

16th June 1984

Dear Daddy and all at home;

It's about time I got down to writing a decent letter. For days I have been trying to ~~telefone~~ phone you but it is very difficult to get through. Here they tell me that it is impossible to get through to Ireland and I'm inclined to thi nk that the problem is here.

I arrived back from Argentina over a week ago and immediately went to spend a few days in the country in order to have a good rest. For the last week now I have been back in the flay of things here. I imagine you got tthe letters and cards I sent from there.

The visit went very well and I had no problem whatsoever. The last^t day before I left I wnet to visit the Irish Embassy and they were very happy to see me. Most of the people have of course changed but several remembered all the hullabullu.

I was very happy to meet with Fatima Cabrera once again and her family. She is in quite good form and have got over the expierience very well. She has just become a primary school teacher and hopes to dedicate herself to work with children. However her family is in quite a difficult situation and one sister Maria Esther (22 years of age) got so depressed when she found her- self without work last year that she began to deteriorate a lot and lost all hope so much that last Christmas eve she committed suicide throwing herself under a train. It really has traumatised the whole family as you can imagine and I spent a good deal of time with them particularly trying to encourage the mother Mrs. Cabrera (widow) to take a more positive view of life. One of her nieces Alejandra aged nine years of age had never been baptised so we celebrated the bapit sm in the house with a Mass which was very nice and I think helped the family to come to terms with the death of Maria Esther.

Most of the time in Argentina I spent with the mothers and families of people who are disappeared or assassinated and it was quite a trying expierience. Many see little hope in their lives and are really disorientated in so many things but they are trying to come to terms with what they have lived. In general I found Argentina a very sad place with people living very isolated lives and with very little to live for. In some respects a situation (from what I have read) which is similiar to Europe after the war. A lot of people without hope, trying to survive and put their lives togethe once agian. The damage that these military dictatorships produce in a society is really incálculable because every aspect of life becomes affected by that. The education, health, work and religion is very seriously damaaged by the fear and terror in wh ich people have had to live.

I also visited Uruguay spending some 4 days in Montevideo and there the military have really destroyed the country however the people are responding very well and hopefully in November there will be elect ions and a democratic government take over. In the visit I also took in Peru and there the situation is de teriorating all the ttime particualy in the countryside. A lot of Peasents are been killed or disappeared by the military.

Really after seeing so much pillage down by the military one begins to ask oneself if the Armed Forces should really disappear as an institution in Latin America. It really has become so perverted that it is almost impossible to see any type of reform possible. In the military schools they indoctrinate the troops that they have to obey any kind of order and there is no scope left for dissent. If they have to kill ~~innocent~~ innocent people they must go along and do it, or destroy homes or anything else. With that type of approach there is no room for even a semblance of conscience or christianity although they may have military chaplains or even bishops who say its all alright.

When I got back I got your letters and newspapers. I was really disappointed that Fergus could not get that work in the States. Sally O'Hanlon wrote to me recently saying that shou could not concretise anything. I guess it all goes back to the story of the 'little red hen'. I really feel bad about it and I was su re she could get something.