

## PREFACE

Since Juan Perón began his rise to power in 1943, Argentina has been the most important and difficult of all the Latin American countries from the point of view of the United States. In both respects the Perón period has only strengthened a trend that had been in progress for half a century. During those years Argentina became increasingly important to the United States as she won and consolidated an outstanding position among the twenty Latin American states in wealth, foreign trade, culture, and international prestige. Simultaneously, the complex Argentine problem became one of increasing difficulty for the United States as the two countries developed economies and foreign policies which were largely competitive, not complementary, for while the United States sought to develop Western Hemisphere regionalism, Argentina took on a more and more pronounced orientation — economic, cultural, and political — towards Britain and Western Europe.

A decade of domination by Perón increased the importance and difficulty of the problem by giving Argentina more dynamic leadership in the execution of a more nationalistic policy; by destroying a democratic system largely modeled upon that of the United States and replacing it with a quasi-totalitarian tyranny; and by maintaining a "Third Position" or middle way between communism and capitalism, between the Soviet Union and the United States, in such a manner as to constitute his government the chief trouble-maker for the United States in all Latin America.