then over thirty television stations have been established.

Economic control of the media is divided between government funding and private enterprise commercial advertising. The latter is the lifeblood of many radio and most television stations and therefore plays a vital role in controlling and financing the mass communications process. Both privately owned stations and government-owned commercial stations depend on revenue provided by commercials. Advertising is heavy

in both media; television and radio carry over half of the total advertising expenditure in the country. Content of advertising is varied but centers mostly on consumer items such as gasoline, cosmetics, and goods that are reasonably accessible to a majority of the society.

## THE MASS MEDIA

### Newspapers

In 1973 there were an estimated 233 dailies in Argentina with a combined circulation of 8 million and a total readership of perhaps three times that number. Greater Buenos Aires alone boasted some sixty newspapers, eighteen of which claimed circulations of over 10,000. The provinces also produced a number of important newspapers, and there were thirty-nine that had circulations of over 10,000. Newspapers were still the most prominent source of news for Argentines and were considered more credible than radio. They were also an important intellectual influence. Aside from news they carried essays, short stories, poetry, and literary criticism.

The leading dailies of Buenos Aires have enjoyed an international reputation for journalistic quality and for protecting their right to freedom of expression. Newspapermen have guarded these liberties through organizations such as the Argentine Press Association (Asociación de Entidades Periodísticas Argentinas—ADEPA).

Two of the most prestigious newspapers have been *La Prensa* and *La Nación*, both founded in the last century. As of 1972 *La Prensa* had an estimated circulation of between 100,000 and 180,000. This newspaper was democratic in principle and was sharply critical of the first Perón regime until temporarily taken over in 1951. In the past *La Prensa* was internationally considered the front-runner among its contemporaries, but in the last few years it has experienced a decline in readership and prestige. *La Nación*, on the other hand, has been on the upswing, and in 1972 its circulation nearly doubled that of *La Prensa*. The two maintained similar editorial policies—both being fairly independent of government influence and relatively conservative, although *La Nación* was the more nationalistic. A content analysis in 1964 revealed a clear preference for hemispheric news in both newspapers; more than two-thirds of all foreign news originated in the Western Hemisphere. Both newspapers devoted over 80 percent of the total news space to national items, underlining the strength of domestic reporting.

Among other leading Buenos Aires dailies popular in 1973, *Clarín* claimed the largest morning circulation (over 300,000), and *Crónica* rivaled *La Razón* for the largest overall morning and afternoon circulation, both claiming over 400,000. All three of these newspapers prided themselves on their independent editorial policies and often outspoken

views on current issues. In the past *Clarín* supported ex-President Arturo Frondizi (1958-62), while *Crónica* was regarded as pro-Peronist. There were also two prominent newspapers serving the business community: *El Crónista Comercial*, with a circulation of 36,000, and *Síntesis de la Industria*, which claimed 15,000.

Half the eighteen Buenos Aires dailies claiming a circulation over 10,000 were ethnic-oriented or foreign-language publications. Among these were the *Buenos Aires Herald*, *Argentinisches Tageblatt*, *Freie Presse*, *Giornale d'Italia*, *Corriere degli Italiani*, *Le Quoditien*, and *France Journal*. *Diario Israelite* and *Die Presse* served Argentina's Jewish population, which was reportedly the largest in the continent. *El Diario Sirio Libanes* served the Arabic-speaking community of Buenos Aires. The circulations of these foreign-language dailies, ranging from roughly 15,000 to 500,000 daily, underscored the importance of past immigration and present heterogeneity for mass media channels.

Because the interior has traditionally supported many reputable dailies, citizens of the provinces have not had to rely upon a mere provincial edition of a Buenos Aires newspaper. Among the more important provincial dailies in 1973 were *La Capital* of Rosario, *La Gaceta* of Tucumán, *El Día* of La Plata, *La Voz del Interior* of Córdoba, and *Los Andes* of Mendoza, all with circulations of between 50,000 and 100,000. *El Litoral* of Santa Fe and *La Nueva Provincia* of Bahía Blanca were slightly smaller. Generally, the provinces of Buenos Aires and Santa Fe, which contain some of the larger urban centers, have maintained the largest number of newspapers with circulations of over 10,000.

For international news the Argentine press had access to the world's major wire services—Associated Press, United Press International, Reuters, Agence France Presse, and Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata (ANSA)—as well as four national wire services. The oldest Argentine news agency was the privately owned Agencia Noticia Saporti (ANS). Telenoticias Americana (TELAM) was government owned and served most dailies, as well as radio and television stations. The communist-bloc countries used one of the local agencies, Distribuidora Argentina de Noticias (DAN), to distribute material from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The cooperative Latin American news agency, LATIN, was used by only a few newspapers.

### Books and Periodicals

Argentina claimed 122 publishing companies in 1971, and approximately thirty of these were major ones. At one time it maintained the largest publishing industry in the Spanish-speaking world, but eventually it fell behind Mexico and Spain. Whereas the latter have received financial support from their governments Argentina, until very recently, has not. The spiraling production costs of 1971 crippled many publishers, but those that survived have since thrived on the government's policy of

subsidizing exports and penalizing importers. These protective measures by the government have greatly curtailed imports of books from Spain and Mexico. The principal market for home publications is Argentina itself, followed by Mexico, Peru, other Latin American countries, and Spain.

The most popular categories have been literature, social sciences, and the fine arts. The majority of Argentine production is dedicated to titles by Latin American authors, followed by translations from United States, English, French, German, and Italian authors. After Spanish, English is the most widely read language in the country. Because publishing costs are so high in Argentina, the great majority of the books printed there are of the inexpensive paperback variety. Many of these appear, along with newspapers and magazines, on street corner newsstands in all the large cities and towns. Bookshops also abound, especially in Buenos Aires.

There are hundreds of periodicals covering as many subjects. In 1973 there were some 400 nationally circulating magazines and in total some 2,000 magazines published throughout the country. Weekly news magazines of major importance included *Gente* (circulation estimated in 1972 at 200,000); *Siete Días* (135,000); and three smaller periodicals—*Análisis*, *Mercado*, and *Confirmado*. These news magazines had an influence that was belied by their relatively small circulation. Magazines aimed at the women's market, such as *Claudia*, *Femirama*, *Para Ti*, and *Anahi*, had perhaps the largest circulation of any one category.

During the first two or three months after Perón's return, at least a dozen new magazines appeared. *Nuestra Palabra*, the official weekly organ of the Argentine Communist Party, reappeared in mid-1973 after that party was officially recognized by the government. *Nueva Hora* also began fortnightly publication and claimed to be the organ of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Argentina (Partido Comunista Revolucionario de la Argentina). It was critical of *Nuestra Palabra* and was believed to take a stand more favorable to the People's Republic of China (PRC). *Planteo Nacional*, neither Peronist nor leftist but nationalist, was begun under the direction of a veteran Argentine journalist. Most new magazines were of leftist or Peronist orientation.

## Radio

In 1973 most Argentines had access to at least one of the 148 broadcasting stations. For an estimated population of 24 million, there were an estimated 10 million radio sets and 19 million listeners. At most hours of the day and night, listeners could hear both classical and popular music, as well as news programs. Most of the broadcasting stations were mediumwave only, although there were also some shortwave stations. In addition to the many domestic stations, there were several international services broadcasting to the outside world.



For many years the government has had a near-monopoly of ownership, and only a few provincial stations could obtain private licensing. Seventy or 80 percent of the stations were still government owned in 1973. Radio Nacional, the official domestic service, Belgrano, El Mundo, and Splendid were large networks under government ownership. The last three, located in Buenos Aires, were government-owned commercial stations operating under private auspices. The twenty-two stations of Radio Nacional spread throughout the country operated independently of each other but broadcast simultaneously and were under government control. Their programs have always placed heavy emphasis on governmental news, progovernment opinions, and Argentine cultural programs, regardless of the regime in power. This powerful broadcasting organ, whose call was under code LRA, owned both shortwave and mediumwave and both international and domestic service stations.

Because of its long history of government ownership, the radio has served as an excellent mouthpiece for various parties and individuals in power. Eva Perón used this medium to rally mass support for her husband in the early years of his career as secretary of labor from 1943 to 1945. Such use of the radio perhaps explains why Argentines—especially those in the higher socioeconomic brackets—have less confidence in radio than in newspapers as a source of news. The return of Perón in 1973 was accompanied by a wave of nationalism that again brought broadcasting into alignment with government policies. In the fall of that year a new law went into effect that required all broadcasting stations to devote 75 percent of their time to music composed or played by Argentines. All broadcasters and technical staff were also to be Argentine. The government also planned to take measures to control radio transmissions from neighboring countries. The Ministry of National Defense was asked to report on transmissions from Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia, Chile, and Uruguay. Special attention would be devoted to broadcasts of a cultural nature.

In early October 1973 the executive branch issued a decree stating that the government was the indisputable owner of the administrative branches of commercial television and radio. The effect was to rescind an earlier decree that had allowed for the release of many of the thirty-seven commercially operated government-owned stations to private ownership. In the October decree the government mentioned which stations would remain under government ownership.

## Television

In 1973 there were over thirty television stations, and at least twenty-four of these were privately owned. One station was owned by the national government, three were controlled by provincial governments, one was controlled by a municipal government, and two were managed by universities. There were no television networks, as the law forbade them, but three of the stations in Buenos Aires had formed affiliations

with channels in the interior, thus creating nationwide outlets. Over the past few years, television has become increasingly popular. Because the sets are locally produced, they are cheaper and more readily available than if imported. In the early 1970s there were over 3 1/2 million sets in use—nearly double the figure for 1968—with a potential audience of 18 million.

Most of the stations were located in the densely populated cities. Aside from the five in Buenos Aires, there were three each in Rosario and Córdoba and two each in Mendoza, Mar del Plata, Sante Fe, and Bahía Blanca. The remainder were distributed in other large cities. A total of twenty closed-circuit stations served the smaller communities.

Under the telecommunications law of mid-1972, the government could grant or cancel licenses, exercise censorship in situations affecting national security, protect the moral and ethical standards of public broadcasting, regulate the time permitted for commercial advertising, and determine sanctions when needed.

The idea of a publicly supported—or government-funded—television has not gained much support in Argentina, and consequently the operation remains a largely commercial enterprise. Both government and private stations rely heavily on money from private enterprise to sponsor their programs. Television is supposed to limit advertisements to ten minutes of every sixty, although for programs with a high audience rating it may be nearer to fifteen.

In 1973 the government required that at least half of the television programs be locally produced. Many of the most popular programs were live or tape shows made in Argentina. Program content could be compared to that offered by most television stations in the world. The primary purpose was to entertain, and to that end there were soap operas, situation comedies, and adventure stories. Televised soccer games also drew huge audiences. Some stations offered up to four hours of news a day, although television's reputation for effective newscasting was not yet well established. To get past the quota on local programs, which were expensive to produce, some stations showed North American films dubbed in Spanish. On any given day a viewer might see up to five United States motion pictures played consecutively throughout the afternoon and evening.

## Films

Filmgoing has always been a favorite pastime among Argentines. As of 1973 there were nearly 2,000 theaters selling a yearly average of 53 million tickets. After a decline in film attendance in the late 1960s, the number began to climb again in 1970. (Nonetheless, annual ticket sales have never hit the 80-million mark reached in Buenos Aires alone in 1957.) Tastes were diverse, and Argentines enjoyed films from the United States, Italy, England, France, the Federal Republic of Germany (West

Germany), Spain, Mexico, and the Soviet Union, as well as those produced in studios at home. The first four countries and Argentina accounted for nearly two-thirds of the films shown in the country in 1972. Four of the top five money-earners in Buenos Aires were United States productions. *The Godfather* outdrew all other films that year.

In 1973 all films, domestic and foreign, had to obtain a certificate of approval and classification from the film censorship board before they could be exhibited publicly. This board was influenced by moral and ethical considerations and in particular by the stance of the Roman Catholic Church. Films not conforming to the Argentine code of morality were either subject to the censor's scissors or could be denied the certificate of approval. Censorship under President Juan Carlos Onganía (1966-70) was quite strict, and the only opportunity to see a controversial film uncut was at the first screening. Those who missed these popular premieres had to take the half-hour flight from Buenos Aires to Montevideo to see the uncut version. There was an evident relaxation of censorship standards during 1972, and filmgoers hoped for further relaxation—even elimination—of these rules under the new Peronist government.

Matters pertaining to the motion picture industry were under the direction of the National Institute of Cinematography, which was under direct control of the executive branch of the government. Local film production was officially supported by the provision of subsidies and credit facilities and through a law requiring exhibitors to show local films. First-run film houses were required to show a locally produced film for at least one week in thirteen, whereas second-run theaters had to meet the requirement for one in every eight weeks. Furthermore, all black-and-white films—both foreign and domestic—had to be printed and copied in Argentina. The impact of this measure continued to diminish, however, because of the increasing number of films in color. For example, of the thirty-two feature length films produced locally in 1972, only one was in black and white.

Beginning in December 1972 the National Institute of Cinematography put into effect a new ticket control system. Admission tickets served as receipts for participation in a national lottery in which one automobile per month was given away. The purpose of the new tax system was to offer better tax control and provide the institute with increased funds to buttress the Argentine film industry.

## GOVERNMENT INFLUENCE IN THE MASS MEDIA

The principle of freedom of expression is incorporated in Article 14 of the Constitution of 1853. Such freedom has been maintained by a powerful and generally uncensored press. Incidents of actual censorship are not as common as in some Latin American nations, although actions as extreme as outright expropriation have occurred in the past. For the

most part, Argentina has prided itself on the honesty and freedom permitted journalists. All recent governments have recognized and accepted the fact that the press is both an important influence on public opinion and a wielder of political power. To this end, it is not uncommon for the text of a press conference with an important government official to appear verbatim in a leading newspaper. The topics are often controversial, giving the press the opportunity to ask astute and penetrating questions. Editorials are often sharply disapproving, criticizing such topics as Argentina's aid to Cuba and government regulation of foreign news agency activity.

In the mid-1940s, however, a trend toward more intervention and repression began to be apparent to many observers. Perón began to utilize the various forms of mass communication to rally mass support and aid his career. After he became president, he attempted to keep the media in a supportive role, but eventually he fell under criticism of one sort or another. Because the media represented a potentially powerful opposition force, the government found itself curtailing freedom of expression through a variety of official regulations. As a consequence of worsening relations between the government and the mass media, repression increased until all channels were affected. For example, one of the most popular forms of stage entertainment—the satirical political review—vanished during the late 1940s and early 1950s and was revived only after Perón's departure. Editors were imprisoned, certain publications were closed down, and others were compelled to sell out to a chain of publications controlled by Perón's wife, Eva. Scores of periodicals were discontinued on the grounds that they had ignored a government order that all 1950 publications carry the slogan "Year of the Liberator San Martín."

*La Nación*, *La Prensa*, and *Crítica*—all leading newspapers—continued to criticize the regime after a number of other newspapers had been suppressed. But eventually they were all brought under control by the government. Methods employed by Perón's against *La Prensa* included withholding of newsprint, a government-inspired strike and, ultimately, expropriation.

The Perón regime's success in mobilizing public opinion demonstrates the great importance of mass media in the lives of the people. Government intervention in the press, the educational system, radio, and television enabled Perón to influence large segments of the population that had been neglected by previous administrations. Labor unions in particular were molded into a force that continued to play an important political role after the collapse of the Perón regime in 1955. This same segment—still highly politicized and vocal—was at the heart of the movement that brought Perón back to power in 1973.

The Pedro Aramburu regime (1955-58) moved to disassemble the publishing empire of Eva Perón by selling various interests to private business and political groups. A few pro-Peronist weeklies were allowed to

surface during the end of Aramburu's regime. This and other actions were taken to mean a general relaxation of his stance on Peronism. During the civilian and military regimes that followed, interference with the mass media lessened, only to resume again with Onganía (see ch. 9). Once in power, Onganía took immediate steps to curb the budding resurgence of Peronism.

Censorship under Onganía became increasingly repressive. There was no open censorship of the press in the early years, although some publications considered offensive to the government were banned. In 1966 *Tía Vicenta*, the country's leading humorous magazine, was closed for caricaturing the president and ridiculing his administration. In 1968 three periodicals were closed, and in 1969 the Peronist weekly magazine *Primera Plana* was banned. Despite government pressure, however, the press continued to criticize Onganía's administration. Both *La Prensa* and *Crónica* published articles ridiculing the government. *Crónica*—which then, as now, claimed the largest circulation—was temporarily closed in May 1970. It was accused of falsely reporting the death of a student during clashes with police in Córdoba.

Censorship during this regime affected not only the press but other organs of communication as well. In April of 1968 the government assumed control of TELAM, the local news agency subscribed to by a good percentage of television and radio stations and several newspapers. The official takeover was designed to improve the image of Argentina abroad and to increase state participation in the private media. The government's attempt to establish an official news agency was hotly contested by many. A protest against censorship was signed by over 200 artists, professors, actors, and intellectuals and sent to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Nevertheless, only six months later TELAM was given the power to centralize and direct all government and state enterprise advertising. Such advertising accounted for 85 percent of the billings of some private agencies, whose interest it was to maintain these large accounts. The catering of private commercial advertising to government desires made TELAM a powerful organ in the network of mass communication. Then, early in 1969 a new film censorship law was announced that gave the government power to ban a film outright. Previously, only cuts could be required. By the end of the Onganía regime, intervention had increased to such a level that many felt censorship and other measures were more extensive than at any time since the fall of Perón.

Censorship decreased after the Onganía regime as the government loosened its hold on the mass communications channels in preparation for the March 1973 elections. This allowed pro-Peronist elements to mobilize forces and elect Héctor Cámpora, whose slogan was "Cámpora to Office, Perón to Power." Although the communications media had accurately reflected public opinion during the elections, they were unsure of their footing in the face of another Peronist regime. The

strongly nationalist tone of the Peronist movement presupposed repercussions in all areas of mass communication—from private enterprise advertising to media censorship.

Through the early months of President Cámpora's stay in office and the government of Raul Lastiri, who was interim president between Cámpora's resignation and the second presidential election of 1973, the government continued to issue assurances of no censorship or self-censorship, but there were some indications to the contrary. During the television coverage of Perón's arrival, it was obvious to media critics that the announcers had been given directives. The state took over all television and radio stations to handle the arrival. Only the Uruguayan station Radio Colonia gave a full report of the day's events—including coverage of clashes between Peronist supporters and security police.

During the summer and fall of 1973 the media found themselves caught between the divergent interests of terrorist groups and the Peronist government. In a special conference with the secretary of information, the government asked newsmen to demonstrate "responsibility" in dealing with terrorist groups, stressing that news coverage be minimal and noninflammatory. When two Buenos Aires television stations broadcast an interview with the head of the People's Revolutionary Army (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo—ERP), the group believed to be most active in terrorist plots, the government moved to impose sanctions through the Federal Radio and Television Council (Consejo Federal de Radio y Televisión—CONFERT). The Argentine Radio—Television Stations Association defended the two stations and condemned the government; the day before the sanctions were to go into effect they were canceled at the express wish of President Lastiri. This incident was followed by a bomb threat at a television station in Tucumán and by the kidnapping of a *Clarín* executive. In order to secure his release, the newspaper was forced to publish three advertisements for the ERP.

Government releases of a nonpolitical nature reflected the emphasis on Argentine nationalism emerging under pro-Peronist groups. In May of 1973 the government issued a new telecommunications law setting a series of rules for radio and television. Foreign films could be shown on television only if dubbed in Argentina. Seventy-five percent of the music broadcast must be composed by Argentines, and all broadcasters, technicians, and operators must be citizens. There was much speculation over the fate of old film censorship laws. A change in officials in the National Film Institute offered hope to those awaiting a relaxation of the decree-law. Moreover, in recent demands of the Association of Peronist Film Workers, the main argument was over the unconstitutionality of censorship.

The most decisive government move was taken in the fall of 1973 when a two-part decree was issued affecting foreign news agencies and news content. The decree, Number 587, was published in the *Official Bulletin* in early September and was due to become effective a month later. It

ordered foreign news agencies to cease supplying local Argentine news items to newspapers within the country and directed the communications media to devote 50 percent of their news coverage to events occurring in Argentina. Preference was to be given first to news about Argentina, then Latin America, and finally the rest of the world. The result of the first part was to give the Peronist-controlled government news agency TELAM a virtual monopoly on internal news coverage. The government move came under attack from several sides. ADEPA protested the action and requested an interview with President Lastiri to outline the consequences of such government action for freedom of the press. Newspapers immediately picked up the protest as well. Editorials in *Clarín*, *La Nación*, and the *Buenos Aires Herald* asserted that the decree was an open threat to press freedom. The situation paralleled similar legislation passed twenty-five years earlier under the first Peronist government.

Quite apart from some government efforts to control branches of the mass media, considerable freedom of expression was allowed, and many felt encouraged to speak out. The return to civilian government brought magazines into print that had been suppressed or nonexistent during past military regimes, and a considerable number of new magazines followed in the wake of Perón's return to Argentina. In addition, the daily newspaper *El Mundo* out of circulation since 1967, resumed publication in August of 1973. Editors were openly critical of Peronist policies; one went so far as to ask for the impeachment of President Lastiri because of his alleged repression of political dissenters.

## FOREIGN GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES AND INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE

Argentina maintains both cultural and communications ties with other governments, primarily within the hemisphere and the continent of Europe but also with Japan and Israel. Binational centers are sponsored by several countries, serving the purpose of disseminating information and offering foreign-language training and scholarships for study abroad. Foreign news agencies also help to spread current events information.

In 1972 various cultural presentations and exhibitions were sponsored by Chile, Peru, and Brazil. Brazil also maintained a cultural center in Buenos Aires and three other cities where Argentines could learn Portuguese. In addition, several Western European countries offered broad exchange programs. Argentina's immigrant heritage and cultural leanings are strongly reflected in the close ties maintained with these countries. France, for example, supported ten Alliance Française centers that offered classes to over 14,500 students. It also sponsored numerous cultural presentations, and exchange of museum personnel, and forty full- or part-time scholarships. West Germany supported the Goethe

Institute in Buenos Aires and other cultural centers in other cities. They were responsible for many musical programs and twenty-five scholarships. The British Council and the English cultural centers in the capital and main cities had approximately 12,000 students in 1972. There were art exhibits and concerts, as well as over twenty-five scholarships given. Italy supports one cultural institute and two libraries in Buenos Aires. Centers throughout the country offered Italian to 5,000 students, and a total of thirty-five scholarships were offered to students in a wide variety of fields.

Cultural ties with Eastern Europe were increasing. In 1972 the Soviet Union maintained a cultural and information center. One of the most recently established centers, it gave Russian lessons to an estimated sixty students. Free information on Soviet universities and Soviet scholarships was available. Poland, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), and Czechoslovakia also sponsored various concerts and art exhibits during the year.

Some of the most active binational centers were those of the United States. In 1972 there were a total of thirteen such centers in the cities of Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Rosario, Mendoza, Tucumán, Salta, San Juan, and Comodoro Rivadavia. Enrollment in English classes was almost 16,000. The United States Information Service (USIS) maintained a center in downtown Buenos Aires—the Lincoln Library—that was one of the most active United States-sponsored libraries in Latin America. Because of the need for increased service, the library underwent extensive reconstruction, adding such services as microfiche, microfilm reading, and copying. USIS maintained both a motion picture library and a book distribution program and published *Enfoques Gremiales*, a bi-monthly newspaper aimed at union and labor groups. The regional book office in Buenos Aires assisted with the publication and distribution of important translations. It covered all of Argentina, as well as Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay. In addition to cultural centers and exchanges, USIS cooperated with virtually all radio and television stations. As many as eighty-seven radio stations have run Voice of America broadcasts, and both radio and television carry USIS-sponsored newsclips and documentaries.



## CHAPTER 11

### FOREIGN RELATIONS

Argentina's geopolitical and demographic features and its dependence on its export market have made for a high degree of continuity in foreign policy in the long term. Since the 1930s, however, variation has been marked. Factors contributing to this variation have included the growth and subsequent slump of its own economy, the transformation of the international political system after World War II, the foreign ties of its military establishment, and oscillation between authoritarian and popular rule.

Distance from the global concentrations of great power has enhanced both the desirability and the possibility of nonalignment. This tendency has been expressed in neutrality in both world wars and in a long history of economic nationalism. The return to power of the Peronists in 1973—first through the election of Perón loyalist Héctor Cámpora and, after his resignation, through that of Juan Domingo Perón himself—signaled a reversion, after some two decades of increasing alignment with the United States, to this traditional stance. The Peronist government was attempting to diversify economic ties and deemphasize political ties with the United States, while strengthening relations with Europe, the socialist countries, the third world generally, and Latin America in particular.

The country's dependence on its export market and, conversely, British needs for Argentine agricultural products led, by the beginning of the twentieth century, to large-scale British investment. A heavy influx of immigrants from Spain and Italy linked the country even more closely to Europe, as did the intelligentsia's affinity for France and, during the first half of the twentieth century, the influence of the German military on Argentine officers.

As a consequence of these strong cultural, commercial, and political links with Europe and its geopolitical status as one of the two giants of South America, the country has always been torn between a tendency to disassociate itself from Latin America and a compulsion to exert hegemony over it. The latter tendency has generated rivalry with Brazil and the United States. Rivalry with Brazil took the form of armed conflict in the River Plate basin throughout much of the nineteenth century. Rivalry with the United States was expressed in opposition to the expansion

of United States influence in the hemisphere in the first half of the twentieth century and in attempts to serve as the spokesman of Latin American grievances against the "Colossus of the North" in international forums.

During the first half of the twentieth century Argentina's distance from the United States, its strong ties with Europe, and the strength of its own economy enabled it to maintain greater independence of action than most of its Latin American neighbors enjoyed. This situation allowed Perón, during his first term in the presidency (1946-52), to resist United States pressures, to articulate a "third position," rejecting both capitalism and communism, and to expand Argentine influence in the hemisphere.

In the early 1950s, however, with Argentina's foreign reserves exhausted and its European trading partners too weak to come to its assistance, Perón was forced to abandon his economic nationalism and his attempts to exercise leadership in Latin America and to turn to the United States and to international organizations for economic assistance. United States investment in the country has increased sharply since that time, and the United States has become the major source of imports, though Europe remains the major export market, and exports to neighboring countries under the terms of the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA) have been increasing.

The Argentine military has exerted considerable, and sometimes dominant, influence on foreign as well as domestic policy since 1930. Along with other factors, the strong ties between the Argentine and German military establishments are believed to have influenced Argentina's position in World War II. The German military missions were withdrawn in the early 1940s and, since the overthrow of Perón in 1955, United States military influence has been predominant within the Argentine military establishment. This has been reflected in a more frequent coincidence of Argentine policies with those of the United States, especially in regard to such issues as the containment of insurgency, than had traditionally been the case. Civilian politicians, however, appealing for popular support, have often advocated policies at variance with those of the United States.

The friendliest relations the Argentine government ever had with the United States and Brazil occurred during the recent period of military rule (1966-73), particularly the years under President Juan Carlos Onganía (1966-70). Reversing this trend, the government elected in 1973 had indicated an interest in promoting a united front among the Spanish-speaking nations of Latin America vis-à-vis the United States and Brazil. This course did not appear very promising in the short run, however, as Argentina found itself surrounded by military governments in Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, and Chile, each of which had strong ties with both Brazil and the United States. Thus, Perón's first months in power were marked by an accommodative approach to all nations.

## EVOLUTION OF FOREIGN POLICY

In the nineteenth century Argentina faced the problem of creating an identifiable, united, and secure nation. Unity and a degree of isolation were emphasized during the regime of Juan Manuel de Rosas, who dominated Argentine politics from 1829 to 1852; he relied on force to weld the nation together and to eliminate threats of territorial loss. When the Argentine Republic became united in 1862, the basic identity of the nation was established, although minor territorial adjustments were made thereafter.

After 1862 the principal concern of the leadership was economic growth, which was tied to European immigration, trade, and capital. From the beginning, however, Argentine policymakers were determined not to allow these relationships to undermine the nation's sovereignty. The Tejedor Doctrine, set forth by Foreign Minister Carlos Tejedor in 1872, declared that foreigners within a country are not entitled to any protection that nationals do not have. The principle was extended to foreign corporations in 1876. Doctrines expressed around the turn of the century by the distinguished Argentine international lawyer Carlos Calvo and by Foreign Minister Luis María Drago contended that foreigners were not to seek diplomatic or military support from their home governments for the collection of private debts and that governments were not to resort to force of arms for the collection of public debts. These principles have come to be regarded as among the most important Latin American contributions to international law.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, England invested in and traded with Argentina to such an extent that the Argentine economy became tied to that of Great Britain. By the beginning of the twentieth century almost half of British investment in Latin America was in Argentina. British capital built the railroads and communications system; its purebred livestock contributed to the growth of one of the world's great agricultural industries; and its exports filled the shops of Buenos Aires. Trade was also extensive with France, Germany, and other European countries, although with the United States it was practically nonexistent.

In 1933 Argentina abandoned its policy of free trade and signed a bilateral trading pact—the Roca-Runciman Agreement—with Great Britain. The agreement, by establishing quotas for exports, was designed to regulate foreign commerce and set up an automatic exchange system to pay for imports from each country. This attempt to make Argentine agriculture and British industry complementary had important political overtones. The decision favoring government intervention in trade had its source in the world depression and the subsequent freezing of credits, import quotas, and unemployment. There was, however, a strong public reaction against the treaty as a form of imperialism and an infringement on Argentine sovereignty.

Foreign policy became more ambitious after the 1946 election of Perón. He dreamed of making Argentina a great nation and a first-rate world power. His policy, proclaimed as the "third position," proposed an alternative between capitalism and communism and incorporated strong feelings of anti-Americanism. Perón saw the future as an era not of states but of continents and followed a policy designed to place South America among the world powers and to make Argentina the leader of South America. Foreign economic influence was to be minimized; weaker neighboring countries were to be brought into Argentina's orbit; and pressure was to be applied to Brazil.

While Perón was in power, foreign-owned utilities and railroads were purchased. An international news agency, Latin Agency (*Agencia Latina*), was established, and the Latin American Trade Union and Workers Association (*Agrupación de Trabajadores Latino-Americanos Sindicalizados—ATLAS*), a regional labor confederation led by Argentines, gained the support of labor unions in Bolivia, Colombia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and Paraguay. The armed forces were strengthened, and research on nuclear fission was begun. In 1953 the Act of Santiago, a bilateral trade agreement, was signed with Chile. Within the next year Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Paraguay became signatories to similar agreements. Participation in international economic organizations was rejected on the grounds that it constituted a form of imperialism.

Before Perón was deposed, however, a decline in the Argentine economy, coinciding with European concentration on recovery from World War II and the expansion of United States power, left Argentina's options sharply constricted. Thereafter the country accepted economic assistance both from the United States and from international organizations. Both of the elected heads-of-state who served between the overthrow of Perón in 1955 and the elections of 1973, Arturo Frondizi (1958-62) and Arturo Umberto Illia (1963-66), campaigned on platforms of economic nationalism and greater independence from the United States in foreign policy formulation. But in the face of strong opposition from the armed forces and powerful economic interest groups, neither was able to follow through on campaign promises. As a consequence, both eventually lost the support of their natural constituencies, and both were toppled by the military.

Despite the continuation of important commercial relations with European countries and, during the 1960s, expansion of trade with the socialist countries, other Latin American countries, and Japan, Argentina drew increasingly closer to the United States, reaching a peak of amity during the government of General Onganía. Some observers believe that popular rejection of this close relationship and the desire for a more independent foreign policy contributed significantly to the overwhelming electoral victories of the Peronists in 1973.

## MULTILATERAL WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS

Argentine attitudes toward political organizations in the Western Hemisphere have traditionally been conditioned by the national objectives of: maintaining without interruption or interference the country's links with Europe; avoiding absorption into the orbit of United States influence; and exercising dominant influence over the other states of South America. An Argentine foreign minister once described his country's geopolitical position as "looking out at the Atlantic with her back to America." In conjunction with the seemingly contradictory tendency to hegemonic ambitions in its own neighborhood, this meant that, even before it began to feel threatened by the expansion of United States influence, Argentina generally identified itself with Europe and, among the Western Hemisphere states, eschewed cooperative efforts that were not of its own initiative.

Argentina signed a treaty of friendship and defense with Colombia in 1823 but refused to extend the treaty to other Latin American states. It refrained from sending delegates to the Latin American congresses in Panama in 1826 and in Lima in 1847. The South American Congress of International Private Law of 1888, initiated by Argentina and Uruguay, was one of the first steps the country took toward inter-American cooperation. This conference produced treaties on international law and copyrights. The following year Argentina sent delegates to the first Pan-American conference, held in Washington, which lasted six months. Throughout this time the Argentine delegation was continually at odds with the United States delegation over procedures and detail.

At the several Pan-American conferences that took place from the beginning of the twentieth century until the adoption by the United States of the Good Neighbor Policy in the 1930s, Argentina attempted to provide leadership for the Latin American states in their efforts to extract from the United States a pledge of nonintervention. At the sixth conference in 1928, for example, the Argentine delegates argued against United States intervention in Latin-American affairs and, at the seventh, the Argentine foreign minister sponsored an antiwar treaty that included provisions prohibiting intervention.

In 1936, at the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace held in Buenos Aires, a contest developed between the representatives of the United States and Argentina. The United States wanted a convention ratified for the maintenance of peace, solidarity, and nonintervention among the American states. Argentina objected to this continental approach and urged that the convention be open to all nations and that any act of aggression—even that of one American state against another—be subject to the treaty. The convention eventually adopted the provision for inter-American solidarity as well as the provision that any act of aggression be subject to the treaty. In 1938 the eighth inter-American conference considered the relations of the Americas to Europe and

the possibility of penetration of Latin America by European fascist governments. The conference produced the Declaration of the Principles of the Solidarity of America, which the Argentine delegation accepted. Argentina specifically stated, however, that it refused to renounce its strong intellectual and cultural ties with Europe.

Further problems were created by World War II. In 1939 the first of three meetings of consultation of the ministers of foreign affairs took place; at that time a general declaration of neutrality was adopted. At the second meeting in 1940, the Declaration of Reciprocal Assistance and Cooperation for the Defense of the American Nations was signed. At both meetings Argentina was in accord with the policies of neutrality adopted and, at the second, even agreed to an inter-American suppression of Axis activities. During a third meeting in 1942, however, the United States wanted the other American nations to break off relations with the Axis. Argentina refused, as did Chile, and was successful in having a number of other anti-Axis proposals weakened.

From 1942 until 1945 Argentina was at odds with the inter-American system. The United States put pressure on Argentina to sever relations with Germany. In 1944 the United States withdrew recognition of Argentina, declared that it was in the hands of a fascist government, and threatened to reveal evidence of extensive Axis activity in the country. In 1945 all the American nations, with the exception of Argentina, met to discuss problems of war and peace. The final resolution dealt with threats or acts of aggression and measures to meet them. Argentina was not directly represented at the conference, but in earlier secret negotiations it had agreed to accept the final resolution, declare war on the Axis, and renew relations with the other American republics. This agreement resulted in Argentina's reentering the inter-American system and its admittance to the United Nations conferences in San Francisco.

In 1947 the inter-American security system was institutionalized by the adoption of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty). This was a treaty of collective self-defense, in conformity with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, in which each of the signatories voluntarily resolved to come to the defense of any other signatory in case of aggression against it. Argentine ratification of this document in 1950 was less a reflection of an official change of heart than of a position weakened by the elimination of options. Europe, recovering from the war, was no longer a viable counterbalance to the United States, and Argentina needed foreign reserves with which to pay its debts to North American exporters. After ratifying the treaty, Argentina received a loan of US\$125 million for that purpose.

In 1948 the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS) was signed at Bogotá. The OAS treaty provided the permanent organizational framework within which political, economic, and social questions relating to the Americas were to be resolved. At this conference Argentina

was critical of inter-American policies, refusing to let supranational interests overshadow national interests and opposing collective action. Argentina did not formally ratify the treaty until 1956; it was the last South American nation to do so.

Argentina opposed the efforts of the United States in the 1950s to gain collective legitimation, through OAS resolutions, for unilateral intervention against the governments of Jacobo Arbenz of Guatemala and Fidel Castro of Cuba. It joined the other member states in 1960, however, in voting to sever relations with the Dominican Republic after the Dominican president had been censured for complicity in a plot to assassinate the president of Venezuela.

At a meeting of foreign ministers in Punta del Este in January 1962, Argentina was among the six countries, constituting two-thirds of the population of Latin America, that abstained on the United States-supported vote to disassociate the Cuban government from the OAS. The position of the Frondizi government on this issue, however, had been strongly opposed by the Argentine military, and Frondizi was deposed two months later. On the occasion of the Cuban missile crisis in October of the same year, all of the OAS member states supported a resolution authorizing the use of armed force, but Argentina was the only country to provide significant support for the United States effort. Argentina also supported the adoption of sanctions, including the suspension of diplomatic relations and trade, by the OAS members against Cuba in July 1964.

Argentina voted in favor of the highly controversial OAS resolution creating the Inter-American Peace Force to assist the United States in quelling rebellion in the Dominican Republic in April 1965. Civilian President Illía refused, however, to allow the Argentine military actually to participate in the force. Illía also opposed the creation of a permanent inter-American force, a move strongly supported by the United States. The military government of Onganía, whose forces toppled the Illía government in 1966, reversed that position and advocated the creation of such a force.

Collective security against insurgency was the major objective pursued through the OAS by the military governments of 1966 to 1973. The Onganía government, upon ratifying the 1967 amendments to the OAS charter, complained that the amendments did not go far enough in strengthening security measures. In the same year Argentina contributed to the defeat of the guerrilla campaign led by Ernesto (Ché) Guevara in Bolivia. A special session of the OAS General Assembly convened in Washington in January and February 1971 to consider a draft convention providing that persons accused of kidnapping or otherwise assaulting diplomats must be extradited or brought to trial by the country in which they were apprehended. Argentina was among the so-called hardliners, including Brazil, Paraguay, Ecuador, Haiti, and Guatemala,

that staged a dramatic walkout, demanding multilateral action against all forms of political terrorism.

Stimulated in part by the ideas of Argentine economist Raul Prebisch concerning the deteriorating terms of trade for producers of primary products, Argentina in the 1960s became interested in the economic integration of Latin America. In 1961 it helped found LAFTA, which set forth as its goals the creation of a common market, free conversion of currencies, and harmonious export-import policies (see ch. 14). At the 1967 LAFTA meeting agreement was reached on procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes. An attempt was also made to attain greater uniformity in the laws of the various Latin American nations.

Argentina, with one of the most highly developed economies in the hemisphere, has profited more than most of the other member countries from the relaxation of obstacles to free trade. At his inauguration in May 1973, President Cámpora expressed an interest in developing "intimate ties" with the Andean Common Market. It was announced on November 9 that Argentina would grant to the member countries of the common market the equivalent of a US\$5 million line of credit for the purchase of Argentine goods.

In 1967 Argentina joined several other South American states in claiming maritime jurisdiction over its territorial waters to a limit of 200 miles, and it met with thirteen other states in Lima in 1970 to sign a pact affirming multilateral recognition of this claim. Adherence to multilateral treaties, such as the Treaty of Tlatelolco (1967), prohibiting the acquisition or use of nuclear weapons in Latin America, and participation in multilateral organizations, such as the Latin American Economic Commission (1969), which were born of Latin American initiative, had aroused little controversy in the 1960s. But participation in organizations dominated by the United States has continued to be controversial, and criticism of those organizations has occasionally been harsh. In 1973 the newly elected civilian government expressed displeasure with the policies of the Inter-American Development Bank, and the Argentine delegate to the OAS, advocating sweeping changes in the organization, said, "The OAS is at present good for nothing." The new government had established diplomatic and commercial ties with Cuba, in defiance of the OAS ban.

## RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the country's attempts to establish itself as an independent nation were threatened by the intervention of the British and French, both in its territory and in the territory of its neighbors. The United States remained officially neutral during these conflicts but did not restrict the activities of Argentines purchasing weapons in the United States or of Argentine ships using its ports. It recognized the country in 1823, the first nation outside South America to do so.



In 1831 Argentina took three United States ships into custody, charging that they had violated its authority in the Falkland Islands. The United States retaliated by sending warships to take punitive action against the Argentine settlement in the Falklands, which then came under British control. Diplomatic relations were severed over these acts and were not restored until 1843.

The fall of the caudillo Rosas in 1852 brought into positions of political influence a number of intellectual leaders who had a profound admiration for United States institutions, in particular the United States Constitution and public education system. Thus the Constitution of 1853, drafted in large measure by Juan Bautista Alberdi, and the educational system established by Domingo Faustino Sarmiento were modeled after those of the United States. Nevertheless, United States attempts at the end of the nineteenth century to expand its commercial ties and political influence through hemispheric organization were viewed with suspicion by Argentina as a threat both to its European ties and to its design for leadership in South America.

Relations remained correct, though not necessarily cordial, through the first four decades of the twentieth century. Argentina's neutrality during World War I created no conflict with the United States. In 1914 Argentina and the United States approved an arbitration treaty. Trade increased after the war, principally as a result of better communications, United States investment, and Argentine borrowing. Relations deteriorated sharply, however, after the United States entered World War II. The Argentines failed to restrict Nazi propaganda and subversive activities and opposed or weakened resolutions sponsored by the United States at inter-American meetings. The United States retaliated by denying military aid, applying restrictive economic sanctions, and intervening diplomatically by threatening to expose Argentine collaboration with the Axis shortly before the end of the war.

The clash between Argentine and United States ambitions in the hemisphere remained pronounced in the early postwar period. The United States intervened openly in the Argentine elections of 1946. Ambassador Spruille Braden delivered pointedly partisan speeches, and two weeks before the election the United States Department of State issued a book that was highly critical of Perón. Perón took full advantage of the challenge. His campaign slogan "Braden or Perón" proved to be highly effective, and throughout most of his tenure anti-Americanism was a significant aspect of his political program. This position became untenable, however, when the country experienced an economic downturn in the early 1950s.

Relations improved with the 1953 visit of Milton Eisenhower, brother of the United States president, who promised to assist Perón in meeting pressing economic problems. Thereafter, Perón spoke more favorably of the United States, borrowed from it, and negotiated contracts with

American firms. At the time he was overthrown, he was negotiating contracts with United States oil companies, a move he had publicly opposed throughout his presidency.

Since 1955 official relations between the two countries have been largely conditioned by Argentina's financial needs, ties between military establishments, and the extent of popular influence on government policies. As the financial needs have been relatively constant, variation in Argentine policy can best be explained by the other two factors.

The United States had naval and air force missions in Argentina as early as the 1930s, and the Argentine navy, in which there was much anti-Peronist sentiment, was host to United States naval vessels even while Perón was in power. It was not until after the fall of Perón in 1955, however, that United States military influence became firmly established. Since that time the United States services have been represented in Argentina by attachés, missions and, more recently, military assistance groups, and Argentine officers have been trained in United States military schools, especially those established for the training of Latin Americans in the Panama Canal Zone. Twenty-three senior officers on active duty in 1973 had attended schools in the United States or the Canal Zone. Furthermore, courses taught in the Argentine military schools have been modified to reflect the basic concerns of the United States military in regard to Latin America. Emphasis has been on anti-communism, counterinsurgency, and internal security rather than on international conflict as had been the case in the past.

For almost two decades the dominant faction of the Argentine military has been willing to contravene both tradition and public opinion in order to align itself with the United States on most issues, especially those involving hemispheric security. In so doing the military clashed with the elected civilian governments of Frondizi and Illía, as both presidents considered the full extent of cooperation with the United States desired by the military leaders to be politically infeasible.

Governments that have sought popular support have also been obliged to resist, at least verbally, the growing influence of United States capital in the Argentine economy. Much of the public pressure has centered on the issue of contracts between the state-owned oil agency and foreign firms for exploration, drilling, and refining. Frondizi lost much of his Radical Party support when he reneged on a campaign promise and entered into such contracts. Illía annulled the contracts but in so doing increased the opposition to his government within the military and among powerful economic interest groups. Onganía renewed the contracts and took various measures to attract United States capital and to secure loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). By 1973 United States investments amounted to about US\$1.4 billion out of a total foreign investment of about US\$5 billion. The United States usually ranks about third or fourth as a market for Argentine exports but is the primary source of imports, accounting for 20 to 25 percent (see ch. 14).

Resistance to United States influences was a major theme of the campaigns of C mpera and Per n in 1973, and economic nationalism was reflected in three of the earliest measures considered by the new Peronist congress. The foreign investment law limits foreign holdings to minority status in most firms, limits repatriation of profits, and puts a ceiling on the access of foreign investors to long-term credit. The other measures call for the renationalization of banks acquired by foreign capital since 1966 and tariff reform for the protection of domestic jobs and production (see ch. 12). United States opposition to these measures was a source of temporary friction between the two countries.

In the areas of hemispheric security policy the new government was suggesting that the Latin American countries must turn their attention to defending their sovereignty against the economic aggression of more powerful states and that internal security should not be the first priority of Latin American armed forces. Despite these differences, neither the Per n government nor the United States seemed inclined to lapse into the hostility of an earlier era.

Argentina received more than US\$1 billion in United States loans and grants between 1946 and 1972, of which US\$865.2 million was in the form of economic assistance and US\$62 million was in military assistance. Grant military assistance to Argentina was phased out in 1969, but grant training assistance, cash and credit sales, and the Military Group presence were continued. Bilateral grants from the United States Agency for International Development were phased out in June 1971, but disbursements of previously appropriated grants were continuing.

## RELATIONS WITH BRAZIL

Both Argentina and Brazil have evidenced ambivalence in their foreign policies as a consequence of the tendency of their elites to identify with Europe or the United States while attempting to exert leadership or influence over South America. Thus, competition for the favors of the power or powers exercising hegemony over South America has sometimes mitigated their competition for leadership within the continent.

Rivalry between the giants of South America has been particularly intense in the River Plate basin. Territorial conflicts in that area initiated by Portugal and Spain were assumed almost without interruption after the independence movement by the new states that replaced the colonial powers. Although it continued to be economically dependent on Argentina, Paraguay achieved political independence in 1811 through the obstinacy of the frontierlike settlement in Asunci n and its ability to play off one of its large neighbors against the other.

By the 1820s Great Britain had gained extensive influence in both Argentina and Brazil and, as a consequence, was able to mediate their conflict over remaining territorial claims in the basin. This was done through the creation of Uruguay as a buffer state in 1828. Rivalry for

hegemony over the new state, however, continued to be fed by the dependence of Uruguay's two most important feuding groups or incipient parties on external support; one of them, the *colorados* (reds) looked to Brazil; the other, the *blancos* (whites) looked to Argentina.

The War of the Triple Alliance (1865-70) was actually sparked by Brazilian intervention in Uruguayan politics on behalf of the *colorados*, but the power pretensions of Paraguayan President Francisco Solano Lopez, who invaded the Brazilian empire, caused a most unlikely alliance—Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay—against Paraguay. Paraguay was devastated and, after Argentina and Brazil had taken their respective portions of its territory and the *colorados* had become firmly entrenched in power in Uruguay, the situation in the River Plate basin was stabilized.

Apart from their rivalry, the experiences of Argentina and Brazil in international politics in the nineteenth century were quite similar. Both countries remained under the influence of Great Britain and, despite some unpleasant incidents, had generally cordial, though somewhat distant, relations with the United States. Both experienced a large-scale influx of European immigrants, although Argentina absorbed a great many more than Brazil. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries each country increased its power position vis-à-vis the other South American states: Argentina through economic advances and Brazil through the expansion of its territory at the expense of each of its contiguous neighbors.

In the early twentieth century the international relationships of the two countries began to diverge. The locus of power in Brazil shifted from the sugar-producing Northeast to the coffee-producing south-central states, whose market was the United States. Thus, Brazil assumed the role of intermediary between the United States and Spanish-speaking Latin American states. Argentine leaders resented what they saw as United States favoritism toward Brazil, but they did not choose to compete with it for the favors of the United States. Rather, they advocated Latin Americanism and universalism as opposed to Pan-Americanism and sought to avoid absorption into the United States sphere of influence by maintaining closer ties with Europe.

While Argentina remained neutral during World War I, Brazil declared war against the Central Powers. The divergence became most pronounced during World War II when Brazil contributed bases and troops to the Allied effort, whereas Argentina maintained what the United States considered a "pro-Axis neutrality."

By the 1950s, however, both countries found themselves under the prevailing influence of the United States, with the options of uniting against it or competing for its favors. The choice between these options tended to be a function of the domestic power structure and the external ties of leadership groups. Economic nationalism and pressures for expanded participation in politics pitted civilian politicians with popular

mandates in both countries against their own military establishments and economic groups that had ties to foreign capital and markets.

In 1961 Presidents Frondizi of Argentina and Janio Quadros of Brazil agreed to coordinate their policies vis-à-vis the United States, the socialist countries, and the so-called third world in order to defend their democracy and civil liberties and to enhance their independence from the United States. These tendencies toward neutralism irritated the military establishments in both countries and were reversed following coups d'état in Argentina in 1962 and in Brazil in 1964. Argentine elections in 1963 resulted in an attempt to align the country with Brazil once again in a more independent stance, but civilian President Illía never had the power to follow through on his intentions. By 1965 Onganía, commander in chief of the Argentine armed forces, had entered into an accord with the new military leaders in Brazil on cooperation in counterinsurgency operations, and in 1966 Illía was deposed.

While Onganía was in power, relations with Brazil were cautiously competitive but nevertheless extremely cordial. Onganía noted that improved relations with Brazil were based not only on technical advances in communications but also on a common "military mentality." The two countries cooperated closely with each other and with the governments of Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia in attempts to eliminate insurgent movements that were assumed to be operating across national frontiers.

Meanwhile, the two countries competed for public and private capital from the United States and for the favor of the international lending agencies. Some observers believe that the fact that Argentina appeared to be losing in that competition contributed to a shift toward economic nationalism by the government of General Roberto Marcelo Levingston, who replaced Onganía in 1971, and to the willingness of the government of General Alejandro Lanusse (1971-73) to return power to a civilian president.

Perón's return to power through the elections of 1973 evoked expressions of alarm from Brazilian leaders. During his campaign Perón had proposed a foreign policy of "continentalism," that is, the molding of a Latin American united front. He had contrasted this policy with that of Brazil, which he accused of acting as the agent of the United States. Perón's initial approaches to Brazil as president, however, have tended toward accommodation rather than confrontation.

## RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

Argentina has traditionally competed with Brazil for dominant influence in Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia. Over the long term, Argentina has held the upper hand in this competition, but since the mid-1960s Brazilian influence has been increasing rapidly, and in 1973 it appeared to exceed that of Argentina.

When Bolivia gained its independence in 1825, the Argentine Constituent Congress sent an invitation asking Bolivia to send delegates to the

congress and to join the United Provinces. Bolivia declined, but its subsequent relations with Argentina have been basically friendly. Minor border disputes have been solved by arbitration; belligerent attitudes have been short lived; and mutual problems have been resolved through cooperative action.

Bolivia's traditional attraction to Argentina is due in part to lingering resentment against Chile over coastal territory lost in the War of the Pacific (1879-83), but trade complementation has also been important. Bolivia has long been a consumer of Argentine wheat and, in turn, sells oil and natural gas to Argentina. In 1963 Argentina offered Bolivia a free shipping zone from Barranqueras on the Paraná River, which was the terminal point of two railroads running from Bolivia. The seasonal migration of Bolivian workers to Mendoza and Córdoba, which has caused temporary problems, is looked upon with equanimity by both governments. Well-to-do Bolivians who live near Argentina often send their children to Argentine schools. Nevertheless, there has been a persistent uneasiness in Bolivia over possible Argentine territorial ambitions directed toward the southern part of the country.

During the Chaco War (1932-35) between Bolivia and Paraguay, the United States and five Latin American countries formed the Commission of Neutrals, which tried to impose a peace. Argentina, with Brazil, Chile, and Peru, feeling that their own interests were more directly involved, tried to counter the work of the commission by forming their own group. After much negotiating (and after the manpower and resources of both combatants were exhausted), a cooperative effort by the Argentine foreign minister and the United States secretary of state succeeded in getting Bolivia and Paraguay to sign an agreement ending hostilities, arranging for an exchange of prisoners, and reestablishing diplomatic relations.

In the 1940s and early 1950s the Perón government gave assistance to the Revolutionary National Movement of Victor Paz Estenssoro in Bolivia. In the mid-1960s cooperation continued as changes in government in both countries brought more conservative leaders to power. An Argentine guarantee for the financing of a crucial pipeline from the nationalized facilities of Bolivian Gulf Oil in 1969 contributed further to cordial relations. Relations between the two countries were somewhat uneasy while the leftist government of General Juan José Torres was in power in Bolivia from October 1970 to August 1971. They improved considerably after Torres was deposed and replaced by General Hugo Banzer, although from the beginning the Banzer government was more closely aligned with Brazil than with Argentina.

Paraguay, though regarded by Argentine leaders until 1852 as a part of their country, has managed to maintain its independence. The five-year War of the Triple Alliance, however, left the manpower of Paraguay drastically depleted, and the allied victors formed a provisional government for Paraguay until 1876.

Argentine influence in Paraguay was further enhanced by Paraguay's bankruptcy after the war. In order to maintain the day-to-day operations of government, Paraguay undertook a massive sale of public property, and by 1904 absentee Argentine landlords owned about half of the country's arable land. Another aspect of Paraguay's dependence on Argentina was that, even though Paraguay had acquired an outlet to the Atlantic through Brazil, some 90 percent of its exports continued to pass through Argentine ports on the Paraguay River in the early 1970s.

The issue of providing asylum for political exiles has often caused friction between the two countries. In 1911, for example, Paraguay severed diplomatic relations, accusing Argentina of assisting Paraguayan revolutionaries. The Argentine government that replaced that of Perón in 1955 was irritated with Paraguay when it offered refuge to Perón.

Since Uruguay was created as a buffer state in 1828, it has managed to maintain its independence by countering the pressures of one neighbor by leaning toward the other. During the 1930s diplomatic relations were suspended for a short time because of the issue created when Argentine political exiles crossed the Río de la Plata into Uruguay. The most serious problems between the two countries arose during the initial era of Perón, who attempted to dominate Uruguay through political and economic measures. Uruguay defended its interests and its institutions and, since that time, has generally maintained harmonious relations with Argentina. Disputes over boundaries, water rights, and similar problems in the River Plate basin have been mitigated by a multilateral treaty signed in 1969 by Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia for the joint development of the basin.

Argentina's first diplomatic relations were established with Chile in 1810. The two cooperated in the wars of independence and signed the first naval parity agreement in the Western Hemisphere. They were parties to the Argentine-Brazil-Chile Treaty in 1915, through which the three countries attempted to mediate disputes in the hemisphere, and pursued similar policies of neutrality during World War I and most of World War II.

As Chile, in the twentieth century, has been too powerful to be dominated like the countries of the River Plate basin, yet not powerful enough to be considered a serious rival like Brazil, relations between Argentina and Chile have generally been marked by peaceful, though not necessarily friendly, coexistence. Border disputes have been chronic, but they have generally been resolved or tempered through arbitration, and occasional exchanges of fire at isolated outposts have been of minor consequence. The most tenacious of these border disputes concerned three islands in the Beagle Channel. After simmering since the beginning of the century, the problem was settled in 1971 through meetings between Argentine President Lanusse and Chilean President Salvador Allende.

Although geopolitics has dictated a considerable degree of long-term consistency in Argentina's relations with its neighbors, short-term shifts in alignments have often accompanied changes in governments. Argentina's return to popular civilian government in 1973 was initially viewed with some trepidation by the military governments of Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia, as a great many political exiles from those countries had taken refuge in Argentina. Paraguay went so far as to close its borders with Argentina in August, allegedly to keep terrorists out. Perón, however, has launched a vigorous diplomatic campaign to win the confidence and goodwill of the governments in his neighborhood.

In November, President Banzer of Bolivia became the first foreign head-of-state to pay an official visit to Perón's Argentina. The two governments were seeking to reach agreements concerning new roads, a joint petrochemical installation, protection for Bolivian seasonal laborers in Argentina, expanded commercial ties, and cooperation in the exploitation of the rich El Mutún iron ore deposits in Bolivia. Perón also scheduled official visits to Paraguay to sign agreements for the construction of hydroelectric power facilities on the Paraná River and to Uruguay to sign an agreement on the demarcation of the Río de la Plata estuary, ending a border dispute that dated back to 1910. In his dealings with all of the Latin American countries, Perón's persistent theme has been that by the year 2000 Latin America will be either united or dominated.

Shifts in relations with Chile were complicated by the violent change in its own government in September 1973. Chile's socialist president, Allende, was accorded special honors at the inauguration of Argentine President Cámpora in May. The death of Allende and the replacement of Chile's elected civilian government four months later by a right-wing military junta evoked three days of official mourning in Argentina, and Perón voiced the suspicion that the coup d'état had been abetted by the United States. Perón, nevertheless, recognized the new Chilean government and reached agreements with it concerning the connection of the electric power grids of the two countries and the joint exploration of natural gas fields. Chilean citizens fleeing the junta were offered political asylum, but exiles from other Latin American countries who had taken refuge in Chile before the coup were not being allowed to settle in Argentina.

## RELATIONS WITH WESTERN EUROPE

A perennial territorial dispute between Argentina and Great Britain has involved the Falkland Islands, a group of two major and numerous smaller islands comprising about 4,600 square miles. Great Britain has occupied the islands continuously since 1833 as a coaling station and whaling port and for sheep ranching. Argentina, which refers to the islands as the Islas Malvinas, claims them on the basis of inheritance from



Spain and on early efforts at colonization. It also draws attention to their location some 300 miles off the Patagonia coastline.

Direct intercourse between the islands and the Argentine mainland was formerly prohibited, but a 1968 agreement has led to the establishment of air, surface, and telephone connections, and the islanders were included in Argentina's 1970 population census. In the early 1970s it appeared that sovereignty might eventually be transferred to Argentina. Great Britain, however, had made it clear that approval of the inhabitants must precede such a transfer.

Argentina also claims a wedge-shaped section of the Antarctic continent and adjacent waters that is claimed as well by both Great Britain and Chile. In 1959 the three claimants joined nine other interested countries in signing a multilateral treaty, which resolved to suspend all territorial claims in Antarctica for a period of thirty years. President Frondizi visited Antarctica in 1961, however, and in late 1973 interim President Raul Lastiri revived the issue by visiting the continent and reaffirming his country's claim to sovereignty over "the southernmost regions of national territory."

In 1845 both Great Britain and France intervened militarily when Argentine President Rosas attempted to bring Uruguay under his control and threatened the freedom of navigation on the Río de la Plata. With this help, anti-Rosas elements defeated Rosas and forced him to flee the country in 1851. Great Britain has not intervened militarily since that time, but until the nationalizations carried out by Perón and the global readjustments of power positions after World War II, British economic influence was overwhelming. By 1913 Great Britain had invested the equivalent of US\$10 billion in Argentina.

Despite Argentina's neutrality and Great Britain's involvement in World War II, relations between the two countries remained formally cordial. In 1942 the United States tried to persuade Great Britain to put pressure on Argentina to break with the Axis. Great Britain refused because it did not want to jeopardize the imports of Argentine beef, which it needed at the time. In 1967 an outbreak of hoof-and-mouth disease in England led to a ban on Argentine beef. The Argentines felt this was unjustified, but the issue was not allowed to jeopardize diplomatic relations. Its own territorial dispute with Great Britain notwithstanding, Argentina has often called upon that country in the twentieth century to arbitrate or mediate its territorial disputes with its neighbors.

Argentina's relations with France have often been described as a love affair, as a consequence of the Argentine intelligentsia's appreciation of French culture. Cultural activities sponsored by the French government were extensive in the early 1970s; they included instruction in the French language for some 14,500 students in twenty-two centers throughout the country; the presentation of concerts and ballets, art exhibits, and films; and the provision of scholarships for study in France. In September 1972 the directors of the French and Argentine

museums of modern art signed an agreement providing for an exchange of experts, information, and exhibits to start in 1973. Several other European countries, especially Great Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, (West Germany), and Italy, maintain cultural centers and engage in other forms of official cultural exchange, but the French program is the most comprehensive.

Trade with France has been important since the nineteenth century, and technical cooperation has been increasing in recent years. In 1963 the Argentine Atomic Energy Commission signed a ten-year agreement with France for cooperation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy and for exchanges of researchers and information. In 1968 Argentina agreed to import thirty French tanks and to build thirty more of the same kind with French technical assistance. It also imported fourteen Mirage III jets and a number of helicopters from France between 1968 and 1970. Political issues have rarely strained relations between Argentina and France, but in August 1973 the Argentine Senate passed a resolution declaring its concern over the French nuclear tests in the South Pacific.

From 1899, when German officers assisted the Argentines in establishing their Higher War College (Escuela Superior de Guerra), until 1940, when the contracts under which the German missions functioned were not renewed, German influence on the Argentine military was paramount. The Argentine military educational system was modeled after that of nineteenth-century Prussia, and personal ties between Argentine officers and their German counterparts were often very close. These ties enabled the German military to maintain some influence among Argentine officers for several years after the missions departed.

During the twentieth century the German business community has also been influential. After the creation of West Germany in 1949, the Argentine-West German Chamber of Commerce was instituted in Buenos Aires. In 1951 Argentina established an embassy in Bonn and signed a trade agreement, valued at the equivalent of US\$308 million, primarily concerned with the exchange of wool and hides for West German industrial equipment. In 1968 a West German firm was given a contract (valued at the equivalent of US\$75 million) to build the first Latin American nuclear power plant in Argentina.

There are strong ties between Argentina and Spain and Italy because of the large immigration to Argentina from both countries, the cultural heritage they share, and the predominance of Roman Catholics in the populations. In 1968 Argentina awarded an Italian firm a contract for a system linking Argentina with other parts of the world by a communications satellite system, and another firm received a contract for the sale of howitzers.

As late as 1939 about three-fourths of the direct foreign investments in Argentina were European. European countries still had a lead over the United States in 1961 with 48 percent of all investment, as opposed to 41 percent for the United States, but the inflow of new investment from the

United States was much greater. Argentine governments have attempted to avoid becoming overly dependent on United States capital and products and to balance the export-import situation by buying more from countries with which Argentina has had a favorable trade balance. They have also sought to obtain a greater proportion of investment capital from European money markets.

The policies of the European Economic Community (EEC, known as the Common Market), however, have placed obstacles in the path of these commercial relations. Italy, more than most European countries, has attempted to plead the case of Latin America before the EEC. Argentine Minister of Economics and Labor Adelbert Krieger Vasena, noting in 1967 certain economic measures taken to strengthen relations with Italy, added, "We hope that Italy on its part will prudently interpret the problem created by the excessive agricultural protectionism of the European Common Market." About 40 percent of Argentine exports go to EEC member states, especially the Netherlands, Italy, and Great Britain. Among European corporations with investments in Argentina in 1968, Italian enterprises led; those of Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, West Germany, and Switzerland followed in that order.

## GLOBAL RELATIONS

In 1973 Argentina maintained diplomatic relations with most countries without discrimination based on political organization or ideological issues. The country reestablished diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1946, after almost three decades of rupture, and did not sever them in the late 1940s as many other Latin American states did. Relations were subsequently established with Yugoslavia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania. The fervent anticommunism of the military governments that ruled from 1966 to 1973 did not preclude commercial and cultural exchanges with the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries. Trade with the People's Republic of China (PRC) was also significant, and the Lanusse government, anticipating possible liberalization of foreign policy under Perón, established diplomatic relations with the PRC in 1972.

The governments of Cámpora and Perón have stressed Argentina's desire to expand and strengthen ties with other socialist countries and with the third world. Since the elections of February 1973 the country has established diplomatic relations with Cuba, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Albania, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam). An economic and commercial exposition of the PRC opened in Buenos Aires in August, and the government announced that means of strengthening commercial relations with other socialist states were under study.

The new government has made various overtures to the Arab countries. Perón spoke enthusiastically, for example, of their apparent deter-

mination to use their control of the bulk of the world's oil reserves to confront the United States. In a message to exiled Cambodian Prince Norodom Sihanouk, he expressed his intention to strive for rapprochement with all third world peoples, including the Cambodians. Argentina also asked to be admitted to active membership in the organization of nonaligned countries, which met in Algiers in September 1973. The Ministry of Foreign Relations announced that Argentina wished to contribute to the process of liberation undertaken by a number of countries against new forms of colonialism and exploitation.

## INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMITMENTS

Traditionally, Argentina has preferred bilateral to multilateral relations. It has participated in most regional and international organizations, however, usually appealing to international law to protect weaker states from the hegemonic ambitions of the great powers. It has particularly stressed the issues of inviolable sovereignty and the juridical equality of nation-states.

Argentina joined the League of Nations at its inception. Along with Mexico, however, it objected to Article 21 of the league covenant, which called upon signatories to recognize the validity of "regional understandings like the Monroe Doctrine." It also objected to distinctions between large and small states and undemocratic selection of council members. As a consequence, Argentina withdrew after the first assembly and refrained from further participation until 1933.

Under great pressure from the Allies, Argentina declared war on the Axis in time to become a charter member of the United Nations in 1945. The Perón government refrained, however, from joining international economic organizations championed by the United States, arguing that they involved a loss of sovereignty, as political and economic sovereignty go together. After Perón's overthrow in 1955 Argentina ratified the Bretton Woods Agreement allowing it to join the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD—commonly known as the World Bank), and the Acts of Paris, which is an agreement between the central banks of Europe and America. This was a significant change after twenty-two years of bilateralism, as exemplified in the Roca-Runciman Agreement of 1933.

Argentina has participated in many specialized agencies of the United Nations. The Argentine economist Prebisch served as the first secretary general of both the UN Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The country was a member of the UN Security Council in 1971 and 1972.

The Peronist government has made use of the UN as a forum for its expressions of solidarity with the third world. At the special meeting of

the Security Council in Panama in April 1973, Argentina expressed recognition of "the just aspirations of Panama for full and effective sovereignty over the Canal Zone" and reiterated its own claim to the Islas Malvinas (Falkland Islands). The Argentine Senate on November 17 unanimously passed a bill requesting that the country's representatives at the UN support the "inalienable right" of the Puerto Rican people to "free determination and independence." Until he became ill in November, Perón had hoped to be able to address the UN General Assembly before the end of 1973.



## **SECTION III. ECONOMIC**

### **CHAPTER 12**

#### **CHARACTER AND STRUCTURE OF THE ECONOMY**

The Argentine economy experienced periods of growth and stagnation from the end of World War II into 1973. In some years there were heavy balance-of-payments and budget deficits. During the periods of growth the public debt continued to increase, and inflationary pressures, although contained, were usually present. No anti-inflationary proposal had been tried long enough to see if it was an adequate solution, and the economy drifted. Economic policies were frequently changed by the government; there were six policy changes during 1970 and 1971 and sixteen ministers of economy during the thirteen years ending in 1972, when the ministry was abolished and its component parts were either given ministerial status themselves or transferred to other ministries. The Ministry of Economy was recreated in mid-1973 and its former components brought back into its fold in an attempt to strengthen governmental economic policy.

A relatively successful stabilization program had been carried out under the government of President Juan Carlos Onganía from 1967 until he was deposed in June 1970. His harsh economic measures, however, had alienated many persons and contributed to his downfall. The peso (symbol, \$a) had been devalued, a partial freeze had been imposed on wages and prices, government spending had been curtailed, and many surplus employees had been discharged from government enterprises. Poor management of many of the state enterprises had long been acknowledged to be the prime cause of budgetary deficits.

In mid-1970 inflationary pressures reappeared, and President Roberto Marcelo Levingston was not able to control them during his short term in office. Although at first he tried to continue Onganía's policies, Levingston soon shifted to a policy of expanding money and credit and permitted wages and prices to rise. The state-owned enterprises once again increased their expenditures and payrolls. President Alejandro Lanusse, who followed President Levingston, refused to adopt austerity measures because of his overriding desire to provide an atmosphere conducive to free elections scheduled for 1973. Many professionals and skilled workers left the country between 1970 and 1972 seeking greater economic opportunities elsewhere, and it was estimated that the equivalent of US\$8 billion in flight capital left the country during that period.

The return of the Peronists to power in 1973, although feared by some business interests, actually provided to most business and trade leaders a degree of assurance of the stability of government policy. The economic platform that had been outlined by President Héctor Cámpora was not changed by interim President Raul Lastiri, who succeeded Cámpora, and was being adhered to by newly elected President Juan Domingo Perón in late 1973. All economic policy changes in Argentina, despite the number of alterations, reflected only two general basic philosophies: an increased role for state enterprises coupled with a strong nationalist approach to foreign investment versus a philosophy of an efficiently managed economy even if it meant increased foreign capital and lower state involvement. The Peronists favored the first philosophy.

The Peronist policies appeared to have slowed down the rate of inflation, and the economy was said to be on the way to recovery by the end of 1973. The cost-of-living index, which used 1960 as the base of 100 and was composed of 285 articles and fifteen services used by an average industrial working family in the Federal Capital, had reached 1,850 at the end of 1972. The constant inflation had become accepted as a way of life. When the index had risen by only 4.5 percent during one month in 1973, a leading newspaper claimed that the rate was "a return to inflationary rates to which the country was accustomed." By the end of September 1973 the annual rate of inflation had dropped to about 50 percent from an 80 percent annual rate just before the May elections. For the first nine months of 1973 the total increase had been only 30 percent, and the new Perón government was hopeful of maintaining that rate.

## SOCIETY AND THE ECONOMY

Argentina has always had the reputation of having the highest per capita income in Latin America and a relatively equal distribution of wealth. The gross domestic product (GDP) in 1972 was the equivalent of about US\$20 billion, and per capita income was about US\$900. During the 1930s the per capita income was about the eighth highest in the world, but slower growth in Argentina and more rapid growth elsewhere in the world caused the country to rank thirty-fifth in per capita income in 1972. Some Argentine economists, however, believe that the GDP and per capita income have been consistently underestimated since 1945 and that the true levels should be much higher.

A United Nations study published in 1971 of income distribution in Argentina indicated that, although there was some concentration of wealth at the top, income was more fairly distributed than in other Latin American countries. Rather, the concentration of wealth was regional. Most of the wealth, industry, and commerce was found in Greater Buenos Aires and the coastal area from La Plata to Rosario, and to a lesser extent in Santa Fe and Córdoba. A 1971 study indicated that 81 percent of the GDP was produced in these areas. The wealthy segment of the



population was no longer made up of the old established landowning families but rather of new urban business entrepreneurs.

Manufacturing was the economic sector contributing most to the GDP, with steadily increasing percentages. Commerce, services, and agriculture followed in that order with decreasing annual shares. Other sectors had fluctuating percentages (see table 10).

An estimated 45 percent of the GDP is generated by the central government, the state entities, and the firms in which the government has an interest. One magazine estimated that there were 170 state entities and companies in 1973. These included companies that were fully owned by the government, such as the State Oil Fields (Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales—YPF), the State Gas Company (Gas del Estado), and Argentine Airlines (Aerolíneas Argentinas); mixed companies where the state had majority control, like the Greater Buenos Aires Electrical Services; and firms where the state held a minority interest as a result of a state bank's purchasing shares of the company for investment or to prevent bankruptcy. Many firms have had to accept the government as a partner in order to obtain sufficient financing.

A 1972 survey by an Argentine magazine indicated that the state controlled thirty-six of the 100 largest industrial firms in the country and six of the ten companies with the highest sales in 1970 and 1971. The largest firm in the country is the state-owned YPF, which is also on the list of the world's 300 largest companies. A law was in the process of being enacted in late 1973 that would create a central holding company for the state-owned firms.

Table 10. Argentina, Gross Domestic Product by Economic Sector, Selected Years, 1965-71 (in percent)

| Sector                            | 1965         | 1969         | 1970         | 1971         |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Manufacturing .....               | 33.9         | 35.3         | 35.6         | 36.5         |
| Commerce .....                    | 18.1         | 18.2         | 17.6         | 17.8         |
| Services .....                    | 14.4         | 13.8         | 13.7         | 13.6         |
| Agriculture .....                 | 16.0         | 13.8         | 13.5         | 12.6         |
| Transport and communication ..... | 7.7          | 7.4          | 7.5          | 7.4          |
| Construction .....                | 3.1          | 4.0          | 4.4          | 4.3          |
| Finance .....                     | 3.6          | 3.6          | 3.6          | 3.6          |
| Electricity, gas, and water ..... | 1.8          | 2.2          | 2.3          | 2.4          |
| Mining .....                      | 1.4          | 1.7          | 1.8          | 1.8          |
| <b>TOTAL</b> .....                | <b>100.0</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

Source: Adapted from Argentina, Ministry of Finance, Press Service, *Economic Information of Argentina*, No. 51-52, Buenos Aires, July-August 1972, inside back cover.

The Perón government had an opportunity to improve the economic situation in 1973 because it had the backing of most of organized labor and major management groups—something few governments had enjoyed during the previous eighteen years. Argentina has the highest level of trade union activity in Latin America. Unions date back to 1853, but their growth was turbulent until the first Perón era, when extensive labor legislation was passed (see ch. 9). Although exact statistics vary, by 1973 there were an estimated 4 million workers organized into more than 500 trade unions, forty-five federations, and three confederations. The most powerful group was the General Confederation of Labor (Confederación General de Trabajadores—CGT), composed of ninety-four affiliated organizations with 2.5 million members. Many of the individual unions had become wealthy by engaging in profitmaking activities, such as real estate and hotels. The Light and Power Workers Union of Buenos Aires, for example, had an operation budget equivalent to US\$7 million for 1972.

Several business and industrial groups are able to exercise leverage on the government with respect to economic policy. The Argentine Rural Society is the oldest management organization, founded in 1866 by the large landowners (see ch. 9). It is organized on a geographic basis, each province having a local association. A national central council represents the landowners' point of view to the government. The Argentine Industrial Union, founded in 1887, represents all manufacturers, who are divided into federations that serve as bargaining agents for their industries in negotiations with labor and government. A central council represents all the federations and gives advice to the government on specific economic matters. The General Economic Confederation, formed in 1951, represents small and medium-sized employers from the interior of the country. It was the first management group to sign the 1973 agreement with the government and labor unions to hold down prices. Numerous other groups, such as chambers of commerce and industry, represent local or sectoral points of view.

## THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

The Argentine government is deeply involved in many aspects of the economy. The first Perón era was characterized by extensive state intervention. Although it had divested itself of direct control of many businesses between the two Perón regimes, the government's role in many fields was maintained and even intensified. The government's influence upon the economy is brought to bear through various means. Budgetary expenditures on wages, goods, and services put large sums of money into circulation, thereby stimulating additional demand. All government agencies, public utility companies, and state-owned enterprises must give preference to purchasing materials, goods, and products of Argentine origin. The government controls all or part of the production and

distribution of certain commodities and services, such as oil, gas, electricity, steel, railroads, telephones, aviation, and ocean shipping. It exercises strict controls over banking and finance and is the direct owner of several banks. Foreign trade controls in the form of import duties and export taxes, prohibitions on the import of certain commodities, and manipulation of exchange rates affect the profitability of persons and firms engaged in such trade. Finally, there are extensive retail and wholesale price controls on basic and other goods, including setting rates for service establishments.

The Peronist platform of 1973 included the redistribution of incomes under a wage and price policy, fuller employment, and a governmental low-cost housing program. After Cámpora was elected, an agreement was negotiated between the government, the leading labor organization, and representatives of the private industrial sector under which wages were raised moderately, prices were frozen, and a government commission was created to set future price and wage increases based upon productivity. Fuller employment was to be achieved by channeling credit and new investment into labor-intensive projects. Eighty percent of all new mortgage loans were to be allocated to low-income or collective housing.

Revenues and expenditures were to be restructured. The tax system was to be reorganized, and a larger percentage of revenue was earmarked for social welfare projects. State enterprises were to operate more efficiently. Bank interest rates were to be lowered and credit channeled to areas selected by the Central Bank of the Argentine Republic (Banco Central de la República Argentina). Foreign exchange controls would become more strict, and exchange rates would be maintained. The import of luxury goods was banned, and the government was to be given authority to intervene in the marketing system. Over twenty different bills concerning economic matters were drafted and submitted to congress for approval. By the end of 1973 several of them had been enacted into law.

## ECONOMIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The government has been engaged in economic planning and development in one form or another since the 1930s, much earlier than other Latin American countries. Some of the plans were formal programs; others were only guidelines. Some were partially successful in meeting their prescribed goals; others were never even implemented. The structure of the planning system underwent considerable changes, and by 1973 a complex framework existed. There were several undersecretariats, boards, regional offices, economic sectoral offices, and liaison offices connecting all to what was formally termed the National Planning System. The most important of the organizations was the National Development Council (Consejo Nacional de Desarrollo—CONADE),

which was considered the central body. CONADE formulates long-range policies and draws up instructions for the parts of the proposed plan, which are to be more fully developed by the regional or sectoral offices or by other government agencies. The proposals are returned to CONADE for incorporation into the overall development plan.

The plan in effect in 1973 was the 1971-75 National Development and Security Plan. But a new three-year plan to go into effect in 1974 was drafted by the Perón government and was made public in late December 1973. The 1971-75 plan had envisaged an average gross national product (GNP) growth rate of 5.5 percent annually, a 55 percent increase in exports, an industrial growth rate of 7 percent annually, an agricultural average growth rate of 4.6 percent, and a per capita income growth rate of 4.2 percent annually. Public spending was to be increased, financing to come from the sale to the public of a series of national investment and development bonds paying 8-percent tax-free interest. Specific targets were set, such as so many vehicles to be produced in a given year but, since the plan was only indicative and not compulsory, few of the specified goals were met by 1973.

Some details of the Perón government's new development plan were announced in a nationwide speech given by the president on December 21, 1973. The new plan envisaged a GNP growth rate of 7.8 percent per year, exports of US\$5.8 billion, and public investments of US\$10 billion in public works and housing projects.

In addition to the national plans, several regional plans and development agencies exist. Because of the chronically depressed economic conditions in the northwest, particularly in Tucumán Province, a regional development plan was drawn up in 1967 dividing that area into three zones and proposing certain industries for each zone. By 1973 some of the proposed projects had been carried out, and a few more were in the process of being carried out, but a lack of coordination between planners and developers and a lack of financial resources hindered completion of the northwest plan. An economic study in 1966 on the development of Patagonia concluded that each Patagonian province should prepare its own development plan and all the provincial plans would be incorporated into a regional scheme. Some projects had been developed by 1973 but, as in the northwest, a lack of coordination between the Patagonian provinces forestalled greater development.

The Federal Investment Council, which is a misnomer because membership is reserved to the provinces, evaluates for the federal government all proposals designed to stimulate development outside of Greater Buenos Aires. Some provinces have created local organizations to help municipalities build infrastructure or to help develop a local area such as a river valley. The government has also adopted the economic theory of using "development poles"—areas where the infrastructure is extensively developed and industrialization encouraged—to serve as centers of development for surrounding areas. Two such development centers

were under construction in 1973; Bahía Blanca in the southern part of Buenos Aires Province, designed as a petrochemical and grain shipping center, and Puerto Madryn in the Patagonian province of Chubut, which will serve as a new major seaport and the site of a future aluminum plant.

The government uses fiscal benefits and penalties to encourage private industry to invest in areas outside the Buenos Aires metropolitan area. A 1972 law forbids any new industries to locate in the Federal Capital; industries locating within a twenty-five-mile radius of the Federal Capital must pay a 50 percent tax on the value of their fixed investment; those locating between twenty-five and thirty-five miles away pay a 30 percent tax; and those locating more than thirty-five miles away pay no penalty. Firms locating in certain stipulated areas where the government is attempting to stimulate development will receive reductions in their income tax plus other benefits. Additional tax benefits are available if the firm locates in Patagonia, the northwest, or the Northeast.

## PUBLIC FINANCE

Until 1940 the annual budget was reasonably in balance, and the small deficits were covered without difficulty by long-term bonds. During the first Perón era the principle of a balanced budget was abandoned, as was an overall federal budget. Instead, the various special accounts, autonomous entities, and state enterprises were permitted to expend funds, and large deficits occurred. The special accounts, which numbered over 100 in the 1960s, are activities, such as the national lottery, carried out by various ministries. Not until 1968 did the government attempt to return to a controlled budgeting system by including figures for the special accounts and the decentralized agencies in the central government budget. The state enterprises still have their own budgets, as do each of the provinces and municipalities. Although some state enterprises earn profits, others such as the railroads do not, and part of the central government's budget is transferred to them, to the provinces, and to the municipalities to help meet their deficits. During fiscal years 1972 and 1973 almost 21 percent of the central government's budget was transferred to other entities. In 1973 the consolidated budgets of the entire public sector totaled about \$a44.4 billion (for value of the new peso—see Glossary), of which \$a31.6 billion was the budget of the central government. This was a large increase over the 1972 consolidated budget of \$a23.5 billion. The central government's budget in 1972 had been \$a17.3 billion. In late 1973 the cabinet approved the submission to congress of the proposed 1974 budget, which amounted to almost \$a50 billion. No details were available.

The largest single percentage of the budget, around one-third, has consistently been spent for economic development (see table 11). General administration has been taking an increasing percentage annually; it accounted for 8 percent of total expenditures in 1968 and had almost

doubled by 1973. This increase is a reflection of the wage increases given to government employees plus a large number of employees. Education, previously in second place, had dropped to third in 1973. The share taken by amortization of the public debt has also been increasing as the debt rises to meet previous budgetary deficits and new public investments. The percentage taken by defense fluctuates; the percentages allocated to other functions have remained more less steady. About 28 percent of total expenditures in both fiscal year 1972 and fiscal year 1973 went for capital investments, and the large balance was spent on wages, goods, and services within each function.

Taxes accounted for about two-thirds of general revenue in 1972 and 1973. This percentage was less than that for the mid-1960s, when taxes brought in three-fourths of total revenue. Government services, such as telecommunications, utilities, and the post office, brought in between 18 and 20 percent in the early 1970s. The balance of revenue came from miscellaneous sources, including loans. One minor but interesting source of government revenue is gambling. Lotteries, horseracing, casinos, and soccer pools are all operated by the government for profit.

*Table 11. Argentine Public Sector Total Planned Expenditures, Fiscal Years 1972 and 1973*  
(in millions of new pesos)\*

| Function                     | 1972            |                  | 1973            |                  |
|------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
|                              | Amount          | Percent of Total | Amount          | Percent of Total |
| Economic development .....   | 7,557.6         | 32.2             | 14,969.6        | 33.7             |
| General administration ..... | 3,345.4         | 14.2             | 6,417.7         | 14.5             |
| Education and culture .....  | 3,560.0         | 15.2             | 5,511.9         | 12.4             |
| Public debt .....            | 1,665.0         | 7.0              | 4,970.8         | 11.2             |
| Defense .....                | 3,474.1         | 14.8             | 4,433.6         | 10.0             |
| Social welfare .....         | 1,732.0         | 7.4              | 3,803.8         | 8.6              |
| Health .....                 | 1,267.1         | 5.4              | 2,128.4         | 4.8              |
| Internal security .....      | 844.9           | 3.6              | 1,369.5         | 3.1              |
| Science and technology ..... | ---             | ---              | 683.8           | 1.5              |
| All others .....             | 50.0            | 0.2              | 100.0           | 0.2              |
| <b>TOTAL .....</b>           | <b>23,496.1</b> | <b>100.0</b>     | <b>44,389.1</b> | <b>100.0</b>     |

\*For value of the new peso, see Glossary.

Source: Adapted from *Business Conditions in Argentina*, Buenos Aires, No. 397, January 1973, p. 5.

The largest source of revenue for the provinces is tax sharing of certain federally collected taxes. The sharing of taxes is an old principle in Argentina, and the division followed a complicated formula that varied according to the kind of tax but usually came to between 20 and 26 percent of the tax collected. The financial requirements of the provinces, however, grew faster than their share of the taxes brought in during the late 1960s and early 1970s, and all provinces except Buenos Aires had to rely on increased government transfers to meet their expenditures. Finally, in an attempt to ease the pressure on the provincial budgets in 1973, the number of taxes to be shared was increased, and the provincial share of them was raised to a flat rate of 48.5 percent. The central government's share dropped to 48.5 percent, and the balance was earmarked for the newly created Regional Development Fund. From the central government's share, 1.8 percent was to be turned over to the city of Buenos Aires. The share of the provincial portion that a particular province receives is determined by its comparative wealth and population and need for development. Provinces do not have to accept the principle of revenue sharing and may raise their own taxes. Municipalities receive part of provincial revenue under similar tax-sharing arrangements.

Annual tax revision and reform have become common practice, making it difficult to describe the tax system because certain features are always changing. In 1973 there were about seventy national taxes, and the proposed tax reform for 1974 called for the cancellation of twelve old taxes and the creation of five new ones. Annual revisions also usually include changes in basic tax rates and permissible deductions to compensate for inflation during the previous year. In general the taxes fall into one of four categories: income taxes of various kinds; property and wealth taxes; production and sales taxes; and foreign trade taxes.

Despite the fairly large number of taxes, the tax burden is not onerous. In 1972, for example, the overall level of taxation was equivalent to less than 14.5 percent of the GDP, a low rate for South American countries. Part of the reason for the low rate is the large number of persons who do not pay taxes. In 1971 a former minister of economy claimed that half of all persons liable for the income tax did not pay any tax, because of either excessive deductions or failure to file. In that year there were only about 2,251,000 registered taxpayers for all kinds of taxes out of a total labor force of about 9 million people. In 1973, of 1,674,000 taxpayers registered for the income tax, only 430,000 taxpayers actually paid their income taxes.

Tax administration in Argentina once compared favorably with European countries but began to deteriorate under the first government of Perón. A general feeling developed among the population that tax evasion was justified. The government contributed to this situation by not prosecuting tax delinquents and by permitting them to postpone payment at low interest rates. Thus, businesses and individuals had the use

of the tax money and finally repaid it in depreciated currency. Periodically, in 1955, 1962, 1970, and 1973, the government granted amnesty for tax evaders provided that they paid a certain portion of their true taxable income for a period of back years. For example, in 1970 the amnesty covered the years 1962 through 1968, and for an 8 percent interest payment no further penalties were levied.

Production and consumption taxes provide the largest share of tax revenue (see table 12). In 1973 there was a general sales tax of 12 percent for most commodities; luxury goods were taxed at rates ranging between 18 and 23 percent. Although excise taxes are levied on a wide range of goods, the chief sources of excise taxes are tobacco and alcoholic beverages. Stamp taxes are required for virtually every business document or other transaction, and in Argentina the stamp tax constitutes a more important source of revenue than it does in many other countries. Fuel taxes are usually earmarked for highway construction.

Foreign trade taxes are usually the next leading category. Import duties are levied at rates ranging up to 200 percent of the cost of the goods plus freight, depending upon the essentiality of the commodity. Generally only about half of all imports are subject to customs duties, and the average effective rate for them is under 40 percent. Export taxes are of two kinds: a general rate subject to alteration depending upon competitive overseas market conditions for the export, and a specific amount earmarked for a particular purpose. The general rates are high; they range up to 38 percent of the value of the export and are always under debate and criticism. Although they are easy to collect and evasion is difficult, they constitute an unfair burden on farmers because most of the exports are agricultural products (see ch. 14).

Income taxes have been in effect since 1932. According to the source of income or profits, different provisions and rates are applicable. There are numerous exemptions and deductions, but offsetting them are several surtaxes. In 1973 and 1974, for example, an emergency surtax of 30 percent of the income tax owed was levied.

Taxes on capital, wealth, and land yield the smallest share of tax revenue but receive an undue amount of publicity because of their nature. One of these is the tax on agricultural land, first established in 1969 as an emergency revenue tax but later amended and made permanent. As a stimulus to more efficient use of land and in order to penalize idle landholdings, the land tax can be deducted from profits earned by the land, thereby lowering the landowner's income tax liability. Beginning in 1974 the tax was to be composed of two parts: a basic rate plus an extra tax on the potential yield of the land assessed by the landowner himself. If the landowner sets the valuation too low, the state has the right to purchase the land at the assessed price for redistribution to landless farmers.

Because tax and nontax revenues have not kept pace with expenditures, the public debt has been increasing steadily. At the end of May



Table 12. Composition of Argentine Tax Revenues, 1967-72  
(in percent)

| Tax Category                       | 1967                | 1968                | 1969                | 1970*               | 1971                | 1972                |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Production and Consumption:</b> |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |
| Sales taxes .....                  | 16.0                | 18.6                | 18.7                | 18.4                | 18.2                | 16.8                |
| Excise taxes .....                 | 9.5                 | 12.2                | 11.9                | 11.6                | 9.5                 | } 15.0              |
| Stamp taxes .....                  | 5.5                 | 6.7                 | 7.3                 | 6.7                 | 7.2                 |                     |
| Fuel taxes .....                   | 2.7                 | 4.7                 | 4.6                 | 4.1                 | n.a.                | n.a.                |
| Other .....                        | 1.1                 | 0.9                 | 0.8                 | 1.4                 | n.a.                | n.a.                |
| Subtotal .....                     | <u>34.8</u>         | <u>43.1</u>         | <u>43.3</u>         | <u>42.2</u>         | n.a.                | n.a.                |
| <b>Foreign Trade:</b>              |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |
| Import duties .....                | 16.5                | 15.5                | 19.0                | 15.9                | } 27.2              | n.a.                |
| Export taxes .....                 | 14.9                | 11.8                | 8.7                 | 6.1                 |                     | n.a.                |
| Customs charges and fees .....     | 1.0                 | 0.7                 | 0.3                 | 0.3                 | 0.2                 | n.a.                |
| Subtotal .....                     | <u>32.4</u>         | <u>28.0</u>         | <u>28.0</u>         | <u>22.3</u>         | <u>27.4</u>         | <u>35.7</u>         |
| <b>Income:</b>                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |
| Income tax .....                   | 19.9                | 19.3                | 19.9                | 18.5                | } 19.2              | 18.1                |
| Surtaxes .....                     | 2.7                 | 1.6                 | 0.7                 | 5.5                 |                     |                     |
| Other .....                        | <u>0.8</u>          | <u>1.3</u>          | <u>1.5</u>          | <u>1.4</u>          | 2.1                 | 1.0                 |
| Subtotal .....                     | <u>23.4</u>         | <u>22.2</u>         | <u>22.1</u>         | <u>25.4</u>         | <u>21.3</u>         | <u>19.1</u>         |
| <b>Capital, Wealth, and Land:</b>  |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |
| Inheritance tax .....              | 2.0                 | 3.5                 | 3.1                 | 3.1                 | n.a.                | n.a.                |
| Emergency tax on vehicles .....    | 0.1                 | 0.0                 | 0.0                 | 3.9                 | 3.2                 | 2.7                 |
| Agricultural land tax .....        | 0.0                 | 0.0                 | 2.4                 | 2.4                 | 1.6                 | 1.8                 |
| Asset revaluation tax .....        | 0.1                 | 2.7                 | 0.6                 | 0.4                 | n.a.                | n.a.                |
| Other .....                        | <u>7.2</u>          | <u>0.5</u>          | <u>0.5</u>          | <u>0.3</u>          | n.a.                | n.a.                |
| Subtotal .....                     | <u>9.4</u>          | <u>6.7</u>          | <u>6.6</u>          | <u>10.1</u>         | n.a.                | n.a.                |
| TOTAL .....                        | <u><u>100.0</u></u> | <u><u>100.0</u></u> | <u><u>100.0</u></u> | <u><u>100.0</u></u> | <u><u>100.0</u></u> | <u><u>100.0</u></u> |

n.a.—not available.

\*Budget projection.

1973 the total domestic debt of the central government was over \$a18.8 billion, four times what the debt level had been only five years before, equivalent to about US\$3.7 billion. The Central Bank also announced in May 1973 that the foreign debt of the central government and autonomous entities was US\$3.5 billion. An equal amount was owed by private Argentine sources to overseas suppliers and banks.

Most of the domestic debt was long term and in the form of various bonds. Periodically the central government issues a consolidated treasury bond to the Central Bank to cover numerous temporary advances made by the Central Bank to the treasury. The bond thus converts short-term into long-term debt. At the beginning of 1973 consolidated bonds held by the Central Bank totaled almost \$a10 billion. Other debts include intermediate-term (one to five years) public works bonds sold to the public and financial institutions to finance planned public investments; short-term treasury notes; short-term bonds sold only to banks; miscellaneous bonds; and floating debt. The floating debt is money owed to suppliers and contractors by the central government and state entities for unpaid bills. Some entities take over one year to pay their suppliers. One unusual kind of bond issue is the national adjustment bond, which has a flexible interest rate adjusted to changes in the dollar exchange rate. It was designed to be sold to the small saver as an alternative to black market purchases of dollars for hoarding.

The foreign debt consists of loans from international organizations, loans from foreign governments, publicly issued bonds, privately placed bonds, loans from foreign banks to the government, supplier credits, and money still owed for past nationalizations of foreign-owned property in Argentina. An unusual feature of the foreign debt is the external bonds. Although denominated in dollars, they are sold by the government for pesos and are then used by Argentine debtors to pay their overseas creditors. As inducements for the creditors to accept the bonds, they mature within five years, are payable in dollars, and have an adjustable interest rate to reflect current world interest rates, with a guarantee of at least 8 percent. During the 1965-71 period, it took between 20 and 25 percent of annual exports to earn sufficient foreign exchange to pay off the external debt falling due.

## BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

The country's balance of payments experienced periods of strain during the 1960s and early 1970s. Deficits occurred from 1960 through 1962, surpluses from 1963 through 1968, and annual fluctuations from 1969 through 1972. A deficit of US\$102 million was incurred in 1969 because of a reduced trade surplus and smaller net capital inflow, which was unable to offset a large current account deficit. In 1970, however, a large capital inflow was reflected in a balance-of-payments surplus of about US\$185 million. During 1971, however, the worst deficit in Argentina's

history was incurred—US\$432 million. Despite the government's attempt to take measures designed to protect the balance of payments, there were a heavy outflow of flight capital because of fears for the economy, a negative trade balance, and a high services account (freight, insurance, and Argentine travel abroad). Preliminary reports for 1972 indicated that there was a surplus of about US\$167 million as the trade balance again was positive and net capital inflow, mainly from loans, was up.

Exchange controls were instituted in 1972 and 1973 in order to protect and diversify the government's holdings of foreign exchange. Certain restrictions were imposed on exchange requirements for tourism, scholarships, retirement abroad, and insurance sold in foreign currency premiums. Foreign importers in sixteen selected countries were required to pay for purchases of Argentine goods in their own currencies rather than in United States dollars in an attempt to reduce the country's dependence upon the dollar.

Part of the inflow of capital from abroad has been foreign assistance. Argentina has received a substantial amount of assistance, most of it in loans. Although exact figures are not available, as of mid-1973 the country was the recipient of at least US\$3.4 billion from international organizations, foreign governments, and foreign private banks plus about US\$363 million in gold and various currencies in standby arrangements from the International Monetary Fund designed to support the peso.

The United States has been the largest single source of foreign assistance, providing over US\$1 billion from the end of World War II through mid-1973. About US\$100 million was in grants, 40 percent of which was for military assistance. The Export-Import Bank has supplied the largest amount of United States official assistance—about US\$667 million in credits to cover numerous sales of equipment to Argentine government entities and companies. The Agency for International Development (AID) and its predecessor agencies supplied about US\$136 million (mainly loans, few after 1965) for such projects as road building, housing, and agricultural improvement. Some technical assistance was given by AID for improving customs administration, agricultural education, narcotics control, and a program to eradicate hoof-and-mouth disease. Military assistance, Food for Peace, and other programs provided the balance of United States assistance.

Among the international organizations, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has authorized the largest amount of credit—over US\$747 million in sixty-six different loans, although only US\$338 million had actually been disbursed by the beginning of 1973. An additional US\$80 million was authorized for the joint Argentine-Uruguay Salto Grande Hydroelectric Project but was to be disbursed to the special joint entity created by the two countries to administer the project (see ch. 13). The Argentine government expressed displeasure in 1973 with financing from the IDB, claiming that its applications for new projects

were not being acted upon, and in 1972 it reimbursed the bank a sum nearly equal to the total amount of new loans received.

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD—commonly known as the World Bank) lent the country over US\$514 million in nine different loans for such projects as highway improvement, electric power expansion, industrial loans, and livestock development. An additional US\$200 million was under negotiation in late 1973. The International Finance Corporation, a subsidiary of the IBRD, has made several loans totaling US\$39 million for various industrial projects in the steel, paper, automotive, petrochemical, printing, and cement industries. The United Nations has provided about US\$25 million, mainly for special preinvestment studies.

Foreign governments other than the United States have provided about US\$425 million, almost all in loans. Most of the funds have been received from the United Kingdom, Italy, and the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany). Communist countries have provided about US\$54 million in credits, and smaller sums have been received from Canada, France, Japan, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. Foreign banks are another important source of assistance; about US\$653 million in credits and loans have been obtained from bank consortia in the United States, Canada, Japan, and Europe.

Foreign assistance has not been one sided; Argentina has provided funds to other countries. For example, in 1970 the country entered into a special agreement with the IDB to provide funds in pesos to help finance local costs of projects in Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay. In 1972 Bolivia was given a US\$10 million open credit for road building and a water purification plant. A similar amount was given to Peru in 1973 for the purchase of Argentine industrial projects, and a US\$100 million credit was extended to Chile and a US\$200 million credit to Cuba for imports of Argentine manufactured goods and foodstuffs.

Foreign investment, another source of incoming capital, is faced with frequent changes in policy. During some periods the attitude toward foreign investment was favorable, but during other periods it was antagonistic. The law in effect at the end of 1973 was enacted on November 8, 1973, replacing the foreign investment law dated July 30, 1971. Under the provisions of the new law, no foreign investment is to be allowed in activities related to defense or national security, public services, insurance, commercial banking, financing, publicity, marketing, agriculture, livestock, forestry, fishing, or any field reserved to a state enterprise. For purposes of the law a foreign enterprise was defined as one with less than 51 percent domestic capital. All foreign companies already in Argentina and engaged in one of the restricted activities must abide by the new law by selling to domestic interests or pay a supplemental, gradually increasing tax.

A judicial precedent set by an Argentine Supreme Court decision in mid-1973 in a bankruptcy case of a foreign firm was added to the new

investment law by congress. The court ruled that all subsidiaries in Argentina of the same parent firm are liable for one another's debts and may not make royalty payments to the parent firm. A filing for bankruptcy is to be considered an act against the country's best interests, thereby permitting the government to take over the company and all other subsidiaries.

Because of the frequent changes in the foreign investment laws, coupled with fears of the economy, many proposed investments never come to fruition. One business magazine estimated that the equivalent of US\$350 million in planned projects was canceled by foreign firms during the 1970-72 period. Despite the restrictions and cancellations, the amount of foreign investment in the country is large, although no exact figures are available. One independent Argentine research organization estimated overall foreign investment at between US\$2.5 billion and US\$3.5 billion in 1973, but a business periodical set a higher level of about US\$5 billion. Private United States investment in Argentina was estimated by the United States Department of Commerce to be around US\$1.4 billion at the end of 1972, up by US\$200 million from a 1970 estimate. About 60 percent of United States investment was in manufacturing. Approximately 300 United States firms had direct investments in Argentina, and about 100 Argentine companies had licensing agreements with one or more United States firms to manufacture their products locally.

## **BANKING, CREDIT, AND CURRENCY**

Argentina has a well-developed banking system and a relatively sophisticated capital market. The financial system consists of a large number of banking and nonbanking institutions. In 1973 there were 121 commercial banks (which had a total of over 2,400 branch offices); over 100 finance and consumer credit associations; over 460 credit cooperatives; 300 insurance companies; and numerous investment firms, mortgage banks, savings and loan associations, retirement funds, and specialized institutions. Although many of the banks and other institutions are privately owned, some belong to the federal government, others are owned by provinces and municipalities, and a few are of mixed ownership. The Central Bank of the Argentine Republic (Banco Central de la República Argentina) is entrusted with applying banking laws and is responsible for all national, provincial, municipal, and government agencies and all foreign and private entities operating as banks or financial institutions with certain exceptions. The insurance companies are regulated by the superintendent of insurance, home savings and loan associations are supervised by the superintendent of savings and loans, and regular savings and loan companies and investment funds are controlled by the inspector general of justice.

The Central Bank was created in 1935 to take over functions then being performed by several different entities. As first constituted, it was

a mixed state-private operation, the private owners being all the foreign and domestic banks already established in the country. The Central Bank became fully state owned in 1946 and was given strengthened powers. Besides regulating the activities of banks and other financial institutions, the Central Bank controls the circulation of money, issues banknotes and coins, maintains exchange rates, sets interest rates and loan volume of commercial banks, holds the nation's gold and foreign exchange reserves, and acts as the financial agency of the state.

The largest commercial bank is the government-owned Bank of the Argentine Nation (Banco de la Nación Argentina). Founded in 1891, it had over 440 branches throughout Argentina and in several foreign countries by 1973; its assets were equivalent to over US\$1 billion, and it accounted for one-fifth of all deposits in the banking system. Its foreign branches were located in Bolivia, Brazil, Uruguay, Italy, New York, London, and Paris. The Bank of the Argentine Nation specializes in loans to the agricultural sector and in the marketing and industrialization of agricultural products. It also provides special credits for specific programs, such as regional development of Patagonia and Tucumán.

The government-owned National Development Bank (Banco Nacional de Desarrollo), created in 1971, took over the activities of the former Industrial Bank and was given additional responsibilities. Its main objective is to channel funds to projects and programs promoting development of the interior. The National Development Bank is composed of five special purpose institutes: the Institute for Financing Infrastructure Projects; the Institute for Basic Industries; the Institute for Financing Industrial Credit; the Institute for Mining Credit; and the Institute for Industrial Promotion, Reconversion, and Rehabilitation. The last-named institute attempts to modernize industrial firms and help save failing ones.

The National Mortgage Bank (Banco Hipotecario Nacional), the mortgage departments of the commercial banks, and the home savings and loan associations constitute the mortgage banking system. The National Mortgage Bank is by far the most important bank in this field. It is authorized to grant mortgage loans; set up savings plans to aid persons in building or buying their own homes; give financial and technical assistance to housing cooperatives; carry out housing projects proposed by the national, provincial, or municipal government; build up-to-standard low-rent housing; give technical assistance to persons building their own homes; and grant guarantees for the deposits in the home savings and loan associations.

Almost all of the provinces and many of the municipalities have banks that are entirely or partially owned by the local government; the oldest is the Bank of the Province of Buenos Aires founded in 1822. In the mixed ownership banks a majority of directors are appointed by the local government, thus assuring control of their management. Most of the provincial and municipal banks provide credit at low interest rates to the pri-

mary economic activities in their areas, particularly to small producers having difficulty obtaining credit from private banks. Among the specialized government lending institutions are the National Postal Savings Fund (Caja Nacional de Ahorro Postal), which operated out of post offices and other public buildings, handling several million savings accounts and making loans to low- and medium-income persons; the National Tourist Bank, created in 1972 to stimulate domestic tourism by providing a source of funds for this sector; and the Agrarian Cooperative Bank (Banco Cooperativo Agrario), which lends funds to cooperatives for relending to their members.

There were about fifteen foreign banks active in Argentina in 1973. For years pressure had been exerted to control or limit their activities. A 1969 law granted preference to domestic banks over foreign banks in setting up branches in the interior of the country, and a 1973 law required seven interior banks acquired by foreign banks since 1966 to be returned to private Argentine interests. Despite the fear of control of banks by foreign interests, less than 16 percent of all deposits in the banking system in 1972 were held by foreign banks.

Cooperatives are popular with small investors and businessmen having difficulty in obtaining credits from other sources. The first cooperative was founded in 1898 as a mutual insurance company, and by 1973 there were more than 4,000 cooperatives in just about every economic field, with a total of over 3 million members. Most of the cooperatives are grouped in one of two national confederations. Agricultural cooperatives are the most numerous and have the largest amount of capital, followed by credit cooperatives. An unusual feature of the cooperative movement is that bankrupt companies are sometimes turned over to their employees to operate on a cooperative basis; in the late 1960s over 230 such cooperatives were in existence.

In 1973 a number of actions were taken by the government in order to control the distribution of bank credit. First, banks located in the interior were required to give priority to loans for public works projects and for housing, with lowest priority for commercial loans. Then the Central Bank listed certain activities that were not to receive credit; interest rates were made variable, depending on the purpose of the loan; and new minimum cash reserves were established. Later in the year, all banks were required to transfer all their deposits to the Central Bank, which would then decide how the individual banks could lend their funds. The control of deposits by transferring them to the Central Bank was first adopted during the 1946-57 period. The Peronist movement made the return to such control part of its 1973 election campaign platform.

The banking system is not the prime source of credit for many companies and individuals. One study done in the late 1960s, covering credit financing by manufacturing firms over the ten-year period from 1956 through 1965, revealed that 38 percent of industrial credit came from

intercompany loans and only 21 percent from the banking system. The government indirectly financed 15 percent of total industrial credit needs through deferment of taxes, 11 percent was raised by the sale of new securities to the public, 7 percent came from nonbank financial institutions, and the balance was in the form of foreign loans or contributions to a firm by members of the family owning it.

Many individuals obtain personal loans from finance or small loan companies, some of which specialize in financing consumer durable goods such as automobiles while others make loans for any purpose. The use of credit cards to finance retail purchases is prevalent among middle and upper income families. One survey in 1972 indicated that at least 300,000 family credit cards were in circulation.

Stock exchanges operate in four cities: Buenos Aires, Rosario, Córdoba, and Mendoza. Over 90 percent of total transactions take place on the Buenos Aires exchange but, since all the exchanges are linked by telecommunications, many of the transactions listed on the Buenos Aires exchange may have originated in one of the interior exchanges. A very limited over-the-counter market operates, usually in securities that have been delisted for one reason or another. Some financial underwriting firms peddle stock they have purchased to persons residing in smaller interior cities that do not have exchanges, and a commodity exchange exists where futures are traded in such items as wheat, corn, flaxseed, and sorghum.

Although more than 500 firms are authorized to have their securities listed on the stock exchanges, fewer than 200 securities were being traded, in 1973. The most popular securities are government bonds—federal, provincial, or municipal. Throughout most of the 1960s the average return on a share of common stock was only 1 percent, whereas many government bonds were returning up to 14 percent. Government securities constituted over 74 percent of all transactions in 1972 and, in an effort to bolster the market for private common stock, the government announced in late 1971 that 10 percent of the income tax due could be used to purchase securities instead.

The unit of currency is the Argentine peso, and the symbol is \$a, although the Central Bank's regulations indicate that the currency can also be identified simply as \$; thereby it is sometimes confused with the United States dollar. At one time the peso was ranked among the world's strong currencies, but since the end of World War II it has been beset by successive devaluations.

From March 13, 1967, until January 1, 1970, the peso had been stabilized at 350 pesos to US\$1. On January 1, 1970, for psychological reasons according to the government, a "new" peso was introduced replacing the "old" peso by moving the decimal point two places. The new official rate was 3.50 pesos to US\$1, and the symbol was changed from M\$N to \$a. Newly minted coins and banknotes were issued, but old currency was permitted to circulate until the end of 1973. The new currency



was issued in banknotes of 1, 5, 10, 50, 100, 500, and 1,000 pesos, and fractional currency, called centavos, came in coins of 1, 5, 10, 20, and 50 denominations. Coins were in scarce supply in 1973 as the 1- and 5-centavo coins were being discarded by many persons as worthless and fewer 10- and 20-centavo coins were being minted than in previous years.

Shortly after its introduction inflationary pressure was exerted on the new peso, and on June 18, 1970, it was devalued to \$a4.00 equaled US\$1. The rate was maintained for almost one year, but continuing pressures caused the government to resort to what is termed by economists a "crawling peg" scheme, whereby the currency is devalued frequently by small percentages. The exchange rate was made \$a4.04 equaled US\$1 on April 5, 1971; \$a4.12 equaled US\$1 on May 3, 1971; \$a4.20 equaled US\$1 on June 7, 1971; \$a4.40 equaled US\$1 on June 25, 1971; \$a4.70 equaled US\$1 on July 30, 1971; and finally \$a5.00 equaled US\$1 on August 25, 1971. On September 20, 1971, multiple exchange rates were created that were still in effect in late 1973 although the new Peronist government was expected to reestablish a single rate. Under the multiple rate plan, the official exchange rate of \$a5.00 was renamed the commercial rate and was made applicable to most exports and to a portion of the transactions covering essential imports. A freely fluctuating rate called the financial rate was made applicable to nonessential imports, some exports, capital transfers, foreign remittances, and travel. In November 1973 the financial rate was \$a9.98 equaled US\$1. In addition, a mixed rate is used for certain specifically named foreign trade transactions. The mixed rate is computed on the basis of a certain percentage of the transaction at the commercial rate and a certain percentage at the current financial rate. The use of the mixed rate formula and the frequent change in its composition impart an element of uncertainty about its effective rate at a given time.

A flourishing currency black market, sometimes called the parallel market, operated in Buenos Aires and in nearby Montevideo, Uruguay. Despite the illegality of the Argentine black market, some newspapers publish quotations on the parallel market. Such quotations have been as high as \$a12 equaled US\$1. Severe penalties exist for those persons caught engaging in illegal currency transactions—up to eight years in prison and up to \$a10 million in fines. Nevertheless, during the time of the crawling peg exchange rate in 1971, illicit dealings in Buenos Aires were estimated to have averaged between US\$5 million and US\$10 million weekly.



## CHAPTER 13

### AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY

The agricultural and industrial sectors play close complementary roles. Agricultural exports earn the foreign exchange required to pay for the importation of intermediate and capital goods absorbed by domestic industry. In addition, the processing of agricultural products is an important segment of industrial production. An imbalance between the two sections has developed, however, because of the government's stress on industrial development at the expense of agriculture. Whereas before World War II agriculture contributed the large share of the gross domestic product (GDP), by 1971 it was contributing about 13 percent, and the industrial share (manufacturing, mining, and construction) had risen to over 42 percent. Agriculture, however, was contributing as much as 90 percent of exports but receiving little government stimulation (see ch. 14).

Despite some improvements in agricultural techniques and practices during the 1960s—more rational use of soil and pastures, increasing use of machinery, bulk handling of grains, better seeds, and improved health of livestock—the average annual growth rate of agricultural production between 1961 and 1971 was only 1.5 percent, about the same rate as that of population growth. During the same period overall industrial production grew by nearly 6 percent annually.

In mid-1971 the minister of agriculture and livestock stated in a nationwide broadcast that the country lacked a coherent agricultural policy and that for years the government had given secondary attention to agriculture in its efforts to develop the industrial sector, despite agriculture's traditional role as the more important export contributor. In late 1973 the government and the major private organizations representing agriculture joined forces through a signed agreement called the Agricultural Act that was designed to work out a national agricultural policy. Production target goals were to be set, and the government promised to assist the farmers in achieving these goals through numerous measures, including easier credit, tax rebates, and rational pricing policies.

#### LAND AND LAND TENURE

Of the country's total continental land area, which amounts to approximately 689 million acres, about 362.3 million acres, or almost 53

percent, were used for livestock grazing land during the 1970 crop year. Woods and forests accounted for about 22 percent, or 149 million acres; cropland accounted for 8 percent, or almost 55 million acres; and the balance consisted of nonagricultural areas, such as mountains, lakes, and wasteland. The percentage of the total land that is considered agricultural—land in crops and pastures—is one of the highest in the world. Pastureland generally is more valuable than cropland although improved cropland can be sold for as much as pastureland.

Of the total land area about 72 percent is privately owned, and the balance is owned by the federal or provincial governments. About 7 percent of the state-owned land is used by renters. The 1960 agricultural census estimated that there were almost 472,000 farms in Argentina of which more than 250,000 farms, or 53 percent, were located in the Pampa region. The number of farms has grown since then; a 1969 census of farms in the eighteen provinces north of the Colorado River enumerated over 527,000 farms in those provinces. A census of the remaining provinces was planned for a later date.

The land tenure pattern is characterized by a wide range of farm sizes, complicated forms of farm operation, and enormous contrasts in the social and economic conditions of rural inhabitants. The 1960 census indicated that about 39 percent of all the farms were smaller than sixty acres and accounted for only 1 percent of total farmland. In some marginal areas, like the Chaco, most farms are small family subsistence operations of only a few acres. Medium-sized farms, between sixty and 500 acres, represented 40 percent of the total number of farms but only 9 percent of total farmland. Large farms, ranging in size from 500 to 2,500 acres, were about 13.5 percent of the total number and accounted for 15 percent of total farmland. Very large farms, defined as those over 2,500 acres, were only 5.5 percent of the total number of farms but contained approximately 75 percent of all farmland. The 1969 census of the 527,000 farms in the eighteen northern provinces indicated an average farm size of just under 670 acres.

The origins of the large estates, called *estancias*, go back to the seventeenth century when the Spanish crown started to sell and grant large land parcels to private persons. The trend toward distributing large tracts, especially land owned by the provincial governments, continued after independence. Large blocks were sold or given by the provinces to a relatively small number of people. Federal government holdings were mainly in the south, in Patagonia, and in the northern provinces of Chaco and Formosa, but demand for redistribution of those lands has never been great, and theoretically land in those areas is still available for colonization. By the time that massive immigration occurred during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, most of the more fertile and better located land in the Pampa region had already been transferred, and the majority of the arrivals in rural areas had to become tenant farmers (see ch. 3). Many of these farmers leased fairly large tracts, had their

own subtenants and workers, and ran their operations on a businesslike basis.

Between 1912 and the late 1920s there was much rural unrest. No tenancy laws existed before 1921, and landlords exploited their tenants, who in turn exploited their workers and subtenants. At first, the tenant farmers started to organize themselves and struck against the landlords for better contractual relations. By 1919 landless wage earners employed by the tenants started their own strike movements against the tenant farmers. Finally, a tenant rental law was passed in 1921 spelling out rights and limitations of rental contracts and working conditions. Since then the law on tenant rentals has been amended several times; a 1967 amendment forbade landlords to sell the land to anyone but the tenant.

By 1973 many kinds of contractual relationships existed between landlord and tenant. There were rents for money, rents in kind, rents in kind and money, and various sharecropping arrangements. Under one typical sharecropping arrangement used mainly in the grape- and fruit-growing areas (and for land being newly developed) a lessee, known as a *contratista*, received a block of land of between twelve and twenty-five acres to operate for a period of eight to ten years. During this period the lessee received both a salary and a share of the profits from the harvest. At the end of the period the land reverted to the landlord, who could renew it for another rental period. In the 1960 agricultural census, lessees were grouped with landowners rather than with tenants, and the lands they worked were considered separate farms. Some sharecropping arrangements were made for only one or two harvests, and the sharecropper under that arrangement had less incentive to work the land efficiently than did the lessees, who viewed the land as almost their own. The rental of pastures from a large landowner by a small rancher was common in the livestock industry. In 1972 the increased value of fatted stock was estimated to be almost double the pasturage rental fee, making many small livestock owners anxious to enter into such rental arrangements.

Because of the number of extensive landholdings, the redistribution of land under an agrarian reform program has always been a sensitive political issue in Argentina. A homestead law of 1917 provides for grants of 500 acres of public land in the far north and far south, but few persons have taken advantage of that law because the size of the plot is still not considered sufficiently large to support most families in those distant areas. Since 1919 the National Mortgage Bank has been permitted to make funds available for landless farmers to purchase rural property, although it was not until the 1960s that many large estates were subdivided for resale. By then inheritance taxes were forcing some families to break up their estates in order to provide sufficient funds to divide the inheritance.

The National Institute of Land Settlement and Tenure, successor to the National Agrarian Council, may acquire inefficiently worked land by

direct purchase for redistribution to new owners. Redistribution has moved slowly; in the thirty-year period between 1940 and 1970 only about 9,000 families were resettled on about 2.5 million acres; a few hundred additional families received titles during 1971 and 1972. Some of the provinces have their own resettlement programs but coordinate their work with the national institute.

## AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

Argentine agriculture was rapidly mechanized between 1920 and 1940 on the basis of horse-powered equipment, even on the smaller farms. Since 1945 there has been a steady shift to the use of tractor power to pull the equipment; there were an estimated 200,000 tractors in the country in 1970. Between 10,000 and 15,000 new tractors were being sold annually by manufacturers. Still, tractor purchases are believed justified only for farmers working more than 2,500 acres because of the high initial cost and the lengthy idle time during a crop year. Owners of smaller farms still use horse-drawn equipment; more frequently, they rent tractors and other machinery from a local machinery contractor or hire the contractor to do the work for a fixed fee. A common practice among farmers, including those operating large farms growing sunflowers, wheat, corn, cotton, and sorghum, is contract harvesting. Itinerant persons with combines and other harvesting equipment move through the countryside contracting out their services.

Despite the fertility of the soils, irrigation is required in many places because of the scarcity of rain during the growing season. By 1970 about 5.8 percent of the cropland, or about 3.3 million acres, was under some form of irrigation. Irrigation is most essential to grape, fruit, and vegetable farmers in the dry area around Mendoza. Of the total land under irrigation in the country, about 939,000 acres were in Mendoza Province. Almost 250,000 acres of land were under irrigation in the valleys of the Limay and Neuquén rivers and of the Río Negro in Neuquén and Río Negro provinces, and the completion of the hydroelectric complex at El Chocón-Cerros Colorados was expected to increase the irrigation potential of those valleys to 2.5 million acres (see Energy, this ch.). Elsewhere, the Water and Electric Power Board (Agua y Energía Eléctrica—AYEE) operated about 2,500 miles of irrigation canals; new irrigation projects located between Jujuy in the north and Chubut in the south which were under various stages of completion in 1973, should add about 500,000 acres of irrigated land.

The fertilizer industry is one of the least dynamic, despite the potential benefits from greater application. Only about 500,000 acres were under fertilization in 1971 and, according to data from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, Argentina is the third lowest consumer of fertilizer in Latin America per acre of cropland. In 1972 fertilizer consumption totaled less than 95,000 tons for the country. The

low level of fertilizer use has been explained by the relatively good soils of the Pampa, which produce acceptable yields without fertilizer using a pattern of rotating crops, which includes fallowing part of the land; by the high cost of domestic and imported fertilizer; and by the denial of bank credit for the specific purpose of buying fertilizer.

The areas where fertilizer is mainly applied are the sugarcane region in northern Argentina, the fruit orchards in the Río Negro valley, the vineyards of Mendoza, and truck gardens scattered throughout the country. The use of fertilizers on cereals is almost nonexistent, except on wheat, on which it is used because certain wheat-growing areas have started to register drops in soil fertility. In an effort to stimulate the wider use of fertilizers, in 1973 the government authorized state entities to start importing large quantities for resale at cost and to subsidize the domestic fertilizer industry in order to increase production at a lower cost.

## CROPS

Numerous crops are produced in the country in sufficient quantities to assure meeting both domestic and export requirements in most years. Potatoes are perhaps the only important crop whose production does not meet domestic demand in some years. Production of most crops remained fairly stagnant throughout most of the 1950s and 1960s but still was sufficient to permit exports. In the very late 1960s and early 1970s production showed a moderate increase, and the prediction was for bumper harvests of most crops in the 1973 crop year (see table 13).

Corn was the leading grain export before World War II, but the area seeded and the yield per acre dropped sharply during the 1950-55 period. Production did not recover until the late 1960s and early 1970s, at which time Argentina was ranked as the fourth leading producer of corn in the world. Corn, grown mainly in the Pampa and the northern provinces, is widely used domestically. It is consumed fresh, processed, or turned into other products such as syrup or starch. About 40 percent of annual production is exported. Increased use of hybrid seeds has helped increase yields, as has the increased use of herbicides and mechanical equipment. In some areas corn is harvested earlier in the crop year than is usual and is artificially dried in drying plants to reduce the possibility of pest and weather damage. Still, many farmers do not use hybrid seeds because common seeds are cheaper. Further, about half of the corn farmers do not employ modern cultivation practices, almost no cornfields are irrigated, and very little fertilizer is applied.

Wheat is another major crop, and Argentina usually ranks among the top seven world wheat producers. The yield per acre is considered to be high, constantly improved seed varieties have been available to farmers since 1935, and most wheat farms are highly mechanized. Only between 5 and 10 percent of wheat farmers use insecticides and herbicides. No wheat is grown under irrigation, and annual losses from drought and

Table 13. Argentina, Production of Selected Crops, Crop Years, 1967-72  
(in thousand metric tons)

| Item                       | 1967             | 1968               | 1969             | 1970  | 1971  | 1972  |
|----------------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Apples .....               | 554              | 470                | 436              | 446   | 424   | 512   |
| Barley .....               | 588              | 352                | 360              | 367   | 553   | 640   |
| Beans and peas (dry) ..... | 27               | 64                 | 91               | 58    | 76    | 70    |
| Corn .....                 | 6,560            | 6,860              | 9,440            | 9,360 | 9,930 | 9,800 |
| Cotton .....               | 270              | 230                | 367              | 458   | 285   | 292   |
| Cottonseed .....           | 148              | 228                | 294              | 270   | 167   | 172   |
| Grapefruit .....           | n.a.             | 112                | 131              | 128   | 143   | 140   |
| Grapes .....               | 2,993            | 2,540              | 2,131            | 2,462 | 2,885 | 2,600 |
| Lemons .....               | n.a.             | n.a.               | 194              | 202   | 198   | 186   |
| Linseed .....              | 577              | 385                | 510              | 640   | 680   | 315   |
| Oats .....                 | 690              | 490                | 425              | 360   | 475   | 540   |
| Olives .....               | n.a.             | 41                 | 66               | 31    | 62    | 36    |
| Oranges .....              | 911 <sup>1</sup> | 1,038 <sup>2</sup> | 767 <sup>2</sup> | 864   | 990   | 819   |
| Peaches .....              | 203              | 224                | 248              | 236   | 261   | 272   |
| Peanuts .....              | 354              | 283                | 217              | 234   | 388   | 252   |
| Pears .....                | 108              | n.a.               | n.a.             | 94    | 74    | 98    |
| Potatoes .....             | 1,797            | 1,974              | 2,342            | 2,336 | 1,958 | 1,340 |
| Rice .....                 | 217              | 283                | 345              | 407   | 294   | 318   |
| Rye .....                  | 270              | 352                | 360              | 181   | 256   | 600   |
| Sorghum .....              | 1,910            | 2,490              | 2,500            | 3,500 | 4,660 | 2,360 |
| Soybeans .....             | 20               | 22                 | 32               | 27    | 59    | 78    |
| Sugar .....                | 811              | 872                | 913              | 970   | 908   | 991   |
| Sunflower seed .....       | 940              | 876                | 940              | 1,140 | 830   | 828   |
| Sweet potatoes .....       | 444              | 379                | 480              | 438   | 454   | 328   |
| Tangerines .....           | n.a.             | n.a.               | n.a.             | 227   | 265   | 233   |
| Tea .....                  | n.a.             | 68                 | 88               | 75    | 166   | n.a.  |
| Tobacco .....              | 63               | 62                 | 54               | 66    | 61    | 65    |
| Tomatoes .....             | 334              | 315                | 352              | 358   | 410   | 481   |
| Wheat .....                | 7,320            | 7,400              | 7,020            | 4,920 | 5,400 | 8,100 |
| Yerba mate .....           | 144              | 131                | 75               | 77    | 87    | n.a.  |

n.a.—not available.

<sup>1</sup>Includes lemons, grapefruit, and tangerines.

<sup>2</sup>Includes tangerines.



pest damage, along with other adverse climatic conditions, are about 15 percent of the crop. In some years losses are even heavier. Eighty percent of the crop is produced in the Pampa provinces of Buenos Aires, Córdoba, and La Pampa. The southwestern portion of La Pampa Province experiences extremely variable weather conditions, and the production from this area usually makes the difference between a poor or good wheat crop year.

In addition to the effect of weather on wheat production, higher prices for other agricultural products sometimes cause farmers to shift away from wheat temporarily. The wheat farmers in southern Buenos Aires Province frequently shift to sunflower seeds or potatoes; in Entre Ríos flaxseed competes with wheat; and elsewhere cattle may be raised on wheatlands. For example, about 9.1 million acres were planted in 1970, but more than 12.6 million acres were sown in 1972 when wheat prices increased. Although most of the wheat grown is for flour and bread making, fairly large quantities of a variety that is used specifically for noodles and pasta products are grown in southern Buenos Aires Province, mainly for export to Italy.

From a position of negligible importance, production of sorghum increased rapidly during the 1950s and 1960s to make the crop the country's third most important grain. It is highly resistant to drought and can either be harvested for its grain or, if prices are low, be left in the fields as forage for livestock. In the 1971/72 crop year many farmers did not bother to harvest their crop, and production fell to half that for the previous year. Newer varieties of sorghum seed that yield from 60 to 75 percent more grain than traditional seed are being distributed to farmers by Argentine seed firms, demand for these seeds exceeds the supply. Sorghum is being planted in the Pampa region and in the northeast provinces. In some places, such as northern Córdoba, farmers plant sorghum in the same fields immediately after wheat is harvested and thereby obtain two different crops in the same year.

Other important grains are barley, oats, rice, and rye. Barley, oats, and rye, grown mainly in the Pampa, are considered to be dual-purpose grains because they are either harvested or left standing for cattle grazing. During most of the 1960s barley production was on a downward trend as farmers switched to sorghum or left the barley as pasturage, but in 1971 and 1972 barley production rose as prices improved. Malt barley is also grown, and farmers have worked with brewers in developing malt barley seeds that are resistant to disease. The production of oats also followed a downward trend during the 1960s and, like that of barley, rose in 1971 and 1972. Rye production fluctuated during the 1960s and early 1970s, but much less acreage was being planted than during the 1950s. Rice production, all in the northeast, rose steadily during the 1960s but fell in 1971 when less acreage was planted. From a high of 252,000 acres in 1970, the area sown in 1971 was down to about 190,000 acres; many farmers chose not to plant because of high water-pumping costs for the irrigation required. Production rose again in 1972 as some

acreage was put back into use because of higher rice prices. Over 90 percent of the rice grown is of the long grain variety.

Argentina is a major producer of oilseeds, the more important being flaxseed, sunflower seed, cottonseed, peanuts, tung nuts, and soybeans. Minor quantities of edible oils are obtained from corn, rapeseed, and sesame seed. The principal edible oil used in Argentina is sunflower-seed oil. Between 2.9 million and 3.2 million acres of sunflowers are usually sown annually, but in the 1973 crop year more than 4.2 million acres were planted. They are grown over a wide area, but production is concentrated principally in the west-central part of Buenos Aires Province.

One advantage of sunflowers is that they have the shortest growing cycle of all oilseeds. They are, however, vulnerable to excessive moisture and, because many farmers plant them in poorly drained fields, the potential damage caused by heavy rains is increased. Other farmers plant sunflowers in the stubble of their wheatfields after the wheat is harvested. Little fertilizer is used on sunflowers, but almost all producers use pesticides. The government has worked on improving sunflower seeds, and about half the acreage is estimated to be planted with the better varieties.

Flaxseed is crushed to obtain linseed oil, an industrial oil used in making paint, varnish, printing ink, and linoleum. Because of low world prices farmers have been cutting back production and switching to more remunerative crops, despite a government-guaranteed purchase program. Over 2.7 million acres had been planted with flax annually during the 1960s, but in 1972 the land sown was only 1.2 million acres, the smallest area in flax since crop production records were started in 1909. The government was forced to curtail linseed oil exports in order to maintain sufficient supplies for domestic industries. Although improved flaxseed varieties are available to farmers from government research centers, much of the annual acreage planted is still of older varieties because numerous flaxseed farmers follow traditional cultivation methods and have not adopted newer techniques.

Cottonseed and cottonseed oil production is entirely dependent upon the annual cotton harvest because cotton is raised primarily for fiber used in the domestic textile industry. Fairly large acreage is planted in cotton, about 1.2 million acres in 1972. Almost all the cotton is grown in Chaco Province in the northeast. The yield per acre, however, is well below the average for Latin America because approximately half the acreage is planted in low-yielding varieties. No cotton farmers use fertilizer, and more than half the acreage is harvested by hand labor. Most cotton production is of very short staple fibers; long staple fibers have to be imported.

Peanut production is concentrated almost entirely in Córdoba Province in the center of the country. Between 700,000 and 800,000 acres are planted annually; production fluctuates because of wet conditions at

harvesttime. Little peanut oil is used domestically, and most of the production is exported. Soybeans, a relatively new crop to Argentina, have recorded a steady annual increase in production. They grow well in the northeast provinces. Tung nut production is extremely cyclical; a good crop is followed by a bad harvest. Most tung oil is exported.

Sugarcane is grown in the three northern provinces of Tucumán, Salta, and Jujuy, and the country has been generally self-sufficient in sugar since the end of the colonial period. The small cane farmer does not use fertilizer, and even many large cane growers do not follow modern techniques. Although all of the cane lands in Salta and Jujuy are irrigated, only about one-third of the canefields in Tucumán are irrigated. A major problem developed in the sugar industry during the 1960s. Because most of the sugar was used domestically, the government attempted to maintain low retail prices; but many of the thirty-seven sugar mills were obsolete, and overproduction by farmers and high refining costs forced the closing of many mills and the bankruptcy of many sugarcane farmers, particularly in Tucumán Province where the climate is more unpredictable than in the other two sugarcane-growing provinces. Political disturbances and outward migration occurred as a result of the adverse economic situation (see ch. 3; ch. 9).

In 1970 the government created the National Sugar Company to take over the failing sugar mills in an effort to keep open sources of employment and at the same time tried to cut back production while seeking an increase in the United States sugar export quota (see ch. 14). In 1972, when the existing mills were operating at only 60 to 70 percent of capacity, a new sugar law was enacted, which forbade the construction of any new sugar mills for a period of ten years. Any mill that closed would not ever be permitted to reopen. Each mill and cane farmer was to receive an annual production quota; if the quota were exceeded, the violator would lose his quota for a maximum of twenty years. The National Sugar Fund was created to collect special taxes on sugar sold in the domestic market, the proceeds of which were to be used to improve the technology of the entire industry.

Large quantities of fruit are produced for both domestic and export markets. Citrus production in particular is encouraged by the government through the granting of easy credit for up to 50 percent of the cost of new plantings and the cost of cultivation of the new trees for four years. Oranges, tangerines, lemons, and grapefruit are grown in that order of quantity produced. Marketing of citrus fruit occurs throughout the year because of different geographic growing areas.

In tonnage, grape production exceeds that of any other fruit, between 2 to 2.5 million tons annually. About 90 percent of grape production comes from the Piedmont provinces of Mendoza and San Juan. Most of the grape production is used to make inexpensive table wine for the domestic market; Argentina is the world's fourth largest wine producer.

More than half the large apple crop is exported. About 80 percent of the apples and 67 percent of the pears are produced in the small river valleys in the Patagonian provinces of Río Negro and Neuquén, where irrigation, fertilization, and spraying are common practices. In fact, about 70 percent of all economic activity in Río Negro Province revolves around the production and marketing of fruit. The country is the largest olive oil producer in the Western Hemisphere. Potatoes are the vegetable raised in the greatest quantity. They are grown in almost all provinces, but 70 percent of the acreage planted is found in Buenos Aires Province. Adverse weather conditions and potato diseases frequently affect production, and imports are required, as was the case in 1972. Some other fruits and vegetables grown in considerable quantities are cherries, apricots, peaches, plums, prunes, pineapples, avocados, onions, tomatoes, and beans.

Tobacco is widely raised in the north and northeast on about 1.8 million acres. Argentina is the second largest tobacco-producing country in South America and a major exporter. Both light and dark varieties are grown, but most of the exports are of the dark varieties. Five large tobacco companies render financial and technical assistance to tobacco farmers, and almost all farms now use insecticides; some are mechanized, and some use irrigation. Tea is grown in the northeastern tip of the country. The tea industry dates only from the 1920s, but production has increased steadily to the point where Argentina was the eighth largest tea producer in the world by 1971. About 70 percent of tea production is exported. A traditional drink has been *mate*, made from the *yerba mate* tree or bush. Production declined during the 1960s as many consumers switched to other beverages, but there appeared to be an upturn in consumption in the early 1970s.

Numerous other crops are grown by smaller numbers of farmers who specialize in their production. One such speciality is the raising of seeds. Corn seed is the most important seed produced, between 50,000 and 90,000 tons annually. Between 10,000 and 18,000 tons of alfalfa seeds are produced annually for sale to ranchers who operate managed pastures; other seeds for pastures are clover, fescue, and miscellaneous grasses. A small dynamic industry is the growing of flowers; there are more than 6,000 full-time flower farmers. A few hundred tons of hops are raised annually in Río Negro Province for the brewing industry. Several hundred acres of opium poppies are planted annually in Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, and Mendoza provinces under close government inspection to make sure that all the production goes directly to pharmaceutical companies.

## LIVESTOCK AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTS

In mid-1972 the government estimated the cattle herds at 52.3 million head, and in 1973 the figure was increased to 54 million head. The latter figure has been challenged by some economists because no accurate

census was made during the 1960s. The herds were reduced in 1969 because of excessive slaughter, and there was not sufficient beef production in 1970 and 1971 to meet both domestic and heavy export demand. Part of the difficulty was caused by a government policy in 1969 forcing ranchers to sell livestock in order to keep down the cost of living for urban residents. So many cattle were marketed in that year that fewer animals came to market in later months and beef rationing was imposed in 1971 (see ch. 6). Beef and veal production peaked at 6.35 million tons in 1969, then fell to 4.45 million tons in 1971. There was some recovery in 1972 as production rose to 4.86 million tons. In typical years about 25 percent of production is exported, but in 1972 over 32 percent was exported.

There are more than 300,000 cattle ranches in the country. The largest herds are located in Buenos Aires Province—almost 21 million head in a 1972 estimate. About 7.6 million head are found in Córdoba, 6.8 million in Santa Fe, 4.3 million in Entre Ríos, 3.9 million in Corrientes, 2.5 million in La Pampa, 1.4 million in Chaco, and 1.1 million in Formosa. Smaller numbers are found in the other provinces. There are many cattle breeds. Modern European ones were introduced during the nineteenth century, and continuing crossbreeding has upgraded the unimproved herds of creole cattle dating from colonial times. No single breed dominates although some are concentrated in certain areas. The Shorthorn, Aberdeen Angus, Hereford, Santa Gertrudis, Charolais, Brahman, and Brown Swiss are some of the major breeds encountered in Argentina. One animal peculiar to Argentina is the Holando-Argentino, a recognized dual-purpose breed used for both meat and milk. By 1960 there had been so much upbreeding that only 10 percent of the cattle enumerated in the agricultural census of that year were considered to have any creole blood. Numerous ranchers specialize in raising only breeding stock for resale to other cattlemen.

Studies in Argentina have indicated that improved, well-managed pastures can carry twice as many cattle as natural pastures. The calf death rate is also lower on improved pastures, and cattle marketed from the more efficiently operated ranches have weights almost double those from the less efficient ranches. Some of the improved pastures, particularly alfalfa, can yield three or four crops per year, permitting year-round grazing. Many large landowners with top-quality pastures frequently rent them to smaller ranchers who have lesser quality grass (see *Agricultural Practices*, this ch.).

All cattle and sheep must be vaccinated three times yearly against hoof-and-mouth disease. Despite these precautions, however, the disease breaks out periodically except in Patagonia. It has been estimated that annual losses equivalent to 250,000 tons of meat are incurred by ranchers. A five-year study during the 1960s undertaken jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization and the Argentine government discovered the causes of several cattle and sheep ailments and made recommendations for their alleviation.

The meatpacking industry, once largely foreign owned, consisted of seventy firms in 1973; only two of them were foreign owned, and both were in bankruptcy proceedings. The largest domestic firm had purchased a chain of retail meat shops in the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and France as outlets for their products. The Argentine Meat Producers Association, established in 1934, is supported by a government tax on livestock slaughter. The association operates several packinghouses and retail outlets in Argentina. The Liniers Stockyards in Buenos Aires is large enough to handle between 17,000 and 20,000 head per day.

The dairy industry is well developed, and milk and milk products are consumed in large quantities. Of the total number of cattle estimated in 1972, about 4.7 million head were thought to be dairy cows on about 45,000 commercial dairy farms. Approximately one-third of the fluid milk is consumed in fresh form and the balance in various processed products, such as cheese, butter, cream, yoghurt and condensed and powdered milk. Quantities of dairy products are also exported. In addition to the dairy farms, the industry consists of more than 960 cheese plants, 800 creameries, 400 casein companies, seventy-five butter factories, and several hundred producers of other dairy products.

The number of sheep in the country varies according to the relative market for wool and mutton. In the late 1960s there were an estimated 55 million sheep, but by mid-1973 the number had fallen to roughly 43 million. Wool prices had been erratic while mutton prices were firm because of the beef shortage during 1970 and 1971. The shift away from raising sheep for wool occurred mainly in the provinces of Buenos Aires, La Pampa, Entre Ríos, and Corrientes, where farmers could raise grain or cattle after slaughtering their sheep. In Patagonia, where sheep grazing is the main economic activity, no shift away from wool takes place because farmers have no other alternatives. As an inducement to the Patagonian sheep farmer, the government levies a much smaller export tax than usual on wool exports originating south of the Colorado River. Argentina uses only about 20 percent of the wool it produces and must sell the rest at whatever price is quoted on the world market. In addition to low export prices, the Patagonian sheep raiser is faced with livestock losses from adverse climatic conditions, such as the extremely cold temperatures and heavy snowstorms in Santa Cruz Province in 1973.

Hog numbers were estimated at 4.5 million head, and slaughter was about 2.5 million head in 1972. Argentine hogs are fed grain, particularly corn, and temporary shortages of feed grains force farmers to increase herd slaughter and to replace with fewer head. Hog raising is a specialty of Córdoba, Buenos Aires, and Santa Fe provinces, where about 80 percent of the total are raised. The Duroc-Jersey and the Poland China are the predominant breeds, but they are not good lean meat producers.

Argentina has always had a reputation for raising fine quality horses. In order to maintain high breeding standards, the Argentine army donates stallions and mares to stud farmers free of charge in return for the first option on buying the offspring. The farmer, however, is under no obligation to sell the animals. The scheme is financed by taxes on race-track bets. Twelve small slaughterhouses specialize in handling horse-meat and produce nearly 200 million pounds annually. Most of the horsemeat production is exported to European countries, and the small domestic consumption is mainly for pet food and the feeding of carnivorous zoo animals.

Poultry raising is highly concentrated; 90 percent of production comes from the Pampa region, half from Entre Ríos Province. Production and consumption of poultry products increase during periods of beef shortages and when there is a reduced supply of pork, lamb, or mutton. In 1972 production soared 25 percent over 1971. Poultry farmers were also aided by the government's elimination of all sales and exports taxes on poultry meat.

Argentina is the world's third largest exporter of honey. Usually there are between 800,000 and 850,000 producing hives, but in years of cold weather, such as 1971, production falls drastically. Mink farming is a small but profitable industry in the area around Mar del Plata in Buenos Aires Province. Llamas are found in the arid hills of northern Argentina and are used by local farmers as beasts of burden and as a source of wool, milk, and meat.

## FISHING AND FORESTRY

The forests of the country have been devastated over the centuries by a combination of land clearing, accidental fires, wars, lumbering operations, and gathering of firewood. In 1915 there were an estimated 262 million acres of forests, but by the late 1960s only about 149 million acres remained. The largest amount of forestland is found in the northern provinces of Salta, about 24.2 million acres; Santiago del Estero, 22.2 million acres (mostly state owned); Chaco, 19.7 million acres (half of which are privately owned); and Formosa, 15.6 million acres.

Of the total land in forests, about 66.6 million acres are timberlands, and 30 million acres are woodlands whose growth is utilized only for firewood and charcoal. The balance of the forested land is considered unproductive small scrublands. Numerous managed timber plantations exist, mainly in the delta region of the Paraná and Uruguay rivers. Tree plantations have been stimulated by various tax benefits and low-interest credit granted by the government. During the late 1960s there were 370,000 acres of poplars and willows, 235,000 acres of conifers, 185,000 acres of eucalyptus, and 12,000 acres of miscellaneous trees on the various plantations. In addition to granting benefits to tree growers, the

government maintains the National Forestry Service, and several provinces operate local forest services. The forest services help to administer about 50 million acres of forests and also conduct research and forestry experimentation centers.

Argentina usually consumes more sawn wood than it produces and must import the balance. An estimated 150,000 people are employed in establishments that rely on wood as the prime raw material in their operations. One of the more important trees is the quebracho; four-fifths of the total world supply of this tree is found in Argentina. Two varieties are exploited; a white quebracho whose wood is used for lathe work, posts, and railroad track sleepers (which are crosspieces used to keep rails in place) and a red quebracho from whose wood tannin is extracted for use in the leatherworking industry and for other industrial processes. Both production and exports of the red quebracho and its extract have shown a downward trend because of competition from synthetic tanning agents. The funds from a small export tax on quebracho extract are used for research and reforestation programs.

The waters off the coastline provide rich fishing grounds but have been relatively unexploited by domestic fishermen because of the national preference for meat. Mar del Plata is the center of the small fishing industry, composed of approximately sixty oceangoing vessels and over 300 coastal ships. The average yearly catch is around 200,000 tons (170,000 tons in 1970 and 229,000 tons in 1971); roughly half is processed in fifty canning plants, seventy salting plants, thirty-five freezing plants, and twenty fish meal factories; the other half is sold fresh.

Since 1970 the government has been granting the fishing industry increasing support. Fiscal incentives have been designed to encourage the modernization and expansion of the industry in hopes of increasing the annual catch to 600,000 tons by 1977. More than eight kinds of edible fish are found in ocean waters off Argentina, but the main catch has been hake, sardines, and sea bass. Consumer taste for other varieties is undeveloped.

Foreign flag vessels are aware of the fine fishing grounds and reportedly take several million tons annually. In an endeavor to control foreign fishing a December 1972 decree permitted only sixteen foreign vessels to fish at any one time in Argentine waters, and the Argentine navy was made responsible for the issuance of licenses. In early 1973 a further decree stipulated that only fishing firms that establish themselves in Argentina may fish in territorial waters, which were defined as extending 200 miles.

A few thousand tons of freshwater fish are caught annually. Many lakes and rivers are stocked by the government with game fish such as trout. Other popular freshwater fish are a kind of drum called *trucha criolla* and the *pejerrey*. Another marine product is algae, which are gathered south of the San Jorge Gulf in Patagonia, roughly 10,000 to 15,000 tons annually. Hunting is an organized industry; fairly large numbers of valuable wild animals are hunted for their skins and hides,



and several million dollars worth of such exports are made annually. Some fur animals such as the nutria are raised on farms as a commercial product. Otters, hare, lizards, wild nutrias, foxes, alligators, guanacos, and wildcats are the more popular animals hunted.

## MINING

Industrial development has led to a steady demand for minerals, and their exploration and exploitation have grown commensurately. During the 1960s the United Nations conducted a minerals survey for the country in the Andean cordillera in the provinces of Neuquén, Mendoza, and San Juan where deposits of copper, lead, zinc, and molybdenum were discovered. A five-year prospecting plan for Patagonia including aerial mapping was initiated in 1972 by the National Geology and Mining Board. Fairly large deposits of copper were discovered in 1972 in an isolated part of San Juan Province, but several years would be required to determine the economic and financial feasibility of developing that project.

In 1972 the mining industry consisted of about 2,000 companies employing a total of 23,000 persons. Most companies were small; fewer than 500 firms had a volume of mineral production in excess of \$a100,000 (for value of the new peso—see Glossary) annually. In order to promote the mining industry the government through the Industrial Bank, grants loans for 70 percent and 100 percent of the costs of exploration for medium-sized and small mining companies, respectively. Other liberal credits are extended for exploitation of newly discovered minerals.

As of 1973 most mineral production was of nonmetallic minerals, particularly coal. Other nonmetallic minerals being exploited were sulfur, limestone, construction sand, gravel, granite, clays, basalt, quartzite, sandstone, salt, gypsum, dolomite, borax, talc, and some three dozen other produced in varying quantities. The most important metal exploited as of 1973 was iron ore, followed by lead, zinc, and manganese. One company alone accounts for 85 percent of the total lead and zinc production annually. Small amounts of silver, tin, wolfram, copper, bismuth, and beryllium are also produced.

All of the coal produced is soft coal and comes from the Río Turbio Fiscal Coalfields in the extreme southwest part of Santa Cruz Province, near the Chilean border. The coalfields are operated by a government company called the State Coal Fields (Yacimientos Carboníferos Fiscales—YCF). For years YCF operated at a loss because of subsidized prices to the major coal users, long distance transportation to consumption centers, and inadequate processing facilities. A five-year survey of the coal reserves that ended in 1972 estimated that there were at least 450 million tons of readily available coal still in the coalfields, enough for the country's needs for a century. The government then initiated a plan to increase coal production by using modern methods and machinery

and to improve the capacity of the transportation facilities. The principal user of the soft coal are the thermal power plants of the electric companies, the railroads, the lime, cement, and brick manufacturers, and some steel plants. Most coal used by the steel plants is coking coal, not produced in the country and therefore imported.

The extraction of iron ore on a significant scale began in 1945 in the Zapla deposits in Jujuy Province in the extreme north. Before that time roughly 3,000 tons per year had been mined. The Zapla deposits are estimated to contain 80 million tons of hematite ore. Larger deposits, calculated at between 90 million and 200 million tons, are found at Sierra Grande in Río Negro Province in Patagonia. The Sierra Grande deposits were being developed by a state enterprise, Patagonian Iron of Sierra Grande (Hierro Patagónico de Sierra Grande), at a total cost equivalent to US\$125 million, and production was expected to begin in 1975.

## ENERGY

Petroleum was discovered in 1907 at Comodoro Rivadavia in Patagonia and in later years in the provinces of Neuquén, Mendoza, Salta, Santa Cruz, Río Negro, Chubut, Jujuy, and La Pampa and in Tierra del Fuego. The government assumed a monopoly over its production until 1915, when three private companies were assigned producing areas to exploit. In 1922 the government established the State Oil Fields (Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales—YPF) as a state company to develop petroleum. Since then oil production has been mainly in government hands although during several periods private firms have been permitted to explore and develop petroleum for YPF. During the Juan Carlos Onganía regime, concessions were granted to about twenty private companies for exploration rights. By 1972 most of these firms had not found oil in commercial quantities and had terminated their operations after fulfilling the minimum terms of their contracts.

In both 1970 and 1971 YPF accounted for about 67 percent of total petroleum production, five companies producing oil under service contracts for YPF accounted for over 31 percent, and four private companies held production rights for the small balance. There were about 10,000 producing oil wells in the country in 1972; an equal number had been abandoned by then for various reasons including technical problems. The Mendoza oil fields are the largest, producing nearly 30 percent of the total. Most of the oil in Argentina is found in small deposits, and the output per well is low with resultant high production costs. Production in some years does not meet demand, and imports are required. Total petroleum production rose from 128 million barrels in 1969 to 141 million barrels in 1970, to 152 million in 1971, and to 156 million in 1972. Production in 1973 was running at slightly less than the 1972 level whereas consumption was rising, and costly imports were causing the government to pay more attention to increasing exploration.

Proven reserves in 1973 were about 2.5 billion barrels, estimated to be enough for sixteen year's production. YPF was investing the equivalent of approximately US\$200 million annually in exploration for new reserves, but petroleum experts were claiming that as much as US\$500 million should be invested annually during the 1973-80 period in order to meet anticipated demands. Despite the obvious need for new petroleum discoveries the government stated that no further production concessions would be granted to private companies although service contracts might be awarded.

YPF operated seven refineries in 1973 that accounted for about 68 percent of total petroleum products refined. Ten private refineries processed the balance. By law, the refineries of YPF must operate at full capacity, and private companies handle the balance.

YPF also produces natural gas; there were about 700 producing gas wells in 1972. The transportation and distribution of gas, however, are the responsibility of another government entity, the State Gas Company (Gas del Estado). The State Gas Company operated about 3,000 miles of pipeline and in 1970 supplied roughly 1.2 million customers. Argentina was the only Latin American country with an integrated system for transmitting natural gas from the production centers to the end users. Total domestic production of natural gas was about 6 trillion cubic meters in 1972 but still met only 70 percent of needs; imports, particularly from Bolivia, were required to meet the rest of the demand. Industrial users accounted for the largest share of gas consumption, over 55 percent. Thermal power plants took about 20 percent of the total; residential customers, used about 20 percent; and commercial establishments and the government consumed the balance.

Substantial investments have been made in electric power facilities, and by 1970 there were approximately 6 million kilowatts of installed generating capacity. Almost 1.7 million kilowatts belong to self-users—industrial and commercial enterprises that are reluctant to depend upon public supplies and have installed their own power plants. Argentina relies mostly on thermal sources for generating electricity. In 1972 petroleum-fired plants accounted for over 71 percent of total installed capacity; natural gas plants, for almost 19 percent; charcoal-burning plants, for over 6 percent; coal-fueled plants, for under 3 percent; and hydroelectric plants, for the very small balance. Since Argentina has ample hydroelectric potential, estimated at 30 million kilowatts, the government hopes to alter the generating pattern so that the expensive and relatively scarce petroleum is used less as a thermal fuel. A number of hydroelectric projects were in progress in 1973 that should add 2.2 million kilowatts by 1975. Various hydroelectric projects still in the planning stage would add over 12 million kilowatts. The estimated cost of the planned projects was between the equivalent of US\$7 billion and US\$10 billion.

Argentina is the first Latin American country to install nuclear-powered plants. A 319,000-kilowatt nuclear plant located at Atucha, in Buenos Aires Province, was scheduled for operation in late 1973. A second

plant, of 600,000 kilowatts, to be finished by 1977, was located 500 miles west Buenos Aires at Río Tercero in Córdoba Province. The government reportedly had plans for two additional nuclear-powered plants to be built before the end of the 1970s, one of which would be located at Bahía Blanca.

The largest project under construction in 1973 was the 1.65 million—kilowatt El Chocón-Cerros Colorados complex located in Neuquén Province in northern Patagonia. It consists of a 1.2 million-kilowatt power station on the Limay River, a 450,000-kilowatt plant at Planicie Banderite on the Neuquén River, plus various river diversion works including smaller dams and irrigation canals to increase the tillable land area. The largest planned project was a massive joint effort of Argentina and Uruguay called the Salto Grande complex to develop power, help control floods, and improve the navigation of the Uruguay River. Plans called for the river to be dammed about twelve miles north of the town of Concordia in Entre Ríos Province and locks to be built to permit vessels to bypass the dam. A highway connecting the two countries would go over the top of the dam, and an eighty-mile-long lake would be formed behind it. Generating capacity of the project was to be at least 1.62 million kilowatts, and the cost was estimated in excess of US\$500 million.

The demand for electricity is highly concentrated in a few regions. The Greater Buenos Aires-Littoral area accounts for 75 percent of public power consumption, the Federal Capital alone consuming over half of all electricity produced (see ch. 3). Two large companies serve most of that area—the government-owned Greater Buenos Aires Electrical Services (Servicios Electricos del Gran Buenos Aires—SEGBA), which produces 37 percent of all electricity in the country, and the privately owned Italian-Argentine Electric Company (Compañía Italo-Argentina de Electricidad—CIAE), which accounts for 15 percent of total production.

An autonomous agency of the government, the Water and Electric Power Board (Agua y Energía Eléctrica—AYEE), provided power to eighteen provinces in 1972 and accounted for about one-third of total production. AYEE also constructs and operates irrigation and drainage facilities. A number of provincial, municipal, and cooperative entities also provide power. The more important provincial power companies are those of Buenos Aires, Córdoba, and Mendoza. Many rural communities have formed electric cooperatives whose electrification schemes have been financed through a US\$30 million loan from the Inter-American Development Bank to the Argentine government.

## MANUFACTURING

Argentina has a more complex and developed manufacturing sector than most countries with comparable populations (see table 14). In the

**Table 14. Argentina, Industrial Production of Selected Products, 1968-72**  
(metric tons unless otherwise indicated)

| Product                        | 1968      | 1969      | 1970      | 1971      | 1972      |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Air conditioners (units) ..... | 45,000    | 65,000    | 85,000    | 93,000    | n.a.      |
| Cellulose .....                | n.a.      | n.a.      | 115,574   | 146,042   | 160,370   |
| Cement .....                   | 4,222,867 | 4,346,868 | 4,769,591 | 5,553,332 | 5,398,000 |
| Motor vehicles (units) .....   | 188,307   | 229,693   | 219,599   | 253,630   | 268,593   |
| Paints .....                   | 92,396    | 100,194   | 107,746   | 121,306   | n.a.      |
| Paper pulp .....               | n.a.      | n.a.      | 53,823    | 69,565    | 89,913    |
| Pig iron .....                 | 568,647   | 583,000   | 810,300   | 861,200   | 854,600   |
| Plastics .....                 | 129,308   | 156,521   | 101,700   | 182,171   | n.a.      |
| Refrigerators (units) .....    | 223,130   | 220,556   | 236,734   | 273,673   | n.a.      |
| Soaps .....                    | 245,286   | 248,267   | 235,769   | 239,954   | n.a.      |
| Steel, cold-rolled .....       | n.a.      | n.a.      | 478,100   | 688,400   | 684,000   |
| Steel, crude .....             | 1,573,100 | 1,690,100 | 1,823,400 | 1,912,900 | 2,105,500 |
| Steel, hot-rolled .....        | 1,778,100 | 1,875,000 | 2,243,000 | 2,514,100 | 2,703,000 |
| Sulfuric acid .....            | 162,531   | 201,325   | 205,688   | 222,585   | 264,554   |
| Synthetic fibers .....         | 18,500    | 22,973    | 24,050    | 31,455    | n.a.      |
| Television sets (units) .....  | 168,000   | 181,236   | 193,623   | 216,445   | n.a.      |
| Tractors (units) .....         | 9,692     | 9,342     | 10,990    | 13,822    | 14,866    |

n.a.—not available.

late 1960s there were approximately 190,000 manufacturing establishments: about 19,000 were food-processing companies; 11,000 were clothing manufacturers; 9,000 manufactured wood products; 8,000 were furniture companies; 7,000 were beverage plants; and 6,000 were textile manufacturers. Manufacturing establishments range from small through medium sized to very large. The largest firms have up to 10,000 employees, are usually government owned or largely foreign owned, and use modern techniques and machinery. The automobile plants are examples of the large company. Medium-sized firms are generally financed by domestic capital but may be foreign managed. Textile mills, vehicle parts manufacturers, and cement plants are examples of the medium-sized firm. The small manufacturing establishment generally has little or no mechanization and operates on low capital. Examples are leather goods companies and machine shops.

Before 1950 the emphasis was on manufacturing import substitutes of light consumer goods. Since 1950 there has been a shift to manufacturing intermediate and capital goods. This policy has been carried on without regard to the cost of the final product so that domestic prices for many items are substantially higher in Argentina than on world markets. The country has been achieving self-sufficiency in a wide range of manufactured goods. By 1971 domestic industry made over 91 percent of all manufactured goods sold in the country. For some products, such as food, beverages, tobacco, and textiles, the domestic companies supplied over 99 percent of the market.

The most important subsector of manufacturing in 1971 was machinery, which accounted for 32 percent of the total value added. Chemicals were second with 20 percent; the category of food, beverages, and tobacco accounted for 17 percent; textiles, for 12 percent; and all others, for the balance. Industrial activity is concentrated in a few locations. More than 65 percent of all manufacturing is found in Greater Buenos Aires (not including the Federal Capital), which accounts for 92 percent of all textile production, 98 percent of all rubber products, and 89 percent of all electrical machinery and equipment. Other major industries in the Greater Buenos Aires area are meatpacking, other foodstuffs, automotive industries, metalworking, oil refineries, cement, vegetable oil processing, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals. Other important manufacturing centers are: Córdoba (automotive industries, steel, wood products); Santa Fe (vehicles, steel, machinery, paper, dairy plants, mineral smelters); Mendoza (machinery, chemicals, fruit-processing plants, wineries); Rosario (metallurgy, oil refineries, tractors, meatpacking, chemicals, tanning); and Tucumán (sugar mills).

The 32,000-employee steel industry was increasing production at a rapid rate but could not meet the demand stimulated by the increased use of steel in building construction, the expanding automotive industry, and a growing network of gas and oil pipelines. Total capacity of the ten steel companies in 1971 was 2.6 million tons of rolled steel, 1.9 million tons of crude steel, and 972,000 tons of cast iron. About 700 small foundries had total installed capacity of 550,000 tons of iron. The domestic steel industry could supply only about half of the 1971 consumption, and several companies had plans to increase capacity. In 1973 the Argentine Steel Institute was created by the government to oversee and coordinate the development of the steel industry. Each company, private or state owned, has one representative on the institute's board of directors. The largest steel producer is the Argentine Joint Iron and Steel Company (Sociedad Mixta Siderurgica Argentina—SOMISA), located in the city of San Nicolás de las Arroyos between Buenos Aires and Rosario. A US\$300 million expansion program was under way in 1973 to increase its capacity from 1.1 million tons of steel to 2.5 million tons by 1975.

The automotive industry has become one of the most important in the economy since 1959. It is highly protected against imports, and in fact subsidized vehicle exports are made to neighboring Latin American countries. Argentina is the leading Latin American country in the number of vehicles per capita, one vehicle per twelve people. Sales are stimulated by the high rate of inflation; since vehicles are kept for long periods and are seldom traded in or resold, they are seen as a hedge against inflation because their value appreciates rather than depreciates as it does in the United States. The first automotive assembly plants were set up during the 1920s and some parts were made domestically. By 1973 over 97 percent of all the parts were made in the country. In the early

1960s there were twenty-two automotive companies, but competition reduced this number to ten by 1973. About 50,000 people are employed in vehicle production. In order to hold down costs most firms extend their model production to as long as seven years before remodeling. In an attempt further to reduce costs, a law was passed in 1971 limiting the number of different models each company can manufacture and setting minimum production goals for each model. The minimum production was set at 15,000 vehicles per model in 1973 with a 5,000-vehicle increase annually to a minimum of 50,000 by 1980.

Production of tractors and other agricultural equipment has also been stimulated by government incentives and high tariff protection. In 1973 the tractor industry consisted of four firms whose sales reflected the health of the agricultural sector. Most tractors have an average life of ten to twelve years, and many of the first units manufactured in the late 1950s and early 1960s were being replaced, contributing to the growth of this industry. Over 500 agricultural equipment companies, mostly small firms, making a wide variety of agricultural equipment and tools, meet almost all domestic demand.

The country's shipyards have a capacity for building ships and boats of various types up to 60,000 deadweight tons, including cargo vessels and tankers. The North Basin Naval Workshops, a state enterprise owned jointly by the Argentine navy and the Ministry of Public Works, repairs and maintains merchant vessels of all flags, including Argentine navy vessels, and builds small boats and miscellaneous equipment for other industries. The shipyards were working at only 40 percent of capacity by 1972 because many contracts for Argentine vessels were being placed with foreign shipyards. To counteract this, one such contract with Spain was canceled in 1973, and the government issued various decrees designed to stimulate shipbuilding, such as import duty exemptions for component parts and special credit from government banks.

A fairly sizable industry had developed since 1952 supplying equipment to the Argentine Railways. Freight cars, diesel locomotives, subway coaches, and hydraulic, braking, and mechanical equipment can all be made locally. One aircraft factory located at Córdoba has been producing small aircraft since 1963.

About 1,000 firms operate in the chemical industry. The government has stimulated the growth of this industry, believing that a solid base is required in order for other industries relying on chemicals to grow. The range of products has progressively broadened to include sophisticated petrochemicals. So many plants were built that overcapacity existed in 1973 for some basic chemicals, such as sulfuric, hydrochloric, and nitric acids, chlorine, and caustic soda. About one dozen major petrochemical projects were in various stages of completion in late 1973. The largest was a joint venture of Dow Chemical Company of Argentina (Dow Química Argentina) and the Argentine government at Bahía Blanca designed to attract industry away from Buenos Aires (Bahía Blanca is 400 miles from Buenos Aires).

The plastics and synthetic resins industry is well established, as a rapidly increasing number of firms are using plastics in their processes. More than 500 companies in Greater Buenos Aires produce or transform plastics and resins. The pharmaceuticals industry is a very competitive one; 300 firms produce 30,000 products. No firm has more than 5 percent of the market for a particular product. Vitamins, antibiotics, and hormones constitute one-third of total production. The paint and solvent industry comprises a small number of highly competitive large producers.

The country is almost self-sufficient in the production and processing of foodstuffs, beverages, and tobacco. Only coffee, cocoa, some flavorings, spices, tropical fruits, and specialized luxury items are imported. About fifteen large canneries process fruits, juices, and jams; and forty medium-sized canneries and a large number of small firms process fruits and vegetables. Few vegetables are canned because fresh produce is available all year long; frozen foods are growing in popularity. Flour milling is an important industry, more than 3 million tons of wheat being milled annually. One very large milling firm accounts for one-fourth of total flour production. Most bakeries use modern equipment and techniques. More than 130 factories process oilseeds for domestic and export requirements.

The wine industry is one of the oldest and largest industries. More than 2,100 wineries and 1,200 bottlers employ about 100,000 people. Almost all of the wineries are located in the provinces of Mendoza, San Juan, Río Negro, and Neuquén, whereas most of the wine bottlers are located in Greater Buenos Aires. Wine is shipped in bulk quantities to the metropolitan area for bottling by many wine growers. The wine industry is actively promoted by the government and receives a series of tax benefits. There are fourteen breweries in the country; the largest firm accounts for nearly half of all beer production. Beer consumption is relatively low when compared to other Latin American countries. More than 85 percent of all beer consumed is very light, mild beer. Soft drinks are very popular, and production and consumption are rising rapidly. Over 120 firms make hard liquors—whiskeys, gins, and liqueurs.

The textile industry, with 100,000 employees, became important during the decade of the 1930s; by the 1970s Argentina's woolen textiles sector was the largest in South America, and the cotton sector was the third most important in Latin America. The synthetic fiber industry is the largest in Latin America. Production is geared to domestic needs; textile exports have never been significant. The textile industry as a whole is considered inefficient, despite some very efficient firms, because of the low productivity of textile employees. Many plants and equipment are old and would require substantial investment for modernization. Although Greater Buenos Aires contains the major share of the textile industry, Mar del Plata has many small textile companies that specialize in performing only one or two steps in the manufacturing process. The material is then passed on to the next specialty company.



Leather requirements are supplied entirely by the domestic leather products industry. The shoe industry is one of the best organized in Latin America; more than 4,000 factories and small workshops turn out in excess of 100 million pairs of shoes annually. Good quality leather is available from the large hide and skin industry.

There are approximately ninety firms in the pulp and paper industry, of which about twenty were pulp mills in 1973. Only one firm, the largest, was fully integrated in the sense that it owned its own forests, made its own pulp, and manufactured its own paper. Most of the plants are located in the Paraná delta near the source of the raw material. With the exception of newsprint, printing, and writing paper, the domestic industry can satisfy requirements.

The growth of the packaging equipment industry is being stimulated by the rapid growth of self-service stores. The rubber industry is dominated by the manufacture of tires, followed by a wide variety of rubber goods. Refrigerators, washing machines, radios, and television sets are the most important product groups of the consumer durables. Local industry can supply about 95 percent of all air-conditioning and refrigeration equipment. Despite the modern aspect of Argentine industry, craftwork by artisans is still widespread. There are no reliable statistics, but a system of apprentices, journeymen, and masters is still followed in many trades, and the standards of handwork are kept high.

The construction industry, long established, has a supply of skilled workers, engineers, and architects capable of handling the largest projects. It is difficult to determine the makeup of the construction industry because statistics cover only the number of permits issued and the total area under construction without detailed breakdown. Sixteen cement plants were functioning at near capacity to meet demand during the late 1960s and early 1970s, and the government set a target date of 1975 for full self-sufficiency in cement production. More than one-half of all cement produced is purchased by the government for its various infrastructure projects.



## CHAPTER 14

### TRADE AND TRANSPORTATION

Argentina is a major exporter of agricultural products, although its share of world markets for many commodities has declined since the end of World War II. Fuller development of the agricultural export sector has been hindered by a combination of factors—cyclical fluctuation in meat production, the primary export; heavy taxation of exports; and a governmental policy of assuring sufficient domestic supplies at low prices by limiting or restricting exports of specific commodities from time to time (see ch. 12; ch. 13).

The country's industrial base is capable of satisfying nearly all demands for consumer goods with the result that imports are mainly sophisticated capital goods, raw materials, and certain intermediate goods required by domestic industry. Since 1962 the level of foreign trade has shown a marked upward trend after a long period of stagnation, and the balance of trade has generally been positive.

The most important flow of trade is with European countries, particularly the European Economic Community (EEC, known as the Common Market), although the United States provides the largest single share of imports. The Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA) is another important trading bloc, especially for Argentine manufactures.

The transportation system was originally geared primarily to serve the export market. The railroads were built with the aim of hauling agricultural products from rural areas to the seaports; they radiate from Buenos Aires like spokes from a hub with few interconnections. A vast network of roads and highways covers most of the country, competing with the railroads for passengers and freight traffic. Inland waterways have been developed to carry goods to and from ocean and river ports, the Río de la Plata estuary being the focal point. Domestic air service developed rapidly because of the great expanse of national territory and the inadequacies of other means of transportation to certain outlying areas, such as Patagonia.

Buenos Aires is the commercial center of the nation, and most wholesalers, importers, exporters, manufacturers, and foreign firms maintain offices there. In the mid-1960s there were over 600,000 wholesale, retail, and service establishments throughout the country. Most shopping is done from day to day in small specialty shops, although there is a growing number of department, variety chain, and self-service stores.

Trade associations have been organized for almost every category of commodity and service and a number of broader organizations exist that

represent a cross section of the business community. Many of the trade associations carry on educational programs, managerial seminars, and conferences for their members to discuss and solve common problems. Some of the organizations have so much influence and prestige that the government heeds their opinions on economic policy matters.

## FOREIGN TRADE

The country's foreign trade policies are governed by two basic principles: the protection of domestic industries and the stimulation of exports to provide foreign exchange for the importation of capital goods and raw materials for domestic industries and to increase revenue from export taxes. Since 1967 domestic industry has been protected by very high tariffs; before then there was a system of direct prohibitions, quotas, and indirect controls, such as strict sanitary regulations. Some exports, such as linseed and sunflower-seed oil, are controlled temporarily in order to ensure sufficient domestic supplies, and others, such as sugar, to regulate export distribution among several producers of the product.

Many schemes for vigorous export promotion have been adopted. The National Development Bank, formerly the Industrial Bank, grants to exporters credits ranging from 30 to 80 percent of the free on board (FOB) value of the export for periods of six months to 8 1/2 years. This allows exporters the immediate use of funds until the goods are paid for by the foreign importer, and the Argentine exporter in turn can offer credit terms to his overseas clients. Exporters of products not previously exported receive additional incentives. From 1967 and at least through December 31, 1973, exporters of new products could deduct 10 percent of their sales from their income taxes. In 1973 they began to receive a better rate of exchange when converting foreign currency receipts into pesos (see Glossary). Under an agreement with the government, an export credit insurance company was formed in 1969 by more than 150 private insurance firms.

The Interministerial Foreign Trade Committee (Comisión Interministerial para el Comercio Exterior—CICE) was created late in 1971 to coordinate all foreign trade policies and to conduct trade negotiations. CICE also represents the country at regional and international trade organization meetings and approves all foreign purchases by the public sector except military equipment. CICE was instrumental in stimulating the opening of a school in 1973 to train persons in all aspects of foreign trade. It also made arrangements for floating trade fairs—vessels loaded with samples of Argentine goods—to visit foreign seaports. Two such ships visited African countries in 1973.

Unlike many other Latin American countries, Argentina actively seeks out agreements in order to formalize trading relations. In late 1967 Argentina became a contracting party of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT); before then it had been a provisional member. In

1971 Argentina became the first Latin American country to sign a commercial agreement with the Common Market. In addition to other measures, the three-year accord granted most-favored-nation status to each contracting party. New trade agreements were being prepared in late 1973 with such state trading countries as Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Cuba, the Soviet Union, and the People's Republic of China (PRC). There were many bilateral agreements with other countries.

Foreign trade statistics, particularly on imports, vary between sources because they may be counted either on the basis of Argentine customs data or on the basis of ships' manifests. All statistics, however, showed the balance of trade as favorable from 1962 through 1972 with the exception of 1971, when imports surged ahead of falling exports. Before World War II the balance of trade had almost always been in Argentina's favor. From the end of World War II until 1962 trade balances fluctuated because exports did not grow above the US\$1 billion level. Between 1962 and 1970 exports increased by about US\$100 million annually. They fell in 1971 but rose dramatically in 1972 to roughly US\$1.9 billion. In mid-1973 the government predicted that exports for that year would rise to over US\$3 billion. Imports in 1972 were about US\$1.8 billion, but 1973 imports were at a lower level for the first seven months.

Argentina is one of the world's largest exporters of agricultural products. It is usually first in nontropical products, such as grains, beef, and wool. According to available data, agricultural products constituted between 70 and 75 percent of annual exports from 1970 to 1972 (see table 15). The category "all other," however, includes many processed agricultural products, such as sugar, vegetable oils, oil cakes, and dairy products, considered industrial exports in Argentine statistics. The true share of agricultural products, therefore, is between 80 and 85 percent of total exports. Before the stimulation of nontraditional exports, agricultural products constituted at least 90 percent of annual exports. The names of various export categories are sometimes misleading. For example, chemical products include quebracho extract and other items of agricultural origin; leather is mainly tanned hides.

The largest single export category is beef and beef products. Large quantities are exported; the annual average was 660,000 tons during the 1966-70 period, which amounted to one-fifth of total world beef exports. The volume fell in 1971, but the value held up because of higher prices. A noticeable shift is occurring in the composition of the beef product mix. Processed, canned, quartered, and frozen beef exports are declining, whereas exports of fresh and chilled beef cuts are increasing. These are cut in Argentina, ready for the foreign consumer, eliminating the export of bone and fat waste and commanding a higher price in the export market.

Argentina is a major exporter of horsemeat, which France, Belgium, and the Netherlands purchase for human consumption. Other countries, including the United States, use the horsemeat for pet or zoo animal

**Table 15. Value and Relative Share of Argentine Exports, 1970-72**  
(in million US\$)

| Product                              | 1970           |              | 1971           |              | 1972           |              |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
|                                      | Value          | Percent      | Value          | Percent      | Value          | Percent      |
| Beef and beef products .....         | 390.9          | 22.0         | 377.6          | 21.7         | 631.4          | 33.1         |
| Corn .....                           | 265.5          | 15.0         | 348.2          | 20.0         | 181.0          | 9.5          |
| Wheat .....                          | 126.0          | 7.1          | 48.5           | 2.8          | 112.9          | 5.9          |
| Leather .....                        | 47.4           | 2.7          | 49.1           | 2.8          | 100.3          | 5.3          |
| Agricultural chemical products ..... | 21.6           | 1.2          | 25.5           | 1.5          | 74.3           | 3.9          |
| Fruit .....                          | 46.6           | 2.6          | 50.3           | 2.9          | 62.8           | 3.2          |
| Cleaned wool .....                   | 35.5           | 2.0          | 29.3           | 1.7          | 49.1           | 2.6          |
| Horsemeat .....                      | 29.0           | 1.7          | 31.9           | 1.8          | 41.7           | 2.2          |
| Greasy wool .....                    | 45.8           | 2.6          | 29.7           | 1.7          | 36.4           | 1.9          |
| Sorghum .....                        | 79.4           | 4.5          | 105.8          | 6.1          | 32.6           | 1.7          |
| Miscellaneous grains .....           | 37.9           | 2.1          | 32.7           | 1.9          | 18.4           | 1.0          |
| Untanned hides .....                 | 49.2           | 2.8          | 19.9           | 1.1          | 18.7           | 1.0          |
| Live animals .....                   | 22.7           | 1.3          | 18.5           | 1.1          | 15.4           | 0.8          |
| Mutton and pork .....                | 17.9           | 1.0          | 11.1           | 0.6          | 12.3           | 0.7          |
| Tobacco .....                        | 7.1            | 0.4          | 8.9            | 0.5          | 9.6            | 0.5          |
| All other .....                      | 549.8          | 31.0         | 553.3          | 31.8         | 509.9          | 26.7         |
| <b>TOTAL .....</b>                   | <b>1,772.3</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>1,740.3</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>1,906.8</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

consumption. Very few ranchers raise horses for slaughter; almost all those destined for the export trade are cast-off farm animals. Horsemeat exporters travel around the country seeking new supplies. There is a small, steady export market for live cattle, especially breeding animals. In late 1972, however, the export of breeding stock was prohibited unless the exporter received an exemption from the government because of a special trading relationship with the country of destination.

Argentina has been one of the world's leading grain exporters since the end of the nineteenth century. As much as 50 percent of the annual production of grains has entered the export market. Wheat was the traditional export grain, but corn became more important during the late 1960s. Sorghum has also become an important export; barley, rye, and oats are exported in smaller amounts. Exports of rice are sometimes suspended, as in late 1973, to provide sufficient quantities for domestic consumption. Argentina has emphasized wheat sales to South American countries because of special trading arrangements giving Argentine wheat preferential treatment and because of lower shipping costs. In earlier periods sales to European countries had been stressed. In 1973 some new customers for wheat had emerged; Bangladesh, the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (North Korea), India, and Japan were purchasing large quantities. It is often difficult, however, to ascertain the true destination of grain sales because many purchases are made by international grain dealers who resell in other markets. In 1972 and 1973

the exportation of wheat flour, a nontraditional product, started, but export sales were suspended in late 1973 to ensure a domestic supply.

Hides and skins are a traditional by-product of the meat industry. Since 1967 the government has been promoting the export of tanned rather than untanned hides in order to build up the domestic tanning industry. In 1973 export duties ranging from 10 to 20 percent of value were imposed on tanned hides and skins, and the effect of such taxes on future exports was unpredictable.

A wide variety of fruits is exported; apples are the most important. The level of fruit exports in 1973 was running at a rate well below that of 1972 because of damage caused by severe frost and hailstorms in late 1972. Tobacco is readily sold abroad because of its reputation for fine quality. Tea, which is included among processed products, is exported in increasing amounts, and in 1973 Argentina was the fifth leading tea exporter in the world.

Oilseeds and their by-products are other traditional processed agricultural exports, but the volume varies greatly. Peanut oil exports are affected by high export duties, which are periodically lowered when exports fall and stocks increase. Sunflower-seed oil exports were suspended from mid-1971 through mid-1973 because of domestic shortages. Linseed oil exports are affected by low prices, decreased domestic supplies, and high world stocks. Olive oil exporters receive tax rebates as an export incentive. All available oilseed meal and cake are sold readily because of their use as a high protein animal feed.

About 200 lines of manufactured products are exported, many of which were not produced before 1960. The volume of such exports is growing slowly but steadily, and more than half goes to countries that are members of LAFTA. The products are diverse and include such items as vehicles, railroad equipment, motors, agricultural machinery, appliances, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, calculators, textbooks, tires, and steel products. Motor vehicle exports, in particular, are promoted by the government. Sales are made on credit, and exporters receive tax rebates equal to 32 percent of all production taxes. Argentine-made vehicles have achieved high quality standards and are readily sold in other Latin American countries, particularly Uruguay and Chile.

The substitution of domestic manufactures for imports has kept imports of consumer goods at very low levels (see table 16; ch. 13). Because so many imports are classified as essential inputs for domestic manufacturing and because nonessential goods have been banned from 1971 until 1977, it is difficult for the government to restrict imports in times of foreign exchange difficulties. Argentina is considered a sophisticated import market and numerous foreign trade missions visit the country to offer specialized items for sale.

Trade relations are maintained with a large number of countries, approximately 120 in 1972. The volume of trade with many is small, however, and significant trade, defined as more than US\$1 million, is carried

**Table 16. Value and Relative Share of Argentine Imports by Major Category, 1969-72**  
(in million US\$)

| Imports                         | 1969         |              | 1970         |              | 1971         |              | 1972*        |              |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                                 | Value        | Percent      | Value        | Percent      | Value        | Percent      | Value        | Percent      |
| Capital goods .....             | 332          | 21.1         | 365          | 21.7         | 446          | 23.9         | 441          | 25.2         |
| Metals and metal products ..... | 291          | 18.5         | 346          | 20.5         | 350          | 18.7         | 297          | 17.0         |
| Chemical products .....         | 179          | 11.4         | 206          | 12.2         | 242          | 12.9         | 250          | 14.3         |
| Machinery and parts .....       | 109          | 6.9          | 120          | 7.1          | 145          | 7.8          | 144          | 8.2          |
| Fuel and lubricants .....       | 101          | 6.4          | 79           | 4.7          | 120          | 6.4          | 107          | 6.1          |
| Paper products .....            | 91           | 5.8          | 100          | 5.9          | 96           | 5.1          | 92           | 5.3          |
| Wood .....                      | 79           | 5.0          | 72           | 4.3          | 75           | 4.0          | 76           | 4.3          |
| Rubber and plastics .....       | 54           | 3.4          | 53           | 3.2          | 57           | 3.0          | 58           | 3.3          |
| Minerals .....                  | 33           | 2.1          | 48           | 2.8          | 43           | 2.3          | 40           | 2.3          |
| Nondurable consumer goods ..... | 39           | 2.5          | 53           | 3.2          | 42           | 2.2          | 28           | 1.6          |
| Durable consumer goods .....    | 29           | 1.8          | 29           | 1.7          | 28           | 1.5          | 22           | 1.3          |
| Other .....                     | 239          | 15.1         | 214          | 12.7         | 226          | 12.2         | 195          | 11.1         |
| <b>TOTAL .....</b>              | <b>1,576</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>1,685</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>1,870</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>1,750</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

\*Provisional.

on with about fifty countries. The United States is the leading supplier of imports; no single country dominates as an export market (see table 17). The United States provided between 20 and 25 percent of total annual imports during the late 1960s and early 1970s, chiefly industrial machinery, electrical equipment, chemicals, coking coal, and transportation equipment. The United States has never been higher than second as a leading market for Argentine exports; in most years it has been third or fourth. The major exports to the United States have been prepared meat—either corned or precooked because of United States sanitary regulations—tanned hides, iron and steel, sugar, casein, and wool.

Italy, which takes about 14 to 15 percent of total annual exports, has been the best export market. From two-thirds to three-fourths of the exports to Italy are cereals; most of the balance is meat, hides, and skins. Between 40 and 45 percent of imports from Italy consist of machinery. The fact that a large percentage of the population is of Italian heritage is a significant element in the close trading relationship with Italy. The Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) has been steadily increasing its share of both the export and the import trade and by 1972 was the second leading buyer and second best supplier. As much as one-half of all exports to West Germany consist of meat. Animal feedstuffs (oil cakes and meal) constitute 11 to 19 percent and hides and skins most of the balance. One-third of the imports from West Germany are non-electrical machinery; chemicals constitute 20 percent and electrical machinery about 17 percent.

The Netherlands, an important customer before 1972, was surpassed by Chile as the third leading market in that year. Chile was purchasing



vehicles and food needed by that country's declining economy. Brazil, because of its proximity, is another important trading partner. It was the third leading supplier of imports in 1972 and the fifth best market for Argentine exports. Other important trading partners are Japan, the United Kingdom, Spain, and France. France takes about one-half of all citrus and tobacco exports.

Table 17. Argentina. Direction of Trade, 1968-72  
(in percent)

| Country or Area               | Exports      |              |              |              |                | Imports        |                |                |                |                |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                               | 1968         | 1969         | 1970         | 1971         | 1972           | 1968           | 1969           | 1970           | 1971           | 1972           |
| <b>Europe:</b>                |              |              |              |              |                |                |                |                |                |                |
| Belgium .....                 | 4.4          | 3.4          | 3.7          | 3.4          | 3.1            | 1.1            | 1.3            | 1.3            | 1.5            | 1.8            |
| France .....                  | 3.3          | 3.5          | 3.9          | 4.2          | 6.2            | 3.5            | 3.3            | 3.8            | 3.0            | 4.4            |
| West Germany <sup>1</sup> ... | 4.9          | 4.6          | 5.9          | 6.6          | 11.8           | 10.9           | 11.0           | 11.0           | 11.7           | 12.4           |
| Italy .....                   | 14.5         | 14.2         | 15.3         | 14.9         | 12.7           | 6.4            | 6.7            | 7.2            | 6.4            | 6.1            |
| Netherlands .....             | 9.9          | 10.5         | 10.4         | 9.2          | 5.2            | 1.7            | 2.1            | 1.9            | 1.8            | 2.3            |
| Spain .....                   | 5.4          | 5.2          | 4.8          | 7.4          | 3.0            | 1.5            | 2.4            | 1.9            | 1.9            | 1.7            |
| Other .....                   | 4.0          | 5.0          | 5.0          | 4.0          | 4.4            | 8.5            | 7.3            | 6.8            | 7.2            | 6.8            |
| Subtotal .....                | <u>46.4</u>  | <u>46.4</u>  | <u>49.0</u>  | <u>49.7</u>  | <u>46.4</u>    | <u>33.6</u>    | <u>34.1</u>    | <u>33.9</u>    | <u>33.5</u>    | <u>35.5</u>    |
| <b>Latin America:</b>         |              |              |              |              |                |                |                |                |                |                |
| Brazil .....                  | 9.5          | 8.1          | 7.8          | 6.1          | 7.2            | 11.8           | 11.1           | 10.9           | 10.5           | 9.7            |
| Chile .....                   | 5.7          | 5.5          | 5.2          | 7.4          | 10.3           | 4.2            | 4.5            | 4.5            | 3.7            | 2.7            |
| Peru .....                    | 4.2          | 2.8          | 1.8          | 0.1          | — <sup>2</sup> | 1.1            | 0.9            | 0.8            | 1.2            | 1.5            |
| Uruguay .....                 | 1.4          | 1.1          | 1.6          | 2.0          | 2.0            | — <sup>2</sup> | — <sup>2</sup> | — <sup>2</sup> | — <sup>2</sup> | — <sup>2</sup> |
| Venezuela .....               | 0.5          | 0.9          | 0.7          | 0.9          | — <sup>2</sup> | 3.0            | 2.4            | 1.8            | 1.5            | 1.4            |
| Other .....                   | 3.6          | 4.4          | 3.7          | 4.7          | 5.3            | 3.7            | 4.5            | 4.2            | 4.2            | 4.2            |
| Subtotal .....                | <u>24.9</u>  | <u>22.8</u>  | <u>20.8</u>  | <u>21.2</u>  | <u>24.8</u>    | <u>23.8</u>    | <u>23.4</u>    | <u>22.2</u>    | <u>21.1</u>    | <u>19.5</u>    |
| United States .....           | 11.9         | 8.9          | 8.9          | 9.3          | 9.8            | 23.1           | 21.9           | 24.9           | 22.3           | 20.6           |
| <b>Asia:</b>                  |              |              |              |              |                |                |                |                |                |                |
| Japan .....                   | 2.1          | 4.5          | 6.2          | 5.1          | 3.1            | 3.6            | 4.1            | 5.0            | 8.3            | 7.8            |
| Other .....                   | 0.1          | 0.1          | 0.1          | 0.1          | 0.1            | 1.6            | 1.8            | 2.2            | 1.7            | 1.2            |
| Subtotal .....                | <u>2.2</u>   | <u>4.6</u>   | <u>6.3</u>   | <u>5.2</u>   | <u>3.2</u>     | <u>5.2</u>     | <u>5.9</u>     | <u>7.2</u>     | <u>10.0</u>    | <u>9.0</u>     |
| Soviet bloc .....             | 3.8          | 4.2          | 4.3          | 4.3          | 3.7            | 1.2            | 1.6            | 1.1            | 1.2            | 1.5            |
| Middle East .....             | 1.5          | 1.3          | 1.3          | 1.6          | 1.2            | 2.1            | 1.5            | 0.7            | 2.0            | 2.5            |
| All other .....               | <u>9.3</u>   | <u>11.8</u>  | <u>9.4</u>   | <u>8.7</u>   | <u>10.9</u>    | <u>11.0</u>    | <u>11.6</u>    | <u>10.0</u>    | <u>9.9</u>     | <u>11.4</u>    |
| TOTAL .....                   | <u>100.0</u> | <u>100.0</u> | <u>100.0</u> | <u>100.0</u> | <u>100.0</u>   | <u>100.0</u>   | <u>100.0</u>   | <u>100.0</u>   | <u>100.0</u>   | <u>100.0</u>   |

<sup>1</sup>The Federal Republic of Germany.

<sup>2</sup>Included in Latin America, other category.

Source: Adapted from International Monetary Fund, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *Direction of Trade Annual, 1968-72*, Washington, 1973, pp. 163, 164.

## THE LATIN AMERICAN FREE TRADE ASSOCIATION AND THE RIVER PLATE BASIN GROUP

Argentina was a member of both the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA) and the River Plate Basin Group in 1973. LAFTA came into existence on June 1, 1961, on the basis of a multilateral agreement known as the Montevideo Treaty. Argentina was an original founding member along with Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. Ecuador and Colombia joined in late 1961, Venezuela in September 1966, and Bolivia in January 1967. As originally conceived, LAFTA was to be a trading association with the objective of expanding members' markets by eliminating barriers to trade, particularly tariffs. Full free trade among all members was to be achieved by 1972 through a series of annual tariff negotiations. Many obstacles developed, particularly over agricultural products, and by 1970, when it was apparent that the 1972 deadline could not be met, an amendment to the basic treaty, called the Caracas Protocol, pushed back the free trade target date to 1980.

By early 1973 a total of over 11,100 general tariff concessions had been negotiated among LAFTA members, Argentina having granted almost 1,900 concessions applicable to all the others. This was the largest number conceded by any single member. The country also negotiated over 2,200 tariff concessions that were applicable only to certain members.

Opinions in Argentina are divided over the merits of the benefits that the country receives from membership in LAFTA. Businessmen who export to LAFTA countries are naturally the most enthusiastic because LAFTA, as a trading bloc, takes about 20 percent of the total annual Argentine exports. Argentina is the leading trading partner within LAFTA for both exports and imports. Enthusiasm in the government appeared to be waning in 1973 as Argentina started to explore the establishment of some sort of relationship with the Andean Common Market, a subregional grouping within LAFTA with its own set of rules and regulations.

Dissatisfaction with the rate of progress and the benefits accruing to them as members of LAFTA had led Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru to sign an agreement in mid-1969 called the Andean Subregional Economic Integration Agreement, commonly called the Cartagena Agreement, to form an association that led to the Andean Common Market. Venezuela, which had participated in the original negotiations, did not join until February 1973 when it received certain assurances that its tariff-protected high-cost industries would not be endangered. Both Chile and Peru favored Argentina's joining the Andean Common Market, and exploratory talks began in 1973 after Héctor Cámpora became president.

An unusual but successful trade liberalization mechanism under LAFTA is the use of what are termed complementation agreements. Representatives of specific industrial sectors, such as pharmaceuticals or chemicals, negotiate agreements on behalf of their governments for free trade in particular products of their industry. The agreements may also include the assigning of production rights. Signatory members of a particular complementation agreement specify which country will manufacture a specific product. This assures a wider market without the threat of undue competition. More than twenty such complementation agreements had been negotiated by 1973.

After 1970 the central banks of LAFTA members assisted one another with short-term financing for temporary balance-of-payments difficulties. Numerous services are provided to members by several specialized regional organizations associated with LAFTA. Some of them are headquartered in Buenos Aires, and thus the country has easier access to their reports, studies, and facilities. Some of the LAFTA regional organizations located in Argentina in 1973 were the Latin American Railroad Association, the Latin American Association of the Electric and Electronic Industries, the Latin American Association of Highway Transport, the Latin American Association of Soap and Related Industries, the Confederation of Tourist Organizations of Latin America, and the Latin American Federation of the Pharmaceutical Industry.

Another subregional grouping of LAFTA is the River Plate Basin Group. In addition to Argentina, it includes Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. In 1941 a regional conference of the countries that included areas within the River Plate basin met to negotiate agreements on a number of common economic matters concerning water, power, and transportation. The basic treaty was not ratified by all the members, and beginning in 1967, at the urging of Argentina, exploratory meetings again were held to negotiate a new agreement. In April 1969 the River Plate Basin Treaty for the economic integration and joint development of the 1.5 million-square-mile area was signed.

The River Plate basin contains four major waterways—the Río de la Plata and the Paraná, Paraguay, and Uruguay rivers. Thirty-seven percent of Argentina lies within the basin. An intergovernmental coordinating committee serves as a central collection point for data and coordinates proposed projects within the basin. All members have agreed not to initiate projects that would have an adverse effect on another member. Some preinvestment studies had been conducted by 1973 to help members plan joint projects, and it was estimated that the full potential development of the basin would take at least until the end of the twentieth century.

## TRANSPORTATION

The transportation system in 1973 was the most extensive in Latin America. It was generally considered adequate except for a lack of coordination between the various modes of transportation, a lack of some roads in rural areas, and a deterioration in the railroads (see fig. 3). Highway and railroad networks, internal shipping lanes, and air routes fan out from Buenos Aires, but there are few interconnecting routes. It is often easier to travel to the capital from outlying cities than to travel between one provincial city and another.

The railroad system, the greatest single contributor to the integration of the national economy and the development of the export sector, had become an obstacle to development by the 1960s and was one of the sources of the country's serious budgetary problem (see ch. 12). The first tracks were laid in 1857 going southwest from Buenos Aires and then later to all parts of the country, uniting the vast distances between the capital and other population centers. The flatness of the Pampa permitted inexpensive railroad building, but track gauges were not uniform, and routes were laid out in approximately straight lines with few interconnections. The unplanned rail network was developed for the purpose of conveying the produce from the countryside by the most direct route to Buenos Aires for shipment to Europe and not to provide transportation between localities within Argentina.

The trackage was constructed and the equipment financed primarily with British capital, secondarily by French interests. Little trackage was laid after 1930, however, and the government later accused the British of having allowed the railroads to deteriorate. During 1946 and 1947 all the railroads with the exception of some minor industrial spur lines were nationalized, and in 1969 the system was renamed the Argentine Railways (Ferroviarias Argentinas). In 1971 there were nearly 27,000 miles of track in the six lines constituting the Argentine Railways, more track mileage than in any other Latin American or Western European country. There are eight railroad stations in Buenos Aires and, in addition to long-distance hauling, the lines provide commuter service from the Buenos Aires suburbs to the downtown area along with a metropolitan subway system that has been in operation since 1913.

Because of the four different gauges in use, passengers and cargo going from one region to another generally have to be routed through Buenos Aires to change to another line. Passengers going to Paraguay or Uruguay, however, do not have to change at the borders because the three countries' rail systems are connected. Secondary convergence points exit at Rosario, Santa Fe, and Bahía Blanca. Cargo shifting between the lines is time consuming and costly. Having inherited a deteriorating system, the Argentine government was not able to rehabilitate the lines, and featherbedding, inadequate maintenance, and generally incompetent administration caused the railroads to lose money annually

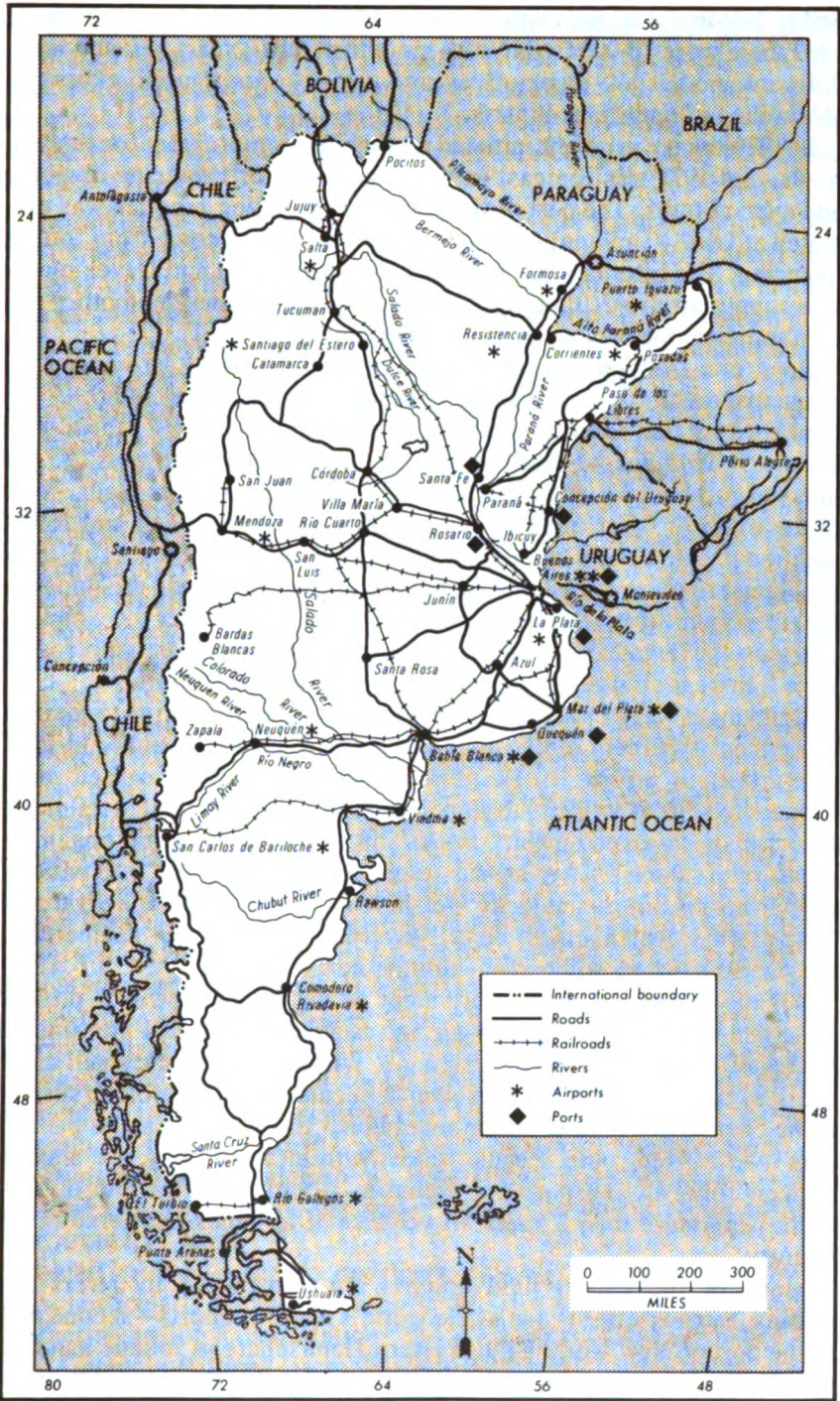


Figure 3. Argentina, Transportation System

and to become a major contributor to the annual budgetary deficits. In 1969 there were 70,000 freight cars more than thirty years old, and many different models of locomotives and freight cars caused expensive stockpiling of replacement parts.

In 1970 the government initiated a rehabilitation program for the railroads, and 1977 was forecast as the target date for balancing revenues and expenditures. The cost of the entire rehabilitation program was estimated at US\$840 million; one-third of the cost was to come from foreign financing. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development was supplying about 10 percent of the cost and Japanese and other foreign suppliers the balance of the foreign funding.

Road construction, the responsibility of the federal, provincial, or municipal authorities, is opening up isolated areas of the country. New road construction receives a high budgetary priority. In 1971 there were about 27,500 miles of roads designated as national highways, 85,000 miles of provincial roads, and about 170,000 miles of local roads. Most of the roads are dirt; in 1970 only 13,000 miles were paved, and 16,000 additional miles were improved all-weather gravel roads. The main provincial roads are adequate, but many of the rural roads are impassable for periods of time in wet weather. During dry weather the clouds of dust raised by wind and vehicles can be choking. Whenever a dirt road is paved, there is a surge of truck and bus traffic over that route.

Trucking is very important in moving produce from farm to market. More than 70 percent of livestock and grains was being trucked in 1973. The uncertain service of the railroads during the 1960s caused many farmers to shift to truckers to ship their produce and, although rail transport has improved somewhat, trucks still dominate the marketing of agricultural products. There are numerous long-distance and international trucking firms but the majority are short-haul single vehicle operations. Truck tariffs, which are set by the government, are in fact competitive, since most truckers will bargain around the fixed rates.

A large number of buses, privately or municipally owned, provide local and long-distance passenger and freight service and are another source of competition for the railroads. Within many cities, small buses are used to combat congested traffic. A peculiar form of urban transport is the *colectivo*, a private automobile similar to a taxi that carries passengers over a fixed route. Regular taxis, with metered rates, are another popular form of transportation found in all cities. At the end of 1971 there were more than 2.5 million vehicles of all types registered in the country.

Many of the exports and imports are transported by rivers and oceans. Buenos Aires is one of the world's major seaports—second only to the port of New York in the Western Hemisphere in volume handled. Coastal vessels connect Buenos Aires directly with the few ports of the Pampa and Patagonia, and river vessels bring most of the produce from the Northeast. Of the 6,800 miles of navigable inland waterways, the main rivers used for commerce are the Río de la Plata, the Uruguay, and

the Paraná. The most important is the Paraná, which together with its tributaries permits passengers and cargo to travel as far north as Asunción, Paraguay, and to the extreme northeast where Brazil and Argentina meet. Long barge trains pulled by towboats and small cargo vessels ply the river. There is frequent passenger service to Uruguay across the Río de la Plata.

The navigable inland water network is a major natural resource but has not been fully utilized. Navigation on the island-dotted Paraná and Uruguay rivers is difficult, and navigation of deep-draft vessels is limited because of silting channels. In late 1972 a river port modernization program was begun, which included new barges and tugs, the rehabilitation of navigational aids, and the dredging of the Paraná River to permit ocean vessels to call at river ports. The director of the government agency charged with dredging the rivers admitted in 1973, however, that the dredging fleet was not capable of maintaining all the port waterways.

Approximately eighty ports were in operation in 1973, but most of these were fluvial and of little consequence; about ten could be considered major ports. One of these was Rosario, the major corn export port—located on the Paraná River, 260 miles inland from Buenos Aires. It is also a free port for Bolivia under the terms of a 1969 agreement between Bolivia and Argentina. Bahía Blanca, at the southern tip of the Pampa coastline, has the country's best natural harbor; it is the principal wheat export port and an important exit for fruit exports. Its full development has been held back by its remoteness from populated areas. Other important ports are Quequén in Buenos Aires Province; Mar del Plata; Villa Constitución on the Paraná; Santa Fe north of Rosario; and Concepción del Uruguay, 200 miles from Buenos Aires on the Uruguay River.

A large number of shipping lines provide service to Argentina, and sixteen lines operate vessels between the United States and Argentina. The Argentine merchant marine consisted of 185 vessels totaling over 1 million gross registered tons in 1973, but more than half the fleet was over twenty years old, and only 10 percent of total exports were being carried on Argentine vessels. Nearly 300,000 tons of the total registered tonnage were accounted for by vessels belonging to the state-owned shipping company, the Argentine Maritime Lines (El Lineas Maritimas Argentinas—ELMA). ELMA, operated by the Undersecretariat of Merchant Marine, maintained six different shipping lines but usually operated at a loss. During the period of 1961 to 1972 it recorded only three profitable years.

Domestic air service has developed rapidly. Air fares to outlying areas, particularly Patagonia, are kept low because of the inadequacies of other means of transportation. The most important state-owned airline, Argentine Airlines (Aerolineas Argentinas), maintains an extensive domestic service linking all provincial capitals and many other cities with Buenos Aires. The company, established in 1950 through the merger of four regional airlines, also provides international service. In an

effort to support its international operations the government placed quotas on the number of passengers the twenty-three foreign airlines serving Argentina might carry. These quota restrictions generated a dispute in 1972 between the United States and Argentina regarding the level of limitations on the operations of Argentine Airlines and United States airlines in each other's territory. The dispute had not yet been resolved by late 1973.

The State Airlines (Lineas Aereas del Estado—LADE), operated by the air force, serves the more isolated areas not connected by Argentine Airlines. There are also a number of small private carriers that operate regional feeder lines and offer charter or air taxi service. Four of the private companies, Air Chaco, Austral Airlines, Transatlantic Airlines, and Transcontinental Airlines, were receiving governmental assistance in the form of easy credit or direct subsidies.

Of the country's more than 200 airports and landing fields, seventy-five handle scheduled traffic, and twenty-two are used for international flights. The largest is the Ezeiza International Airport, located about twenty-two miles south of Buenos Aires. Approximately ten other airports of varying size serve Greater Buenos Aires; the most important is the Aeroparque, located in downtown Buenos Aires on the banks of the Río de la Plata. It is used for almost all domestic flights and all international flights to Uruguay and Paraguay.

## DOMESTIC COMMERCE

The marketing structure is generally well developed, and commercial practices are more modern and sophisticated than in much of the rest of Latin America. A new law on commercial and industrial companies went into effect in 1972 replacing previous legislation that dated as far back as 1859. The new law embodied commercial legislation from European countries, particularly France and West Germany. The Civil Code is the controlling legislation in cases not provided for by the new commercial code. Sole proprietorship is by far the most common business enterprise and the least subject to government regulation. The general partnership is the form most often adopted by other small enterprises; partnerships may have up to fifty members, and all partners' names must be revealed. Medium-sized enterprises prefer the limited liability company, and the larger firms tend to become corporations; limited liability companies are similar to, but not exactly like, corporations. Some corporations are joint public-private enterprises. One of the oldest forms of business enterprise is the cooperative. The cooperative movement began during the nineteenth century and, encouraged by government legislation, spread out into the producing, marketing, consumer, and credit fields. Several other forms of business enterprise are permitted but are of minor importance.



There are numerous importers, and they may function as wholesalers or as agents of foreign firms. Most importers are multiline distributors who sell exclusively to retailers. Most of the wholesalers deal in domestic agricultural products. Many wholesalers run small, specialized operations. All wholesalers must be registered with the government, and retailers are forbidden to purchase from unregistered wholesalers as part of the government's attempt to maintain sufficient supplies and contain prices. In 1973 price ceilings were set on most products by the government.

Retailing is accomplished through department stores, self-service stores, small shops, open-air markets, arcades, and street vendors. During the late 1960s more than 56 percent of all retail sales and the same percentage of retail personnel were in foodstuffs. Sales of apparel accounted for 20 percent; household items, 17 percent; and all other items, the balance. Although there are only a few large department stores as known in the United States, these were already in operation before World War I. The largest ones had branches in major provincial cities. These large firms do their own importing of merchandise not produced in Argentina. Some of them are associated with domestic manufacturers, thereby eliminating wholesalers. Credit is extended by most of the larger stores, and modern merchandising practices, including special promotions and sales, are common. Rural residents can shop by mail order from several of the largest department stores.

Buenos Aires, Córdoba, and many other urban areas have large supermarkets, some of which are chain operated; two of the largest are run by labor cooperatives. Supermarkets and smaller self-service stores have been encouraged by the government through laws passed in 1966 and 1969 that grant certain tax incentives and lower utility rates for such enterprises. The theory is that this kind of outlet helps fight inflation by lowering operating costs. In 1970 it was estimated that self-service stores accounted for 15 percent of all retail sales.

The bulk of retailing is done by small specialty shops and grocery stores even though there are department stores and the number of supermarkets and other self-service retail establishments continues to grow. Shopping arcades, made up of clusters of small shops under one roof, substitute for department stores in some areas. Sales are low for many of the merchants, and overhead is high. Many food retailers are financed by their wholesalers. The number of small retail shops is astronomical; for example, in Buenos Aires in the early 1970s there were 23,000 retail food stores served by 4,000 food wholesalers.

Most of the cities and larger towns have a system of public neighborhood markets supervised and maintained by the municipal governments. These markets typically consist of a series of stalls rented by private merchants where all kinds of products are sold. There are twenty-five large municipal markets within the Buenos Aires metropolitan region. In 1973 a vast new central market was under construction on 500 acres of

land on the road to the major airport. It is designed to consolidate wholesalers and retailers of fruits, vegetables, fish, flowers, poultry, and meat.

The marketing and distribution of domestic products, particularly agricultural produce, varies by region and by kind of product. The marketing structure for products moving into Buenos Aires is very well developed, but products moving to small communities may be delayed or stymied by an inadequate distribution system. Livestock, for example, one of the more important agricultural products for both domestic use and export sale, is marketed in one of several ways. Approximately 40 percent of cattle and 65 percent of sheep are sold through four large livestock markets located in Buenos Aires, Rosario, Córdoba, and Tucumán; another 40 percent of the cattle are marketed through small local markets; and the balance is sold directly to packinghouses. The livestock generally reach the market through a chain of middlemen. Ranchers usually sell cattle to a middleman—a consignee—on thirty-day credit terms. The consignee in turn sells the livestock to a supplier, a fattener, or an export packinghouse. Suppliers, including municipal abattoirs, slaughter the cattle and sell the meat to wholesalers or retailers, partially for cash and partially for credit. It is customary in the Buenos Aires area for the consignee to sell the slaughtered meat on behalf of the supplier to wholesalers and retailers.

Other important agricultural products with their peculiar marketing systems are grains and oilseeds. More than 3,400 grain-buying firms and cooperatives called *acopiadores*, (collectors) purchase and collect the grain and oilseeds from the farmer. These merchants in turn consign the grain and oilseeds to brokers or commission men who then sell at major city markets, to processors, to exporters, or to the National Grain Board, which guarantees final purchase at a fixed price. Some of the larger farms sell directly to processors, exporters, or the grain board; some of the large marketing cooperatives do their own exporting. Cooperative marketing is also common among fruit and vegetable growers in the west and cotton, tobacco, and *yerba mate* farmers in the north.

Every kind of household item or appliance has a different distribution system. Some are sold by manufacturers only to wholesalers and retailers, whereas other manufacturers may also have their own retail outlets in some cities. Other manufacturing firms have set up subsidiary companies to distribute miscellaneous products, not necessarily of their own manufacture. Some companies license a limited number of major dealers to market and maintain their products, and some manufacturers have a sales force that calls upon small independent stores. Some electrical appliances are sold only through building contractors.

Storage facilities for domestic trade are inadequate but improving. In many instances facilities provided for importers and exporters have been used for storing products to be traded domestically, thus creating bottlenecks in many ports. At the end of 1971 the latest figures indicated a total storage capacity for all grains, in and out of ports, of 21.3 million tons. Only 2.3 million tons of storage capacity were located in rural

areas. About one-half of all grains are stored by cooperatives and the other half by mills, factories, and exporters. The grain elevators at Rosario, Santa Fe, and Buenos Aires frequently serve as warehouses rather than as functioning loaders for ships. A new 80,000-ton grain storage elevator was under construction in Rosario in 1973.

Advertising has become increasingly significant as a marketing technique. It is a large industry consisting of more than 1,000 firms; the majority are marginal operators who do not have all the facilities required to handle an account completely. Many of the local advertising companies are associated with major international agencies and are considered to be on a par with the best firms in the world. Some foreign agencies have Argentine subsidiaries. The larger agencies have their own market research facilities, whereas other agencies utilize the services of specialized market research companies. Newspapers and periodicals receive the largest amount of advertising expenditures, and television advertising has become more important than radio advertising. Direct mail advertising is increasing in importance, but advertising in motion picture theaters, once common, has declined.

The metric system of weights and measures has been in compulsory use since 1887, but several English units of length are in limited use. The inch, the foot, and the mile, known in Argentina as the *pulgada*, the *pié*, and the *milla legal*, respectively, are a heritage of the early British settlers and traders. A *milla marina* is an international nautical mile.

## TOURISM

The government recognizes the importance of tourism as a foreign exchange earner. Despite its relative isolation from the rest of the world, over 680,000 tourists visited Argentina in 1972, bringing in an estimated US\$96 million, and predictions were that tourists would spend about US\$130 million in 1973. The income from tourism more than offsets the spending by Argentines going abroad. Most tourists come from other countries in South America; more than 40 percent came from neighboring Uruguay from 1968 to 1970.

The government grants tax incentives and concessions for the building and operation of new hotels, tourist restaurants, and recreation facilities. In 1971 there were about 6,000 hotels with a total of 120,000 rooms in the country plus an unknown number of private hotels owned by unions and social clubs catering to their members only. Although there are a large number of hotels, a special survey in 1970 classified only 1,200 rooms throughout the country as first class, that is, as suitable for the more affluent tourist. The outcome of this survey was immediate planning for several major first-class hotels, which were under construction in 1973.

In addition to stimulating private investment in the tourist industry the government spends large sums of money improving roads and other facilities in major tourist areas, such as Iguazu Falls at the point where

Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay meet. Another popular tourist attraction is the lake area around the town of San Carlos de Bariloche in the Andes. Besides offering swimming and fishing in warm weather, San Carlos de Bariloche is a ski resort. Publicity and information for foreign tourists are the responsibility of the National Tourist Board, and provincial boards provide similar services for domestic tourists. The domestic tourist business is also important for the economy. An estimated 4 million Argentines tour their country annually, and the figure is increasing as the highway network improves, more persons own their own vehicles, and bus service becomes more comfortable. Argentines traditionally have gone only to the seashore, the hills in Córdoba Province, or the area in the southeast portion of Buenos Aires Province. The tradition is changing with the increasing mobility of the population.

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Argentina has a well-developed telecommunications system. Telegraph, telephone, and postal service extend to most of the settled parts of the country, and a microwave network was being installed in 1973 to bring direct communications to isolated areas. Nevertheless, at times these services are inadequate to meet the heavy demand. All telecommunications are provided by the government; by the end of 1970 the last private communication company had been nationalized, and an amendment to the 1973 foreign investment law prohibits any foreign investment in telecommunications.

The National Telecommunications Company (Empresa Nacional de Telecomunicaciones—ENTEL) operates the telephone lines. By the end of 1972 ENTEL had 1.46 million lines and 1.77 million telephones in operation. The demand for telephones exceeds ENTEL's ability to meet it. The rate structure has been inadequate, despite numerous increases, to purchase sufficient equipment to meet demand, and the company was in such financial difficulties in 1973 that it announced that all outstanding requests for new telephone installations would not be met until 1975.

Since 1932 the Secretariat of Communications has been responsible for postal and telegraphic services. The last hand-operated telegraph circuit was phased out in 1970, and since then telegraph operations consist of teletypes, teleprinters, radiophones, and radiotelegraph. Land telegraph lines and a microwave system connect with the telegraph systems of Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, and Paraguay. A ship-to-shore service is also provided. Argentina is a member of the international satellite communications consortium and has two ground stations that permit it to maintain direct communications with Brazil, Chile, Peru, Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, Spain, Italy, France, the United States, the United Kingdom, and West Germany.

## **SECTION IV. NATIONAL SECURITY**

### **CHAPTER 15**

#### **PUBLIC ORDER AND NATIONAL DEFENSE**

Although Argentines generally are an orderly and law-abiding people with a tradition of respect for authority and adherence to the disciplines imposed upon them, in the early 1970s the society continued to be disrupted by a number of radical revolutionaries and rightists who were responsible for terrorism in Argentina's largest cities. In 1973 the armed forces and the police continued their efforts to bring under control guerrillas who were carrying out kidnappings and assassinations.

Trial by judge rather than by jury is the rule, and the stated aim of the penal system is to rehabilitate rather than to punish offenders. There are both federal and provincial courts.

The country's police organization consists of the Federal Police and the individual provincial police forces. Each of the provinces has its own force, but the Federal Police, in addition to nationwide authority in certain kinds of crimes, have exclusive jurisdiction in the Federal District of Buenos Aires and in Tierra del Fuego. Federal Police authority is exercised through regional branch offices set up in the provincial capitals and other outlying major cities.

The National Gendarmerie is a paramilitary border constabulary, and the National Maritime Prefecture is a naval coast guard that polices water boundaries and ports. From the point of view of organization and administration, however, these form part of the military forces.

In early 1973 the military remained one of the strongest, if not the strongest and most politically significant, elements in Argentina. In recent years its support has been essential to the survival of any civilian government, including the government of Juan Domingo Perón established in 1973. Since the founding of the republic, the country has been governed both by civilian administrators and by outright military regimes. In 1973 the government returned to civilian control for the first time since 1966.

The Argentine armed forces are among the best trained and most sophisticated in Latin America. Although a large part of the army's strength is made up of short-term conscripts, a hard core of regular officers and enlisted men provides professional competence and continuity. In 1973 the armed forces totaled over 150,000 men, including the

National Gendarmerie and the National Maritime Prefecture. Of these, almost 82,000 were in the army, about 35,000 in the navy, approximately 20,000 in the air force, and some 17,000 in the gendarmerie.

A compulsory military service law provides for the conscription of all male citizens between the ages of twenty and forty-five and permits the drafting of women when necessary. Some 80,000 young men are inducted annually and serve for a period ranging from twelve to twenty-four months, depending on the needs of the armed services.

## INTERNAL SECURITY

### Subversive Activity

In 1973 Argentine radical revolutionaries and right-wing terrorists continued to be disruptive forces. In tactical terms, they scored dramatic successes, especially after the shift of emphasis from rural guerrilla warfare to urban terrorism. The kidnapping of foreign diplomats and the murder of foreign and Argentine businessmen and of Argentine labor leaders bore witness to their skill in planning and executing individual raids. But they appeared to be making little progress in winning broad popular support or in wearing down the will of the incumbent regimes to resist.

In 1973 there were four major revolutionary groups: the Argentine Liberation Front (Frente Argentino de Liberación—FAL); the Peronist Armed Forces (Fuerzas Armadas Peronistas—FAP); the Revolutionary Armed Forces (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias—FAR); and the People's Revolutionary Army (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo—ERP). Although they operated on a more restricted scale, reference should be made to the Montoneros guerrillas, the Argentine Revolutionary Movement (Movimiento Revolucionario Argentino—MRA), the Army for the Liberation of the North (Ejército de Liberación del Norte—ELN), and the Peronist Revolutionary Front (Frente Revolucionario Peronista—FRP). From 1969 to 1972 a minimum of 250 incidents annually were reported that involved guerrilla groups; the equivalent of US\$1.2 million was acknowledged to have been taken in 1970, together with a large quantity of machine guns and other military equipment. Precise figures on the sums of money and weapons seized in the raids were unavailable since the guerrillas often did not indicate exactly what had been taken and the police, particularly when the booty was voluminous, preferred to keep details secret.

The FAL, founded in 1966, claimed to be "a patriotic organization, and to struggle on behalf of all the united democratic and progressive sectors in the defense of the mass of the people." Its members defined the organization's ideology as "Marxism-Leninism, scientific socialism, the revolutionary ideology of the proletariat." Among its more notable feats, the organization claims an attack against the night guard at the

Campo de Mayo, the assault and robbery at a police subcommissariat, the kidnapping of a Paraguayan consul, the theft of a light plane to drop leaflets over a village in Rosario, the occupation of a campaign commissariat in Tucumán, and the assassinations of a number of Argentine labor leaders. During the course of a police operation in Mendoza in 1971, twelve members of the FAL were apprehended together with their weapons, bombs, and other materials.

The FAP, also a revolutionary group, violently opposed the military regime before the return of Perón but was denounced by Perón in 1973 for its violent actions. The movement operates through cells consisting of three to five members, whose policy is to strike and escape. According to indications from some FAP members, some ties may exist between the FAP and the Montoneros, but differences of opinion keep them divided.

Members of the FAR identify themselves with the phrase spoken by Ernesto (Ché) Guevara, "Endlessly, until victory." The members allegedly dream of "unity of the brotherhood of revolutionary organizations, which have already started out on the road to liberation, and with which, in the not too distant future, they hope to enter into pacts so that they may stand together in the vanguard, and lead the people to the conquest of power." A number of attacks, especially against military personnel, have been attributed to the FAR.

The ERP is probably Argentina's best organized and most effective leftist group engaged in guerrilla warfare. Allegedly responsible for a number of assassinations, including the murder of José Rucci, a leading Peronist labor leader, it became the principal target of the Argentine security forces in 1973. There were in 1973 three distinct trends in the movement: the proletarian; the Castroist, proposing immediate action; and the Leninist, which insisted on politicizing the militants before launching them into combat. The ERP was responsible for a number of assaults and other operations, most of which gained wide attention in press, radio, and television coverage. It did not attack solely in Buenos Aires but preferred, until 1972, to direct its activities to the northeast of Argentina and to Rosario. In 1972 the ERP kidnapped the honorary British consul. In exchange for his freedom the victim's company donated the equivalent of US\$50,000 in foodstuffs, to be distributed among 3,700 employees of a manufacturing plant.

Among the police and the military there were in 1973 two opposite points of view on how to combat the internal disturbances. A section made up of the Federal Police and the state information secretariat advocated stronger controls and surprise raids on the houses belonging to those who might be connected with the urban guerrillas. This section supported "combing" operations in certain neighborhoods of Greater Buenos Aires and setting up one-lane traffic channeling on heavily traveled routes, a system that would allow the security forces to make contact with some members of the urban guerrilla groups transporting disguises, arms, explosives, or documents. Owing to the thoroughness of

this system, it was hoped that it would be possible to eliminate subversive centers, although its advocates realized that the technique would be extremely irritating to innocent people. These operations, however, put into effect in the late 1960s and early 1970s, were costly in men and resources.

A second method of combating subversion, which had the endorsement of high military circles, consisted of letting the urban guerrilla movement develop and unify itself. Its advocates thought that the isolated and dispersed nuclei were infiltrating the security network with ease, and those who ended up being trapped were of little importance in relation to the total movement. In this case, to the extent that the urban guerrilla organizations united and coordinated their activities, each isolated point that could be detected would make it possible for the authorities to infiltrate a particular level of the organization. This method of combating subversion was to be complemented by the creation of bodies specializing in antisubversive struggle, with modern means of communication and mobilization. The practice of training police and military units so that they were prepared to defend themselves from surprise attacks was stressed.

The problem in operations against irregular forces in 1973 was that the police were too widely dispersed and that the guerrilla struck at weak points. On the other hand, if control was concentrated, the guerrillas had freedom of movement, a situation that developed in parts of Argentina in 1973. The police stations and posts were closed and surrounded by barricades from sundown until dawn. Extensive areas, therefore, remained without protection.

The map of subversion included all the politically and economically important populated centers: the Federal Capital and Greater Buenos Aires, Rosario and Santa Fe (wheat and manufactured goods), Córdoba (metallurgical industry and durable consumer goods), Tucumán (sugar), and Mendoza (viticulture). Episodes in all these locations showed that some of the armed organizations were working systematically. In these places there was an increasing number of attacks on isolated policemen; these attacks were designed to obtain arms and uniforms.

### **Incidence of Crime**

Among most Argentines respect for constituted authority has been traditional, and the influence of family, church, and the social framework has created an attitude responsive to ordered and disciplined behavior. With a large and relatively prosperous middle-class structure that has to a large extent eliminated extreme contrasts of poverty and wealth, many incentives to ordinary crime have been diminished. In addition, the penal code is credited by many penologists with having contributed to keeping crime rates at their relatively low national level. The exceptions are crimes that are apparently politically motivated.



A study by the News Organization of Argentina (Organización Noticiosa Argentina—ONA) in 1973 revealed that there had been a slight decline in the number of armed robberies and in the number of criminals involved between 1971 and 1972. In 1971 there were 527 armed robberies, which left 406 dead and 339 wounded. Reportedly, there were 417 shooting affrays between police and robbers in 1972, resulting in 356 deaths. During 1971 fifty banks were robbed, and the approximate equivalent of US\$2 million was stolen; in 1972 sixty-one banks were robbed, and the equivalent of about US\$1.6 million was stolen. The hardest hit was the Provincial Bank of Córdoba, robbed eleven times.

The decline in reported crimes in 1972 generally brought fewer arrests—2,423 persons, compared with 4,260 in 1971. Of those arrested in 1972, 38 percent were under twenty years of age; 23 percent, twenty-one to twenty-five years; 14 percent, twenty-six to thirty years; and 25 percent, over thirty years of age.

Government statistics indicate a definite correlation between educational level and incidence of crime, criminal activity allegedly dipping sharply as educational levels rise. In sample surveys made in the early 1970s, over 80 percent of offenders in federal penal institutions had not gone beyond primary school, whereas in the population as a whole some 60 percent had not gone beyond primary school (see ch. 5).

City day laborers were the most numerous offenders, followed by white-collar office and administrative employees and then by rural laborers. Crime rates among those of European origin are small in comparison with those of aliens originating in neighboring Latin American countries, who form a large laboring-class element in several parts of Argentina.

Car theft has been on the increase in recent years, having been given impetus by import restrictions and inflation, which have resulted in prohibitive prices for automobiles. Rape, molestation, and moral offenses are extremely rare. The ratio between offenders of urban and those of rural origins closely approximates the urban-rural ratio for the population as a whole, but reports indicate that the criminal from the city has a 25 percent greater chance of becoming a repeating offender. Crimes committed under the influence of alcohol, though not of serious proportions, are most common in rural areas and have been most numerous in some of the northern provinces.

Juvenile delinquency, though increasing, was not a serious problem in 1973. Children generally receive close parental supervision. The absence of widespread poverty tends to limit motives of deprivation or need; much youthful misbehavior is, in fact, prompted by political motives, which primarily affect young men of the upper and upper-middle classes. There have been some reports of alleged use of marijuana by young people.

For years the government has devoted considerable attention to the problem of juvenile crime, and numerous laws prescribe procedures for

the protection and treatment of youthful offenders. Parents or guardians guilty of gross negligence may be fined or imprisoned, and procedures are designed for correction rather than punishment. There are over 100 establishments, both public and private, for the care and rehabilitation of minors.

## THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM

Argentina's legal framework, like its constitution, was patterned largely on concepts and precedents found in the United States. The judicial power rests in an independent judiciary under the general jurisdiction of an attorney general appointed by the president. The attorney general is the administrative head of the entire federal judiciary structure; he also serves as legal adviser to the president and the cabinet.

Argentina is one of the few Latin American countries that maintains both a federal and a provincial court system. The criminal code, however, is national in scope and tends to impart a strong centralization to the application of criminal justice.

The Constitution of 1853, in effect in 1973, contains provisions designed to protect the individual and ensure the equitable administration of justice (see ch. 8). Among the provisions are the principles of equality under the law, the presumption of innocence until guilt is proved, freedom from arbitrary search and arrest, and the opportunity for an adequate defense. Although the first thirty-five articles outline the basic freedoms of the individual, including freedom of speech, the press, assembly, and religion and the right of peaceful demonstration, some of these rights were curtailed during the military regimes between 1966 and 1973.

Beginning in the early part of the twentieth century, various criminal procedure codes authorized arrest without a warrant under certain conditions. Both the police and private citizens had the authority to make an arrest when they saw a crime being committed, and the police also acted when they had positive information that a person had committed a crime, even though they had not witnessed it. Constitutional provisions that permit the authorities to arrest and detain persons without a warrant have frequently been used since 1966. These are emergency measures designed to safeguard constitutional government and are unrelated to ordinary criminal prosecution.

### The Penal Code

The penal code in force in 1973 rested largely on European jurisprudence and was applied nationwide. Provincial governments are not permitted to enact their own penal codes. They are not, however, prevented from attaching penalties to local laws that they are otherwise competent to enact.

Offenses directed against national interests, such as treason or counterfeiting, are within the exclusive jurisdiction of the federal tribunals. Ordinary crimes are usually tried by provincial courts, unless the offense has taken place in an area under exclusive federal control. The code comprises two volumes, one outlining general provisions applicable to criminal law and the other dealing with substantive offenses. Specific subsections of the code treat such matters as competence of the law, defense procedures, criminal responsibility, and kinds and computations of punishments.

The code recognizes two principal levels of offenses: designated felonies, or grave offenses, and misdemeanors, or violations, which are acts of a less serious nature. The code is concerned specifically with felonies, which are classified according to twelve different categories. It does not deal with misdemeanors or violations, leaving the jurisdiction of these classifications to provincial or municipal legislation.

In June 1970 a law went into effect that authorized the death penalty for kidnappers if the victims were killed by their captors. The law also provides for the death penalty if a kidnapped person sustains serious injury but survives or if the kidnapper does not deliver the victim or disclose his whereabouts. Kidnappers receive prison sentences ranging from one to four years if they voluntarily release the victim within three days of the kidnapping. The same law imposes the death sentence for armed attacks against ships, airplanes, and military or security forces establishments and posts, as well as the personnel of those forces. Persons who aid kidnappers or obstruct investigations by authorities receive prison sentences of from five to twenty-five years. The unauthorized use of insignia, uniforms, or distinguishing marks of the armed or security forces is punishable by prison terms ranging from three to ten years; if their use is for the purpose of committing a crime that is otherwise punishable by more than eight years under the Argentine penal code, the penalty is death. The law was retroactive for kidnappings if the victim was killed or seriously injured after its enactment. The law also provides for the death penalty to be carried out within forty-eight hours after sentencing by a firing squad at the penitentiary where the criminal is being detained. Crimes punishable by death have a twenty-year statute of limitations. Homicide may also be punishable by death.

Punishments are treated in considerable detail in Book II of the penal code and, although courts are given some degree of latitude, the range of penalties and their limitations are clearly prescribed. Recognized punishments provide for imprisonment, jailing, fines, and disqualification, the last of which entails the loss of civil rights. Parole is provided for, and pretrial confinement must by law be credited toward a sentence. Persons under life sentence may be paroled after twenty years' imprisonment, and those serving terms in excess of three years may be paroled after one year of imprisonment. Suspended sentences are permitted, provided the case involves a first offender and entails a maximum penalty of two years.

Until the late 1960s the death sentence and imposition of life imprisonment were rare, and penalties were usually near the minimum of the allowable range, except in cases considered aggravated or malicious. Imprisonment for assault causing permanent injury may range from one to six years; theft, one month to one year; rape, six to seventeen years; and counterfeiting, three to fifteen years. Fines are widely used in cases of nonviolent offenses. Persons found guilty may also be required to pay damages to victims of their crimes. In case of need, payments may be made in installments, but imprisonment is usually imposed for nonpayment of fines.

### **Criminal Court Structure**

The country's dual system of federal and provincial courts is patterned after that of the United States. Although the federal government and the provinces have separate and independent systems, a degree of centralized supervisory control is exercised by the secretary of state for justice in the Ministry of Interior. Although the president is expressly barred by the constitution from exercising judicial functions, since 1930, and especially since 1966, Argentina's military presidents have tended to ignore this provision. Argentina's president maintains the right to grant pardons, but this is considered an executive rather than a judicial prerogative.

The federal court structure is headed by the Supreme Court, which sits in the national capital. Its seven justices are appointed by the president, but the court elects its own presiding officer from among its members. It interprets national legislation and has the power to rule on the constitutionality of congressional enactments—an authority that has rarely been exercised. The Supreme Court has appellate jurisdiction over the lower federal courts and the highest provincial tribunals, including the provincial supreme courts. It has original jurisdiction in cases involving ambassadors and other foreign dignitaries, as well as in disputes in which a provincial government is a party. Its rulings are binding on all other courts in the nation.

Below the Supreme Court at the national level there are eight federal courts of appeal and nearly forty federal courts of first instance—at least one of the latter in each province. In criminal matters they have original jurisdiction over cases involving violations of federal law; appeals from their findings that are referred to the appellate courts may, in turn, be referred to the Supreme Court. Courts of appeal, both federal and provincial, supervise the activities of their respective courts of first instance as well as hear their appeals. They are composed of three magistrates who reach their findings by majority vote. Courts of first instance have only one judge.

The court structure at the provincial level closely parallels that at the federal; each province has a supreme court, courts of appeal, and courts

of first instance. Most violations of the penal code are tried by the courts of first instance, and the channel of appeal is to their provincial appellate court. A decision of provincial court of appeal may be forwarded for adjudication to the Federal Court of Appeal having jurisdiction in the area.

The Federal Capital is under the sole jurisdiction of federal criminal courts, except for cases of minor violations and misdemeanors. Apart from the federal and provincial court systems there is a variety of minor courts at local, provincial, and municipal levels. They handle petty offenses not covered by the penal code and are limited to cases involving penalties of less than thirty days' confinement. Unlike those of the major tribunals, their hearings are oral. There are also separate juvenile courts located in the Federal District and in most of the large cities. In the Federal District the chief of the Federal Police may conduct a correctional court to try violations falling within the province of police regulations.

### **Criminal Procedure**

Most of the provinces have their own codes of criminal procedure. The wide range of procedure codes provides a varied and complex approach to the operation of the court system. The Code for the Capital and National Territories is frequently used as a prototype, although there is little uniformity in the various codes, and many variations are found in interpretation and detail.

Criminal procedure involves three basic phases—the pretrial investigation, the indictment, and the trial. The stated objective of the pretrial investigation is to determine the commission of a punishable offense, discover the offenders, find any accomplices and accessories, and take steps to apprehend the offenders. Except in provinces having more modern codes, the accused need not be informed of the grounds for his arrest until after he has been interrogated. He is given an opportunity to make a statement, which may or may not be under oath, but his refusal to make a statement is not to be considered an admission of guilt.

Indictment proceedings are held in secret. The examining magistrate at this stage may summon witnesses to confront the accused, and he may cross-examine witnesses who present conflicting testimony. Upon completion of the examination the judge may declare a stay of proceedings and release the prisoner or, if he considers that the evidence indicates the guilt of the accused, he may declare the indictment proceedings closed and pass the case, together with the evidence, to a trial judge.

The jury system is not used in trials, although the constitution contains provisions for its establishment. Before the start of plenary proceedings, the presiding magistrate familiarizes himself with the case and reviews the complete written records of the pretrial investigation and indictment. As litigation is conducted primarily in writing during the

pretrial phase, the average case involving a serious crime will often require a year's time or longer. Once initiated, full proceedings usually take place in open sessions.

A trial opens with the reading of witnesses' statements and any reports of objective findings by police or other investigating agencies. The deponents are available for additional questioning and may be examined by the judge or counsel. After presentation of their cases by both sides, testimony is summarized, and the judge takes the case under advisement.

The case for the prosecution is usually handled by the public prosecutor but may be put in the hands of an attorney for the injured party if the latter chooses to hire counsel. The accused is legally permitted to conduct his own defense but may engage a lawyer or may be assigned one by the court if the magistrate deems it in his best interest. When the judge has retired, the court is closed until he has reached his decision. When court is reconvened at the proper time, the verdict is announced, and the prisoner is either discharged or sentenced.

Appeals must normally be filed within five days of the close of a trial. Not only the accused but the prosecution as well may appeal a judicial decision. Attorneys for both sides may appear before the magistrates of the appellate court, where proceedings, unlike those of the courts of first instance, are conducted orally.

The various provincial criminal procedure codes protect the individual from unreasonable search and seizure. Although the federal code grants to state attorneys and examining magistrates the right to make searches and seizures, it specifies that houses may be searched only by warrant and between sunrise and sunset. It further provides that the homeowner must be notified in advance, and sworn records must be prepared on the results of the search. There are, however, emergency provisions that permit entry without warrant under circumstances where a crime can be prevented or to prevent the destruction of evidence or the escape of a criminal fugitive. From 1966 to 1973, however, there reportedly were a number of instances in which some of the criminal procedures were not enforced.

## THE POLICE SYSTEM

The nation's police establishment in 1973 comprised two principal elements—the Federal Police and the provincial police forces. In 1973 the new National Intelligence Center was created to include the intelligence agencies of the armed forces and the Federal Police. Designed to bring about a functional relationship between the various security agencies, it also encouraged active cooperation not only between security agencies but also between delegates from ministries and secretariats. In October 1973 the center was directed by a junta made up of the heads of the agencies and chaired by an officer of the armed forces with the rank

of general. He had the title of chief of the National Intelligence Center and the status of a secretary of state. He was appointed by the president on the nomination of the Board of Commanders in Chief of the Armed Forces (Junta de Commandantes en Jefe de las Fuerzas Armadas).

The center was to engage in intelligence activities and was designed to plan, orient, centralize, and coordinate the activities of the State Intelligence Secretariat (Secretaría de Información de Estado—SIDE), the armed forces intelligence services, the joint staff intelligence agency, and the Superintendency of Federal Security. It also disseminated strategic national intelligence to the president, to the National Security Council (Consejo Nacional de Seguridad—CONASE), to the Military Committee, to the commander in chief of the armed forces, and to planning and implementation agencies concerned with national security.

The mission of the police is to maintain law and order, preserve the peace, protect life and property, prevent and detect crime, and apprehend offenders. The Federal Police are concerned with all crimes over which the federal government has jurisdiction, as well as ordinary criminal offenses within the Federal District and Tierra del Fuego. The provincial forces have jurisdiction in their areas over all offenses that are within the province of the penal code.

In 1973 the Federal Police numbered over 22,000 men. The force was directly subordinate to the Ministry of Interior and maintained its headquarters in the capital. The provincial forces varied widely in size, depending on the extent and population of their territories. The largest was the Buenos Aires Provincial Police, which had 18,500 men. The size of the establishment reflected the broad area of its responsibility.

### **The Federal Police**

The Federal Police was established in 1880, and in 1943 its authority was extended to the provinces, giving it jurisdiction over all federal crimes, including political offenses. After it was reorganized in 1971, the chief of the Federal Police was a high-ranking command officer of the armed forces and the deputy chief, a high-ranking officer of the active Federal Police in the security field. The chief of the Federal Police controls the granting of identity documents nationwide.

Police headquarters is organized into a number of directorates and divisions charged with staff direction of the various police functions and responsibilities. This includes the Metropolitan Security, which consists of the general directorates of preventive vigilance, urban order, fire fighting, traffic, and the departments of aviation and counterintelligence.

Directly subordinate to the Office of the Chief of the Federal Police are the legal counsel and the directorates of training and of federal coordination. The legal counsel serves as adviser to the department and rules on the legality and jurisdiction of Federal Police actions.

Next in line in the chain of command under the chief is his deputy chief, who serves as his principal assistant and is directly responsible for supervising most of the department's operations. He has the duties of inspector general and comptroller and has nine directorates under his jurisdiction.

In addition to the Fire Department Directorate, there are three other directorates concerned with corollary activities of the force apart from law enforcement. These are communications, social work and health, and general secretariat. The Communications Directorate operates the police telephone, telegraph, and radio networks and maintains their installation and repair shops. The Social Work and Health Directorate involves family care, medical facilities, and social benefits for police and their families and includes medical care for prisoners. The General Secretariat Directorate has charge of police archives, issues regulations and bulletins, and operates the police library, museum, and bands.

The Security Directorate and the Investigations Directorate constitute the operational units in the field of law enforcement. The Investigations Directorate conducts criminal investigations and maintains identification files. It operates most of the police technical facilities and has charge of the crime laboratory. Its jurisdiction, however, is limited to the capital, and federal investigative functions in the provinces are carried out by the regional police offices.

The principal operational element of the police mechanism is the Security Directorate, which has assigned to it all the federal uniformed police except those of the women police and fire department. Its personnel are the patrolmen on the beat and the traffic officers.

The grade structure of the Federal Police is made up of two categories of officers and enlisted personnel. There is no provision for advancement from enlisted to officer status and, in order to attain commissioned rank, a candidate must attend the two-year course at the Colonel Ramón L. Falcón Police Academy. Officer grades below inspector general, the highest police level, range from subadjutant officer up to senior inspector.

Basic enlisted police become patrolmen or agents after a short period as probationary agents. Noncommissioned officer ranks start with corporal and advance through first corporal, sergeant, first sergeant, clerk noncommissioned officer, adjutant noncommissioned officer, and principal noncommissioned officer. The highest enlisted rank authorized for the women police is first sergeant.

The Federal Police place considerable emphasis on training, and, in general, the quality of instruction for both officers and enlisted police is at a high level of competence. Training of officers is more formalized than that of enlisted personnel, but in the case of the latter, training (much of it on the job) is continuous throughout their active careers.

As they advance in their careers, officers are periodically required to attend advanced courses at the Superior Police School, which provides



training for senior officers at various levels of the hierarchy. Some foreign training is provided police officers, and small numbers have been sent to the United States, France, Great Britain, and the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany). The program has been limited for several years, however, by a perennial lack of funds.

### **Provincial Police Forces**

The provincial police are concerned principally with crime falling within the realm of provincial jurisdiction; in the matter of offenses under federal jurisdiction, they are subordinate to the Regional Police Office of the Federal Police in their area. In some of the border provinces, there is a degree of overlapping of provincial authority by the jurisdiction of the National Gendarmerie over international boundaries and frontier zones. Basically similar in organization and operation, the provincial police parallel or, in most cases, conform to the structure of the Federal Police. There is, nevertheless, disparity in the size of the individual forces, which results in variations in structure and emphasis.

In general, provincial police forces are not up to the standards of the federal or Buenos Aires establishments. Equipment is of lower quality; personnel are not as competent or well trained; and pay scales, which are in many cases considered inadequate, result in lower effectiveness and create morale problems. Many of the larger provinces have their own police academies, but their facilities and programs do not meet the high standards of the federal academy. The government has taken steps to remedy the situation, and a number of programs have been initiated to raise the quality and effectiveness of provincial police performance.

Provincial police are under control of the provincial governor and in most cases are commanded by an inspector general or chief. Staff structures conform closely to the federal pattern but are usually less elaborate. Most provincial police headquarters have directorates or other subdivisions charged with administration, investigation, and law enforcement.

There are two basic functional areas, the municipal and the rural. Cities of any size in all the provinces have their metropolitan forces, whose operations are confined to the limits of the urban area. These provide citywide police services, including traffic control, with centralized guidance from provincial police headquarters. In all but some of the more populous industrial provinces, rural forces are generally larger and more noticeable. They are organized into divisions, police commissariats and subcommissariat, and detachments. Because of a shortage of motor vehicles, many patrols are carried out on horseback.

### **THE PRISON SYSTEM**

Penologists consider Argentina's prison system to be one of Latin American's outstanding systems. There are both federal and provincial

prisons, but not every province has both. In all, the system includes some fifteen federal and nearly sixty provincial institutions. As a rule, federal prisons are superior in plant and effectiveness to those of the provinces, but the provinces of Santa Fe and Buenos Aires are reported to support equally well-run penal establishments.

Federal prisons are under the jurisdiction of the General Directorate of Penal Institutions, a responsibility which comes under the minister of interior. The organization is made up of a director general and an advisory council composed of a professor of penal law, the director of Psychiatric Services, the chief of the National Criminal and Prison Registry, and the director of the Released Convicts Welfare Agency. Similar agencies are found in those provinces that have local correctional institutions.

Despite its comparative excellence, one of the basic problems of the prison system is its overcrowded conditions. Although the legal codes call for separation of inmates according to character and offense, shortage of space frequently makes this impossible. There is also a lack of separate facilities for those awaiting trial.

Approximately one-half of Argentina's total prison population, ranging between 12,000 and 13,000, is in federal institutions, and the remaining one-half is in provincial institutions. The penal code provides for lodging provincial prisoners in national facilities if their sentence is over five years or if local facilities are not available. Federal offenders may also be placed in provincial prisons. Many of the prisoners are given an opportunity to work, for which they receive some pay.

Argentina's federal penal institutions are modern and of good construction, with adequate quarters, workshops, and facilities for rehabilitation. The caliber of guards and administrative personnel is generally high. In addition to the customary installation, several prison farms and "open door" institutions are maintained where trustworthy prisoners are subject to minimum security restrictions. There are, however, few provincial prisons that meet the standards of the national establishments, their most serious problem being that of overcrowding. There are also several institutions for women and a large number of facilities for minors. The latter are generally called "homes" and provide training in agriculture and various trades in an atmosphere designed to approach a normal domestic environment.

Over the years considerable attention has been given to the problem of rehabilitation. Numerous laws prescribe its application in the treatment of prisoners. There are a number of steps that help qualify a prisoner to return to the outside world. He is permitted to work on special projects in the prison or to work outside the prison and, after trial period at a work camp or prison farm, he may be released from prison and placed on parole. Inmates are graded on performance, and their release is dependent on a record of good conduct and observance of the rules. Further rehabilitation efforts, after prison, tend to be more effective in Buenos Aires than in any other area.

## MILITARY TRADITION IN NATIONAL LIFE

The military tradition is strong and deeply rooted, but the institutionalization of the military did not occur until the latter part of the nineteenth century. During the independence movement the armies were improvisations composed in part of officers and men trained by the Spanish for service in the imperial forces and in part of ad hoc militias and guerrilla bands that sprang up to meet the exigencies of the moment (see ch. 2). Officership was attained by the practice of arms and obvious ability to command. Included among the heads and chiefs of these armies were criollos (persons of Spanish descent born in Spanish America) who had been influenced by ideas of the Enlightenment. There were also persons of mixed blood among them, including owners of large properties as well as illiterate gauchos and guerrillas. Given the extensive geographic area over which the fighting took place and the undeveloped communication and transportation technology, the different units of these armies secured relatively autonomous spheres of action for themselves.

Attempts to form a national army broke down during the early part of the nineteenth century. Each province established independent armed units. Buenos Aires, with the resources of expanding trade at its command, organized a more or less regular army. This army, however, did not develop institutions for the training of officers and men. The situation was even worse in the interior. The gaucho caudillos (regional strong men) of the interior provinces gathered together irregular guerrilla forces whenever they felt that force of arms was necessary to maintain their power. In both Buenos Aires and the interior, the soldier was looked upon as a peon owing personal loyalty to his commander. If nominal reunification of the military forces of the country was briefly attained during the war with Brazil (1825-28), it was followed again by dissolution at the end of the war. Not even during the long dictatorship of Argentina's nineteenth-century strong man, Juan Manuel de Rosas (1835-52), was a national army organized (see ch. 2). During this period the military and the civilians worked very closely together. Such a condition was due partly to an undeveloped military technology and partly to a primitive transportation and communication system. Ideologically and politically the two groups agreed with one another. The irregular armies were merely the reflection of the wider social and economic conflicts that divided Argentina into a patchwork of overlapping jurisdictions.

It was during the second half of the nineteenth century that the Argentine army was founded as a national institution. German military advisers played a decisive role in forming many of the ideals and much of the structure of the army. The model for a professional army was Prussian, which meant the establishment of a bureaucratic institution, including the inculcation of a specifically military ethos. This entailed: the specific

duty of the institution as the guarantor of the state's sovereignty against foreign aggression; the inculcation of strict patterns of authority with emphasis on the necessity of discipline and obedience within a hierarchically organized command system; formal training for officership; and the institutionalization of a military career with a regular salary and a clearly defined pattern for promotion and advancement within the organization based on the universalistic criteria of ability and achievement. It also entailed the isolation of the military from politics as necessary for the safeguarding of specifically military norms.

The foundations for the creation of a professional army in Argentina were laid during the presidency of Bartolomé Mitre (1862-68). Mitre initiated the process by sending officers to be trained at the Military Academy of Saint-Cyr in France, although he did not succeed in the actual organization of the provincial forces into a unified army. Despite nominal unification of the armed forces in the country during the war with Paraguay (1865-70), provincial caudillos retained *de facto* control over the various armed units contributed by each province to the war effort. In fact, some of the provincial caudillos revolted against the central government during the war. Argentina still lacked a national structure; it was not until the economic and social changes produced by immigration and increased British investment totally altered the demographic and economic bases of the country that national institutions, including a national army, could be established.

Even during the presidency of Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1868-74) the provinces continued to maintain their own military forces. Nevertheless, Sarmiento took the first steps toward the institutionalization of military education with the establishment of the Military College (*Colegio Militar*) and the Naval Academy (*Escuela Naval*). Subsequently, during the presidencies of Nicolás Avellanada (1874-80) and General Julio A. Roca (1880-86), campaigns against remaining Indian-controlled territories resulted in a significant step toward the unification of the provincial units into a national army.

Although the Military College had been founded in 1870, by 1880 only fifteen cadets per year were graduating from the institution. With the election in 1880 of Roca, the professionalization and organization of the armed forces were accelerated. The Higher War College (*Escuela Superior de Guerra*) was established in 1880, a German colonel acting as its first director. Subsequently, institutions for the training of noncommissioned officers, infantry, cavalry, and other specialized units were created. In 1882 a law of promotions was passed that for the first time brought order into the military ranking and command system. The development of the Military College was encouraged so that by 1890 the number of graduates per year had increased to fifty-four.

Admission to the various military schools was based on criteria of ability and achievement except for the sons of officers. A generous system of scholarships facilitated the entrance of members of the middle

and lower classes into the military schools. Most of the cadets came from urban centers.

The officer corps did not play a significant role in the determination of national policies until 1930 and after, but it cannot be considered to have been apolitical at any time. Military lodges with political programs already existed in the nineteenth century. General Roca, for example, manipulated promotions and assignments, sending officers and chiefs to the frontiers with the Indians or to the barracks of the capital according to the degree of their loyalty. Personal relationships and political affiliations remained major factors in the preservation of cohesion within the army and its control by civilian governments.

The foundation of a modern military institution occurred during periods of rapid economic and social change. These changes led to new demands upon the political system, which were to affect the orientations of the officer corps and finally lead to military intervention in the political process. By the time the Radical Civic Union, commonly known as the Radical Party, won the national elections and Hipólito Irigoyen became president in 1916, the majority of the officer corps looked favorably upon the change in government. But Irigoyen's policies with reference to the army increased its politicization and eventually created opposition and discontent within the institution. Opposition grew among officers of differing political affiliations as well as among those who had established the professional norms of the institution. The Argentine army, however, contained a professional core that did not intervene in politics even during crisis situations.

Officers were politicized at the beginning of the twentieth century through the efforts of middle-class political parties oriented toward limited political and social reform. This politicization did not lead, however, to the creation of cohesive ideological perspectives within the officer corps. The ineffectiveness and corruption of Irigoyen's second administration (1928-30) turned the support of officers sympathetic to the Radical Party into increasing alienation and, finally, immobility in the face of conservative criticism and attacks. Despite profound demoralization, the majority of the officer corps remained loyal to the government. The officers identifying with the Radical Party were disunited, but there was also division among the eventual conspirators against the constitutional government of Irigoyen. Generally, the officer corps was politically divided. After the successful revolt against the corrupt second Irigoyen administration, an intense campaign of professionalization and depoliticization was instituted by the government in the 1930s to insulate the army from the political process and to guarantee its loyalty to the state. This meant the retirement or relocation to nonstrategic areas of all officers of known radical sympathies.

Both the Radical and the Conservative parties were discredited in the eyes of the officers in the 1930s. When the military intervened in 1943,

its position was not clearly allied with any specific political group, except for some members of the military who identified with the philosophy of the corporate state as articulated by Benito Mussolini of Italy. Many of the officers who intervened, however, favored the interests of various middle-class groups. Although the officers who overthrew the government in 1943 can be characterized as nationalists in favor of development and industrialization, they did not possess a unified political ideology with reference to the interpretation of the past or with reference to a program for the future.

During the Perón era between 1946 and 1955 the political ideas that prevailed among many officers can be summarized as a dislike of the nations that constituted the Allied powers during World War II (and of the United States in particular) and a vague program for the industrialization of Argentina. Rather than a specific ideology, the officers had definite reasons for opposing the former Allied powers. They were above all nationalistic. They objected to British investment and the terms of the Roca-Runciman Agreement negotiated earlier, which they felt constituted an insult to, and a limitation upon, national sovereignty (see ch. 2).

Commitment to professional norms deteriorated during this period. Officers were increasingly politicized and occupied nonmilitary posts within the administration. Perón, however, did not attempt to change the army as an institution into a revolutionary organization or a cohesive political force. The army deteriorated not only from the standpoint of professionalism but also in the quality of recruits in the officer corps (and the education received by these recruits).

After the first Perón regime, the Argentine armed forces, especially the army, were characterized by increasing factionalization. This was reflected in the multiplicity of cliques and lodges, the constant interventions, and the shuffling of personnel in the service hierarchies.

Political responsibility and the increasing politicization of the officer corps were accompanied by a further fragmentation in political perspectives and orientations. As the officers became involved in politics, they came under pressure from a variety of groups—oligarchic, middle-class, and, to a lesser extent, working-class organizations. As a result, there were divisions in the officers corps that closely mirrored the various political divisions among the civilian groups.

Because army officers were recruited largely from middle-class groups, they tended on the whole to reflect the orientations of these groups. The navy, whose officers tended to come from higher strata in the social structure than those of the army, generally supported the claims of the more conservative sectors. Even there, however, fragmentation occurred as the political involvements of the naval officers increased. Thus, instead of constituting a single pressure group in the political process, the armed forces were shredded into a multiplicity of pressure groups more or less identified with specific civilian political interests. During the military regime of General Juan Carlos Onganía

(1966-70), however, factionalism within the armed forces was reduced to a minimum. The forced retirement of a number of generals helped reduce friction among the military. But in 1973 many of those generals had been permitted to reoccupy their previously held positions.

Under the United States Military Assistance Program, Argentina received over US\$25 million worth of military equipment from 1950 to the early 1970s. Much of this assistance consisted of credits for the purchase of equipment. Under the excess stocks program, over US\$270 million in military equipment was provided during the same period. In the early 1970s almost US\$600,000 in military assistance funds for civic action programs was also provided.

## THE ARMED FORCES AND THE GOVERNMENT

Since 1930 the armed forces have played a number of distinct roles related to government. Between 1932 and 1943 and again between 1963 and 1966 they acted as a pressure group with somewhat limited objectives. Between 1946 and 1955 they were a sort of governmental partner (*cogobierno*), as if they themselves were in power. Throughout this period the military received almost all it wanted with respect to rapid promotions, pay increases, and military weaponry. In addition, the armed forces were consulted on most important issues and even participated in decisionmaking related to nonmilitary matters. From 1958 to 1962 the military enjoyed absolute veto power. Instead of formulating policy during the Arturo Frondizi administration, they vetoed proposals. Finally, there have been at least five occasions during which the military has forcibly overthrown presidents and assumed power itself. In 1973 it appeared that the military was acting as a simple pressure group.

Perón in 1973 was assisted by a number of government-level advisory bodies concerned with the armed forces. The principal ones were the National Security Council (Consejo Nacional de Seguridad—CONASE) and the Board of Commanders in Chief of the Armed Forces (Junta de Comandantes en Jefe de las Fuerzas Armadas). The CONASE was composed of the commanders in chief and the president's cabinet ministers. The board included only the military service commanders in chief; it was roughly equivalent to the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Day-to-day operations of the armed forces are conducted by the Joint General Staff (Estado Mayor Conjunto), which is directly subordinate to the Board of Commanders in Chief of the Armed Forces. It serves as the principal staff element for the entire defense establishment and is composed of four traditional sections called departments. These departments are personnel, intelligence, operations and plans, and logistics.

## THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT AND THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

The cost of national defense has always had a significant impact on the economy, and the sums devoted to military expenditures have to some extent kept pace with expanding national budgets. The revenues devoted to the armed forces between 1945 and 1946 were between 20 and 25 percent of the national total. The percentage in 1970 was estimated to be between 15.1 and 16.1 percent of total government expenditures, or about 1.62 percent of the gross national product (GNP).

Since the mid-1960s the purchasing power of the sums allotted has been adversely affected by continuing inflation and periodic devaluations of the currency. This has required a degree of austerity resulting in widespread economies. As every effort is made to maintain the pay of troops and grant raises to counteract rising costs, the armed services have suffered most in the area of material and equipment and have not been able to purchase the equipment deemed necessary for full modernization of their forces.

Total defense appropriations for 1970 amounted to the equivalent of US\$388 million. This compared with US\$430 million in 1969. Approximately US\$168 million, or 43.3 percent of the defense fund, was allocated to the army; US\$117 million, or 30.2 percent, to the navy; and US\$103 million, or 26.5 percent, to the air force. The Ministry of National Defense received about 0.6 percent for its own administrative operations. The defense budget as published indicates the allocation for each of the three services and the Ministry of National Defense. It does not, however, identify the sums allotted to the National Gendarmerie, which are included in the army's funds, or to the National Maritime Prefecture, which receives part of the navy's allotment.

The more than 150,000 men on active duty in the armed forces in 1973 constituted approximately 0.59 percent of the population and not over 3 percent of the active males between the ages of sixteen and forty-nine. The withdrawal of this small number from normal civilian pursuits had no appreciable impact on the economy, nor did the relatively short term of military service constitute any particular burden or hardship for the average conscript. Many were, in fact, helped by the acquisition of skills that serve them in good stead upon their return to civilian life.

In the industrial sector, military-allied manufacturing contributes to the economy by supporting much of the country's light industry and providing one of the principal stimulants to heavy industry. Military factories form an important element of the country's capacity for heavy goods production, and continuing armed forces requirements represent a broad potential for eventual future expansion.

The military has taken over and completed public works projects in the Patagonian provinces, Chaco and Formosa. They have helped in the prospecting and exploitation of natural resources; they have built high-



ways and set up communication media; and they have also developed basic industries and pioneered in the aeronautics and naval industries.

## MANPOWER

Although all men between the ages of twenty and forty-five are required to serve in the military, usually only those between twenty and twenty-two are inducted. A sizable majority of the men in the armed forces are citizen soldiers conscripted for one or two years' service. Although there is an adequate hard core of regular career men, the military services are a conscript force. All qualified males must register for service upon reaching their eighteenth birthday.

The Argentine military establishment maintains that entrance into the officer corps is completely open, that promotions are based entirely upon merit, and that the leaders of the armed forces come from all segments of Argentine society. Until recently it was a popular belief that most high-ranking officers had to be landowning aristocrats, preferably from one of the provinces of the northwest. Present-day studies, however, have shown that during the last half-century, at least, the top leadership of the Argentine armed forces has come from the urban middle class. Between 1917 and the 1960s only about 10 percent of the nation's generals were born in the provinces of the northwest, and roughly 40 percent were born in the Federal Capital and its suburbs. This trend is even more pronounced in the case of admirals and brigadiers, almost two-thirds of whom were born in Greater Buenos Aires, and only about 5 percent in the northwest.

Also, rather than coming from "traditional" or aristocratic families, many of the generals have been second-generation Argentines—that is, their parents were born abroad, most of them in Italy and Spain. Virtually all of the generals have come from families that may be labeled middle class. Two-thirds of the fathers of these generals were businessmen, military men, members of the liberal professions, or white-collar workers; less than 10 percent were in any way connected with agricultural enterprises. The general political conservatism of the Argentine military leaders would appear to be a result of aristocratic social origins.

Noncommissioned officers are experienced, competent volunteers selected on the basis of proven capability, and they constitute one of the principal mainstays of the military service. Although the nation has a marked degree of ethnic and linguistic homogeneity, the armed forces serve as a melting pot for men from different sections of the country and of varied national origins and social levels.

Neither the draftees nor the noncommissioned officers figure in political action to any real extent, nor do the officers in the professional services, such as medicine and law. Interference in politics by the military generally has been spurred by the officer corps and usually has been led by field grade officers of high rank.

## Recruitment and Training of Officers

All members of the command corps are graduates of the military academy in Argentina. Branches, such as cavalry and infantry, are chosen early, usually during the first year of the four-year course, and form the basis for lifetime association. Academy life in Argentina is rigorous, every aspect of the daily routine being carefully structured and controlled. Only the cream of the officer corps is selected to command and administer the academies, and great attention is devoted to the top priority task of character formation. Academies have a mixture of civilian and military instructors; some of the former are tenured professors, others are part-time instructors from the national or private universities.

Three basic academies turn out regular officers for the respective armed services: the Military College, the Naval Academy, and the School of Military Aviation (Escuela de Aviación Militar). Young men in the sixteen- to twenty-one-year age-groups who meet matriculation standards may apply individually for admission to the school of their choice, and selections are made from those physically qualified on the basis of competitive entrance examinations. No congressional appointment is required, but applicants must have completed a minimum of four years' secondary schooling. A special provision permits qualified regular noncommissioned officers to take the entrance examinations up to the age of twenty-eight.

The Military College and the School of Military Aviation offer a four-year curriculum leading to a bachelor's degree. Upon graduation, cadets are commissioned as sublieutenants. The standard line course at the Naval Academy lasts four years. Each armed service school also offers a one-year preparatory course for young men between fifteen and twenty years of age to qualify them for entrance to the academy.

The Military College graduates approximately 200 line officers annually. The curriculum is designed to promote character, honor, and pride appropriate to an officer and a gentleman and to develop a well-rounded, intellectually oriented man. To attain this goal, the regular four-year curriculum is made up of academic subjects, military instruction, and physical training. Approximately half of the student's time is devoted to academic work, and the rest is taken up with military field activities.

The Naval Academy graduates approximately 200 officers annually. The training program lasts five years, after which graduates may elect to attend the Naval Aviation School for pilot training, which lasts twenty months.

There is an extensive system of advanced career schools, both at the joint level and within each individual military service. These are designed to prepare an officer for higher responsibilities. Most of those selected to be colonel or naval captain, for example, will attend a one-year higher military studies course devoted to national problems and goals at the broadest level that considers all the dynamic forces of the society—military, political, economic, sociological, and psychological.

The small student body includes important civilians from government and the professions; and lecturers from government, industry, and the academic community address the students. The graduates fill key staff and command positions and form probably the most influential element of the military-political constituency.

The individual services maintain a number of other institutions for career development. Among the principal army schools are the Higher War College and the Center for Higher Studies. The navy maintains a postgraduate school for junior officers and the Naval War College for commanders and captains. The air force has only one advanced career school, the Command and General Staff School. It conducts courses at two levels, one for captains and majors and one for lieutenant colonels and colonels. The National Gendarmerie has its own academy, which conducts a three-year cadet course to prepare officers for the service.

### **Recruitment and Training of Enlisted Personnel**

Of the almost 200,000 men who reach the age of twenty every year, at least 40 percent are inducted. Physical standards are high, but it is estimated that in an emergency over 3 million men would be fit for active duty. Citizens between the ages of seventeen and thirty may enlist voluntarily for periods not exceeding five years, provided their conscript number has not been called. About one-fourth of the army and over one-half of the navy and air force are volunteers.

During the mid-1960s and early 1970s exemptions for educational reasons, for sole support cases, and for surviving sons have been relatively liberal. In 1973 the law called for one year's service in the army or air force and two years' service in the navy. The lottery system used to select the draftee also determined the branch of service to which he was assigned. It is equitably applied to all sectors of the society, and conscripts generally represent a true cross section of the population.

Training of enlisted personnel is thorough and continues throughout the individual's military career. The large number of conscripts, however, results in two levels of emphasis, as the short period of service, particularly for army and air force recruits, does not permit thorough mastery of many of the more complex aspects of modern warfare. As a result, the more advanced phases of training, especially the higher level schools, cater almost exclusively to the professional cadre of regular noncommissioned officers.

Through the United States Military Assistance Program, several mobile training teams and technical assistance teams have been attached to the Argentine services. They are providing specialized training and technical assistance in a variety of military, air, and naval subjects. In the early 1970s a team of United States Special Forces had been training Argentine troops in northern Argentina in counterinsurgency warfare. Furthermore, a number of Argentine noncommissioned officers have attended courses at the United States Army School of the Americas in

the Canal Zone. In March 1973, however, the then commander in chief of the army, General Jorge Carcagno, sent a memorandum to the minister of national defense, Felix Robledo, recommending that the military missions of the United States and France be terminated. Although no action has been taken on the memorandum, it reflected the dissatisfaction in some sectors over the presence of foreign military missions within the country.

## **MISSION AND ORGANIZATION OF THE ARMED FORCES**

In 1973 the overall authority and direction of the individual armed services were concentrated in the hands of the respective commanders in chief, who were responsible only to the president without the intervention of a civilian secretary or minister. The mission of the armed forces was the preservation of national integrity. This requires a state of readiness to defend the nation and implement its military policies. The army was the dominant element of the armed forces, in part because of its size. The navy and air force were, nevertheless, fully autonomous and had separate jurisdiction and areas of staff responsibilities.

### **The Army**

The army is assigned the task of defending the country's territorial integrity and, especially during the past five years, contributing to the maintenance of internal security. It is further charged with supporting the nation's international commitments and assisting as needed in national development. It is headed by the commander in chief of the army, who is charged with commanding not only the country's field forces but also the National Gendarmerie.

The Army General Staff consists of the chief of staff and five assistant chiefs. The assistant chiefs are responsible for personnel; intelligence; operations and training; logistics; and policy, research, and planning. Directly under the Army General Staff are various commanders, including infantry, artillery, engineer, quartermaster, communications, and aviation. The country is divided geographically into four army corps areas, and the commanders of these areas report directly to the commander in chief.

In 1973 the army was organized into four corps, five infantry brigades that were expandable to divisions upon reserve mobilization, two mountain brigades, one airborne brigade, two mechanized brigades, and ten artillery regiments. Army units were dispersed throughout the country; the principal concentration of troops was in and around the capital and in Buenos Aires Province. Troop dispositions usually remained relatively static, but units were moved from time to time for joint training exercises or for internal security reasons. In September 1973, for example, a number of additional units were moved into Buenos Aires after the assassination of the trade union leader José Rucci. These units engaged in

a thorough house-to-house search for members of the People's Revolutionary Army (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo—ERP), who allegedly were responsible for the murder.

Most of the army's weapons were of foreign origin, but limited quantities of small arms and ammunition were manufactured locally. Much of the material was of World War II vintage and was approaching obsolescence. The major equipment inventory in 1970 included light tanks, armored cars, light artillery, and liaison and transport aircraft.

The National Gendarmerie is a federal constabulary and security force maintained on an all-volunteer basis. It is considered an auxiliary military organization and is commanded by a regular army general officer who is directly subordinate to the commander in chief of the army. The National Gendarmerie patrols the borders and, outside the frontier zones, it functions primarily as a riot control force. It is lightly armed and equipped and uses motor vehicles, horses, and its own reconnaissance aircraft.

### **The Navy**

The navy is charged with defending the country from aggression by sea and the protection of shipping in coastal and international waters. It has the additional responsibility of assisting the army in maintaining internal security and is committed to antisubmarine patrolling for hemisphere defense. The Argentine navy, one of the largest in Latin America, had a total strength in 1970 of less than 35,000 men, including approximately 4,100 marines.

Ships included two carriers, three light cruisers, eleven destroyers, six patrol escorts, two submarines, nine patrol craft, five landing ships, five coastal transports, six coastal minesweepers, five landing craft, and eighteen auxiliaries. The navy also has four naval aviation squadrons, which are distributed between three mainshore bases—Commandante Espora, Puerto Belgrano, Punta de Indio—and two carriers. It had eighty-four combat aircraft, including light bombers, armed trainers, fighters, and patrols. Furthermore, there were transports, helicopters, and 5A trainers. The major naval bases were in Puerto Belgrano, Zárate, Río Grande, Ezeiza, Río Santiago, Darsena Norte, Trelew, Madryn, and Ushuaia.

The commander in chief of the navy is directly subordinate to the president. His principal assistant is the chief of the navy general staff, and at the operational level there is the commander of the Navy Operations Command, who directs all units afloat.

### **The Air Force**

The mission of the air force is the air defense of the country, the conduct of strategic air warfare, and the support of the surface forces. It

also takes a role in maintaining internal security. In 1973 it was organized into five operational commands that reported directly to the commander in chief of the air force.

The Air Force General Staff, headed by a chief of staff, consists of the following departments: plans, intelligence, and general secretariat. The commander in chief is also assisted by a special staff, which has assumed most of the responsibilities formerly assigned to the secretary of aeronautics. In addition to normal air staff functions, it includes in its responsibilities the supervision of the Argentine Airlines and the State Airlines.

The five air force operational commands were the Personnel Command, Air Operations Command, Matériel Command, Research and Development Command, and the National Directorate of Civil Aviation. Air force personnel strength in 1971 was approximately 20,000 men.

Aircraft inventory in 1972 included forty-five fighters, thirty-five light bombers, sixty transports, fifteen helicopters, and 200 trainers. Operational units were deployed in a broad belt across the central part of the country from Buenos Aires to the Chilean border. Fighter and bomber units were disposed for the protection of densely populated areas and to confront possible exterior threats.

Despite the traditional policy against the use of military units outside the country, the air force furnished a number of transport pilots for the United Nations operation in the Congo (Kinshasa) in 1960 and 1961, provided crews to support the United States blockade of Cuba during the 1962 missile crisis, and actively considered participating in 1973 in the peacekeeping force in the Middle East crisis.

## CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

The general environment and physical conditions surrounding military life reflect the favored status enjoyed by the armed forces; and the dignity, comfort, and well-being of the serviceman usually are matters of continuing concern throughout the military establishment. The life of the military man is not one of ease, however. His daily routine is strenuous.

Military posts are scattered throughout the country; a large part of the principal installations of all three services are concentrated in the Buenos Aires area. Most posts and stations range from good to excellent, and fixed installations are nearly all of permanent construction, consisting of brick, stone, or concrete housing units and official buildings. Permanent posts have adequate, commodious quarters for officers and noncommissioned officers and excellent family housing for married regulars. Recruit conscripts are lodged in modern, comfortable barracks.

In general, quarters, compensation, rations, and services maintain a standard that compares favorably with the national middle-level economic norm. Additional advantages, such as leave accrual, retirement,

medical care, and other benefits, are further refinements of military service. In the matter of pay, in particular, every effort is made to keep rates attractive for the professional serviceman. Since the mid-1960s pay scales have been adjusted almost annually, and military compensation has been kept generally consistent with earnings of comparable skill levels in civilian life. Within the country itself, pay is considered good and, despite fluctuations, is judged by its purchasing power in the local economy. In addition to the basic rates, there are many supplementary allowances for both officers and enlisted men. The total compensation in most cases amounts to approximately twice the basic rate of pay.

Leave and retirement policies are liberal. In 1973 retirement was particularly generous and included substantial benefits that could amount to 100 percent of active duty pay. Retirement could be statutory or granted upon request. Especially during the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, a significant number of generals were forced to retire. After ten years' service, officers and noncommissioned officers could retire on one-third of the regular retirement pension. After thirty years' service, officers received full pension, which amounted to 90 percent of base pay plus general supplements. Enlisted personnel qualified for full pension after twenty-five years.

## RANKS, UNIFORMS, AND INSIGNIA

The rank and grade structure of all three services roughly parallels that of the United States, particularly in the officer grades. One notable difference is the existence of the rank of sublieutenant, a probationary grade just below second lieutenant; this is designated *subteniente* in the army, *guardiamarina* in the navy, and *alférez* in the air force. On service uniforms, officers display insignia of rank on shoulder straps in the army and gendarmerie, and on the sleeve cuff in the navy and air force. Non-commissioned officers' insignia are usually worn on the upper sleeve.

The basic uniform of the army in 1973 was khaki. The air force wore a rather dark slate blue, and the navy used standard navy blue or white. There was a distinctive greenish uniform for the National Gendarmerie, but the Naval Infantry Corps wore regular navy garb. Uniforms were many and varied, ranking from very formal to fatigue wear. Army and air force jackets were standard single-breasted models, worn with straight trousers except in the field. In winter naval officers used a blue double-breasted coat and in summer, a white uniform. There was also a gray work uniform. Uniforms for enlisted men closely resembled United States Navy garb. A white jacket was used for dress by the army and air force, and several elite army units had full-dress uniforms patterned on traditional blue-and-red hussar uniforms of the nineteenth century.





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## GLOSSARY

*bachillerato*—Bacclaureate. Diploma awarded upon successful completion of general or college-preparatory school of secondary level. Also describes this type of school or course of study.

Buenos Aires—In common usage, the metropolitan area comprising the Federal Capital and the surrounding urban localities that make up Greater Buenos Aires. Greater Buenos Aires is a part of Buenos Aires Province; the Federal Capital—conterminous with the Federal District—is not.

Chaco—The Argentine portion of the Gran Chaco Plain. It includes the provinces of Chaco and Formosa and portions of the provinces of Santiago del Estero and Santa Fe.

*compadrazgo*—The extension of kin relationships through godparenthood.

*concuñado*—Brother-in-law relationship; often extended to include non-related peers.

*criollo*—In a historical sense, a person of Spanish descent born in Spanish America. With specific reference to Argentina in 1974, it was often used as an adjective to describe native food or custom or with reference to Argentines whose ancestors predate the massive immigration of the previous century.

Cuyo—A historically significant name for the Piedmont provinces of San Juan, Mendoza, and San Luis.

*descamisados*—Literally, shirtless ones; workers who had migrated to the urban areas from the interior and who were, for the most part, unorganized and unrepresented until Perón sought their support in the early 1940s.

Dry Pampa—The outer reaches of the Pampa region where rainfall becomes progressively scantier.

*empleado*—A salaried employee. Roughly equivalent to a white-collar worker.

*estancia(s)*—Large ranch(es) or estate(s).

Humid Pampa—A subregion of the Pampa that extends some 200 miles from Buenos Aires. It is the center of food crop production.

interior—All parts of Argentina other than the Federal Capital and Greater Buenos Aires.

Littoral—A strip of territory extending northward from Buenos Aires along the west bank of the Paraná River and including the cities of Rosario and Santa Fe.

- machismo**—Literally, maleness. Complex of beliefs and attitudes defining the concept of masculinity.
- Mesopotamia**—In Argentina, the land between the Paraná and Uruguay rivers. Includes Entre Ríos, Corrientes, and Misiones provinces.
- Northeast**—Geographic region north of the Pampa and east of the Andes mountains and their foothills.
- obrero**—Wage-earning worker or laborer. Roughly equivalent to a blue-collar worker.
- Pampa**—Geographic region. A fertile plain extending some 500 miles from north to south and westward from the Atlantic Ocean, it is the heartland of the country.
- Patagonia**—Geographic region. All of continental Argentina south of the Colorado River.
- patrón**—Literally, patron. Term used for boss or master, frequently applied to owners of *estancias*. Aside from its generic usage is also a behavioral concept implying a paternalistic relationship between two people of unequal status.
- peso**—The unit currency. Symbol is \$a. Since January 1, 1970, the peso has been called the new peso. Currency used before that date is referred to as the old peso. The new peso has been devalued several times, and multiple rates exist. As of the end of 1973 there was a commercial rate of \$a5 equal US\$1 and a financial rate of \$a9.98 equal US\$1. In addition, a mixed rate, composed of a certain percentage of each rate, is used for specifically named transactions.
- porteños**—Literally, people of the port; residents of the city of Buenos Aires.
- profesional**—A term used to describe vocational education at the secondary level.
- Río de la Plata**—Literally, River of Silver; the estuary on which Buenos Aires is located and that serves as outlet for the Paraná-Uruguay river system.
- River Plate**—Anglicization of Río de la Plata.
- villas miserias**—Literally, misery towns; squatter communities located on the outskirts of Buenos Aires and other major cities.



## INDEX

- Aconcagua (mountain): 35  
Act of Santiago: 234  
Acts of Paris: 250  
adult education: 100, 101, 103, 126-127  
advertising: 219-220, 228, 313; and TELAM, 227  
Africa, North: 57  
Agency for International Development (AID): 241, 265  
agriculture (*see also* cattle, crops, dairy products, farms and farmers, landownership, livestock): viii, 5, 11, 15, 72, 273-285; Agriculture Act, 273; and economy, 255; and education, 100, 104, 109, 110, 114, 115, 116, 117, 119; and elite, 80; exports, 299; and labor force, ix, 61, 63, 64, 67, 85; and Perón, 199; tenancy, 139  
Aguirre, Julian: 177  
air force: ix, 316, 339-340, 341; Air Force General Staff, 340; Command and General Staff School, 337; and industry, 335; School of Military Aviation, 336  
air transportation: 46, 307, 309-310; Aeroparque, 310, 340; Argentine Airlines (Aerolíneas Argentinas), 190, 255, 309, 340; State Airlines (Líneas Aéreas del Estado—LADE), 310  
Aizenberg, Roberto: 180  
Albania: 249  
Alberdi, Juan Bautista: 167, 168, 186, 239; *Bases y puntos de partida para la organización política de la república Argentina* 167; *Facundo*, 168; utilitarianism, 167  
alfalfa: 38, 41, 42; seeds, 282  
Allende, Salvador: 245, 246  
aluminum: 259  
Alvarez, Agustín: 169; Sud America, la historia natural de la razón, 169  
Alvarez, Mario Roberto: 181  
Alvear, Marcelo T. de: 21  
anarchists: 205  
Andean Common Market: 304  
Andean Subregional Economic Integration Agreement: 304  
Andes (mountains) (*see also* Northwest Andes, Piedmont): vii, 3, 8, 10, 14, 29, 31, 34, 35, 36; climate, 39; minerals, 43; river system, 37-38; vegetation, 40  
Anguín, Nimio de: 172  
Antarctic: 40, 48, 247; sovereignty, 45  
Arab countries: 249  
Aramburu, Pedro: 26, 199, 226-227  
Araujo, Joaquín: 165; Guía de forasteros, 165  
Arbenz, Jacobo: 237  
architecture: 163, 181; churches, 163  
Argentine-Brazil-Chile Treaty: 245  
Argentine Catholic Immigration Service: 56  
Argentine Confederation of Mutual Societies: 152  
Argentine Family Protection Association (Asociación Argentina de Protección Familiar): 59  
Argentine Federation of Family Planning Centers: 59  
Argentine Industrial Union: 256  
Argentine Institute for the Promotion of Trade: 25  
Argentine Liberation Front (Frente Argentino de Liberación—FAL): 316, 317  
Argentine Mesopotamia: 34; borders, 36; climate, 39; swamps, 38; vegetation, 40-41  
Argentine National Directorate of Adult Education: 127  
Argentine Press Association (Asociación de Entidades Periodísticas Argentinas—ADEPA): 220, 229  
Argentine Radio—Television Stations Association: 228  
Argentine Revolutionary Movement (Movimiento Revolucionario Argentino—MRA): 316  
Argentine Rural Society: 256  
Argentine University Federation (Federación Universitaria Argentina—FUA): 121  
argentinidad: 174  
"Argentinization" (*see also* argentinidad): 213  
Arlt, Roberto: 175  
armed forces (*see also* air force, army, National Gendarmerie, navy): ix, 1, 6, 27, 190, 198, 232, 234, 315; Board of Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces,

- 212, 325, 333; commander in chief, 187, 325; defense budget, 260, 334-335, and economy, 334-335; and Germany, 248; and government, 333, 335; Higher War College, 248, 330; intelligence, 324; Military College, 23, 330, 336; Military Committee, 211, 325; military rule, 185, 186, 187, 195, 196, 206, 208, 210, 211-213; military service, 65, 316; military tradition, 329-333; and Perón, 23, 199; and politics, 22, 195, 196, 203-204, 208, 211-213, 215
- army (see also armed forces): ix, 315, 316, 329, 330, 331, 332, 334, 337, 338-339, 341; Army General Staff, 338; Prussian model, 329-333
- Army for the Liberation of the North (Ejército de Liberación del Norte—ELN): 316
- Arrieta, Rafael Alberto: 170
- arts and crafts (see also architecture, ceramics, leather, painters, sculptors, silver, theater, Torcuato di Tella Institute): 161-164, 178-184; pre-Columbian, 162-163, 180; weaving, 162, 163, 164, 182
- arts, plastic: 100, 178-181; training, 117, 123
- assimilation (see also ethnic groups, Indians, mestizos, mulattoes): 76-79
- Astrada, Carlos: 172
- Asunción (city): 10, 11, 36
- Atlantic Ocean: 8, 10, 11, 29; and climate, 39; coastline, 33; drainage, 37
- atomic energy (see also nuclear power): 248
- Austral Basin: 44
- Austria: 73
- authoritarianism: 161, 162
- automobiles (see also motor vehicles): 49, 291, 292; automotive industry, 292-293; and consumers, 146; and education, 111, 127; employment, 67; racing, 147
- Avellaneda (city): 47
- Avellaneda, Nicolás: 19, 330
- Axis powers: 22, 236, 239, 242, 247, 250
- Ayolas, Juan de: 10
- Azcuenaga, Domingo: 165
- azules faction: 27, 28, 204
- Badii, Libero: 180
- Bahía Blanca (city): 50, 224, 293, 309; and economy, 259
- balance of payments: 264-267; deficits, 264-265, 305
- Balbin, Ricardo: 6, 209, 214, 215
- ballet: 178
- Banda Oriental: 13
- Bangladesh: 300
- Bank of the Argentine Nation (Banco de la Nación Argentina): 268
- banks and banking: 257, 267-270; Acts of Paris, 250; Central Bank of Argentina, 193, 198, 257, 264, 267-268, 269; credit system, 267, 269-270; Industrial Bank, 287; National Development Bank, 268, 298; National Mortgage Bank, 268; National Tourist Bank, 269; renationalization, 241
- Banzer, Hugo: 244, 246
- Bariloche Foundation: 64, 162, 173
- Barranqueras: 244
- Bartolomé, Leopoldo José: 175
- Beagle Channel: 40, 45, 245
- beef (see also cattle, livestock, meat): 11, 145, 247, 283, 299; and diet, 131, 132, 133; hoof-and-mouth disease, 247, 265, 283
- Belgium: 299
- Belgrano, Manuel: 166
- Beltrán, Luis: 14
- Benitez, Father: 171
- Bentham, Jeremy: 167
- Bermejo River: 37, 38
- Berni, Antonio: 180
- Bianchi, Andrés: 163
- Bioy Casares, Adolfo: 174; Diario de la guerra del cerdo, 174
- Birdbank Basin: 44
- birth control: 58
- birth rate: 3, 58; decline, 30, 51-53; and size of labor force, 59, 62
- Boero, Felipe: 177
- Bolívar, Simón: 8, 15
- Bolivia: 1, 5, 8, 9, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 124, 164, 223, 232, 234, 237, 243-244, 245, 246; aid to, 266; Altiplano, 41; and banking, 268; Bolivian Gulf Oil, 244; frontier, 40, 44; migration from, 56, 78, '6, 244, 246 population, 46, 55; Revolutionary National Movement, 244; and trade, 305
- books: 126, 164, 221-222; paperbacks, 222
- Borda, Osvaldo: 180
- Borges, Jorge Luis: 161, 173, 175; El informe de Brodie, 173
- Braden, Spruille: 25, 239
- Brazil: 1, 16, 18, 20, 30, 36, 42, 157, 163, 223, 229, 231, 232, 234, 237, 241-243, 244, 245, 329; and banking, 268; boundary, 44-45; and immigration, 56; and trade, 303, 305
- Bretton Woods Agreement: 250
- budget: 256, 259-260; deficits, 253; for education, 99, 129, 260; for health, 151; for military, 334-335; provincial, 259
- Buenos Aires (see also Federal Capital, Federal District): vii, 2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11-13,

- 16, 17, 18, 29-30, 31, 70, 143, 155, 162, 190, 197, 270; art galleries, 180; climate, 38, 39; diet, 133; dress, 137; education, 99, 103, 106, 107, 110, 115, 129; employment, 65, 67; and foreign relations, 233; Greater Buenos Aires, 29-30, 46, 148, 150, 254, 292, 293, 294, 317, 318, 335; housing, 138, 139, 140, 141; industry, 292; intercultural exchanges, 229, 230; Jewish population, 93; and media, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224; migration to, 9; and Perón, 23, 25; police, ix; political tension, 7, 12, 15; and politics, 210; population growth, 46-49, 50, 52, 53, 55; port of, 36, 42, 46, 72, 74, 308; recreation, 147, 148-149, 150; schools, 28; security, 315, 340; theater, 176, 217; transportation, 306
- Buenos Aires (province):** 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 29-30, 33, 259, 328; banking, 268; economy, 261; education, 106, 110; farming, 279, 280; floods and swamps, 38; livestock, 283, 284; and military, 338; minerals, 43-44; nuclear power, 289; subdivisions, 29, 45
- Bulgaria:** 249
- Bunge, Carlos Octavio:** 169, 170
- buses,** 308
- Cabinet (see also ministries):** 187, 190, 211
- Cabot, John Sebastian:** 10
- Cadiz:** 14
- Callao:** 9
- Calvo, Carlos:** 233
- Campana:** 50
- Campo Durán:** 44
- Cámpora, Hector:** 6, 106, 109, 119, 122, 154, 185, 195, 238, 241, 246, 249, 254, 304; and Perón, 195, 214, 215, 216, 227, 231
- Canada:** 154; and financial aid, 266
- Capdevilla, Arturo:** 170
- Caracas Protocol:** 304
- Carcagno, Jorge:** 338
- Caritas International:** 56
- Carril, Hugo del:** 176
- Casa Rosada:** 22
- Casals, Pablo:** 178
- Castile:** 10
- Castillo, Ramon S.:** 22
- Castro, Fidel:** 237; and Castroists, 317
- Castro, Juan José:** 177; *Proserpina y el extranjero*, 177
- Catamarca (province):** 35, 48
- cattle (see also beef, estancias, livestock, meat):** 11, 15, 16, 19, 33, 35, 74, 282-283, 300; breads, 283; estates, 75 caudillos: 2, 3, 15, 16, 17, 18, 95, 166, 167, 168, 174, 186, 329, 330; and politics, 197, 211
- Celman, Miguel Juárez:** 19, 20
- cement factories:** 74
- censorship:** 162, 218, 225-229; and church, 92; and films, 58, 92, 150, 225; lack of, 217, 218; Law of the Indies, 164; and literature, 174; and television, 224
- census:** 48, 49, 51; and labor force, 60, 62
- Central America:** 3
- ceramics:** 163, 181-182; *rojiza* pottery, 182
- cereals (see also alfalfa, corn, grains, sorghum, wheat):** viii, ix, 5, 11
- Chab, Victor:** 180
- Chacabuco (battle):** 15
- Chaco (province):** 34, 48, 126, 334; cattle, 283; farming, 274, 280; forests, 285
- Chaco (subregion):** 31, 34, 35, 37, 70, 163; climate, 39; vegetation, 40-41
- Chaco War:** 244
- Chamber of Deputies:** 27
- charity:** 24, 149, 160; and elite, 80
- chemicals:** viii
- Chiesa, Jorge Della:** 176
- children:** 53, 74, 151, 157, 158; child-care centers, 156; diet, 132; and education, 99, 106, 124, 126; and employment, 62; minors, 328; of workers, 85
- Chile:** vii, 1, 3, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 19, 20, 29, 30, 35, 38, 44, 163, 223, 229, 232, 236, 244, 245-246, 247; Act of Santiago, 234; boundary, 45; and immigration, 56; population, 55; and trade, 301, 302-303
- China, People's Republic of (PRC):** 222, 249, 299
- Chinese colonization:** 77
- Chubut (province):** 33, 48, 50, 258, 276; oil, 288; settlement of, 75
- Chubut River:** 37
- cinema. See films**
- cities and towns:** and immigrants, 73; population density of, 69
- Civil Code:** 310
- civil liberties:** 213; and Perón, 26
- civil rights:** 186
- civil service:** 186, 193-194; Superior Institute of Public Administration, 193
- clergy (see also Roman Catholic Church):** 16, 89, 90, 91, 165, 203, 212; anticlericalism, 90, 103, 166, 210; bishops, 187; shortage of priests, 92; and social change, 70, 89; "Third World" priests, 90, 202-203
- climate:** vii, 1-2, 11, 12, 38-39
- clothing:** 30, 131, 136-137, 144, 145, 212; rural, 136; woven, 182
- coal:** 37, 44, 287-288; State Coal Fields (Yacimientos Carboníferos Fiscales—

YCF): 190, 287  
Colombia: 234, 235; Bogotá, 236; and emigration, 57  
Colonel Ramón L. Falcón Police Academy: 326  
Colorado River: 31, 33, 34, 37, 38; and oil, 44; and vegetation, 41  
*colorados* faction: 27, 204  
Comahue (subregion): 33  
commerce, domestic: 310-313  
commerce, foreign. *See* trade, foreign  
Common Market. *See* European Economic Community  
communication (*see also* media, satellite, telecommunication): ix, 190, 217-230, 233, 255; and labor force, 61  
Communications Directorate: 326  
communism and communists (*see also* political parties): 171, 198, 205, 206, 210, 211, 232, 240; anticommunism, 249; financial aid, 266  
Comodoro Rivadavia (city): 34, 65, 230; minerals, 44; oil, 288  
Comte, Auguste: 168, 169, 170  
*Comunidad Nacional*: 202  
Concordancia alliance: 197, 198, 204  
Concordia (town): 36  
Congo (Kinshasa): 340  
Congress of Tucumán: 166  
conscription: 335, 337; and training, 337  
Constitution of 1853: viii, 18, 26, 76-77, 167, 185, 186, 192, 239, 320; and church, 201; and education, 100; and free expression, 225  
Constitution of 1947: 208  
Constitution of 1949: 26, 198-199  
constitutions: 17-18, 20, 27, 185, 186, 187; provincial, 191  
construction industry: 61, 73, 295; building materials, 44  
consumerism: 144-146  
cooperatives (*see also* stores and markets): 269, 310, 311, 312, 313; *acopiadores*, 312  
Córdoba (city): 9, 10, 12, 35, 46, 47, 49, 65, 84, 140, 143, 150, 153, 218, 224, 230, 244, 254, 270, 318; and education, 99, 106, 121  
Córdoba (province): 48, 49, 149, 182, 190, 210; cattle, 283; and education, 103; farming, 279, 280; nuclear power, 290  
Córdoba Manifesto of 1918: 114, 121  
Córdoba rivers: 37  
corn: 35, 277, 278; seed, 282  
Corrientes (province): 34, 48, 73, 126, 182; livestock, 283, 284  
Cortázar, Julio: 173, 174; *Casa tomada*, 174  
Corumbá (town): 36

Costantini, Humberto: 174; *Hablenme de Funes*, 174  
Council of the Indies (Consejo de las Indias): 164-165  
courts (*see also* judicial system): 315, 320, 321; criminal courts, 322-323; Federal Court of Appeal, 323  
craftsmen: 71  
credit system. *See* banks and banking  
crime: 77, 138, 318-320, 321, 322, 327; criminal procedure, 323-324  
criollos: 2, 3, 13, 14, 16, 72, 75, 76, 85, 329; pronunciation of Spanish, 79; pottery, 181; resistance against English, 165; weaving, 182  
*Cristianismo y Revolución*: 202  
crops (*see also* alfalfa, cereals, corn, fruits, grains, grapes, potatoes, sorghum, sugar, tea, tobacco, wheat): 33, 38, 274, 277-282  
Cuba: 226, 237, 238, 249, 299; aid to, 266; and blockade, 340  
Cuenca de la Plata: 36;  
cultural life (*see also* arts and crafts, dance, films, literature, music, poetry, theater): 4, 83, 150, 161-163, 183, 217; heritage, 75, 229; radio, 222; urban, 69  
currency (*see also* economy, peso): viii, 270-271; black market, 271  
curriculum: 99, 106, 107, 108, 109, 118, 124  
Cuyo (subregion): 7, 8, 35; former province, 14  
Cuzzani, Augustín: 176  
Czechoslovakia: 230, 249, 299  
dairy products: 5, 284; consumption of, 132; milk, 133, 134, 284  
dams: 290; Chocón dam, 38  
dance: 83, 165, 183; ballet, 178; *carnavalito*, 183; *fandango*, 165; *tango*, 183  
Danish church: 92  
Dario, Rubén: 170  
Darsena Norte: 339  
David, Mario: 176  
Davidorsky, Mario: 177  
death penalty: 321, 322  
death rate: 30, 52, 53, 156; of infants, 157  
debt, foreign: 264  
debt, public: 262-264  
Declaration of Reciprocal Assistance and Cooperation for the Defense of the American Nation: 236  
Declaration of the Principles of the Solidarity of America: 236  
Defensa (battle): 13  
defense (*see also* security): 315-341  
De Kooning, Willem: 179

democracy: 20, 26-28, 83, 171, 211; and press, 220  
dentists: viii, 153, 154; and emigration, 57; training of, 117, 119  
*departamentos*: 45  
depression: 19, 22, 197, 203, 233  
Derisi, Octavio N.: 172  
Derqui, Santiago: 18  
Desaguadero River: 37  
*descamisados* (see also migration): 9, 84, 195  
Diamante River: 37  
Dianda, Hilda: 177  
diet and nutrition: viii, 132-136, 156; national dishes, 135  
Directorate General of Museums and Libraries: 101  
Discepolo, Armando: 175  
discrimination: 77, 78; against communists, 210; racial, 168, 170; religious, 93  
disease (see also tuberculosis): viii, 156, 157, 158; heart, 156  
Di Vicenzo, Roberto: 147  
divorce: 26, 88, 90, 202  
doctors. See physicians  
Dominican Republic: 237  
Draghi, Lucero, Juan: 183-184; *Cancionero popular cuyano*, 183; *Las mil y una noches argentinas*, 183-184  
Drago, Luis María: 169, 233  
Dragún, Osvaldo: 176  
drainage: 37, 38  
drama (see also theater): 83, 150  
dress. See clothing  
drought: 277  
Dry Pampa: 33  
Dulce River: 37  
duties: 257; customs, 22, 262, 263; import, 13, 257, 263  
Echeverría, Esteban: 167, 168; *Dogma socialista*, 167; *El matadero*, 167; *La cautiva*, 167  
economy (see also balance of payments, depression, inflation): 6, 27, 190, 217, 240, 253-271; economic nationalism, 231; foreign assistance, 265-267; and military, 334-335; and Perón, 199; and politics, 196, 197, 211; Spanish merchants, 12; study of economics, 116-118, 161, 172  
Ecuador: 234, 237  
education (see also adult education, curriculum, primary school, scholarships, secondary school, students, teachers, technical and vocational schools, universities and colleges): viii, 4, 18, 81, 99-130, 161,

168; and birth rate, 52; budget, 99, 129, 260; costs, 58; parasistemática courses, 103, 104, 127; reform, 124-125; Subsecretariat of Education, 99, 100, 101; tuition, 105; textbooks, 105  
Eichelbaum, Samuel: 175  
Eisenhower, Milton: 239  
El Chocón-Cerros Colorados (see also dams): 276, 290  
Electoral Laws of 1912: 20  
electoral system: 20-21, 27, 192-193; direct vote, 185; District Electoral Board, 193; Electoral College, 192; National Electoral Chamber, 193  
electricity (see also hydroelectricity, nuclear power): 255, 289, 290; Greater Buenos Aires Electrical Services, 190, 255, 290; Italian-Argentine Electric Company, 290  
elite. See upper class  
Emerson, Ralph Waldo: 168  
emigration (see also migration): 8, 30, 55, 56; brain drain, 57, 161, 212; and employment, 60, 67  
employment: viii, 257; trends, 59-65  
energy: 288-299  
engineers: 64; and emigration, 57; training of, 116, 117, 118  
English language: 4, 75, 79, 107, 111, 219  
English people (see also Great Britain): vii; influence of American colonies, 12; and education, 103; and occupations, 12, 13  
Entre Ríos (province): 18, 34, 36, 39, 48, 72, 182, 279, 283, 284  
Esperanza colony: 73  
Espíritu Santo: 10  
*estancias* (see also farms, landownership, ranches): 72, 80, 81, 274-276; *estancieros*, 17; and rural labor, 85 ethnic groups (see also criollos, Indians, mestizos, mulattoes): 2, 3, 70, 72-76  
Europe and Europeans: vii, 1, 2, 7, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 25, 29, 30, 131, 198, 231, 232, 234, 235, 236, 239, 242; arts and crafts, 164, 170, 177, 180; and cultural influence, 161, 164, 166, 167, 171, 177, 217; and emigration, 8, 30, 31, 50, 53, 55, 56, 57, 169, 233; and employment, 64; heritage, 5, 69, 71, 72, 185, 189, 197, 209; intercultural exchanges, 229; and judicial system, 320; and population, 70, 84; and schools, 80; settlers, 71; and trade, 297, 303, 306  
European Economic Community (EEC): 249, 297, 298  
Eva Duarte de Perón Foundation: 24, 80, 160  
Evers, Medgar: 180

- executive branch (see also Perón): v, viii, 4, 20, 185, 186-188, 191, 194; caudillo tradition, 186; and church, 201, 202; dominance of, 185, 186, 187; intervenors, 191; veto, 188; vice president, 187, 188  
 Export-Import Bank: 265  
 exports (see also taxes): viii, ix, 5, 6, 231, 232, 233, 249, 299, 300; food, 132, 133; and trade, 298; and World War I, 21  
 Ezeiza: 339  
 Ezeiza International Airport: 2, 30, 310  
  
 Falkland Islands (see also Islas Malvinas): 45, 48, 239, 246, 251  
 Falu, Eduardo: 177  
 family life: 3, 86-88, 96, 139; *compadrazgo*, 87; of elite, 80-81; extended family, 87; personal relationships, 96; nuclear units, 70, 85; values, 94; of working class, 85  
 family planning: 58-59  
 farms and farmers (see also agriculture, *estancias*, land-ownership, ranches): 11, 37, 274-285; *contratista*, 275; and immigration, 57, 75; and labor force, 60, 63, 67; and machinery, 276; and Perón, 25; and population, 50; sharecropping, 275; and taxes, 262; tenancy, 73, 75, 85, 274, 275  
 Farrell, Edelmiro: 24  
 fascism: 205, 206, 236  
 fatalism: 30, 76, 97  
 Federal Capital (see also Buenos Aires): 29, 47, 48, 138, 140, 144, 150, 151, 153; and education, 103, 106, 110; and industry, 259; population, 53; and security, 318, 323; and unemployment, 65  
 Federal District (see also Buenos Aires): 29, 45, 188, 315, 323, 325  
 Federal Investment Council: 258  
 Federal Police: 315, 316, 317, 323, 324, 325-327; Metropolitan Security, 325; Regional Police Office, 327; Superior Police School, 326  
 Fernandez, Macedonio: 172  
 Ferrera, J. Alfredo: 168; *Bases para un plan de estudios de educación primaria*, 168  
 fertilizer, use of: 276-277, 280, 282  
 films: 92, 150-151, 176, 219; and *Alliance for Progress*, 176; and abortion, 58; foreign, 228; National Film Institute, 228; National Institute of Cinematography, 225  
 finance, public: 259-264  
 Fire Department Directorate: 326  
 Firpo, Luís: 147  
 fish and fishing: 61, 286-287; and diet, 133; *dorado* fish, 42  
 Five-Year Plan: 25  
  
 flag: 89  
 floods: 34, 36, 37, 38, 138  
 folk expression (see also arts and crafts): 161, 177, 181-184  
 Food for Peace: 265  
 food supply: 19, 131, 132, 133, 144; and exports, 22  
 Ford Foundation: 58  
 Ford Motor Company: 215  
 foreign investment: 241, 248, 249, 266-267; banks, 269  
 foreign policy (see also foreign relations): 234  
 foreign relations: 16, 17, 20, 22, 187, 209, 231-251  
 forests: 1, 31, 40-41, 274, 285-286; National Forestry Service, 286; trees, 139, 285-286  
 Formosa (province): 34, 48, 49, 65, 153, 334; cattle, 283; forests, 285  
 Forner, Raquel: 180  
 France (see also French Revolution): 12-13, 16, 23, 151, 178, 229, 233, 238, 247-248, 249, 306; and aircraft, 248; Alliance Française, 229; and financial aid, 266; immigrants from, 73; and intelligentsia, 231; language, 4, 107; and meat, 284, 299; and media, 219, 222, 224; Paris, 114, 178, 179, 180; and security, 327, 330; and trade, 303  
 Franco, Francisco: 204  
 freedom of expression: 217, 219, 220, 225-229; the press, 4, 26, 186, 218, 220, 229  
 freedom of religion: 4  
 French Revolution: 12, 89, 165  
 Frondizi, Arturo: 26-27, 28, 208, 209, 214, 221, 234, 237, 240, 243, 247, 333  
 fruits: viii, 38, 276, 277, 278, 281-282; and diet, 132, 133; exports, 301  
 Furlong, Guillermo: 171-172; *La historia de las ideas*, 171  
  
*gallegos*: 77  
 Gallegos River: 37  
 Galvez, Manuel: 170  
 gambling (see also lotteries): 97, 260; and *quiniela*, 97  
 Garay, Juan de: 10, 11  
 García Lupo, Rogelio: 172  
 Gardel, Carlos: 183  
 gas, natural: 244, 255, 289; State Gas Company, 190, 289, 255  
 gauchos: 3, 15, 16, 19, 33, 71, 166, 175, 329; gauchoesque literature, 169, 174; and migration, 51; origin, 31; and values, 94, 95, 170  
 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT): 298

- General Confederation of Labor (Confederación General de Trabajadores—CGT): 24, 26, 84, 201, 205-206, 207, 212, 256
- General Directorate of Penal Institutions: 328
- General Economic Confederation: 201, 256
- General San Martín (city): 47
- General Secretariat Directorate: 326
- German Democratic Republic (East Germany): 230, 249
- German Evangelical Synod: 75, 92
- Germani, Gino: 172
- German language: 4, 79, 219
- Germany: 21, 22, 23, 24, 190, 233, 236, 248; immigration from, 69, 70, 73, 75, 76; influences, 204, 217; and media, 222; and military, 231, 232, 329, 330; settlers from, vii, 69
- Germany, Federal Republic of (West Germany): 151, 224-225, 248, 249; Goethe Institute, 229-230; and financial aid, 266; and meat imports, 284; and security, 327; and trade, 302
- Gerstein, Noemi: 180
- Gianneo, Luis: 177
- Gilardi, Gilardo: 177
- Gillette Foundation of Argentina: 58
- Ginastera, Alberto: 161, 177; *Beatrix Cenci*, 177; *Bommarzo*, 177
- The Godfather*: 225
- Goren, Ibar: 171
- Gorostiza, Carlos: 176
- government (see also executive branch, judicial system, legislative branch, provinces): viii, 6, 17, 185-194; control of industry, 208, 257; and economy, 256-257; and media, 223, 225, 228-229; and military, 185, 186, 187, 195, 196, 206, 208, 210, 211-213
- grains (see also alfalfa, cereals, corn, sorghum, wheat): viii, ix, 74, 273, 277, 278-280, 300, 313; marketing, 312; National Grain Board, 312
- Gran Chaco Plain: 1, 34
- Granbajo de Gualicho: 34
- grapes (see also vineyards, wine): 278, 281
- Great Britain (see also English people, Falkland Islands, United Kingdom): 8, 12, 16, 21, 22, 45, 150, 151, 152, 231, 233, 238, 239, 241, 242, 246-247, 249, 332; British Council, 230; immigration from, 70, 75; London, 25, 180, 268; use of measurements, 313; and media, 224; and railroads, 233, 306; Scottish settlers, 75; and security, 327, 330; settlements, 33; Welsh settlers, 73, 75, 77, 92
- gringos: 77
- gross domestic product (GDP): viii, 5, 47, 254, 255, 261, 273
- gross national product (GNP): 5, 27, 144, 207, 258; and military, 334; and Perón, 25
- Gruggetti, Faustino: 179
- guanaco: 42
- Guaraní language: 79
- guatambu tree: 40
- Guatemala: 237
- guazú pucú animal: 41
- guerrillas: 1, 196, 212, 214-215, 315, 316, 317, 318, 329; and the church, 91, 203; kidnappings, 212; Montoneros, 316, 317; and priests, 91
- Guevara, Ernesto (Ché): 173, 237, 317
- Guido, Beatriz: 176
- Guido, José María: 27
- Giliraldes, Ricardo: 169, 170; *Don Segundo do Sombra*, 169
- Gulf of San Jorge: 44
- Gulf of San Juan: vegetation, 41
- Guyana: 46
- Haiti: 237
- health (see also diet and nutrition, medicine, pharmaceuticals, physicians, welfare): viii, 30, 52-53, 151-158; and budget, 260; and education, 100; mental, 58; programs, 131, 151-153, 154
- Hernandez, José: 169; *Martín Fierro*; 169
- highways (see also roads): ix, 30, 46, 297, 306, 308
- Hitler, Adolf: 93
- Hlito, Alfred: 179
- holidays: 142-143; Corpus Christi Day, 202
- honey: 285
- horses: 11, 85, 94, 285; and farm equipment, 276; horsemeat, 285, 299, 300; and Indians, 71; and sports, 147-148
- hospitals and clinics: 59, 151, 152, 155; Foundling Hospital, 165; Rawson Hospital, 59; segregation, 78
- housing: 88, 137-142, 144, 257; and birth rate, 52; construction of, 73; *conventillos*, 86; and employment, 66; financing, 268; the *rancho*, 140; rents, 138, 139, 142; shortage of, 132, 137, 138, 142; *villas miserias*, 86, 138, 139, 140, 142
- Houssay, Bernardo: 171, 173
- Humahuaca (gorge): 10
- Humanists: 205
- Humid Pampa: 33; settlement of, 46
- Hungary: 249
- hunting: 61, 286-287; by Indians, 71

- hydrocarbons: 44
- hydroelectricity (see also electricity, nuclear power): 36-37, 38, 246, 276, 289; Argentine-Uruguay Salto Grande Hydroelectric Project, 265; Chocón complex, 38; New Hydroelectrical Company, 190
- hydrography (see also lakes, rivers, water supply): 36-38
- Iglesias, Horacio: 147
- Iguazu Falls: 313
- Illía, Arturo Umberto: 6, 27-28, 211, 234, 240, 243
- Imaz, José Luis: 174; *Los que mandan*, 174
- immigration (see also migration): 2, 3, 8-9, 18, 19, 30, 48-49, 55-58, 69, 72-76, 229; from abroad, 48, 51, 53, 55, 72; and politics, 210; seasonal, 56, 72, 78; urban, 47, 197
- impeachment; 188; and press, 229
- imports: ix, 5, 232, 240; foreign importers, 265, 311; and taxes, 262; and trade, 298, 301-302, 303
- Incas: 10, 162-163
- income: 51, 52, 145; in Buenos Aires, 47; distribution of, 131, 254; and labor, 206-207; and middle class, 82; per capita, 254
- independence: 8, 12-14
- India: 300
- Indians: vii, 2, 3, 5, 10, 16, 18, 70, 78, 79, 86, 162, 168, 170, 183, 330, 331; Alacaluf, 78; Araucanian, 78, 163; arts and crafts, 163-164; Aymara, 162; Calchaqui, 10, 163, 183; Chaco, 70; Colla, 78; Diaguitas, 163; and folk Catholicism, 92; Incas, 10, 162-163; Kaainguas, 182; language, 79; Onas, 78; Pampa, 78; Quechuan, 31, 78, 79, 162; Tehuelches, 78; towns, 11; tribes, 78; Yahgan, 78
- individualism: 94; and personalism, 96
- industry (see also automobiles, construction industry, leather, manufacturing, tobacco, wood): viii, 5, 273, 287-295; and government owned, 190, 200-201, 255; and labor force, 61, 63, 64, 66
- inflation (see also economy): 6, 131, 145, 201, 211, 213, 253, 271, 292, 311; and Perón, 254
- Ingenieros, José: 169, 170; *El Hombre mediocre*, 169
- insurance: 267, 269; and Perón, 198
- intellectual development: 164-166; the Enlightenment, 165; and media, 220; monarchists, 166; nationalism, 161; renovation and liberalism, 165; revolution, 165-166
- intellectual expression: 166-175; conservatism, 169; nativism and nationalism, 170-171; positivism, 168-169; romantic liberalism, 167; synthesis and divergence, 170; trends, 171-175
- intellectuals: 173
- Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace: 235-236
- Inter-American Defense Board: 213
- Inter-American Development Bank (IDB): viii, 238, 265-266; and universities, 119, 122
- Inter-American Peace Force: 237
- Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty): viii, 236
- Interministerial Foreign Trade Committee (Comisión Interministerial para el Comercio Exterior—CICE): 298
- International Bank for Reconstruction and Development—IBRD): viii, 266, 308
- International Committee on European Migration (ICEM): 55
- International Finance Corporation, 266
- International Labor Organization (ILO): 53, 59, 62, 63
- International Monetary Fund: viii, 209, 250, 265
- International Planned Parenthood Federation: 59
- Intransigent Radical Civic Union: 26
- Investigations Directorate: 326
- Irala, Domingo Martínez de: 10
- Ireland: settlers from, 73
- Irigoyen, Hipólito: 20, 21, 203, 204, 208; and church, 201, 202; and military, 331
- iron: 36, 43, 288; Argentina Joint Iron and Steel Company (Sociedad Mixta Siderurgica Argentina—SOMISA), 190; El Mutún deposits, 246; Patagonian Iron of Sierra Grande, 288; Sierra Grande Iron Ore Company, 190, 288; Zapla deposits, 288
- irrigation: 37, 39, 276, 277, 281, 282
- Isla Grande: 45
- Islas Malvinas (see also Falkland Islands): 45, 246, 251
- Israel: intercultural exchanges, 229
- Isthmus of Panama: 8
- Italy: vii, 150, 178, 179, 230, 248, 249, 279, 332; and banking, 268; and Common Market, 249; and financial aid, 266; and immigration from, 19, 69, 70, 72, 75, 231; influences, 203, 204; Italian people, 2, 3, 4, 8; and media, 219, 222, 224; and Perón, 22, 23; and trade, 302
- Ituel River: 37



- Japan: 177, 234; and colonization, 77; and financial aid, 266, 308; intercultural exchanges, 229; and media, 219; Tokyo, 2, 178; and trade, 300, 303
- Jewish Colonization Association: 76
- Jews (see also Israel): vii, 4, 76, 171; Jewish religion, 92-93; and media, 219, 221
- Juaretche, Arturo: 174; *El medio pelo*, 174
- judicial system (see also courts, jurisprudence): viii, 185, 188, 189-190, 191, 320-324; judges, 187, 189, 193, 315, 322, 323; jury, 190, 315; Supreme Court, 185, 187, 189, 190, 199, 211, 266, 322
- Jujuy (province): 35, 37, 48, 49, 53, 79, 276; climate, 39; farming, 281; minerals, 43, 44, 287; oil, 288
- jurisdicciones*: 46
- jurisprudence: 161; Roman law, 164; Spanish law, 164
- Justo, Agustín P.: 22, 203-204
- Justo, Juan Bautista: 170, 210; *Teoría y práctica de la historia*, 170
- juvenile delinquency: 319-320, 323
- Kagel, Mauricio: 177
- kidnapping: 212, 317, 321
- kinship: 70; of elite, 80; and *estancia*, 85; in family-dominated companies, 96
- Klee, Paul: 179
- Kohn, David: 176
- Korea, Democratic People's Republic of (North Korea): 249, 300
- Korn, Alejandro: 169
- Kosice, Gyula: 180
- La Matanza (city): 47, 140
- La Pampa (province): 33, 38, 48; farming, 279; livestock, 283, 284; oil, 288
- La Plata: 8, 47, 49, 121, 163, 164, 165, 254; viceroyalty of 11, 12, 14
- La Prensa: 26, 218, 220, 226, 227
- La Rioja (city): 44
- La Rioja (province): 35, 48
- Labarden, Manuel José de: 165; "Oda al Paraná", 165; "Siripo," 165
- labor force (see also General Confederation of Labor, strikes, working conditions): viii-ix, 2, 5, 20, 21, 29, 30, 54; and crime, 319; *empleados*, 60; exploitation of, 78; and immigrants, 73; *obreros*, 60; and Perón, 23, 196, 199, 204; and politics, 195, 196, 198, 204, 205-207; rural, 85-86; structure of, 59-68; and students, 205; urban groups, 69-70
- labor unions: 6, 186, 200, 234, 255; health and welfare, 152, 154, 159; hotels and camps, 149; and media, 226; and Perón, 23, 24, 25, 85, 215; and personalism, 96; rural, 85, and teachers, 130
- Laferrere, Gregorio de: 175
- lakes (see also Mar Chiquita): 36, 38, 75, 149, 314; of Andes, 39, 42; largest, 37, 38; and salt, 43
- Lamas, Carlos Saavedra: 22
- Land Settlement Institute (Instituto de Colonización): 50-51
- landownership (see also *estancias*, oligarchies, ranches): 20, 50, 73, 74, 80, 81, 255, 256, 262, 273-276; government owned, 274; land distribution, 15; and Perón, 25
- language: 4, 79; study of, 109, 123
- Lanús (city): 47
- Lanusse, Alejandro A.: 6, 112, 122, 212, 213, 243, 245, 249, 253
- Lastiri, Raul: 100, 215, 228, 229, 247, 254
- Latin America: vii, 1, 25, 31, 58, 74, 89, 131, 139, 145, 169, 185, 229, 231, 232, 238, 241; and church, 90, 92; economic aide to, ix; and education, 101, 108, 111, 114, 116, 118; employment, 60, 62, 63, 66, 67; and income, 52; population, 49, 52, 53, 55; and trade, 303
- Latin American Economic Commission: 238
- Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA): viii, 232, 238, 297, 301, 304-305; regional organizations, 305
- Latin American Trade Union and Workers Association (Agrupación de Trabajadores Latino-Americanos Sindicalizados—ATLAS): 234
- Le Corbusier: 181
- Le Parc, Julio: 161, 180
- lead: 43
- League of Nations: 250
- leather: 40, 291, 295; craftsmen, 182
- legislative branch: viii, 185, 188-189, 192; Chamber of Deputies, 185, 187, 188, 189, 209, 210; National Congress, 198, 208, 211; Senate, 185, 187, 188
- lepacho* tree: 40
- Levene, Ricardo: 171
- Levingston, Roberto Marcelo: 212, 213, 243; and inflation, 253
- libraries and librarians: 101, 219; training of, 118
- life expectancy: 52
- Light and Power Workers Union of Buenos Aires: 256
- Lima, Vicente Solano: 215
- Limay River: 276
- Liniers, Santiago: 12
- literacy: viii, 4, 99, 104, 125-127, 168, 217; among workers, 56, 67; and class struc-

- ture, 74  
 literature (see also gauchos): 30, 161, 162, 169-175; alienation, 174; Association of May, 167; *Historia Argentina Contemporanea, 1862-1930*, 172; novelists, 170, 173  
 Littoral: 33, 163  
 livestock (see also beef, cattle, meat, ranches sheep): viii, 11, 12, 274, 279, 282-285; and elite, 80; hogs, 284; llamas, 285; marketing, 312; pasture rentals, 275; and Perón, 25  
 living conditions: 131-160  
 Lomas de Zamora (city): 47  
 Lonardi, Eduardo: 26, 199  
 Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth: 168  
 Lopez Buchardo, Carlos: 177  
 Lopez y Planes, Vicente: 165  
 Los Patos (pass): 14  
 lotteries (see also gambling): 149, 160, 259, 260; and films, 225; and military draft, 337; *quiniela*, 150  
 lower class (see also rural society): 69, 72, 82, 84-86; *cabecitas negras*, 86; and education, 120, 124; marriages, 88; and military, 330; and mortgages, 142; and politics, 207; Spanish immigrants, 71; values, 96-97  
 Lugones, Leopoldo: 170  
 Lutheran Church: 75  
 Lynch, Benito: 170; *El romance de un gaucho*, 170  
  
 Macció, Romulo: 179  
 Madryn: 339  
 Magallanes Basin: 44  
 magazines. See periodicals  
 Magellan, Ferdinand: 10  
 Maipu: 15  
 Maldonado, Tomás: 179  
 Malharro, Martin A.: 179  
 Mallea, Eduardo: 174; *La historia de una pasión argentina*, 174  
 Mallmann, Carlos: 173  
 Malvinas Basin: 44  
 Mann, Horace: 18, 168  
 Manrique, Francisco: 214, 215  
 manufacturing (see also automobiles, leather, steel, tobacco, wood products): viii, 11, 190, 290-295; aircraft, 293; cement, 291, 292, 295; chemicals, 292, 293; Dow Chemical Company of Argentina, 293; and economy, 255; exports, 301; food processing, 291, 294; and labor force, 61, 64, 66, 256; and military, 334; paper, 295; plastics, 294; shipyards, 292; and Spanish merchants, 12; textiles, 65, 74, 291, 292, 294; tractors, 292  
 Mar Chiquita: 37, 38  
 Mar del Plata (city): 42, 50, 141, 149, 150, 181, 224, 309  
 March of Constitution and Liberty, September 1945: 206  
 Marechal, Leopoldo: 173; *Antigona Veliz*, 176; *Megafon*; o, *La guerra*, 175  
 marriage: 87, 88; of elite, 80; intermarriage, 80, 93  
 Martín García (island): 24, 33, 36; sovereignty, 45  
 Martínez, Ezequiel: 214  
 Martínez Zuviría, Gustavo: 171  
 Marxism (see also socialism): 122, 170, 171, 173, 196, 205, 215, 316  
 Mazorca organization: 17  
 meat (see also beef, cattle, horses, livestock, sheep): ix, 5, 16, 312; Argentine Meat Producers Association, 284; consumption of, 132, 133; exports, 301, 302; Liniers Stockyards, 284; meat-packing industry, 284; poultry, 133, 135  
 media (see also communication, newspapers, periodicals, printing and publishing, radio, telecommunication, television): 4, 217, 218, 219, 227, 228; Federal Radio and Television Council (Consejo Federal de Radio y Televisión—CONFERT), 228; and landowners, 200; TELAM, 227, 229  
 medicine (see also dentists, health, hospitals and clinics, nurses and nursing, pharmaceuticals, physicians, welfare): viii, 326  
 men: 53, 88; clubs, 148, 149; *concuñados* relationship, 87 dress, 136; education, 110, 126, 127; and employment, 60, 62, 63, 158; fatherhood, 52; life expectancy of, 52, 53; *machismo*, 94; patriarchal role, 86; and population, 52  
 Mendoza (city): 35, 44, 46, 65, 115, 138, 140, 150, 224, 230, 244, 270, 318  
 Mendoza, Pedro de: 10, 11  
 Mendoza (province): 35, 37, 48, 50; and education, 103; farming, 276, 277, 281, 282; and Japanese, 77; minerals, 43, 44, 287; oil, 288  
 merchant marine: 309  
 merluza fish: 42  
 Mesopotamian provinces. See Argentine Mesopotamia  
 mestizos: 2, 3, 69, 70, 71, 86, 168  
 Mexico: 5, 11, 89, 163, 219, 222, 225, 234, 250; and art, 178, 180; and emigration, 57; University of, 114  
 middle class (see also porteños): 3, 5, 21, 69, 74, 75, 81-83, 144; bourgeois minority, 13;

and education, 106, 120; and family life, 70, 86, 87; and literature, 171, 174; and military, 330, 332, 335; and Perón, 24; and politics, 195, 197, 199, 200, 202, 203, 206, 207, 208, 209; values, 94, 96-97, 318

Middle East: vii; immigrants from, 78; peacekeeping force, 340; and trade, 303

migration: 1, 50, 76, 84, 86, 195; external, 55-58, 60; rural, 47, 69; urban, 49, 63, 69, 198

military. *See* armed forces

Military Academy of Saint Cyr: 330

Mills, James: 167

minerals (*see also* coal, hydrocarbons, iron, lead): 7, 43-44, 287

mining: 46, 255, 287-288; government control of, 208; and labor force, 61

minister of foreign affairs and worship: 4

ministries: 186, 187, 194, 259; Agriculture and Livestock, 273; Culture and Education, 99, 100, 101, 109, 113, 121, 122, 124; Economy, 253; Foreign Relations, 250; Interior, 193, 325, 328; Labor, 141; National Defense, 102, 223, 334; Public Health, 59; Public Works, 293; Social Welfare, 86, 151

Minujín, Martha: 179

miscegenation: 71

Misiones (province): 14, 34, 48, 49, 157; and education, 107; and Japanese, 77; population, 53, 75; rainfall, 39

Mitre, Bartolomé: 18, 19, 20, 107-108, 218-219; and army, 330

Molinari, Jorge: 177

Monroe Doctrine: 250

Monte Caseros (battle): 17

monte vegetation: 41

Montevideo Treaty: 304

Monzón, Carlos: 147

Morel, Carlos: 179

Moreno, Mariano: 164, 166; *Representacion de los hacendados*, 166

Morón (city): 47

motion pictures. *See* films

motor vehicles (*see also* automobiles): viii, 5; exports, 301

mountains (*see also* Andes, Sierras): vii, 33, 34, 35

mulattoes: 2, 72

Murena, Héctor A.: 174; *Epitalamica*, 174

Muro, Fernández: 180; *Shot in the Back*, 180

Murua, Lautaro: 176

music: 83, 163, 177-178, 183-184; broadcasting, 218, 228; Colon Opera House, 150; folk, 177; orchestras, 178

Mussolini, Benito: 332

Mutún iron mines: 36

Napoleon Bonaparte: 12, 14

National Agrarian Council: 275

National Commission of Culture: 183

National Council of Education: 106

National Council on Technical Education: 110

National Development Council (Consejo Nacional de Desarrollo—CONADE) (*see also* economy): 101, 105, 108, 129, 156, 257-258

National Directorate of Tourism: 146

National Gendarmerie: ix, 315, 316, 327, 334, 338, 339, 341; academy of, 337

National Health System (Sistema Nacional de Salud): 151

National High School (Colegio Nacional): 108

National Health Council: 151

National Housing Fund: 141, 142

National Institute of Anthropology: 183

National Institute of Industrial Technology: 67

National Institute of Land Settlement and Tenure: 275

National Institute of Language Training: 123

National Institute of Physical Education: 148

National Intelligence Center: 324-325

National Maritime Prefecture: 315, 334

National Meat Board: 133

National Medical Career (Carrera Médica Nacional): 151

National Mortgage Bank: 141, 275

National Planning Council (*see also* economy): 102, 257

National Security Council (Consejo Nacional de Seguridad—CONASE): 211, 325, 333

National Social Security Institute: 158

National Social Works Institute (Instituto Nacional de Obras Sociales—INOS): 152

National Territory of Tierra del Fuego (*see also* Tierra del Fuego): 45-46, 48

nationalism (*see also* intellectual expression): 12, 13, 77, 96; and Perón, 204, 218, 227, 228; ultra nationalism, 23

Navazio, Walter de: 179

navy: ix, 240, 316, 332, 334, 339; coast guard, 315; and industry, 335; mainshore bases, 339, 341; Naval Academy, 330, 336; Naval Aviation School, 336; Naval Infantry Corps, 341; Naval War College, 337; shipyards, 293; Trelew Naval Air

- Base, 213  
 Nazi refugees: 75  
 Negroes: 2, 168  
 nepotism: 85  
 Netherlands: 249, 299; and financial aid, 266; trade, 302  
 Neuquén (province): 33, 48; and asphalt, 44; climate, 39; and coal, 44; farming, 282; and forests, 40; and minerals, 287; and oil, 288  
 Neuquén River: 276  
 neutrality: 9, 21, 22, 231, 236, 242, 243, 245; during Chaco War, 244; in World War I, 245  
 News Organization of Argentina (Organización Noticiosa Argentina—ONA): 319  
 newspapers: 4, 76, 79, 83, 162, 165, 171, 217, 218, 219, 220-221; *Buenos Aires Herald*, 219, 221, 229; *Clarín*, 220, 221, 228, 229; *Crítica*, 226; *Crónica*, 220, 221, 227; *El Cronista Comercial*, 221; and educational reform, 125; foreign language, 221; and free press, 225; *El Mundo*, 229; *La Nación*, 171, 218, 220, 226, 229; *Nuestra Palabra*, 222; and Perón, 26, 199, 220, 221; *La Prensa*, 26, 218, 220, 226, 227; provincial, 221; *La Razón*, 220; *Síntesis*, 221; *Standard*, 219; wire services, 221  
 Nicaragua: 234  
 Nobel prize: 173  
 nomads: 3, 163  
 North America: 1, 5, 12, 42, 131, 217; and employment, 64; oil companies, 26  
 Northwest Andes: 34-35, 49, 149, 162, 163, 182; drainage, 38  
 nuclear power (see also atomic energy, electricity): 234, 289-290; weapons, 238  
 nurses and nursing: 153, 154-155; and emigration, 57  
 oil. See petroleum  
 oilseeds: viii, ix, 5, 278, 280-281; exports, 301; sunflowers, 280  
 oligarchies (see also landownership): 19, 20, 169, 206, 207; Alliance for Liberty and Progress (Alianza para la Libertad y el Progreso), 200; Coordinated Action of Free Enterprise Institutions (Acción coordinada de las Instituciones Empresarias Libres), 200; landowners, 195, 196, 197, 200, 201; and military, 332; and politics, 207  
 Olympic games: 147  
 ombu thistle: 41  
 Onganía, Juan Carlos: 28, 47, 66, 93, 209, 211, 212, 213, 232, 234, 237, 240, 243, 288; and censorship, 225, 227; and church, 202, 203; and economy, 253; and military, 332-333; and opera, 177  
 Organization of American States (OAS): viii, 127, 236, 237, 238  
 Orrego, Antenos: 174; *Hacia un humanismo americano*, 174  
 Ortíz, Raul Scalabrini: 174; *El hombre que esta solo y espera*, 174  
 Ortíz, Roberto M. 22  
 Pacific Ocean: 8, 34; and climate, 39; drainage, 37  
 painters: 178-180  
 Palacios, Alfredo: 171  
 Palermo Park: 150  
 palo borracho tree: 40  
 Pampa (see also Dry Pampa, Humid Pampa, La Pampa province): 1, 3, 8, 11, 12, 16, 19, 29, 30, 31-33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 71, 167, 179; climate, 39; farms, 73, 75, 274, 277, 279; and railroads, 46-47, 49; vegetation, 40, 139; wildlife, 42  
 pampero: 39  
 Pan-American conferences: 235  
 Pan American Health Organization (PAHO): 57, 141, 153, 154, 155  
 Panama: 1, 12, 234, 251  
 Panama Canal Zone: 240, 251, 338  
 Paraguay: 1, 7, 8, 13, 16, 18, 19, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 41, 163, 223, 232, 234, 237, 241, 242, 243, 244-245, 246; aid to, 266; Asunción, 241; boundary, 44-45; migration, 78, 86; population, 46; and trade, 305  
 Paraguay River: 10, 18, 36, 245, 305; boundary, 45; and immigration, 56; and wildlife, 41  
 Paraguayan War: 18, 330  
 Paraná River: 10, 33, 34, 36, 244, 246, 285, 305, 309; boundary, 45; fishing, 42; and recreation, 146;  
 Paraná School: 168  
 partidos: 29, 45, 46  
 pasta tierna grasses: 41  
 pasto duro grasses: 41  
 Patagonia: 8, 31, 33-34, 35, 36, 47, 132, 133, 163, 247, 259, 268; climate, 39; and economy, 258; farms, 73; and Indians, 70; livestock, 283, 284; minerals, 287; petroleum, 44; and population, 49, 50; ports, 50; ranches, 56; rivers, 37-38; schools, 105; vegetation, 40, 139; and the Welsh, 75  
 patron: 94  
 Pavón (battle): 18  
 Payro, Roberto: 175  
 Paz Estenssoro, Victor: 244

Paz, Juan Carlos: 177  
 Pelligrini, Carlos: 19, 20  
 penal code: 320-322  
 Peñalba, Alicia: 180  
 pensions. *See* retirement  
 People's Revolutionary Army (Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo—ERP): 215, 316, 317, 339; and media, 228  
 periodicals: 4, 83, 162, 219, 221-222, 227; *Análisis*, 222; in Buenos Aires, 60, 66; *Confirmado*, 222; *Gente*, 222; *Martín Fierro*, 179; *Mercado*, 222; and politics, 222; *Siete Días*, 222; *Sur*, 175; *Tía Vicenta*, 227  
 Perón, Eva Duarte (*see also* Eva Duarte de Perón Foundation): 23-24, 26, 86, 96, 160, 198, 204, 206, 222, 226; *La Razón de mi Vida*, 160  
 Perón, Juan Domingo: v, vii-viii, 1, 6, 9, 22-26, 27, 95-96, 160, 185, 186, 190, 195, 196, 198, 199, 200, 204, 207, 208, 210, 213-216; and defense, 315, 332, 333; and economy, 254, 256, 257, 258, 259, 261, 269, 271; and elite, 81; and foreign relations, 231, 232, 234, 239-240, 241, 243, 244, 246, 249-250, 251; and Jews, 93; *justicialismo*, 171; and labor class, 84, 86; and media, 218, 222, 223, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229; and middle class, 83; regime, 5; and Roman Catholic Church, 70, 90, 201-204; and theater, 176; and voting, 192  
 Perón, María Estela (Isabelita): 95-96, 215  
 Peronist Armed Forces (Fuerzas Armadas Peronistas—FAP): 316, 317  
 Peronist Revolutionary Front (Frente Revolucionario Peronista—FRP): 316  
 Peronist University Youth (Juventud Universitaria Peronista—JUP): 122, 214  
 Peru: 5, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 124, 163, 164, 222, 229, 244; aid to, 266; Lima, 8, 9, 12, 15, 19, 238; settlements, 46; Upper Peru, 10, 13; viceroyalty of, 7, 12, 89  
 peso: viii, 27, 253, 270-271  
*petiribi* tree: 40  
 petroleum: 27, 44, 190, 199, 209, 240, 288-290; Bahía Blanca Petrochemical Corporation, 190; and Bolivia, 244; and employment, 66; and government, 208; Mosconi Petrochemical Corporation, 190; State Oil Fields (Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales—YPE), 190, 255, 288-289  
 Pettoruti, Emilio: 179  
 pharmaceuticals: 155-156, 160, 294; opium poppies, 282  
 physicians: viii, 58, 152, 153, 154; and emigration, 57; training of, 116, 118  
 Piedmont: 1, 7, 31, 33, 34-35, 37, 49; climate, 39; coal, 44; drainage, 38; salt, 43; vegetation, 41; wildlife, 42  
 Pilcomayo River: 45  
 Pizarnik, Alejandra: 175  
 plantations: 50, 56; and labor force, 60  
 poetry: 165, 170, 175  
 Point Dungeness: 45  
 Poland: 230, 249, 299  
 police (*see also* Federal Police, National Gendarmerie): ix, 315, 317, 318, 324-327; academy, 326; chief, 212; directorates, 326  
 political parties: 6, 20, 27, 193, 207-211; Argentine Communist Party, 208, 210, 222; Catholic Union (Unión Católica), 201; Christian Democratic Party, 202; Conservative Party, 201, 209, 331; Democratic Socialist Party, 210; Intransigent Radical Civic Union (Unión Cívica Radical Intransigente—UCRI), 208, 209; Intransigent Renovation Movement (Movimiento de Intransigencia y Renovación—MIR), 208; Justicialists Liberation Front (Frente Justicialista de Liberación—FREJULI), 214; Justicialist Party, 96; Labor Party (Partido *whorista*), 198, 207, 214; and military, 331, 332; Movement of Integration and Development (Movimiento de Integración y Desarrollo—MID), 209, 214; National Autonomous Party (Partido Autonomista Nacional—PAN), 20, 209; National Democratic Party, 209-210; National Federation of Parties, 210; People's Radical Civic Union (Unión Cívica Radical del Pueblo—UCRP), 27, 208, 209; Peronist Party (Partido Peronista), 24, 27, 207; Peronist Popular Union (Unión Popular), 207, 209, 214; Popular Conservative Democratic Party, 210, 214; Popular Federalist Alliance, 214; Progressive Democratic Party (Partido Demócrata Progresista—PDP), 198, 210; Radical Civic Union (Unión Cívica Radical—UCR), 6, 20, 21, 27, 83, 93, 100, 195, 196, 197, 198, 200, 201, 203, 205, 208-209, 214, 240, 331; Radical Party, *see* Radical Civic Union; Revolutionary Christian Party, 214; Socialist Party, 90, 93, 195, 198, 206, 210, 218; Union of the Argentine People (Unión del Pueblo Argentino—UDEPA), 210; United Officers Group (Grupo de Oficiales Unidos—GOU), 22; Women's Peronist Party (Partido Peronista Femenino), 207  
 political unrest (*see also* guerrillas, revolutionary groups, violence): 7, 11, 19-22, 26

- Popham, Commodore Home: 12  
 population: vii, 1, 2, 3, 7, 30, 35, 37; density, 46; of elderly, 62, 63; gains, 48-49; and internal mobility, 69; slow down of, 51-53; urban, 47-50, 69  
 porteños: 2, 3, 4, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 72, 77, 166, 167; language of, 78; and literature, 170; and politics, 197, 206, 212; and social schism, 74; women, 24  
 ports (see also Buenos Aires): 49, 50, 72, 307, 309, 315; General Port Authority, 190; river, 50, 309  
 Portugal: 241; language, 107  
 Posadas (city): 65  
 post office: 269; National Postal Savings Fund, 269  
 potatoes: 278, 282  
 poverty: 77, 160; marginal, 86  
 Prebisch, Raul: 161, 172, 238, 250  
 prejudice. See discrimination  
 presidency. See executive branch, Perón  
 press. See newspapers  
 Prete, Juan del: 179  
 price controls: 257  
 primary school (see also education): viii, 28, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106-107, 123, 124, 125, 127; and child labor, 62; preprimary schools, 105-106; qualification of teachers, 128; and working class, 84  
 Primoli, Juan Bautista: 163  
 printing and publishing: 4, 218, 219, 221-222  
 prisons: 327-328  
 professional workers: 82  
 proselytism: 92  
 Prostitution: 90, 202  
 Protestantism: 4, 70, 92-93  
 provinces: 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 28, 70; banks, 268-269; courts, 320; economy of, 258-261; government, 185, 186, 191-192; governors, 191; mayors, 191; police, 327, 328; prisons, 328; and security, 315, 318, 329, 330  
 Pucciarelli, Mario: 179  
 Puerto Belgrano: 339  
 Puerto Madryn: 259  
 Puerto Rico: 251  
 Pueyrredón, Juan Martín: 166  
 Pueyrredón, Prilidiano: 179  
 Puig, Manuel: 174; *La traición de Rita Hayworth*, 174  
 pulgón fly: 42  
 Quadros, Janio: 243  
 quebracho tree: 40, 286  
 quebradas: 35  
 Quequén Grande River: 37  
 Quesada, Ernesto: 169  
 Quilmes (city): 16, 47  
 Quin, Arden: 179  
*quiniela*: 97, 150  
 radio: 4, 146, 162, 178, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222-223, 326; and Perón, 199  
 railroads: ix, 1, 6, 8, 18, 19, 20, 22, 25, 30, 36, 46, 47, 50, 198, 212, 234, 244, 259, 297, 306-308, 309; Argentine Railways, 190, 293, 306; construction, 73, 74; featherbedding, 66, 306; and government, 208; rehabilitation, 308; Underground Railways, 190  
 rainfall: vii, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39  
 Ramirez, Ariel: 177; *Misa Criolla*, 177  
 Ramos Mejía, José María: 169  
 ranches (see also estancias): 50, 56, 72, 283, 312; and labor force, 60  
 recreation: 146-151  
 Reformists: 205  
 Regional Development Fund: 261  
 Regueles, Marisa: 177-178  
 religion (see also clergy, Jews, Protestantism, Roman Catholic Church): 92-93; and discrimination, 93; festivals, 149; holidays, 142-143; and Perón, 23  
 resources, natural (see also crops, minerals): 1, 7, 190, 334  
 retailing (see also stores and markets): 297, 311  
 retirement: 158, 159; of military, 341; pensions, 63, 158, 159, 193  
 Revolution of 1810: 13-15, 165  
 Revolutionary Armed Forces (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias—FAR), 316, 317  
 revolutionary groups: 316-318, 339  
 Río de la Plata: 5, 9, 10, 11, 33, 36, 37, 49, 245, 246, 247, 297, 305, 308; boundary, 45; fishing, 42; forests, 40; housing, 140; and *pampero*, 39; ports, 50  
 Río Gallegos (city): 44, 47  
 Río Grande: 339  
 Río Negro (province): 33, 48; farming, 276, 277, 282; iron ore, 43, 288; and navigation, 38; oil, 288  
 Río Negro River: 34, 37, 38, 50, 276  
 Río Santiago: 339  
 Río Turbio: 37; coal, 44, 287  
 Rivadavia, Bernardino: 15, 166  
 Rivarola, Pantaleón: 165  
 River Plate Basin Group: 36, 37, 231, 241, 242, 245, 304-205  
 rivers (see also Colorado, Paraná, Paraguay, Río de la Plata, Río Negro, Uruguay): vii, 34, 35, 36-38, 49, 307, 308-309; State River

Fleet, 190; traffic, ix, 36  
roads (see also highways): 22, 162, 97, 306, 307, 308; construction of, 73  
Roca, Julio A.: 19, 20; and military, 330, 331  
Roca-Runciman Agreement of 1933; 233, 250, 332  
Rojas, Ricardo: 170; *Eurindia*, 170, 174  
Roman Catholic Church (see also clergy): vii, 4-5, 26, 70, 74, 89-92, 165, 187, 248; and acculturation, 76; Athenaeum of the Republic, 202; and education, 100, 103, 105, 115; and elite, 80; and the English, 12; and family stability, 88; and Jesuits, 163, 164, 171; and media, 225; and nationalists, 202; and Perón, 26; and politics, 195, 198, 200, 201-204, 211; and Rosas regime, 16; and scholasticism, 164; and "Third World," 202-203; values, 93; and welfare, 160  
Romania: 249, 299  
Romero, Francisco: 172  
Romero, Jose Luis: 171; *La historia de los partidos políticas*, 171  
Rosario (city): 9, 10, 33, 37, 47, 49, 65, 84, 140, 150, 210, 224, 230, 254, 270, 309, 317, 318; and education, 99  
Rosas, Juan Manuel de: 8, 15-17, 162, 168, 171, 186, 201, 233, 239, 247, 329; dictatorship, 167  
Rousseau, Jean Jacques: 166; *Social Contract*, 166  
Rouvray, Claude Henri de: 167  
Rucci, José: 317, 338-339  
Ruiz, Oscar: 181  
rural society: viii, 2, 84-86, 88, 274; birth and death rates, 53-55; the "camp," 33; diet, 132, 135; dress, 136; and education, 99, 105; and employment, 62; family life, 3; and labor force, 85-86; and politics, 197; and revolution, 14, and social structure, 74-75; traditional value, 93; and transportation, 306, 308; unrest, 275; urban migration, 5, 30, 47, 70; and welfare, 158  
Russia (see also Soviet Union): immigrants from, 73, 76, 93  
Sábato, Ernesto: 173; *Sobre heroes y tumbas*, 173  
Saenz Peña, Luis: 20  
Saenz Peña, Roque: 192, 195  
Salado del Norte River: 37  
Salado del Sur River: 37  
Salado (province): 16  
Salado River: 10, 37  
Salazar, Juan de: 10  
salt: 43

Salta (city): 140-141, 143, 230; religious festival, 149  
Salta (province): 35, 37, 48, 49, 79; border dispute, 46; climate, 39; farming, 281; forests, 285; minerals, 43, 44; oil, 288  
San Carlos de Bariloche (city): 34, 314; forests, 40  
San Isidro (city): 47, 147, 149  
San Jose: 46  
San Juan (city): 35, 167, 230  
San Juan de Capistrano: 42  
San Juan (province): 35, 37, 48; coal, 44; farming, 281; malnutrition, 132; minerals, 287  
San Juan River: 37  
San Luis (city): 35  
San Luis (province): 35, 48; minerals, 43  
San Martin, José de: 3, 8, 14, 15, 166  
San Miquel de Tucumán. See Tucumán  
San Nicolás de los Arroyos (city): 17  
Sanchez, Florencio: 175; *Barranca abajo*, 175; *La Gringa*, 175; *M'hijo el dotor*, 175  
Santa Cruz (province): 33, 48, 50; coal, 44, 287; forests, 40; livestock, 284; oil, 44; 288; population, 53  
Santa Fé (city): 10, 33, 47, 178, 224, 254, 309, 318; and media, 221  
Santa Fé (province): 34, 48, 49, 73, 153, 210, 328; cattle, 283; and education, 103, 106; farming, 282; population, 46  
Santa María del Buen Aire (city): 10  
Santiago del Estero (city): 10  
Santiago del Estero (province): 34, 43, 48, 126, 163, 182; climate, 39; forests, 40, 285  
Sardinia: 23  
Sarmiento, Domingo Faustino: 18-19, 72, 106, 107, 167, 168, 218, 239, 330  
satellite: ix  
Sauce Grande River: 37  
scholarships: 162; France, 247; Italy, 230; Soviet Union, 230  
schools (see also education): viii, 18, 104, 166, 168; and church, 91-92, 201; and employment, 59; and health, 151; military, 336-337; private, 100, 101, 102, 103, 106, 113, 128; segregation, 78  
science: 173  
sculptors: 178, 180  
secondary school (see also education): 4, 99, 100, 102, 103, 104, 105, 107-110, 125, 127; baccalaureate certificates, 108, 109-110, 125; and middle class, 82; middle units, 125  
Secretariat of Culture and Education: 183  
Secretariat of Public Health: 151-152  
security (see also armed forces, police, pris-

ons): 315-341; internal, 260, 316-320  
Security Directorate: 326  
service occupations: 60, 61, 63, 64, 66, 68;  
and economy, 255  
settlement patterns (see also emigration,  
immigration, migration, population, ur-  
banization): 46-51; resettlement, 50-51;  
rural, 50  
Seville: 14  
sexual morality: 94, 95  
sheep: 29, 38, 283, 284; ranches, 56, 75  
shipping: 309; Argentine Maritime Lines (El  
Lineas Maritimas Argentinas—ELMA):  
309; harbors, 39; refrigerated, 19  
shoe industry: 74  
shops. See stores and markets  
Sierra de Córdoba: 31, 35  
Sierra de la Ventana: 33  
Sierra del Tandil: 31-33  
Sierra Grande: iron deposits, 288  
siesta: 144  
Sihanouk, Prince Norodom: 250  
Silva, Ramon: 179  
silver: 164; silversmiths, 164, 182  
slaves: 2; disappearance of, 72; trade, 71-72  
Slavs: 73  
Smith, Adam: 166, *Wealth of Nations*, 166  
Sobremonte, Marques de: 12  
social reform: 90  
social security: 59, 65, 85, 158, 159-160  
social stratification (see also criollos, elite,  
mestizos, lower class, middle class,  
slaves): 2, 69, 72, 74, 80-86  
social structure: 69-70, 80-88; mobility of 69,  
70, 74, 82, 87, 96; *peña*, 148, 149; *tertulia*,  
148-149  
social values: 93-97; and personalism, 96  
Social Work and Health Directorate: 326  
socialism (see also Marxism, political par-  
ties): 24, 170, 171, 205, 217; Christian,  
167, 173  
Society of Benefits (Sociedad de Benefi-  
ciencia): 24  
soil: 29, 31, 33, 34, 36, 276, 277; and drain-  
age, 38  
Solano Lopez, Francisco: 242  
Solar, Xul: 179  
Solís, Juan Díaz de: 9-10  
songs (see also music): 30  
sorghum: 278, 279  
South America: vii, 3, 10, 29, 34, 35, 39, 242;  
and immigration, 72; and independence,  
8; South American Congress of Interna-  
tional Private Law of 1888, 235  
South Orkneys (islands): 45  
South Shetlands (islands): 45

Southern Baptist Convention: 93  
Soviet Union: 210, 221, 225, 249, 299; and  
cultural exchange, 230; trade, 303  
Spain: vii, 8, 166, 241, 248; Council of the  
Indies, 164-165; and culture, 5, 163, 167,  
182; heritage of, 69, 71, 93, 202, 203, 217;  
immigration, 3, 19, 70, 72, 231; independ-  
ence from, 7; language, 4, 79; and media,  
218, 219, 222, 225; occupation of, 9-13;  
and Perón, 22, 23, 26, 213; settlers and  
settlements, 2, 5, 10; and trade, 303  
Spencer, Herbert: 168, 169, 170  
sports: 83, 146-148; *pato*, 147-148; soccer,  
146-147, 224  
Squirru, Carlos: 179  
Squirru, Rafael: 174  
standard of living: 1, 3  
state industrial agencies: 190  
State Intelligence Secretariat (Secretaría de  
Información de Estado—SIDE): 325  
steel: viii, 190, 292; Argentine Joint Iron and  
Steel Company (Sociedad Mixta Siderur-  
gica Argentina—SOMISA), 190, 292  
stock exchanges: 270  
stores and markets (see also cooperatives):  
60, 311-312; hours, 143-144; petty mer-  
chants, 71; supermarkets, 311  
Storni, Alfonsina: 170  
Strait of Magellan: 1, 33, 45  
Strauss, Richard: 178  
strikes: 26, 186, 212, 213; and Perón, 23, 24,  
226; and students, 204; and tenant farm-  
ers, 274  
students (see also education, youth): 100,  
101, 102, 103, 104, 108, 112, 118, 119, 120;  
activism, 28; from Bolivian universities,  
56; part-time, 118; and Perón, 26; and pol-  
itics, 196, 200, 204-205, 212; unrest, 4,  
101, 121, 122, 123, 129, 227  
Suarez, Francisco: 172  
subversion. See guerrillas, political unrest,  
revolutionary groups, violence  
suffrage. See electoral system, voting  
sugar: 49, 85, 132, 281, 298; harvest, 56, 78;  
National Sugar Company, 281  
Supreme Court. See judicial system  
Syrian-Lebanese: media, 219  
Sweden: 151  
Switzerland: 177, 249; colonists from, 73;  
and financial aid, 266  
tariffs (see also duties, taxes): 208, 304; pro-  
tective, 298  
Tartagal (town): 44  
taxes (see also duties, tariffs): 261, 262, 263;  
excise, 262, export, 257, 262, 263, 297;  
income, 22, 261, 262, 263, 298; industrial,



- 48; inheritance, 275; laws, 189; provincial, 191; sharing, 261
- tea (see also *yerba mate*): 282
- teachers (see also education): viii, 4, 18, 99, 101, 103, 104, 107, 108, 127-130; and emigration, 57; Higher Institute of Secondary Teacher Training, 123; oversupply of, 124, 128; *profesores taxímetros*, 129; *profesorados*, 112; retirement of, 158; strikes, 130; Teachers' Statute of 1956, 129; training of, 100, 104, 105, 112, 117, 123, 124, 125
- technical and vocational schools (see also education): 57, 65, 84, 104, 110-112, 113, 116, 117, 120, 125, 127, 128; National Technical University, 115
- Tejedor, Carlos: 233; Tejedor Doctrine, 233
- telecommunication (see also communication, media): ix, 19, 314, 326; law of 1972, 224; National Telecommunications Company, 190, 314
- television: 146, 150, 162, 176, 218, 219, 220, 221, 223-224
- tenancy. See farms and farmers
- territorial conflicts: 45, 46, 239, 241, 244, 245, 246, 247, 251
- territorial waters: 238, 286; policing, 315
- terrorism. See violence
- Testa, Clorindo: 179
- textbooks. See education
- theater (see also drama): 150, 162, 175-176, 219; Argentores, 175; Caminito, 176; and music, 178; National Theater of Comedy, 175; San Martín Municipal Theater, 150, 175, 176, 181; Teatro Colón, 161, 177, 178; Theater of the People, 175
- third world peoples: 250
- Tierra del Fuego (see also National Territory of Tierra del Fuego): 1, 33, 163, 315, 325; forests, 40; oil, 44, 288; peat, 44
- Tierra Nueva: 202
- Timoteo Dominguez (island): 45
- tipa blanca* tree: 40
- tobacco: 282, 292
- topography: vii, 8, 31-35
- Torcuata di Tella Institute: 57, 162, 172, 179, 180
- Torre Nilsson, Leopoldo: 176
- Torres, Camilo: 203
- Torres, Juan José: 244
- Toscanini, Arturo: 178
- tourism: 313-314; National Tourist Board, 314
- towns and cities. See urban society
- trade, foreign (see also balance of payments, commerce): 15, 25, 233, 257, 263, 298-305; Argentine Trade Promotion Institute (Instituto Argentino de Promoción del Intercambio—IAPI), 198, 199; free, 233; and United States, 239
- transportation (see also air transportation, rivers, roads, shipping, railroads, trucking): ix, 190, 255, 306-310; and labor force, 61
- Treaty of Tlateloco: viii, 238
- Trelew: 339
- Tres de Febrero: 47
- Troilo, Aníbal (Pichuco): 183
- trucking: 308
- tuberculosis: 24, 155
- Tucúman (city): 10, 14, 65, 166, 178, 181, 228, 230, 317, 318
- Tucúman (province): 19, 35, 48, 268; border dispute, 45; climate, 39, 281; and depression, 258; farming, 281; malnutrition, 132; population, 46, 56; unemployment, 65, 281; vegetation, 40
- Tunuyan River: 37
- Tupungato: 44
- underemployment: ix, 66, 67
- unemployment: viii-ix, 65-66; urban, 64
- United Kingdom: 266; and trade, 303
- United Nations: 43, 120, 133, 236, 250, 251, 340; demographers, 51; loans, 266; mineral survey, 287
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD): 172, 250
- United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA): 172, 250
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: 114; and censorship, 227
- United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization: 276, 283
- United Nations Security Council: 250, 251
- United Officers Group (Grupo de Oficiales Unidos—GOU): 204
- United States: 17, 18, 21, 26, 135, 150, 151, 153, 154, 231, 232, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238-241, 242, 243, 246, 247, 248, 250; American Revolution, 165; anti-Americanism, 234, 332; and arts, 177, 178, 179; and banks, 268; and brain drain, 57, 172; and cultural exchange, 230; and elite, 80; *Enfoques Gremiales*, 230; and films, 224, 225; financial assistance, 265-266; influences, 167, 168, 186, 190, 320; and international waterways, 45; investments, 267; and media, 222; military influence, 240, 338, 341; New York (city), 2; and Perón, 24, 199; and security, 327; and trade, 281,

- 299, 302, 303; and transportation, 310; Voice of America, 230
- United States Army School of the Americas: 337-338
- United States Information Service (USIS): 230
- United States Military Assistance Program: 333, 337
- United States Special Forces: 337
- universities and colleges (see also education): viii, 4, 21, 28, 58, 64, 99, 101, 105, 110, 111, 112-123, 166, 171, 172, 204-205; Academy of Maximo, 164; Argentine University Federation, 205; and brain drain, 57; extrauniversities, 123-124; faculties, 28, 64, 115-118, 120, 122, 123, 128, 129, 130, 171, 212; intervenors, 122, 123; medical training, viii, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 153; and middle class, 82; National Technical University, 115, 116; National University of Cuyo, 35, 112, 113, 114; and Perón, 26, 204; and status, 97; technical training, 108; tripartite system, 101; University of Buenos Aires, 15, 59, 113, 115, 116, 118, 119, 120, 122, 123, 153, 171, 172, 173, 181, 205, 212; University of Chuquisaca: 164; University of Córdoba, 18, 59, 112, 113, 114, 164, 165, 204; University of El Salvador, 59, 113; University of La Plata, 113, 114, 169, 171; University of Lomas de Zamora, 112; University of San Juan, 112
- upper class (see also oligarchies): 72, 74, 77, 80-81; and education 106; and family life, 86, 87; and family name, 69; the Jockey Club, 148, 200; and military, 335; and Perón, 23, 24; and politics, 197, 199-201, 209; Rural Society, 200; values, 93, 94, 96
- urban society: vii, 2, 20, 146; diet, 132, 135; dress, 136, 137; and education, 107; and employment, 64; and labor, 84; and living conditions, 131, 139, 141; and migration, 30, 64, 69; social schism, 72; and unemployment, 64; and social unrest, 1
- urbanization: 5, 9, 23, 46-47, 49, 51, 52
- Uriburu, Jose F.: 22, 202, 203
- Urquiza, Justo de: 17, 18
- Uruguay: 1, 8, 13, 16, 18, 30, 36, 88, 131, 132, 144, 149, 163, 175, 223, 232, 235, 241, 242, 243, 245, 246, 247; aid to, 266; and banking, 268; boundary, 45; immigration, 56; and labor force, 67; and media, 228; Montevideo, 16, 56, 162, 225; population, 49, 51, 52, 69; and trade, 301, 305
- Uruguay River: 18, 34, 36, 285, 305, 308; boundary, 45; fishing, 42
- Ushuaia: 339
- Uspallata (pass): 14
- Vasconcelos, José: 174; *La raza cosmica*, 174
- vegetables: 134, 276, 282
- vegetation: 29, 33, 40-41
- Venezuela: 8, 237
- Vertiz y Salcedo, Juan José de: 165
- Vicente Lopez: 47
- Victoria, Francisco: 172
- Vietnam, Democratic Republic of (North Vietnam): 249
- Villa Constitución: 309
- villages: 50
- vinal plant: 41
- vineyards (see also grapes, wine): 37, 56, 85
- violence (see also guerrillas, political unrest, revolutionary groups): 315, 316; cordobazo, 205; and Perón, 216
- Vitullo, Sesostris: 180
- volcanoes: 35
- voting (see also electoral system): 20-21, 193, 195, 197
- wages and salaries: 6, 60, 96; and civil service, 194; and government workers, 260; and labor, 213; and military, 341; and Perón, 23, 25, 198, 206, 257; and rural labor, 85-86; and teachers, 129
- War of the Pacific: 244
- War of the Triple Alliance: 242, 244
- Wast, Hugo. See Martinez Zuviria, Gustavo
- Water and Electric Power Board (Agua y Energía Electrica—AYEE): 190, 276, 290
- water supply: 37, 50; and cities, 141
- welfare: 85, 86, 131, 158-160; and budget, 260; and disability, 158; and Eva Duarte Perón, 206
- Welsh settlers: See Great Britain
- Western Hemisphere: 220, 235-238, 245
- wheat: 5, 11, 35, 49, 244, 277-279; and diet, 134
- Whitelocke, John: 13
- wholesaling: 297, 311
- wildlife: 29, 33, 41-42
- Williams, Alberto: 177
- Williams, Amancio: 181
- wine (see also grapes, vineyards): 134, 281, 294
- women: 53, 71, 87, 88, 94, 95-96, 106, 149; and abortion, 58; childbearing age, 52; and defense, 316; dress, 137; education of, 108, 111, 119, 124, 126, 127, 128; and employment, 60, 62, 63, 65, 158; and independence, 14; and labor force, viii; life expectancy of, 52, 53; maternity care,

156, 159; and medical training, 154; in middle class, 83; and Perón, 198, 207; and population, 52; and social change, 71; in sports, 147; in upper class, 80  
wood products: 182, 292; furniture, 164; images, 183  
wool: 5  
working conditions (*see also* labor force, labor unions, retirement, wages and salaries): hours, 143-144  
World Bank. *See* International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)  
World War I: 21

World War II: 9, 24, 25, 190, 231, 232, 236, 239, 332, 339  
*yerba mate*: 134, 278, 282; cups, 164, 182  
youth (*see also* students): and the church, 202; and Perón, 214, 215; and politics, 196, 214  
Yrurtia, Rogelio: 180  
Yugoslavia: 249; and media, 219  
Yupanqui, Atahualpa: 184; "Mi Caballito Blanco." 184  
Zarate: 50, 339  
Zonza Briano, Pedro: 180



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- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>550-65 Afghanistan<br/>                     550-98 Albania<br/>                     550-44 Algeria<br/>                     550-59 Angola<br/>                     550-73 Argentina<br/> <br/>                     550-66 Bolivia<br/>                     550-20 Brazil<br/>                     550-168 Bulgaria<br/>                     550-61 Burma<br/>                     550-83 Burundi<br/> <br/>                     550-166 Cameroon<br/>                     550-96 Ceylon<br/>                     550-159 Chad<br/>                     550-77 Chile<br/>                     550-60 China, People's Rep. of<br/> <br/>                     550-63 China, Rep. of<br/>                     550-26 Colombia<br/>                     550-67 Congo, Democratic Rep. of<br/>                         (Zaire)<br/>                     550-91 Congo, People's Rep. of<br/>                     550-90 Costa Rica<br/> <br/>                     550-152 Cuba<br/>                     550-22 Cyprus<br/>                     550-158 Czechoslovakia<br/>                     550-54 Dominican Republic<br/>                     550-155 East Germany<br/> <br/>                     550-52 Ecuador<br/>                     550-150 El Salvador<br/>                     550-28 Ethiopia<br/>                     550-167 Finland<br/>                     550-29 Germany<br/> <br/>                     550-153 Ghana<br/>                     550-87 Greece<br/>                     550-78 Guatemala<br/>                     550-82 Guyana<br/>                     550-164 Haiti<br/> <br/>                     550-151 Honduras<br/>                     550-165 Hungary<br/>                     550-21 India<br/>                     550-154 Indian Ocean Territories<br/>                     550-39 Indonesia</p> | <p>550-68 Iran<br/>                     550-31 Iraq<br/>                     550-25 Israel<br/>                     550-69 Ivory Coast<br/>                     550-30 Japan<br/> <br/>                     550-34 Jordan<br/>                     550-56 Kenya<br/>                     550-50 Khmer Republic (Cambodia)<br/>                     550-81 Korea, North<br/>                     550-41 Korea, Rep. of<br/> <br/>                     550-58 Laos<br/>                     550-24 Lebanon<br/>                     550-38 Liberia<br/>                     550-85 Libya<br/>                     550-163 Malagasy Republic<br/> <br/>                     550-45 Malaysia<br/>                     550-161 Mauritania<br/>                     550-79 Mexico<br/>                     550-76 Mongolia<br/>                     550-49 Morocco<br/> <br/>                     550-64 Mozambique<br/>                     550-35 Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim<br/>                     550-88 Nicaragua<br/>                     550-157 Nigeria<br/>                     550-94 Oceania<br/> <br/>                     550-48 Pakistan<br/>                     550-46 Panama<br/>                     550-156 Paraguay<br/>                     550-92 Peripheral States of the<br/>                         Arabian Peninsula<br/>                     550-42 Peru<br/> <br/>                     550-72 Philippines<br/>                     550-162 Poland<br/>                     550-160 Romania<br/>                     550-84 Rwanda<br/>                     550-51 Saudi Arabia<br/> <br/>                     550-70 Senegal<br/>                     550-86 Somalia<br/>                     550-93 South Africa, Rep. of<br/>                     550-95 Soviet Union<br/>                     550-27 Sudan, Democratic Rep. of</p> |
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550-99 Yugoslavia  
550-75 Zambia









111

111

