

September 20, 1973

Letter from Indian Ambassador to Argentina

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Summary:

Argentina's stance towards the new regime in Chile

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FROM: M.M Khurana, Ambassador to Argentina

TO: Shri Avtar Singh, Secretary (W), MEA

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□...The fact that Argentina has recognized the new regime in Chile, does not mean that they approve of the coup or the method in which it was undertaken or support the policies of the new government. This is only recognition of facts of life. As neighbors sharing the longest border in the world, they have no other alternative. It is also in the Latin American tradition where, on the face of it, changes of regimes are recognized in order to prove that there has been no interference in internal affairs of the afflicted country.

□...The most telling effect in Argentina of the coup in Chile, in my opinion, has been the decision of the Army Headquarters to recommend to the Defence Minister that the Military Missions from the United States and France now stationed in Argentina under TIAR (Treaty of Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance) should be asked to leave the country immediately. The Army Command has stated that in view of the fact that Argentina is now a member of the Non-Aligned Group, strengthened by the attitude Argentine army has adopted in Caracas against the military pact of TIAR - Argentina with Peru strongly demanded its modification - the existence of these two Military Missions which are occupying the 2nd floor of the Army Headquarters, is a complete anachronism. The Army Command has of course not said that the presence of these foreign military missions can be a nucleus to initiate a military coup such as the one that has just taken place in Chile, and of which Argentina has itself many an experience.

□The coup in Chile has isolated Argentina as I have mentioned in my letter earlier. However, at the same time it makes it more important for us to cultivate Argentina because she is now one of the few countries left on the Continent which adhere to the principle of non-alignment and constitute a democratic government based on popular support. The present government which was elected in March, won almost over 50% votes. Peron is now expecting to win the elections to be held on Sunday next, September 23 even with larger number of votes. His position, synonymous with a popular democratic government is certainly in greater danger from a minority which enjoys the support of so many outside powers including the USA.