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COUNTRY Argentina  
SUBJECT Argentine Police Control of Church Sermons

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.



1. The Archbishop of La Plata, Monsignor Tomas Solari, recently convened a special meeting attended by approximately thirty priests of the vicinity, during which he referred to a confidential circular that had been delivered to all police commissioners in the Province of Buenos Aires. The circular instructed the commissioners to report each Monday to the Chief of Police on the contents of the preceding day's sermons. The Archbishop admonished the priests to exercise extreme prudence in their sermons and to refrain from making any comments which might be directly or indirectly of a political nature. He added that he had already submitted a complaint on the matter, but that he was obliged to see that none of the priests under his jurisdiction issued any political pronouncements from the pulpit.
2. Although the priests declined to comment on the Archbishop's instructions, they have exercised caution in all their public statements touching on the political field.
3. Father Jose Anos Masabal, parish priest of General Roca, Buenos Aires Province, recently received a visit from the Buenos Aires police commissioner, who informed him that the police had received orders to report on the contents of sermons delivered by priests in that vicinity. The commissioner stated that a woman member of the Peronista Party had been selected to report on his sermons. Father Anos Masabal indicated that the clergy is indignant about such obvious government control of priests' activities, and that some religious circles fear that the government may demand to pass on the appointment of all priests in the future.

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