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TRANSLATIONS ON LATIN AMERICA
(FOUO 1/79)



LATIN



AMERICA



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ARGENTINA

VIDELA'S SPEECH VIEWED AS TIMELY, UNIFYING

Buenos Aires LA OPINION in Spanish 26 Nov 78 pp 10-11

[Article by Sergio Ceron; passages enclosed in slantlines printed in boldface]

[Text] Firmness, decisiveness and, at times, bluntness. These are three of the words used by observers to describe the message given to the country last Thursday by the president of the nation. Lieutenant General Videla was thus fulfilling his obligation to give the Argentine people a clear explanation of his thinking, at the risk of his political capital dropping to irreversible levels in the gradual deterioration observed during the last few weeks.

As pointed out in this same column by LA OPINION last Sunday, the fact of the matter is that the military government's image was passing through an umbra which could be characterized in this manner: "slowness in the handling of political 'timing,' indecision, polemics with respect to retirement and the naming of collaborators, failure to meet expectations in various sectors which required tactical rectification of the outlines of political economy."/

Apparently, the president recognized the need for reestablishing direct communication with his people. He succeeded in--and this is a good sign--arousing general interest, thanks to the announcement of his message which, according to the BUENOS AIRES HERALD in its editorial on Friday, "aroused as much interest in private homes and public places as if it were an important football game."/ Even allowing for the subtle vein of British humor discernible in the comparison, we must agree that it is a suitable sophism for the measurement of a political "rating."

Unsatisfied Concerns

Many unsatisfied concerns which were inciting public opinion to demand an explanation from the man who, despite the legal points that govern power relationships, continues to be, perhaps because of political tradition,

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the most authoritative spokesman of the National Reorganization Process, above all because in recent times too many voices have been heard, which came from the interior of this process and which disseminated contradictory and at times antagonistic images. It was logical, then, for confusion and discouragement to infuse the Argentines who were, moreover, subjected to the action of the psychological factories which were advancing without resistance over terrain free from obstacles.

The aggravation of the conflict with Chile, the accumulation of bitter criticisms of socio-economic policy, the expressions of alarm--some well-intentioned, others suspect--from political figures on how the process was going and, finally, the alarming outbreak of a strike which repeatedly paralyzed the national railway network, were factors which created a negative ambience. There were too many concerns on the part of the people which were not given satisfactory answers.

Finally, on Thursday, Lieutenant General Jorge Rafael Videla poked his head into the homes of the Argentines. The serenity, confidence and aplomb with which he read his message were noted by observers. As LA NACION stated in its editorial yesterday, "In any event, he did not eschew the tone which habitually is used for blunt replies."/

The HERALD agrees with this comment by maintaining that President Videla's words "should in large measure serve to put an end to the talk about indecision and tiredness in his government. So long as his words are backed by action, to the degree that the new cabinet takes care of its many problems, President Videla will move his ship out of the region of the doldrums."/ In other words, the presidential message arrived just in time to halt the deterioration in his government's image. However, words are not enough to strengthen and reinvigorate the image. It is necessary that authority be exercised and that such exercise of authority be perceived, without a shadow of doubt, by the people. This is a responsibility which not only concerns Lieutenant General Videla but also the Military Junta which, combined, is the sum total of political authority and shares the responsibility for the conduct of the National Reorganization Process. It is clear that the possible failure of one of the members of the Junta will have an impact upon the others.

Definitions

The speaker clearly stated the general outlines of the process, repeatedly set forth by him during his government. These are the principal elements of the Process:

--The political objective of the Process is to find a democratic solution which is lasting/ in time.

--Toward this end, the Armed Forces are preparing to formulate a political proposal which will reach "all sectors and factions that are ready to shape a pluralist and stable democracy within the framework of a modern Argentina."/

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--That proposal will be based upon two necessary elements: /"dialog to enrich it and participation to materialize it."/

At the same time, the president of the nation described the three sectors which for various reasons are opposed to the materialization of those proposals. He listed them as follows:

--/Elitist groups/ which are ignorant of the national reality and the most tragic world experiences.

--Sectors which are betting on an /electoral outcome/, lacking the support of a solid civilian-military convergence.

--/Parvenus/ who aim to disorient the Armed Forces by attempting to enlist them in demagogic or populist positions.

Lieutenant General Videla succeeded in transmitting the emotion and authenticity of his words to his audience when he announced his decision not to convert his government into an autocracy and his ambition to share authority /" with the Armed Forces, with the men who are representative of the sectors and factions which make up our society and with the Argentine people, the ultimate benefactors of this Process."/

It is evident that the president of the nation is certain of the fact that authority in a complex community such as Argentina is shared. The Armed Forces, political parties, businessmen, unions, the Church, intellectuals, scientists and technicians, among other sectors, are participating in authority. Only the sum of a majority of those factions of authority can insure the success and historical viability of a political plan. However, what Lieutenant General Videla and his comrades of the Military Junta should understand is that in order to mobilize the formidable latent energies of the Argentine people it is necessary to propose to them a national, significant, imaginative, bold and at the same time realistic national strategy. The definition of their objectives and the proposal of an action plan to attain them will promote adherence to the proposed policy which the Armed Forces intends to present to the country shortly for consideration and analysis.

We are on the threshold of another era like that of the '80's. There is even a symbolic and mysterious analogy between the dates and the expectations for development, progress and greatness. However, the possibility of that threshold being crossed by Argentina depends upon ourselves, our lucidity, our generosity, our dedication to the common good and our boldness. For if it is true that the winds of heroic deeds are blowing in the country, it is necessary that we be prepared to live in /"a state of heroic deeds."/

The responsibility of a ruler is not at odds with dynamism in action; nor is caution at odds with drive; even less is wisdom at odds with imagination.

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The military government has everything it needs to propose a strategy of greatness: the aspirations of 25 million Argentines and the conditions of the world situation which offer a temptation and a challenge. To the degree that the military government is in harmony with events and does not proceed contrary to the facts of the situation, it will have the keys to political dynamism. And if it is capable of marching in step with the rhythm of that dynamism, it will obligate all the social forces to fall in line behind it. Then, neither fears nor suspicions will be justified in the face of the opening of the dialog nor the perspective that through participation the representatives of the civilian community will be incorporated into the government.

Foreign Policy

As regards foreign policy, once again the virtues which have characterized the president's handling of this sector surfaced: good sense, responsibility and awareness that it is necessary to exhaust all possibilities before resorting to an armed confrontation. It is not solely and simply a question of the amount of blood [spilling] implicit in such a confrontation but also the frustration--at least the partial frustration--of the most intelligent and effective policy which Spanish-speaking nations can evince in South America: a policy of gradual and irreversible integration, and with the attainment of that policy the preparation of the conditions for a frank and pragmatic understanding with Brazil to form a solid package of interests vis-a-vis the rest of the world.

Clearly, knowledge of these objectives of Argentina's continental policy cannot serve Chile as a pretext to make an effort to penetrate regions which historically have been subject to national sovereignty. Nor were there gray areas in this sector in the president's message: /"in the same manner that we must not lack caution in arriving at an equitable solution, we must not lack the decisiveness necessary to affirm our sovereignty, should the need arise."/

These sober words were few in number; however, they were clear. It is to be hoped that the addressee is able to understand their profound significance.

Also, on the subject of the already stale legal proceedings involving the compatible utilization of the Upper Parana's resources, the president's speech was sensible and crystal clear: /"In the final analysis, our position is simple: we must find a just balance among the interests of the three countries."/

The Brazilian foreign minister, Antonio Azeredo da Silveira, stated (see CLARIN, 25 November 1978, p 2) that Videla's statements are /"perfect, even conciliatory."/ After this remark, he stated that he had not encountered a single word which did not make good sense.

Notwithstanding the volubility which in recent years has characterized the actions of the Itamaraty titular, his reaction gives no cause for

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optimism over the resolution of differences concerning Corpus and, in the final analysis, serves to give an exact measure of President Videla's speech.

An Image of Coherence

Two other positive factors combined to restore coherence and solidity to the image of the military government. The first involved the statements made on the same day, Thursday, by the Army commander in chief, Lieutenant General Roberto E. Viola, to diplomats who were holding a reception for him.

Subject to the rigidity of a questionnaire, obviously Viola did not take up all the questions that the president was to discuss hours later. However, his speech clearly shows a political viewpoint exactly like that expressed by Jorge Rafael Videla, the same concern over guiding the country in the direction of democracy and avoiding the influence of elitists or demagogic factors which could impede the forward movement of the Process.

A day later, Admiral Armando Lambruschini was to allay the concerns of Salta newsmen. When he was asked his opinion of the status of the National Reorganization Process, he stated that he saw progress being made; however, he added that "what is important is to refrain from giving sectorized or partial opinions." And in connection with the problems associated with the Beagle and Corpus, he elected to refer to what had been said 24 hours earlier by the president of the nation.

Both speeches--Viola's and Lambruschini's--contributed to reinforcement of the image of coherence and rationality disseminated by the speech of the president of the republic and, doubtless, to consolidation at the same time of the Armed Forces as a function of authority.

One aspect of Videla's speech remains to be considered. The president refrained from entering the minefield of a polemic with the growing wave of criticisms against his minister of economy. The railway strike, which a day after its occurrence evoked a comment by the provicari general of the Armed Forces, Monsignor Victorio Bonamin, is a symptom which induces one to reflect on the possibility of considering "flexibility" in the rigid direction given to economic policy in its social aspect. Above all because both of these occurrences in a way represent two ends of the spectrum: that of the labor movement, influenced by renovating currents, and that of Monsignor Bonamin, characterized by its adherence to formulas of conventional thought within the framework of factions existing within the Church. When the spectrum of sectors critical of a political orientation is so broad, the inevitable duty of a ruler is to reflect on the viability of the policy in question.

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ARGENTINA

WRITER POINTS TO CONFORMITY OF CHURCH, POLITICAL VIEWS

Buenos Aires. LA OPINION in Spanish 26 Nov 78 p 10

[Article by Rodolfo Pandolfi]

[Text] There must have been few historical occasions on which the statements of the Argentine Episcopate have had greater immediate and more profound significance in the totality of national life. The Catholic Church has attained a universality in its teaching which by far exceeds the number of its faithful and which has an impact on all sectors. In large part, this situation is due to the fact that the Church has increasingly achieved a firm interrelationship between the exposition of transcendental truths and their contemporary meaning.

The whole world knows that the Catholic Church, in these days, listens carefully before offering an opinion. It listens and interprets the signs of the present reality without allowing itself to be pressured either by old or new triumphalisms.

The latest document of the Episcopate--like the texts which have been emanating since 1976--may have attained even greater dissemination because of suspension of the public activities of the various political parties. The business or union sectors, although they have the national interest in mind, express the concerns raised by Argentine problems in different, concrete sectors. The political parties are making an effort to represent overall strategic alternatives of a national kind, as they do not bring together citizens on the basis of their belonging to a union but rather on the basis of the objectives they share. However, although the suspension of their activities has been interpreted in a flexible way, which thus permits the expression of multiple thoughts, the political parties by definition--as parties--cannot assume a teaching function like that carried out by the Church.

Above and beyond these comments, there is no observable contradiction between the Church's thinking and the voices which have been raised recently from various currents of public, union and business opinion.

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In this connection, four subjects can be cited:

- a. The conflict between Argentina and Chile over the Beagle Channel situation. All sectors of opinion have stated that they are in favor of peace; however, at the same time, the various political forces--perhaps with the sole exception of the group headed by Alvaro Alsogaray--are advocating a policy of firmness in the defense of national sovereignty.
- b. Socioeconomic policy has generated anxiety in all sectors of opinion. Independent of the value judgments which may be made with respect to the administration of Martinez de Hoz, it is indisputable that this administration, in a manner of speaking, is "in the eye of the storm."
- c. With shades of difference, all the exponents of national thought feel that the time has come for deeper political debates which are called for by the present situation. Lieutenant General Juan Carlos Ongania himself cited the risks of a prolonged depoliticization process.
- d. All the political forces of the country have shown themselves to be firmly against subversion; and they acknowledge the merit in the government's having eradicated it, although some of them are making procedural observations.

In the following table a comparison is made between the recent statements of the top leaders of radicalism, Ricardo Balbin and Raul Alfonsin, and those of a group of citizens made up of Peronists, popular conservatives, Allendists, Christian Democrats, socialists and communists. However, if the question is limited generically to those four points, including what is being done to the economic sector by the existence of a generalized malaise but without giving an opinion about the therapeutics to be used, the spectrum would be complemented by the opinions of developmentalism and of personalities such as Francisco Manrique and Rafael Martinez Raymonda. The same thing is happening with respect to the broadening of the political sector, a thesis with which Arturo Frondizi is in agreement, although he does not, of course, propose the same solutions as radicalism.

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	Ricardo Balbin	Raul Alfonsin	Deolindo Bittel, Vicenta Solano Lima, Raul Rabanaque, Jose Antonio Allende, Francisco Cerro, Fernando Nadra
Beagle Conflict	"We want peace in Latin America but not at the price of diminished sovereignty."		"We must firmly maintain the policy of peaceful and bilateral negotiations, without renouncing the sovereign rights assigned to us by history and geography."
Economic Policy	"...it is contrary to the interests of the country because it centralizes and harms the small and medium-size producers."	"It is deplorable, above all for the sectors which depend upon wages for their subsistence."	"We should proceed without vacillation to a revision of the Economic Plan, which has only experienced failures, to transform it into a program with national roots."
Political Parties -- Elections	"[We should] return to the search for the great currents in the country to consolidate an authentic democracy."	"The call for elections is a substantial, although not integral aspect of democracy."	"We should immediately reestablish a legal situation, which is something more than the simple exigency of political institutions."
Subversion		"The greatest merit of the present government is having eradicated subversion."	"Despite the extremes to which it went, violence in no way won the support from any sector. On the contrary, it is in full retreat."

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Expressed in this manner, there is little doubt about the subjects which are of greatest concern to Argentines.

But it is the totality of the situation and the totality of opinions about the situation which are reflected by a new and vibrant sector through the word of the Episcopate. In the significant text of 19 November there are observations which cannot be read carelessly:

First. Since it could not be otherwise, for natural and supernatural reasons, the Episcopate exalts peace and recalls in this connection the word of the Holy Fathers: "Peace is the acme of messianic wealth." Peace will never be so strong that it need not be fortified by prayer," the Episcopate states.

The concept of peace is interpreted both on the domestic level and on the foreign level, with an obvious allusion to the Argentine-Chilean conflict. However, it is in this latter sense that the words of St Augustine have special meaning: "Peace is tranquility in order." The quotation is clarified with a passage from the Holy Bible: "Peace is the work of justice."

After that, the Episcopate analyzes the content of peace as a work of justice.

Second. The Episcopate also reflects the people's economic concern which is shared, moreover, by the partisans of the present Process. In reaffirmation of the Church's social doctrine, the text states: "If man lacks the essentials because another takes them from him or does not give him his share, this lack is the product of injustice; and peace is shattered."

Third. The Episcopate also makes reference to the need for participation. After recalling the Apostolic Letter, Octogesima Adveniens, of Paul VI, it states: "When man feels that he is alienated from everyday life or does not actively participate, he suffers, if the situation is brought about because someone illicitly prevents him from doing so."

Fourth. The Church strongly urges reconciliation and forgiveness. At the same time, it offers this clarification: "Since we have lived through them, we are very much aware of the events which successively constituted a painful expression of this gradual deterioration in our country: national desencuentro [discord], the lack of great ideals, the need for authority and, as the culmination of this disintegration of the Fatherland, the violent outburst of terrorism and organized subversion, which were orchestrated in many instances by ideologies of various kinds, principally Marxist in origin, all of which are contrary to the Christian ethic of our nation, that was forged with ideal of justice and freedom." "We have suffered this gradual process and the hearts of Argentines have filled with pain over the bloody fight which has broken out, whose deep wounds will not be easily staunches." Proposals concerning a new and imaginative legal mechanism which ensures the viability of the juridical order and concerning adequate information about episodes deriving from the antisubversive campaign, are at the heart of the ecclesiastical document.

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ARGENTINA

COLUMNIST REFLECTS ON JUNTA'S THREE-YEAR RULE

Buenos Aires LA OPINION in Spanish 27 Nov 78 p 12

[Article by Rodolfo Pandolfi]

[Text] In a month, three years will have gone by since then-commander in chief of the army Jorge Rafael Videla addressed a dramatic message to the country and a direct, final warning to the government of Isabel Peron. Three tempestuous, almost impossible years have passed since then. The republic emerged from the war against subversion to face an extremely difficult international situation, without an opportunity to even catch its breath. No one doubts that in almost all sectors, the government's relations are complicated, dangerous, agitated. There seems to be no peace in this process which was launched to secure peace.

In the final analysis, how can the terms of the equation be exactly stated?

Everything considered, year's end is very near--the end of the fiscal year, one could almost say--and it is probably worthwhile to make a hand count of the factors to strike the balance.

1. Three years ago, subversive bands were still capable of engaging in a veritable military battle in the very heart of Greater Buenos Aires and were at the point of bringing about a deep cleavage in the normal structure of the country, with the seizing of important positions and a large amount of war material. They suffered a decisive defeat in Montre Chingola, from the war-making standpoint; and it was there that if not the beginning of the end at least the end of the beginning took place.

Today, subversion has disappeared from a military viewpoint, although it is enough for two bold persons at any time to carry out a terrorist act. Sections of the country were bloodied in these three years, which were marked by episodes such as the bombings of the federal coordination and ministry of defense offices and by assassinations such as that of Paula Lambruschini. At a terrible cost, the entire country became aware of the nature of terrorist subversion whose beginning ten years ago was recognized by very few as a hallucinatory sign.

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2. However, not only have the subversive bands disappeared from a military viewpoint but subversion has ceased being a political alternative. The few remaining subversive sectors which could attempt a political movement are doing so in the greatest isolation. There is small doubt that the situation has complicated fluid communication between the government, unions, parties or university students. However, there is even less doubt that the unions, parties and university students--to speak of three sectors which in some way could be victims of infiltration attempts--are rejecting terrorism like the plague.

3. After having lost its military and political battles in the republic, subversion made an effort to operate through international pressure. It should be recognized that in a very harsh war situation of the kind Argentina experienced it was inevitable that unjust incidents occurred which everyone regrets. Those incidents were used by the same persons who publicly boasted of having assassinated Pedro Eugenio Aramburu, Hermes Quijada or Arturo Mor Roig, for example, to mention only three notorious cases.

Because of a complex combination of circumstances, including the tone which prejudice customarily gives to objective events, it is true that out of good faith or bad faith, with information or absolutely uninformed, because of peculiar political calculations or because of frivolity, honestly believing that they were contributing to the improvement of the situation of the Argentines or thinking that they were harming Argentina, democratic politicians with great prestige in Europe and the United States spoke out in a highly energetic manner with respect to our country. Even international organizations whose members had personally experienced the terrorist offensive hastened to emit totally unproductive judgments.

4. At the beginning of the year, but particularly during the last few months, the state began to put the finishing touches on control of the situation as regards the undesirable effects of the antisubversive campaign. As in the case of subversive terrorism, it can be noted that the isolated incident is always possible. However, the evolution was so marked that it escaped none of the national or international observers.

5. From that point of departure, the Process with renewed force started to change the image which had been created abroad. During his recent trip to the country, the former commander in chief of the Navy, Admiral Emilio Eduardo Massera, stated that his actions had contributed to the definitive isolation of the Montoneros. Social democratic parties which had shown themselves to be mindful of the denunciations made by the subversive sector began to modify their points of view. Also, because of the influence of Americo Ghioldi, but in recent time, apparently, because of the dynamic action by Admiral Massera above all, the social democratic sector adopted a new criterion with respect to Argentina. During the International Socialist Congress in Vancouver, requests to admit Montoneros as member observers were rejected (it should be remembered that the Palestine Liberation Organization is an observer at the United Nations).

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The top Spanish socialist, Felipe Gonzalez, differentiated between reactionary dictatorships and situations generated as dikes in the face of seditious activity.

6. Faced by the international situation presented in connection with the border litigation with Chile--a sector in which the statement of the British Ministry for Foreign Affairs reinforced the Argentine viewpoint--the country gave evidence of a decisive predilection for unity in the presence of an emergency whose outcome continues to be unforeseeable. Moreover, it is true that the alternatives of that question have disoriented sectors of public opinion; however, this has not diminished the unanimity on existing points of view.

7. The country's economic situation continues to be a subject of polemic, concerning which many observers maintain that all the results announced on 24 March 1976 have not been attained. Nevertheless, although criticisms are far from extreme, we should keep clearly in mind the maximum point of economic and financial disorganization which the country had reached three years ago.

8. In the educational sector, the process went through complex and, on occasion, contradictory stages. Including the interim appointment of General Albano Harguindeguy, four men with different styles (Bruera, Catalan, Harguindeguy and Llerena) had to tackle the problems existing in a sector which is the real strategic human reserve of the country. The last debate on several books adopted in private religious institutes compels us to remember that extreme caution should be used with respect to opinions which are offered occasionally outside the integral context in which they should be considered. The ideological campaign against subversion, at this stage of affairs, requires the maximum precision in marksmanship to avoid even the suspicion of exaggerations. This may or may not be the case: the Catholic hierarchy, moreover, has the judgmental factors for consideration of the problem. No warning is totally pointless when the entire country remembers how subversion was introduced at various educational levels. However, it will be useful to also remember that there were those who two years ago denounced the distribution of a "subversive" text in a number of churches to be sung precisely at this time of the year. It was the Magnificat," the words intoned by the Virgin Mary before the Annunciation that she would fulfill all the prophecies.

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ARGENTINA

BEAGLE CONFLICT JEOPARDIZES STRATEGIC, ECONOMIC INTERESTS

Buenos Aires LA OPINION in Spanish 5 Nov 78 pp 10-11

[Article by Sergio Ceron: "Paradoxes and Reflections at the End of the Second Stage of Negotiations With Chile"; passages enclosed in slantlines printed in boldface]

[Text] Diplomatic observers stated at the end of the week that the situation in the dispute between Argentina and Chile was paradoxical since both governments were waiting for a reply from the other to separate proposals that practically crossed simultaneously. A cable from Santiago on Friday said that the Argentina President, Jorge Rafael Videla, had sent a note to his colleague, Augusto Pinochet, in which he proposed direct negotiations--presumably at the highest level and in peremptory terms--to resolve differences.

The foreign minister from across the Andes, Herman Cubillos, talked with reporters and estimated that 6 months of talks had exhausted the possibilities for a direct understanding. In his judgment, the final act showed that "there is agreement on some points and disagreement on other." In consequence, he insisted in taking the route shown by the note sent by his Foreign Ministry to San Martin Palace, in which he proposes an appearance before the International Court of Justice in The Hague or recourse to mediation "by a friendly government chosen by common agreement."

The Chilean Opposition

In sum, Santiago is not backing down 1 centimeter from its original position. It is in disagreement with everything that means analyzing the border problem in the light of reason and friendship, firmly grasping an award that Argentina rejects as abusive. An award that, without considering Argentine feelings and national pride, proceeded by means of decisions that implied interference in Argentine areas that it never consented to submit to any arbitration. This is the case of the islands situated south of the "hammer area" which includes only Picton, Lennox, and Nueva Islands.

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On the other hand, Chile quickly agreed to all the terms, as a complement to, and for the economic integration and the mutual defense of, its Antarctic, whereby it can obtain direct benefits from Argentine goodwill. A characteristic of the diplomacy from across the Andes has been to consent to arbitration when the lands in dispute had legally belonged, up to that time, to someone else.

To expect that Argentina would accept recourse to the Court of Justice is not very responsible when it is realized that there are close relations between that organization and several members of the arbitral tribunal, whose manifest abuse of power led our country to declare its decision null and void.

That would leave the subject of mediation by a friendly country. The head of the Argentine delegation to Mixed Commission No 2, Gen Ricardo Etcheverry Boneo, on being interviewed by the Buenos Aires press, agreed that that was a possibility, without expressing an opinion on its real viability. However, he observed prudently that "the important thing would be to locate someone who is more qualified than I who could explain the difference between mediation and arbitration, because they are not the same."

Visit by the King of Spain

The coming visit by the King and Queen of Spain has not ceased to provoke the imagination of reporters and analysts, to the extent that someone had to ask Etcheverry Boneo whether mediation could emerge as a consequence of the visit. The reply was obvious: it is a question that is outside of the authority of the Argentine negotiator and on which it is not for him to respond for reasons of political prudence. Nor is it possible to find any specific reaction at the highest levels of the government. In any case, in the event that after appropriate analysis the conclusion is reached that mediation is acceptable--not arbitration or an arbitral award--it would be difficult to choose a mediator more suitable than the Spanish Crown.

In the first place, because I do not perceive that the mother country has interests at stake in the area as obvious as Great Britain, which throughout its history has known how to subordinate its judicial speculations to the specific practicality of its own conveniences.

In the second place, because the nations of Hispanic origin, from the time of their declaration of independence, accepted the borders established by the Spanish Court for its colonies. Unless, of course, there were later cessions of territory by legal process and not by force. The archives of the peninsula possess a rich store of precedents on this subject.

Pacific and "Pacifist"

At all events, it is useless to speculate on this subject until it is possible to proceed further on the basis of the decision that will be

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taken in this regard by the Argentine Government, in whom it is impossible for the international public, if it has carefully followed the progress of the interdict and its recent and remote historical background, not to recognize a great amount of goodwill and pacific spirit.

And here it is necessary to insist once more in the difference between a pacific man and a pacifist. The former is nonviolent, one who will sacrifice everything, except the safety of his loved ones and his dignity to the cause of peace. The latter, on the other hand, will sacrifice everything, absolutely everything, in order to flee responsibility and the understandably human fear of suffering the consequences of violence. The Argentine is pacific.

At the same time, no Argentine writer has ever written geopolitical texts to justify the expansion of our frontiers. On the contrary, a certain frankly universalist culture behind our backs has led us to sacrifice territories inherited from the mother country and therefore unquestionably our patrimony for a friendship that at times has had its only real echo in our hearts.

The past is enlightening and it should help us to avoid falling into facile optimism; but in no way should it be a weight that inhibits the imagination in projecting into the future. And what we are trying to do here is imagine a formula that will permit us to overcome yesterday's differences in order to vigorously build a tomorrow.

The world is marching toward regionalization, toward large geographic, human, economic, and perhaps political concentrations. Seen from this perspective, the Beagle conflict seems to add up to a ridiculous trifle. Nevertheless, what is at stake is something much more than territorial jurisdiction over some isles. Strategic, economic, and geopolitical interests of enormous significance are at stake. And for Argentina a matter of dignity and self-respect, in addition, since it cannot retreat from the oceanic division principle dictated by history and by solemn treaties that Chile and the arbitral tribunal have ignored.

Starting with this principle, everything is possible. One can imagine such a broad cooperation and integration between both countries that it could even mean the first step toward the unity of the nations of the southern cone. Which in turn could be built on such a solid foundation as to attain the old dream of Bolivar and San Martin, continental unity.

For this, generosity and clear sight and further, consciousness of the real historical interests of the Hispanoamerican nations is necessary.

Chauvinist Power Plant?

I cannot resist the temptation to restate the title of the note published on Wednesday, the 1st, in CLARIN by Enrique Alonso. It deals, of course,

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with the Itaipu hydroelectric complex in the wake of the announcement that Brazil and Paraguay decided without warning to raise the number of turbines to 20 from the 18 provided for previously and repeatedly endorsed by their experts and politicians.

"The unilateral advantage that Brazil seeks--minimizing the energy-generating possibilities of Corpus--is in turn," says Alonso, "at variance with the norm of the common good, which should aim for the optimum use of the hydraulic potential in all its different levels and falls."

In his interesting commentary my colleague adds that Carlos de Meira Mattos, the Brazilian general, proposes the creation of seven regions of multinational integration throughout the length of his country. One of these includes "the southern part of Mato Grosso, western Parana, southeastern Paraguay, and the Misiones region of Argentina." Thus, if this geopolitical concept were applied, Itaipu would have a precise mission, similar to that carried out by the Brazilian "bandeirantes" of the colonial era: to be the advance guard for the expansion of the empire's frontiers.

While the Argentine Foreign Ministry clearly maintains that the change decided on by the Itaipu partners revives the whole question of the compatibility of that dam with the Corpus dam, curiously the greatest criticism has come from the Brazilian press. The editorial of the JORNAL DO BRASIL of 31 October maintained: "The new revision of the bilateral Itaipu agreement, announced officially yesterday by Brazil and Paraguay is destined to be a controversial decision capable of altering the political credibility of Brazil."

And it adds later: "For the Brazilian Government the innumerable times that Foreign Minister Azeredo da Silveira reiterated that Brazil would never increase the number of turbines did not matter. On the 20th of this month, in the solemn ceremony opening the diversionary channel of the Itaipu, President Geizl himself mentioned the number of 18 turbines twice."/

The following day O GLOBO agreed with its colleague and at the same time gave the following reflection: "The Corpus hydroelectric project also is of interest to Brazil, as it will furnish greater operating flexibility to Itaipu. Thus an eventual Argentine withdrawal from that project would not benefit us."/

O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO expressed similar opinions at the conclusion of a commentary with the affirmation that the episode "aggravates the tension already existing between Brazil and Argentina, which is not to the interest of any of the member states of the River Plate basin."/

There is no doubt that Argentina must reconsider its position. And the first aspect that should be analyzed is whether, after Yacyreta, Corpus should have priority in the execution of the large infrastructure projects.

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There are many and very respectable voices that demand, in the interest of a solid national strategy, consideration of the Middle Parana and the Bermejo canal projects for priority attention.

Unity in Diversity

At the end of a week of events, reports, and rumors of great intensity, the President announced his cabinet. In the episodes that accompanied the change--in which a wise use of time was not observed, different for the military sensibilities than for the civilian--the unity of action of the armed forces was definitely confirmed. It is a unity that--and it would be ingenuous to conceal it--does not fail to show that there are differences of opinion on how to focus on the situation. The purpose of the lunch Videla had on Wednesday with the three commanders-in-chief was without doubt to show that the spirit of unity had not been broken and that the process had regained its momentum.

At the same time, Adm Armando Lambruschini had a particular interest in emphasizing, as he did in the morning, that /"the basic documents of the National Reorganization Process have undergone no changes with regard to the degree of participation by the Navy in the present process,"/ and that this service /"is working to ensure that this process will go forward and become dynamic."/

Why is it important for the country for military unity not to be fractured? Because the future of Argentina depends basically on the nation's mobilizing itself around a plan that integrates all sectors of society. This objective can hardly be achieved if the armed forces, which on 24 March 1976 represented the last redoubt against anarchy and dissolution, do not conserve unity of action. This is a substantial motive for making possible a convergence with the civilian population that will vitalize the energies of the nation.

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CUBA

COMMENTARY EXAMINES SITUATION OF U.S. SKYLAB

Havana PRELA in Spanish 2130 GMT 22 Dec 78 PA

[PRENSA LATINA special feature by Gilberto Caballero Almeyda: "The Tragic Skylab Fiasco"]

[Text] The announcement that the United States is abandoning efforts to salvage the erratic "Skylab" orbital station, leaving it to fall on our heads, underscores the inefficient way in which this space project was conceived.

This first and only habitable U.S. space station was, during its days of glory, a symbol of what some U.S. scientists tried to present to the world as Washington's supremacy in space. Built at an astronomical cost of over \$2.6 billion, "Skylab" (sky laboratory) received three groups of astronauts between 1973 and 1974 within its tons of metal and sophisticated equipment. Later abandoned, it became a "phantom ship" orbiting earth every 93 minutes at an initial height of 435 meters [as received] and at lower heights during subsequent years.

According to U.S. space research plans, Skylab was to remain unmanned and in orbit for 10 years after the three missions were completed. During that time, scientists of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) were supposed to have had the opportunity to install a new propulsion rocket which would offer two possibilities: To boost it into a higher orbit, or to guide it back to earth toward an ocean or unpopulated area.

However, NASA's plans failed resoundingly, and the huge mass, with a 35-meter length, 7-meter diameter and a weight of 85 tons, began to tumble and lose altitude.

U.S. technicians and scientists have orchestrated a campaign for months to reduce worldwide fears about the prospects that a ship of such size could fall on some cities in a rain of steel particles. References were made to orbital corrections, position changes and, lately, to a long-awaited space shuttle that would carry a propulsion rocket to Skylab to steer it toward its destruction without risk to mankind.

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However, it is impossible to permanently conceal space fiascos during our time. By mid-December, the station's orbit had dropped to 360 km and now, finally, President James Carter has been forced to announce what the whole world knew: Nobody can save Skylab.

According to NASA, the enormous laboratory will plummet into earth's atmosphere between July and September of next year and, when it disintegrates, between 400 and 500 fragments will fall to earth over an area 3,500 km long and 150 km wide.

Where will they fall? All countries located between the equator and latitudes 50 degrees north and south--almost all of Latin America, Europe, Africa, Asia and part of North America--are candidates for the dangerous rainfall. According to NASA, the countries on the reentry path can be given only a 1-hour warning. "However, we will make plans for quick medical assistance to those affected," a Washington spokesman announced in a supposedly reassuring tone.

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END