

THE PERONS AND LABOR:
A SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP

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ABSTRACT

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Colonel Juan Domingo Perón, the twenty-sixth president of the Argentine Republic, his wife Eva Duarte, and labor established a symbiotic relationship which changed the course of the nation's history. Despite the regime's tyrannical tactics and demagoguery, the workers remained faithful to the Perons throughout the regime. For the Argentine workers, Evita and Perón were idols who had delivered them from the grips of a painful, undignified existence and given them a new sense of dignity and purpose. Even today, Peronismo is very much alive in the hearts of the Argentine workers who now form the strongest political movement of Argentina.

DEDICATION

This paper is dedicated to my parents who have been unfailing source of inspiration to me all my life.

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The Perons and Labor:

The Establishment of a Symbiotic Relationship

The rise of Juan D. Perón, twice president of Argentina, 1946-1955 and 1972-1974, and his wife Eva Duarte, fundamentally altered Argentina's historical evolution. Perón's rapid ascent to power began with his participation in the coup d'etat that on June 4, 1943 overthrew President Ramon S. Castillo's unpopular and corrupt government. Perón was then unknown outside army circles, and to the Argentine people was just another officer. However, in little more than two years, his name became a household word in Argentina and the world, as he cleverly established a crucial relationship with the laboring masses, "Los Descamisados," (shirtless ones). This symbiotic relationship with the workers, later abetted and cemented by his extraordinary wife, "Evita," was to guarantee Perón the presidency for almost a decade and, in turn, give labor a new social and political status in Argentine society. Although idolized and glorified by labor, the Perons were hated and denounced as incompetent tyrants by elements of the middle and upper classes. In fact, they had a peculiar power of evoking instinctive hatred or frantic loyalty, and no one remained indifferent to them. By the end of their regime, a multi-factional political system had evolved into a two way rivalry--the Peronists and anti-Peronists. Nonetheless, both their defenders and detractors agree that the Perons were the dominant figures in post

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World War II Argentine history. The political and social forces they set in motion still dominate public affairs in that South American Republic.

Perón was born on October 8, 1895, of lower middle class parents in Lobos, a small Pampas town south of Buenos Aires. His mother was a chinita, a part-Indian country girl. Perón reflected this heritage in his ruddy complexion, high cheekbones and black eyes. His father was a small scale farmer of Italian origin. Young Perón began his military career at the age of sixteen when he entered a military academy. He was an undistinguished student but a tough soldier and excellent sportsman. After nineteen years of routine army life, he attained the rank of captain. In the early 1930's, he was a professor of military history at the Staff College until he was appointed military attaché in Chile. In 1940 he went on a special mission to Italy, where he was much impressed by Benito Mussolini's fascism. He also studied military tactics in France, Germany and Spain. After his return to Argentina, he studied political theory, wrote several books on military history and strategy, gave lectures on a vast number of subjects, including philosophy, politics and history, and completed a tour of duty as professor of military history.¹

Personality rather than statesmanship accounted for Perón's rise to power. Although he was not an intellectual, Perón was well read and had boundless confidence in himself and his ideas. He could adapt himself to the viewpoint of whomever he happened to be courting at the moment. He possessed natural qualities to appeal to the masses--an impassioned oratorical style; a handsome appearance, massively built with broad shoulders; personal charm; a flair for showmanship; a remarkable

understanding of mass psychology; and a flamboyant, magnetic personality. Perón also fit the description of a caudillo, a man of action and of strong personal leadership, who in the past had easily imposed his authority on people unaccustomed to democracy. He was, likewise, a gaucho, the national folk hero, strong, commanding and arrogant, with the wits of a vivo, a man of no principles. Most importantly, Perón was a man of great ambition and political vision.²

Upon his return from Europe, Perón's life took a different turn, as he became increasingly active in politics and learned a new and important lesson at each turn of his involvement. Particularly impressed by Mussolini's ability to manipulate the masses, he studied the Italian dictator's methods. Astute and observant, Perón perceived the potential for power and revolutionary change in the fluid national situation. Profound social and economic changes were taking place through urbanization and industrialization, yet the existing conservative government seemed oblivious to these trends. With regard to these changes, Perón commented: "Argentina is passing through a decisive moment in her history; worldwide disturbances point out with terrible seriousness the virulence of disintegrating upheavals in which egoism and indifference to the needs of others is uppermost."³ Furthermore, Perón's involvement in politics and growing interest in the welfare of the masses, brought him closer to a remarkable woman, Eva Duarte, with whom he would establish a partnership unparalleled in Argentine history. Most importantly, Perón was the first influential ruler to recognize the potential significance of the workers' frustrated aspirations and interests. He realized that this neglected class could be the foundation of a new and

powerful political constituency. Perón also sensed that before he could gain any influential power, he would have to moderate the army's antipathy for labor. To accomplish this he had to develop a strong base of power within the military. In fact, Perón launched his political career by helping to organize a mysterious military brotherhood known as the Grupo de Oficiales Unidos (GOU). Indeed, he became its chief inspirer and leader. This group, composed mainly of ambitious fascist-oriented colonels, plotted the army coup which overthrew President Ramon Castillo's government in 1943, paving the way for Perón's rise to power.⁴

For three years after the 1943 uprising, a succession of three army officers occupied the Argentine presidency. General Arturo Rawson held the office for only twenty-eight hours; after serving seven months, General Pedro Ramirez was forced to step down on February 1944. General Edelmiro Farrell, Perón's close friend, was president until the elections of February 26, 1946. All the while, it was Perón who manipulated the alterations in political leadership. As leader of the GOU, Perón simultaneously gained undisputed control over the army.⁵

After having achieved complete control over the military establishment, Perón arranged for his appointment to the three government offices which would assure him the presidency. In October, 1943, President Ramirez appointed him Head of the Department of Labor and Welfare, a position which allowed him to develop a close relationship with the working classes. In May, 1944, he became Minister of War, cementing dominance over the military. Finally, in July, 1944, he assumed the position of vice president, the closest step to the presidency. Filling several

positions simultaneously, he built an image as the indispensable leader. He would proudly declare: "I display only three titles, that of being a soldier, that of being the first Argentine worker, and that of being a patriot."⁶ With these three positions, Perón was able to forge a shaky alliance between the military and the laboring masses.

Labor and Perón began their symbiotic relationship the day he arranged to change his title from Head to First Secretary of Labor and Social Welfare. The title was "Secretary" rather than "Minister," because the Constitution of 1853 provided for only eight ministers and the GOU was reluctant to establish new ministries before the Constitution was changed. The decree issued for this new office created a "Secretariate of Labor and Social Welfare to be in charge of regulating relations between capital and labor and securing the welfare of the working classes in accordance with Argentine legislation." Among the new duties assigned to the new Secretary were "strengthening national unity by securing greater social and distributive justice." He was also to take measures to bring about an "early and effective improvement of the standard of living, "and to teach "capital and labor that they both have social duties as well as rights."⁷

Perón fulfilled all the roles assigned to his new office. What is more, he assumed these duties at a propitious time. The nation's economy was booming. Remaining neutral during World War II, Argentina's export trade prospered as the warring powers increased their demands for meat products and raw materials.⁸ By the end of the war, Argentina had approximately 1.7 billion dollars in reserves, including gold and foreign exchange.⁹ This tremendous amount of wealth, as well as an illusion of

everlasting prosperity, permitted Perón to establish a corporate or welfare state through social programs which mainly benefitted the workers and helped him to win their affection and trust. In addition, he kept the army content with massive military spending. By 1945 almost half of all government expenditures went to the armed forces.¹⁰

Other social forces also combined to his advantage. Since the early 1930's, the military and conservative regimes in Argentina had frequently disregarded the legal and constitutional rights of the working class. Leaders before Perón had interrupted workers' meetings, used spies to infiltrate labor organizations, broken strikes by police action, placed union leaders in concentration camps and made no effort to enforce existing labor legislation, including minimum wage laws. Repression was so severe that the decade of the thirties came to be known as La Década Infame (the infamous decade). The frustration of those years led the workers away from political activity and union participation.¹¹ Furthermore, the real power lay in the hands of a conservative oligarchy composed of the land-owning aristocracy and the rising industrialists whose wishes were respected and enforced by the military. These two conservative groups were completely indifferent to labor's needs and wishes. As a result, the workers received wages insufficient to keep up with the increasingly high costs of living. Moreover, the workers experienced little independent influence in politics. Their votes were directed mainly by their patrones (bosses). Even when the workers had their own candidates, the ruling elite manipulated elections in their own favor or resorted to fraud if they faced defeat at the polls.¹² Furthermore, no political party truly represented the working classes. The

communist and socialist parties, which had once struggled in defense of the workers in the 1930's, had turned their backs on labor. One observer noted: "The abandonment of the Argentine workers by the leftist parties was not simply tactical defeat but symptomatic of strong conservative forces at work . . . and created the leadership vacuum which Perón so ably filled."¹³

Another important development which served to benefit Perón was the changing nature of the Argentine working class. The urban workers were now truly Argentinian. The Spaniards and Italians who had come to Argentina in the World War I era were no longer influential in the new labor movement. These immigrants had brought with them the old world forms of radicalism-anarchism, syndicalism, and Marxian socialism. The new-stock workers, native born and nationalistic, regarded these theories as foreign. They wanted their own indigenous social reform movement. Again, they provided ready made circumstances for Perón to exploit.¹⁴

The rapid growth in industry also changed the size and character of the working class. As a result of industrialization, there was mass immigration of rural workers into the cities and full employment. In fact, from 1937 to 1947, the number of new jobs in industry increased by an annual average of 42,000, while the number of persons entering the labor force each year averaged only about 40,000. The fact that immigration stopped in the 1930's also resulted in demand by industries for more labor than was available.¹⁵

Emigration by rural workers was also stimulated by the differential between the poor quality of rural life in the interior provinces and the

potential for an improved lifestyle offered by high wages in industrial and service jobs in Buenos Aires and other industrial cities. In the period 1943 - 1947, about one million people, or twenty percent of the total urban population of 1943, moved into urban centers. Greater Buenos Aires grew by 750,000 people, of whom 600,000 were internal migrants.¹⁶ These new migrants were mainly a racial mix of Caucasian and Indian, with little attributes of European culture. They were illiterate, uneducated and filled mostly unskilled jobs. More sophisticated city dwellers referred to them derisively as lombrices de la tierra adentro (worms from the land within) or cabecitas negras (little blackheads). These transplants found themselves lost in the city, and they remained outside organized groups of society. Ill-housed, ill-clothed and victimized by the caprice of their employers, they had no social or political rights. All they knew of politics was following the instructions of their patrones who ordered them to vote for certain candidates. Their lack of self-image and opportunity made them susceptible to the manipulations of a demagogue who offered them a better standard of living and a new set of aspirations.¹⁷

There was yet another factor that abetted Perón's rise to power: the split of the old trade union movement. It was no longer the crusading, reform movement it had once been during the First World War. There was internal disunity and lack of true leadership. This, in turn, led to general lethargy among the rank and file. The largest trade union in Argentina, the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), formed in 1930, split in 1942 into CGT number one and the CGT number two. The crisis stemmed from the struggle within between the socialists and communists.

The socialists controlled the older, more highly skilled unions as well as the commercial and municipal workers. The communists, on the other hand, represented the new industrial unions.¹⁸ Soon after, on the ground that it was communist-dominated and therefore subversive, the CGT number two was dissolved by the government shortly before Perón became Secretary of Labor.¹⁹ From then until the coming of Perón, the CGT under socialist leadership continued to be the largest central labor group.

The change in the size and character of Argentine workers is another reason Perón was so readily accepted by the laboring masses. During the early 1940's, Perón would unify the working class movement by mobilizing the newly emerging sectors of the workers (the internal migrants) but also by making strong inroads among the older, more established union workers. The new recruits to the industrial labor force were tradition-bound, with a rural outlook, unaccustomed to class organization and suffering from social isolation and economic insecurity. They could, therefore, be easily incorporated into a populist movement with leadership from outside the working classes. The old trade union leaders, with a long history of labor struggle, disunified and repressed by the government, were also willing to accept a new leader who could give labor a strong political character. These "old" and "new" working classes were both seduced by Perón's promises as he slowly penetrated the labor movement.²⁰

Perón began negotiating with labor leaders in early July, 1943, before he was appointed Secretary of Labor and Welfare. He guaranteed the workers that he would fight for economic and social reform. He also

preached his vague doctrine, justicialismo. This doctrine remained nebulous, but one Peronist, attempting to give it form, stated that it was "a doctrine whose objective was the happiness of man in human society, achieved through the harmony of materialistic, idealistic, individualistic and collectivist forces, each valued in a Christian way."²¹ In short, he promised social justice for all. Labor leaders, in turn, explained what the workers wanted: equal status with all other groups in Argentine society, freedom to organize throughout the country, an effective ministry of labor, pension and social security systems, and an end to government suppression of union activities.²²

Perón had closely observed the development of hostile labor-government relations throughout the "infamous decade," when the workers had to bear the brunt of lower wages and political repression. There was an increasing number of strikes throughout the country. In 1942 there were 114 strikes, more than double the number in 1941.²³ Strikes, however, did not produce economic gains for the workers during this period, although they menaced the government's position and made the workers either very impatient with the regime or thoroughly discouraged. In these official meetings, or Congresos, they made statements informing him of the workers' disappointment with "the stunted growth of the economic and democratic evolution of the country." They insisted that the country needed a "democratic, constitutional government that would represent everyone's interests," and assured Perón that they were "the only ones qualified to unite the country in defense of such government." "The labor movement," the union leaders noted, "was 'independent' of all partisan and political interests." It possessed "the necessary conditions

to stimulate the unification of all political and economic sectors of the republic concerned with reestablishing honest elections, permitting the representative of the genuine majorities access to the direction of state, guaranteeing constitutional liberty for all inhabitants of the country, and supporting democratic countries fighting totalitarianism."²⁴

Thus at a time when labor was turning against the repressive measures of the military government, Perón was given the job of running the labor department, which he later elevated to the status of Secretariate of Labor and Social Welfare to give it cabinet rank. Perón understood that, for his regime to survive, force alone would not suffice. He thus ended the assault on the workers' organizations and proceeded to reverse government labor policy. He continued to make personal contacts with labor leaders and went directly to the workers themselves in many personal factory visits. The workers were amazed that Perón could speak their language, swap stories in their vernacular, and enjoy drinking with them. Perón won converts by the thousands and laid the foundation for deals between his secretariate and labor leaders. In the process, he learned which unions were or were not loyal to him. He jailed, tortured or ousted those leaders who wished to maintain independence or did not comply with his ideas and suppressed those unions which did not follow his rules. At the same time, those who did conform were rewarded. And in the absence of a heritage of civil liberties, Argentine workers gladly ignored Perón's repressive measures and eagerly grasped the material benefits which he offered. In the two years during which he headed the Secretariate of Labor and Welfare, Perón enacted a great

deal of social legislation by decree and developed a system of redistribution of wealth in favor of the working classes. He stimulated the growth of the organized labor movement by strengthening and unifying it, intervened in the process of collective bargaining, and expounded his doctrine in a number of fiery speeches which promised a new political influence to the labor movement.

In his first speech delivered at the founding of the Secretariate of Labor, Perón declared, "I have never believed that the problems of labor and management were private matters." In the past, "the state remained aloof from the working population. It did not regulate social activities, as was its duty, it only had contact with labor . . . when the fear of seeing the apparent order of the street upset, obliged it to descend from its ivory tower." Now the government must encourage a labor organization with a "deep rooted love of the patria (nation) and an absolute respect for the law." Perón concluded, "and we must be able to count on the loyalty and support of all the workers as we move along the road toward the greatness of the patria."²⁵

In addition to pointing out the mutual responsibilities of the state and the working class, Perón gave the workers a new sense of purpose and dignity.²⁶ Perón spoke of the importance of work to build a new nation, a "New Argentina." "Work after the home and school is an irreplaceable mold of the character of the individuals," he declared. "Work molds individual character, plus collective habits and customs and, therefore, the national tradition."²⁷ Perón had thus suggested a role for labor. They were to become partners with the military government in the development of the country. This central theme, repeated in

many future speeches, "was always directed towards strengthening the national economy through improving conditions of the working people and giving the role of labor a hitherto neglected place in the socio-economic structure of the nation."²⁸ There is perhaps no better summary of his many promises than that given in a speech of October 2, 1943:

The era of Argentine social policy begins with the creation of a Secretariate of Labor and Welfare. The epoch of instability and disorder in which relations between the employer and the worker were submerged is vanished forever. The workers will enjoy a guarantee that the working conditions established, detailing the rights and duties of each, will be enforced zealously by the labor authorities, and any failure to comply will be inflexibly punished. Both parties must be convinced that there is no scope for either cunning or violence in the labor sphere, as an irrevocable determination will demand both the enjoyment of rights and the fulfillment of obligations in each case.²⁹

In order to implement these larger goals, Perón diligently worked to organize new unions and strengthened already established ones. He personally led campaigns among packing-house workers, sugar plantation peons and various other labor groups in the interior of the republic. In fact, the number of unions recognized by management increased from 356 in 1941 to 969 in 1945. Membership also increased. In 1943 there were 80,000 union workers. In 1945 the number of union workers increased by approximately 500,000. Altogether the proportion of unionized labor increased from one-tenth to two-thirds working force.³⁰ Furthermore, before Perón came to power, only a small percentage of the urban workers, and virtually none of the rural workers, were engaged in collective bargaining. Thus, by stimulating unionization, Perón also helped the workers gain great victories in achieving their collective needs. The

Secretariate of Labor and Social Welfare office became the headquarters for collective bargaining. The unions which came to the Secretariate with their complaints usually won, as the employers were forced to accept labor's demands. Thus, the workers learned that Perón's Secretariate would play the role of "unconditional protector" of the laboring masses. They soon realized that it was not the union representatives who were responsible for their advancements, but Perón.

Not only did Perón dictate new labor regulations, but he enforced already existing laws more effectively by locating officials of the Secretariate in provincial capitols. Results in favor of labor were soon forthcoming. In the first year of the Secretariate's existence, Perón arranged 174 settlements of labor disputes and enacted twenty-nine new labor laws by decree.³¹ A new social security program was established. The new system provided funds and retirement pensions. With years of service, a worker could retire at full wages at the age of fifty-five years. The laborers contributed ten percent of wages to the social security fund and employers paid fifteen percent of their wage bill. The new system also included a health insurance program for all workers. Some specific services paid subsidies to sick workers and provided bonuses for the birth of each child. Perón also established labor courts all over the country to settle labor-management disputes, and a new system of factory inspection. Perón also passed many decrees concerning paid vacations and holidays which included free transportation and tourist hotels for union members only; a forty-eight hour work week and an eight-hour day which now applied to more workers; indemnities, the Aguinaldo, an additional month's pay as a separate New Year bonus;

workmen's compensation, which included abolishing maximum wage limits; and the statute of the peon to defend the basic rights of the rural workers, such as minimum wages, paid vacations and health insurance. There were also regulations covering the apprenticeship of minors and women; work of women and children was limited to less than eight hours and minors between fourteen and sixteen were only allowed to work four hours a day and twenty-four hours a week. Expectant mothers could not be dismissed because of pregnancy and were provided maternity benefits. Other regulations were implemented governing domestic service, minimum wages, arbitrary job dismissal, tenure of selected occupations, and sanctions against persons and corporations obstructing the work of the Secretariate of Labor. Other matters in Perón's labor program included workers' housing projects, educational programs and nationally recognized holidays.³² As a result of all these measures, Argentina gained the reputation of having the most advanced program of social insurance and protection of labor rights in Latin America; little wonder that the working masses believed that national development and social welfare would be the primary objectives of the government under Perón's leadership.

Perón's organization and recognition of labor unions was yet another major step in his labor policy. Most importantly, he abetted the rise of the CGT, the most important trade union in Argentina. He did this by adding thousands of previously unorganized industrial and rural workers to its membership and gained its control by a new law. A military decree was signed in 1943, creating the regulation of professional associations. It later became the Professional Association Law of 1945. The law defined "a sindicato, or professional association, as a group

formed by manual or intellectual workers of the same profession or in similar or connected professions or industries constituted for the defense of their professional interests." The significance of this law was twofold. First, it officially put the power of the state behind recognized trade unions and implicitly obliged the employers to deal with them. Second, this law made it essential for a union to acquire personeria gremial (legal recognition) before it could function effectively. Eventually most unions or sindicatos possessing personeria gremial came under the umbrella of the CGT, which became each sindicato's only bargaining agent.

Perón would use this decree to destroy the unions politically hostile to the regime. However, most of the unions which represented the majority of the workers in a given trade possessed personeria gremial and enjoyed many rights under law. These rights were the right to defend and represent the interests of the workers in dealing with employers, courts and governmental bodies; to have a representation in governmental organizations regulating labor relations; to participate in collective bargaining; to participate in political activities; to conduct meetings and assemblies in closed halls; to determine the suspension and renewal of work; to establish sanctions in case of violation of their statutes and trade union decisions; to require employers with previous authorization from the ministry to install the checkoff; to be exempt from all taxes, and to have preference in employment insofar as the state and all firms having contracts with or concessions from the state are concerned.³³

Under Perón, the CGT also took a new face and a new form. It became Perón's most faithful political tool. Perón often boasted of

his relationship with the CGT. "When the Confederation feels that something must be done in a certain way, it comes to me and tells me how they want it done and I do it that way." On the other hand, "if I need something from the Confederation, I call the boys together and tell them, 'Look, boys, I think this should be done this way, and they do it.' This understanding is no more than the result of our political and social orientation."³⁴ In reality, Perón's cordial relationship with the CGT was necessary because by controlling it, he could control all other workers' unions as well.

By the end of 1944, Perón had won over the internal migrants and organized labor as well. He had done this by changing the socio-economic and political panorama of the country. "Today the force of the state is at the service of social justice, and the voice of the workers has the same authority and respect as others."³⁵ Perón had appealed to the migrants, whose conception of government was paternalistic, with his promises, his tremendous vitality and machismo, characteristics that counted heavily among the rural masses since colonial times. Furthermore, with Perón the cabecitas negras were no longer outcasts. He had won organized labor by becoming its unifying force and leader, providing all the answers to their problems, and giving the movement a certain new meaning and dynamism. The socio-economic and political benefits they had gained in such a few years with Perón were enough evidence to support him.³⁶ Although labor had slowly fallen under government control, it had at last gained a new status, and Perón had won a new and powerful political force.

Perón had been successful in maintaining control of labor through his post as Secretary of Labor and Welfare, but control of the military was becoming ever more difficult. At first it had been the War Ministry post, itself, that had enabled Perón to consolidate his hold over younger officers outside the GOU. By manipulating assignments, promotions and retirements, he was able to isolate his enemies and reward his friends. Moreover, as War Minister he was able to carry out popular military reforms that affected both the organizational structure of the army and individual needs of certain men. In addition, many military officers liked Perón's involvement with labor because they believed his methods were reducing the appeal of communism. However, the opposition, which consisted of elements of big business, the land-owning aristocracy, university students, the press, the Army and Navy and anyone who feared Perón's rapid rise to power and his tyrannical tactics, joined forces against him. By 1945 the opposition was very active. In June a Manifiesto was issued by 321 industrial and commercial organizations attacking the socio-economic policy of the regime and denouncing Vice President Perón in particular. On September 9, 1945, approximately 500,000 people demonstrated in Buenos Aires in opposition to the government. It became known as the Marcha de la Constitución y la libertad (March of the Constitution and Liberty). On October 4, 1945, general strikes of university students were called against the government. The next day, an anti-Peronist newspaper, La Critica, was closed.³⁷ As a result, by the end of the month, Perón was rounding up the principal leaders of the opposition in one of the greatest manhunts of Argentine history. A

New York Times correspondent in Argentina, Arnaldo Cortesi, reported this incident:

. . . not one of the men or women who have dared to stand in his way has failed to see the inside of a jail before the day is over. At last, late at night, he moves to Police Headquarters to look over the day's haul of prisoners in Buenos Aires.³⁸

Not only did Perón use oppressive tactics, but he began to act more openly as a candidate for the presidency, and turned labor against the opposition. On July 12, 1945, an inter-union committee sponsored a huge labor rally at a downtown intersection of Buenos Aires, ostensibly in defense of improvements obtained by the workers through the mediation of the Secretariate of Labor and Welfare. Thousands of workers showed up in what turned out to be a political rally for a presidential candidate, Perón.³⁹

On October 2, 1945, Perón asserted, "Everyone is demanding my head but thus far, no one has come to get it."⁴⁰ Despite the workers' support and Perón's last minute fiery speeches against the enemy, on October 9, an army garrison at Campo de Mayo, led by General Eduardo Avalos, rose in revolt against Perón. Avalos had remained in close contact with anti-Peronists and was a jealous rival of Perón. Perón was soon forced to resign all three posts he held in the government, setting off wild celebrations by anti-Peronists,⁴¹ On October 10, 1945, the day after he resigned, Perón harangued a large, excited crowd outside the Labor and Social Welfare Department with a speech that was broadcast over the official government radio network. He assured the workers that his resignation did not mean withdrawal from politics. He also announced that before leaving the War Ministry he had signed a

decree granting Argentine workers salary increases and profit-sharing. As the crowds grew more enthusiastic, Perón promised that he would fight against "the oligarchy of capitalistic interests" and promised to join a labor union so he could "defend the workers' interests better." He repeatedly pledged to dedicate himself exclusively to serving the interests of the workers and declared that "Argentina's Revolution was under way and he would never disappoint the hopes of the men who worked and suffered." Finally, he asked the workers to remain faithful to his leadership, promising "victory will be ours."⁴²

The events of October, 1945, gave the workers the chance to demonstrate the strength of their support for Perón as the opposition desperately tried to make order out of chaos and confusion. On October 12, Perón was placed under arrest and incarcerated at the island of Martín García, the traditional sequestration point for the country's political dissidents. Soon afterwards, Avalos called upon the political parties to form a new government under President Edelmiro Farrell. The civilian politicians, however, refused to accept Farrell because they feared another "government of colonels."⁴³ Instead, they demanded that the constitution prescribed that in the absence of a president or vice-president, the Supreme Court should assume the powers of government. This was a great mistake by anti-Peronists, since the Supreme Court, a very conservative body, constituted the workers' worst enemy. If conservatives assumed power, the workers risked losing the gains attained in the previous two and one-half years. Furthermore, on October 12, which was one of the paid holidays created by Perón, many employers posted notices to the effect that recent events justified their cancelling the

paid holiday. Moreover, all other secretaries and ministers were forced to resign by the Campo de Mayo group. By October 13, President Farrell had a cabinet of only two members, General Avalos and Admiral Hector Vernengo Lima.⁴⁴ Despite the new government's general announcement that "all social conquests achieved by the working population will be integrally maintained," pro-Perón rallies grew bigger and bigger all over the country, and Avalos grew more apprehensive. On October 16, 1945, he denied Perón's arrest. He announced: "Perón has been taken into protective custody for fear he might suffer bodily harm."⁴⁵ Avalos then allowed Perón, who complained from pleurisy pains, to be hospitalized in Buenos Aires.

When Perón was forced to resign, he was with his mistress, Eva Duarte, whom he had met in January 1944. In the chaotic days of October, 1945, she began to emerge as a leading figure in the public scene and passed her first test of loyalty. As soon as Perón was imprisoned, she set out to mobilize the masses. She contacted all the union officials who owed Perón their loyalty and pleaded for them to gather as many of the members of the Labor Ministry as possible. She also knew the police chief of Buenos Aires, who was militantly pro-Perón, and asked him to detain anyone who attempted to interfere with the marching workers. She then telephoned all those military officers who supported Perón and begged them to show their allegiance in this time of crisis. Finally, she personally met with the two most important union leaders, Cipriano Reyes and Luis Gay. Reyes was most popular with the packing-house workers who lived within fifty miles of the capital and formed the largest union in Buenos Aires. Luis Gay was the leader of the telephone workers'

federation. Together, the three set out to organize a major demonstration on behalf of Juan Perón.

Eva, herself, showed no weakness or hesitation in these hectic October days.⁴⁶ She described with emotion the incidents of the time. She recalled in her book, La Razon De Mi Vida:

I flung myself into the street searching for those friends who might still be of help to him as I descended from the neighborhoods of the proud and rich, to those of the poor and humble, doors were opened to me more generously and with more warmth . . . above I found only cold and calculating hearts, the 'prudent' hearts of 'ordinary' men incapable of thinking of doing anything extraordinary, hearts whose contact nauseated, shamed and disgusted one.⁴⁷

In a matter of hours, Eva, Cipriano Reyes, Luis Gay, and other union leaders loyal to Perón were successful in mobilizing the working masses. The meat packing workers were the first to pour into the square of the Casa Rosada (government house), after the CGT called a general strike. Throughout the day, the workers continued to pour into Buenos Aires by foot, train, bus and trucks, shouting, singing and waving portraits of their hero.⁴⁸

October 17, 1945, is a date indelibly etched in Argentine history. For the first time the descamisados, who had been ignored, insulted, and oppressed, controlled the city and perhaps the nation's political future. They were the poorest, rowdiest, and toughest among the workers, dark haired, poorly dressed, yelling only one name. Brothers of the same voice and the same faith, they chanted louder and louder, "Perón is not a communist, Perón is not a dictator, Perón belongs to the people and the people are with Perón."⁴⁹ (translation by author) The laboring masses, for the first time in Argentine history, stood up collectively in

defense of their economic, political and social rights behind the leader who was responsible.

Perón, who was in the city hospital, knew of the events in the square of the Casa Rosada. Even though Avalos had conferred at length, Perón decided to wait before he appeared. In the event of an attempted military counter-revolution, he wanted the masses to be uncontrollable. In the midst of confusion and chaos, and after the workers spent hours yelling and demanding to see Perón, he announced that he was feeling well and would soon be present in the Plaza de Mayo. Avalos finally telephoned the military officers responsible for the coup that it had failed and that Perón would soon speak to the people from the balcony. Perón finally appeared in the balcony of La Casa Rosada at 11:00 p.m. There were approximately 300,000 workers in the square. More significant than their number was the tension they evoked. Farrell introduced Perón as "the man whose dedication and hard work has won the hearts of the people."⁵⁰ (translation by author) What followed was no mere address to admirers but a personal dialogue between a demagogue and a wildly enthusiastic crowd.

Three years ago from this same balcony, I told you I had three duties in my life, to be a soldier, to be a patriot, and to be an Argentine worker. Today I discard the honorable and sacred uniform of my country, to put on the coat of a civil servant, to mingle with the suffering and powerful masses, which build up with their work, the greatness of the nation. Herewith, I give my final adieu to the army! I give, too, my first welcome to this huge crowd which represents the synthesis of a sentiment which seemed to have died in the Republic. The true civic status of the Argentine people! . . . Two years ago I asked for confidence. I was often told that the people for whom I sacrificed by hours by day and night, would betray me, may these unworthy scoffers realize today that the people never deceive those who do not betray them! For this reason,

gentlemen, on this occasion, as a simple citizen mingling with the sweating masses, I wish to press all you closely to my heart as I might my mother.⁵¹

The crowd often interrupted with different chants and repeated over and over, "Perón, Perón, we love you." Perón ended his speech by saying, "Manana es San Perón . . . Que trabaje el patron." (Tomorrow is the day of Saint Perón, let the boss work).⁵² This day, indeed, marked the beginning of a new era. Even today, thirty-eight years later, it is known as Loyalty Day.

Commenting on the scene, a Buenos Aires newspaper noted, "A handful of descamisados thronged through the streets of the city cheering the dictatorship and creating a disturbance."⁵³ (translation by author) The descamisado thus became the political symbol of Peronistas during the "October days" of 1945. To the opposition the descamisado stood as a "shirtless, naked, ragged, uncultured hoodlum." To Peronistas, who seized the term and turned it against the opposition, it meant something completely different. The word descamisados, under Perón's "new Argentina" doctrine, referred to "modest, intellectual and manual workers organized in defense of their political, social and economic rights." This transformation is symbolic of Perón's social revolution. This word, which now was a symbol for "revindication, justice, truth," also created a state of national conscience and gave the soul of the masses a magic impulse to become a powerful component of the nation.⁵⁴ October 17 not only transformed the descamisado but also converted Perón from a military man of fascist proclivities into a new sort of civilian politician, a democratic populist, although not for long. Only temporarily

did he accept the challenges of open elections.⁵⁵ Anticipating the upcoming election, he retired from the army and began organizing a new political party that would give his candidacy legal and political structure.

The new Partido Laborista (Labor Party), established by the most important leaders of the CGT, elected Luis Gay and Cipriano Reyes as president and vice-president. The party's program consisted of the following components: A constitutional government; restrictions on the political activity of the church and military; industrialization based on a free trade economy; continued European immigration to help meet a demand for labor; nationalization of public services and a few basic industries owned in a large part by foreigners; rent, property and inheritance taxes; profit-sharing and social security. On January 15, 1946, the Partido Laborista nominated Perón as its candidate for the presidency.⁵⁶

Perón knew that he could not rely solely on the workers. He sought the support of decisive sectors of the armed forces and the powerful Catholic Church. To please the Church he married Eva Duarte on October 21, 1945, and promised that he would discourage legal divorce and lay education. He also promised officers in the armed forces key positions in the government, such as provincial governorships, cabinet posts, federal police chiefs, and major posts in the civil service. Perón also gave the army control over the production of war materials and eventually made the armed forces the highest paid in the world.⁵⁷ He constantly tried to keep the two pillars of his regime in balance. He knew that by balancing labor against the army he could retain his power.

He would often boast that he had an army of a hundred thousand trained soldiers and four million workers armed with clubs at his back, and he was in a position to play one against the other--to threaten the workers with army discipline if they ceased to obey him and the army with civil rioting if they withdrew their support.⁵⁸

Arrayed against Perón was the conservative party, headed by the landed elite, the industrial unions representing big industrial capital, the middle class radicals, and even the socialists and communists. All these groups paraded as a popular front--Union Democratica.⁵⁹

The campaign was not conducted fairly. The opposition candidates were often unable to use the press or the radio. Their campaigners met with violence. Union Democratica candidates talked exclusively about political issues, but forgot to mention more important social and economic issues. Perón, on the other hand, portrayed himself as the protector of labor and defender of the constitution. There was yet another reason why Perón's campaign was more successful; United States Ambassador Spruille Braden compiled a "Blue Book" on Argentina, which Perón used to his advantage. It accused Perón and his associates of collaborating with the Nazis and claimed that CGT was nothing more than a puppet of the government.⁶⁰ Perón's answer was a "Blue and White (Argentina's national colors) Book," denouncing imperialist intervention. "Braden or Perón" became the favorite campaign slogan of the labor party.

Even without chicanery, Perón almost certainly would have won, since he had the workers' vote. His party served as an industrial working class party in the more developed regions and as a popular lower

class party in the more underdeveloped areas of the country.⁶¹ In other words, Perón appealed to the established organized workers of the city, as well as the unorganized migrants who came from the underdeveloped regions of the country. The working classes for the first time in Argentine history played a major role in the elections and, in the process, gained political power. Before Perón, they had not been able to find political expression because of the restrictions imposed by the prevailing attitudes of the established classes. They now formed the most powerful party in the country. Although he won a decisive victory, the popular votes were fairly even: 1,479,517 for Perón, and 1,220,882 for the opposition. The electoral college gave an overwhelming victory to Perón. He won all but two provincial governorships, all but two senate seats, and two-thirds of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies.⁶²

On June 4, 1946, Perón was inaugurated Constitutional President of the nation. During the succeeding years it was his first lady, "Evita," who became the manager of the descamisados, the power behind the Ministry of Labor, and Perón's direct link to the workers. With Perón as "the force" and her as the "heart" of the movement, a powerful partnership emerged. Of her work Perón would comment, "She is worth more than five ministers."⁶³

Although Perón had championed the workers and the lower classes, Señora Maria Eva Duarte de Perón had yet a more genuine understanding of their necessities and miseries. Her identification with the poor and less privileged derived from the fact that she, too, had lived a brutally impoverished and barren childhood.⁶⁴ She was born May 7, 1919, in

the town of Los Toldos, a poor, illegitimate child to Juana Ibagurren, the daughter of a coachman, and Juan Duarte, a small landowner, who deserted his legal wife. Eva suffered the consequences of illegitimacy. She was ostracized by social stigma and snobbery. Later she would describe in her book that there were two kinds of people--the rich "or oligarchy" who snubbed her and the "poor" who were generous at heart and loved her. They too suffered from hunger, ill health and lack of education. According to Evita, they were the "true people of Argentina."⁶⁵

At sixteen, tired of her miserable existence and filled with ambition, Eva went to Buenos Aires in search of a colorful acting career. Her early years in the big city were not successful. Although she was described as a diminutive, pale-skinned, dark-eyed, dazzling blond, her physical beauty alone could not win her an acting job in the movies or the theater.⁶⁶ She finally found work as a radio actress in Radio Belgrano, one of the most important radio stations in Buenos Aires. Eva would not gain fame and power as an actress but by meeting many powerful GOU members, especially those who would be important in the "new Argentina."

Before Perón became president, Eva accompanied him to labor meetings and quickly identified herself with the masses. She helped Perón by indoctrinating them, picturing him as their savior, sole patron and protector, and turned them against her own most hated enemy, the rich oligarchy.

For many years I have had a limitless quantity of illusions and dreams. I felt most deeply that the anguish, the grief and

the sadness of our people could not be eternal . . . and that someday they would break forever the chains of hateful slavery and painful misery in which they had been kept by the old oligarchy. So, when I saw Perón take the flag of the workers to carry to victory . . . and when I saw the people had decided to fight with Perón . . . I, a humble woman of the people, understood that it was my duty to take my place with the Descamisados.⁶⁷

Although Perón wanted to maintain close contact with the working masses, his presidential duties prevented him from doing so; thus, Eva Perón set up headquarters in the Secretariate of Labor and Welfare. She arose early in the morning to meet those working people who wanted to bring their problems to the ministry. In the afternoon, she actively intervened in collective bargaining negotiations and held weekly labor courts. "I receive the workers, the humble, those who need me . . . solving trade union problems, examining them on their own merits and for their economic and social repercussions." She told the nation, "My presence at the Secretariate is as the shadow of the leader and as his shadow I intend to continue along the path he started."⁶⁸ The truth is, Evita came to play many roles. She became a combination of marriage counselor, public defender, pediatrician and mystic. The workers became her "beloved descamisados." They called her "Evita." She preferred this colloquial nickname, because it gave her a separate identity as Evita rather than being merely the wife of the president.⁶⁹

Although Evita lacked formal training, she had political intuition and was successful in representing Perón and carrying his authority. She knew and understood the descamisados perhaps better than did Perón. She could often be impetuous, domineering and irrational but, at the same time, appear humble, understanding, mystical and spiritual to the

workers. What Evita did best, in fact, was what she asked history to record: "There was a woman alongside Perón who took him to the hopes and needs of the people . . . and her name was Evita."⁷⁰

A charity foundation provided Evita with her most successful vehicle to identify with the less fortunate descamisados. The name of the foundation was Maria Eva Duarte de Perón Social Aid Foundation. She did not like it to be identified as a charity organization because to her "charity humiliated whereas social aid dignified and stimulated. Charity was the generosity of the fortunate; social aid remedied social inequalities."⁷¹ Her foundation attempted to solve "the problems of millions of Argentine workers with starvation wages, without security of employment, without right to self improvement, without a single guarantee for themselves, their families and their future."⁷² The foundation started out with Evita's capital investment of \$2,092.00 dollars. By the time of her death, it was operating with an annual budget of approximately one hundred million dollars and it never had to present any accounting of its funds.⁷³ The Eva Perón Foundation was funded by Evita's personal funds, voluntary contributions, government subsidies and voluntary donations of the country's workers. In reality, the foundation often served as an agency of political coercion. Donations were gained by threats and strong-arm tactics. Those who refused were often imprisoned or forced into exile; their business forced into bankruptcy. Nevertheless, the foundation did fight for social justice and was successful in giving financial aid and assistance in finding employment for the needy of Argentina. The foundation was responsible for constructing old folks homes, schools, universities, hospitals, orphan homes and vacation

centers for workers. It sponsored homes for unwed or abandoned mothers, children's miniature city (a sort of miniature Disney World), school cafeterias, children's hospitals, kindergartens, schools for nurses and housing for the poor. The foundation was also busy during Christmas and other major holidays. It provided food, shelter and clothing for those in need. Children often received bicycles, motorcycles, shoes, clothes, school books, dolls and other toys from the foundation. Emergency relief was often rushed to disaster areas, not only in Argentina but other countries as well. Eva also provided scholarships for poor students who could not otherwise afford to study. As a result of her actions through the foundation, Evita became the "emblem of hope" and "sister of the downtrodden." In order to sustain these images, the Perons made sure that their melodramatic saving of the poor, unhappy and sick was publicized nation-wide. The workers were also constantly reminded that only the Peróns themselves were responsible. In every construction and public service granted by the foundation, there were signs reminding the masses, "Perón cumple, Evita dignifica" (Perón keeps his promises, Evita dignifies.)⁷⁴

Although Evita's greatest work was in the field of social welfare aid, she was also responsible for molding the trade union movement to her and her husband's will. In the six years she worked at the Secretariate, she removed those union leaders who had independent inclinations. She chose the leaders for the individual unions and the CGT itself. The CGT then became the only central labor organization in the country. All national unions were centralized and subordinated to the CGT, which had

the right to intervene in the affairs of its affiliates and to remove and replace their leaders.⁷⁵

The new congress, clearly in the hands of the Peronists, sanctioned his previous labor decrees and went further. The minimum wage law was changed to recognize the rising cost of living, additional workers received paid vacations and the pension system was strengthened. Perón and Eva also consolidated their power by promulgating a new constitution in 1949. The Perons' socio-economic program was written into the text of the document and Perón became eligible for re-election after a six year term. The constitution also brought the workers closer to the Perons. It converted the Secretariate into the Ministry of Labor and Welfare and included a declaration of the workers' rights. These were the right to work, to a fair wage, to training, to proper working conditions, to preservation of health, to well being, to social security, to the protection of the family, to a better economic condition and to the defense of professional interests. These rights incorporated the fundamentals of all of Perón's labor legislation. Along with these rights were those of the family, of the aged and to education and culture. In the new constitution, the Perons left a monument to themselves by incorporating social legislation, which had become their banner.⁷⁶

By the time of her death, Evita had finalized what Perón had started. The Labor Movement was their powerful political tool and was totally under their control. The nature of the CGT was clear. The organizations's new constitution proclaimed that the fundamental purpose of the CGT was to support Perón and carry out his policies. The

workers soon learned they would have to do things Perón's way. Cipriano Reyes, who had mobilized the masses on behalf of Perón, was a victim. He disagreed with the president on some political matters regarding the labor party which was dissolved soon after 1946. Reyes was imprisoned for seven years. Eventually all old-time leaders were ousted in less spectacular ways and replaced by individuals who owed their post to the Perons.

A short time before Eva's death, the workers had wanted her to become vice-president and run alongside Perón in his second quest for the presidency. Perón's first six-year term was due to end in 1952, and he agreed that Evita should be his running mate. She was officially nominated on August 22, 1951, by the new party, El Partido Peronista. However, military opposition was too great. Nine days later, the most powerful political woman in Latin American declined the nomination in a nation-wide broadcast. In a melodramatic speech, she proclaimed her unworthiness to be Perón's running mate. She said she had no higher goal in life than to serve her country and her husband. "I am not resigning work," she said, "just the honors."⁷⁷ Within months, Evita died of cancer. Her death came at an opportune time. Working class enthusiasm was waning, the economy was faltering and social programs were without adequate funding. Advance arrangements had been made to have her body prepared for public exhibition. She was taken to the Ministry of Labor to lie in state until her funeral. At least 500,000 persons fought to pay last respects to Evita. The funeral procession was the largest in Argentine history. The nation stopped work under the decree issued by the Confederation of Labor, which joined the government in inviting the

public to watch the procession. Meanwhile, national mourning was proclaimed for thirty days. All theaters, movie houses, restaurants and public places were closed indefinitely. Public demonstrations of grief and mourning were bigger than anything else before known in Argentina, which remained in the grip of semi-hysteria for days. Soon after her burial, on August 1, 1952, some of the country's labor leaders cabled Pope Pius XII, asking for canonization of Eva Perón. The reply came a few days later and explained that there were many formalities which had to be observed before anyone could be declared a saint. After her death, Evita remained even more powerful than before. Her faults were forgotten and her myth as a fighter for the rights of the workers remained. The fact that the Vatican had refused to accept Evita for sainthood did not matter for she was already a saint to hundreds of thousands of workers who set up shrines to her in their homes. From then on, she was referred to by the workers as the spiritual leader of the nation.

The symbiotic relationship established between the Perons and labor was based on reciprocal needs and goals. From the beginning of the relationship, Perón and the workers were similarly self-seeking, yet both parties responded with the same enthusiasm. Many labor leaders recognized that the foundation of Perón's benevolent interest in the workers and unionism was raw political ambition. Yet they responded to him only after they realized that he was the man with power enough to oust the repressive conservative political regime and establish a new government friendly to labor. The ordinary workers who did not know they were being used probably did not care about his intentions so long as they benefitted. They obviously adored him, and all outward signs

indicated that he reciprocated. He lived up to his pledges. He promised a social revolution, a brighter future, a "New Argentina," of which they would be a part. Then they experienced the solid results--new labor laws, new political rights and, most importantly, new material benefits. Of importance also was the new identity they had gained--a sense of importance, of purpose, of dignity. Finally, they also got relevant targets for their rage--the oligarchy, the imperialists, the conservatives and any other groups the Perons thought of as their enemies.

Perón had responded to the workers' demands rapidly and consistently in the three years he served as Secretary of Labor, so the relationship was largely one-sided until the workers responded on the day which cemented the symbiotic relationship, October 17, 1945. Perón was able to regain his political prominence only because the workers responded to his plight with unbounded loyalty. The workers simultaneously seemed to recognize as the day wore on that success would result in their effective integration into the political process of the country. Perón too learned that to maintain himself in power, he would need to continue this same relationship with labor. In the following years, he would utilize them to balance the power of a developing anti-Peronist movement.

Despite the favorable circumstances, the personal qualities of Perón should not be discounted. Perón was undoubtedly a talented manipulator of the masses. He spoke their language, understood their desires, and dealt with them directly. He also had a special partner, Evita, a charismatic leader in her own right. She knew how to get power and how to use it while championing the cause of the underprivileged.

Her own special relationship with the masses contributed to the symbiosis. Her most important role, in fact, was informing Perón what his followers were thinking, saying, needing and, at the same time, constantly reminding the masses that Perón was responsible for their political and social advancements.

The culmination of the symbiotic relationship came with Evita's death. Remnants of the relationship remain today, but never again would the working masses respond with the same unity and fervor as during the first years of the regime. Nevertheless, an Argentine author believes the relationship will never die. "Once an idol has been erected, it is rarely taken down from the altar, and though stained and anti-aesthetic, it persistently receives mechanical adoration of the devout, more for fear of innovation than due to true enthusiasm."⁷⁸

Other factors militated in favor of the symbiosis. The disgraceful neglect of the social, political and economic rights of the workers by the fraudulent and corrupt ruling conservatives created a vacuum the Perons were able to fill. The favorable economic condition of the country when he assumed power allowed the Perons to establish a welfare state and provide the workers with material benefits never before granted in Argentine history. The changing character of the labor movement, its consequent organization and ultimate transformation into a powerful political movement would not have been possible without Perón's undivided devotion. Finally, and most importantly, was the achievement of their respective goals: Perón gained the presidency, Evita the power once held by the oligarchy, and the workers representation of their

needs, assurance of their welfare, and a new, permanent status within the power structure of Argentina.

Today, the workers remember the Peron era as the belle-epoche. It is no wonder since they saw the conversion of a government of the oligarchy to a government of the masses. Opponents to the regime cannot understand the workers' adoration of the Perons, why they fail to perceive the Perons as tyrants who had students beaten, union leaders jailed, newspapers suppressed and universities shut down. What anti-Peronists fail to understand is that those who followed the Perons felt they had actually gained the liberty and freedom long denied them by the regimes prior to Perón. For them, liberty was being able to affirm their rights against the oligarchy, being able to vote, standing up straight with dignity. The Perons had promised and granted them emancipation from misery, from a feeling of inferiority and insecurity, from their bosses and from the condition of "non-existence" so well described by French labor historian Simone Weil--"You are no one here. You do not count. You are here to obey, to withstand, to be quiet."⁷⁹ (translation by author) Unfortunately, the result of this symbiotic relationship and the undying loyalty and fervor the workers felt for the Perons and their ideals, have caused the fragmentation of Argentine society. By playing the working sector of the Argentine community against the others, the Perons abetted rather than eliminated internal disunity. Today Argentina remains a conglomeration, not a community, and many of its political, social, and economic problems stem from Perón's engendered hatreds. The success or failure to unite this country will, in fact,

depend on new leaders' understanding of this symbiotic relationship and its effect on Argentina.

ENDNOTES

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9. Loren McIntire, "Which Way Now For Argentina," National Geographic, 147 (March 1975), 314.
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11. For more on the political situation before Perón see Di Tella, Argentina Sociedad de Masas, p. 211; Weil, Argentine Riddle, pp. 1-73; Whitaker, Argentina, pp. 83-103; Blanksten, Perón's Argentina, pp. 259-60; Samuel L. Baily, Labor, Nationalism and Politics in Argentina (New Brunswick, N.J., 1967), pp. 51-71; Alberto Belloni, Del Anarquismo al Peronismo: Historia del Movimiento Obrero Argentino (Buenos Aires, 1960) pp. 46-50; Jacinto Oddone, Gremialismo Proletario Argentino (Buenos Aires, 1949), pp. 402-407; "La Década Infame y el Ascenso del Peronismo," Marcha, 26 (Sept. 1964), 30-31; Arthur Whitaker, "An Overview of the Period" in Falcoff and Dolkart, Prologue to Perón, pp. 1-30.

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