

The Bell Syndicate, Inc.

PEARSON SPECIAL FOR PAPERS INTERESTED IN LATIN-AMERICAN NEWS;

AVAILABLE TO ALL SUBSCRIBERS.

Release Friday, Feb. 4, 1949.

ARGENTINA'S TOURIST BAN

Real motive behind Argentine Dictator Peron's new decree restricting the movements of tourists in that country is that, like Russia's Joe Stalin, Gen. Harry Vaughan's friend wants to keep foreigners out of his private world.

From the Peronist point of view, it's a two-way disadvantage now to have outsiders coming into totalitarian Argentina. For one thing, even the casually observant tourist can't help seeing that the much-ballyhooed five-year plan is getting exactly nowhere.

Between the regime's "inability" to import machinery and supplies from the U.S. (although it spent some \$150,000,000 on armaments bought from us last year) and the marked decline in worker productivity, Peron's grandiose plans for industrialization have been 85 per cent abandoned. And almost any visitor is bound to realize it.

Then, too, the foreigner coming into Argentina these days can make himself a small fortune by bring in a few small U.S. luxury items (wrist watches, fountain pens, electric shavers, etc.). Starved for such imported consumer goods, and jittery about the value of his own money, the currency-poor Argentine will pay fabulous prices for them.

As a result, many an American tourist in Buenos Aires recently has covered the cost of his entire trip with almost no effort. And the articles he sells at a handsome profit command even more on resale, thus booming the Argentine Capital's fat black market.

So, in typical police-state style, Peron has now ordered all tourists to register with his federal cops and secure from them a permit to remain more than 72 hours in the country. The fact that this will influence U.S. trippers to by-pass Argentina is clearly foreseen and welcomed.

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