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Argentine Government Breaks Contract With French Company To Replace Identity Cards

by Barbara Khol

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On Aug. 14, Interior Minister Jose Luis Manzano announced that the government has decided to withdraw from a controversial \$250 million contract with the French company SOFREMI for replacement of 40 million identity cards. The minister acknowledged the possibility of legal and diplomatic problems with France. The agreement signed last November sparked widespread protests, and contributed to the Aug. 9 resignation of Manzano's predecessor, Julio Mera Figueroa. Domestic manufacturers, newspaper editors and both the ruling and opposition parties launched protests over contract costs, the threat to personal privacy and the fact that the government did not call for bids. (Basic data from AFP, 08/14/91)

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