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**The Second Line of
Peronist Leadership:**

**A Revised
Conceptualization of
Populism**

Raanan Rein

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Working Paper No. 6

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The Second Line of Peronist Leadership: A Revised Conceptualization of Populism

The Peronist regime and the doctrine it called *justicialismo* have been the subject of many conflicting interpretations that reflect various ideological viewpoints and that, more than once, have served specific political purposes. The multiple definitions of Peronism have in some cases obfuscated rather than clarified its unique characteristics. Perón himself, in his memoirs, ridiculed the different labels that had been applied to his administration: “Some called me a Fascist, and others a Nazi, and some even said that I was a Communist and a Nazi, as though one could be a Nazi and a Communist at the same time.”¹

Chronologically, the first interpretation of the regime and its ideology was the view of Peronism as Nazi-fascism. This interpretation emerged during the final stages of the previous regime, when Perón had become a dominant figure in the government and was busy establishing ties with the working class. When Perón moved into the presidential residence in 1946, equating Peronism with Nazi-fascism became widespread among his opponents. This view was reinforced by the international context since the ideological dichotomy of fascism versus democracy that dominated the end of World War II and the early post-war period influenced the perception of events on a national level.² Accordingly, liberals, Socialists, and Communists saw Peronism as a local strain of Nazi-fascism, or “*fascismo criollo*”. The influence of nationalist ideas and groups—such as the Alianza Libertadora Nacionalista—on early Peronism, the personalist nature of the movement, and the clearly anti-Marxist and anti-

liberal accents in Peronist discourse contributed to the idea that Peronism and fascism were somehow related.

This view predominated in the wake of the *Revolución Libertadora* of September 1955, which overthrew Perón. Peronism was presented as xenophobic nationalism, and Perón, “*el Conductor*” and “*el Líder*”, as the equivalent of “*il Duce*”. Perón himself, it must be said, never concealed his admiration of Mussolini and his desire to follow in his footsteps while avoiding his mistakes.³

Carlos Fayt was one of the first to offer a systematic argument to show that Peronism was simply the Argentine version of Italian Fascism. He offered six reasons: 1) Peronism, like Fascism, first acted and only subsequently developed a doctrine; 2) it extolled the virtues of order, hierarchy, and discipline; 3) it rejected both liberalism and Marxism; 4) it identified the movement and the doctrine with the nation and with the ruler and his wishes; 5) it rejected class war and sought the gradual institution of a corporative regime; and finally, 6) it promoted an expanding concept of State goals and the subordination of the individual to such aims as the greatness and unity of the Nation.⁴

Although certainly many superficial similarities can be found between fascism and Peronism, such a focus does not contribute to elucidating the social and political realities of post-war Argentina, nor the significance Peronism had for broad social sectors in the 1940s and 1950s. Unlike the fascist regimes that sprang up in Europe between the two world wars, Perón’s regime found its basic core of social support in substantial sections of the working class and the organized labor movement (which led Seymour Lipset, among others, to develop the questionable definition of Peronism as “fascism of the left”⁵), while gradually alienating itself from traditional forces such as the landowners, parts of the army and the bourgeoisie, and ultimately the Catholic Church.⁶ During the Peronist decade, the Argentine working class enjoyed improvements in wages, working conditions, health services, welfare, and education undreamed of by the workers of fascist Italy, who had resisted the rise of Mussolini’s movement. Perón’s first government (1946-1952) included people with

socialist backgrounds and trade-union experience, such as minister of the interior Angel Borlenghi, and foreign minister Juan Atilio Bramuglia.⁷ Generally speaking, it was Peronism's solid working-class roots that allowed it to carry on even after Perón's overthrow in 1955.

One of the characteristics of European fascism between the two world wars was its expansionist, imperialistic aspirations. This tendency did not surface in Perón's Argentina. True, Argentines had always considered themselves entitled to a leading position in South America. However, Perón's friendly overtures towards Argentina's neighbors in 1953-1955 were motivated primarily by a desire to diversify Argentina's import and export markets and reduce its economic dependence.⁸ Nor did the central role played by Evita conform to the "masculine" fascist style.⁹

Perón considered *justicialismo* an ideology representing a synthesis of four aspirations: idealism, materialism, individualism, and collectivism. He claimed that European fascism contained an excessive mixture of idealism and collectivism, without leaving any room for individualism or a healthy dose of materialism. Some scholars have resisted applying the fascist label to Peronism because they saw it as the imposition of a concept relevant to Europe on a Latin-American movement and society; in other words, as a Eurocentric viewpoint that sought to impose European concepts alien to Latin American social and political realities.

In this context, still other scholars have claimed that Perón's regime was totalitarian. They emphasized active participation by the masses in shaping political life. Sociologists such as Gino Germani have claimed that democracy is based on true participation of the masses in the political process, whereas Peronism, like every form of totalitarianism, only created the illusion of such participation, instilling in the masses a deceptive sense that they were the deciding factor in public affairs.¹⁰ This interpretation also assumes that the working class was divided when Peronism arrived on the scene, that only uneducated workers with no class consciousness supported Perón, and that the

proletariat's role in the events that brought Perón to power was completely passive –assumptions that have not been substantiated.

The totalitarian paradigm is also problematic with respect to the Peronist regime. Even if we accept the premise that the Peronist regime began to develop totalitarian ambitions, as expressed in the political indoctrination that was part of the education system and the regime's efforts to attain ideological hegemony,¹¹ we cannot ignore that Perón was put in power by free and fair elections such as had never before been seen in Argentine political history. However, throughout the 10 years of his government Perón punctiliously held regular elections for the presidency, national Congress, rural governorships, and other offices. On each occasion Peronism proved victorious at the polls, and Perón increased the slim majority he had won in 1946 to about two-thirds of the vote in the presidential election of November 1951. Thus, from an electoral standpoint, Peronism enjoyed democratic legitimacy.

Similarly, many of the social and political attributes of a pluralistic society were preserved to one degree or another. Opposition parties continued to operate in Argentina, notably the Unión Cívica Radical, which always had a few representatives in Parliament. Although these parties were harassed and obstructed, Peronist Argentina could not be described as a single-party state. Freedom of speech was also subject to various restrictions, and Peronism gradually began to take over various communication media.¹² Yet there were still newspapers and other publications, in particular the venerable *La Nación*, that were not controlled by the regime. Although human rights were violated in Perón's Argentina, abuses never approached the wholesale brutality of Nazi Germany, Stalinist Russia or post-Peronist Argentina. There were no executions and no disappearances, although torture of political prisoners had been reported and some politicians fled the country. Obviously, the fact that Perón was elected president in the wake of World War II and the defeat of fascism encouraged him to preserve some of democracy's rules, particularly the electoral institution.

Peronism as a Populist Movement

Scholars have, of course, put forward additional and even more dubious interpretations, such as those who considered Peronism as a type of Bonapartism, those comparing Perón's leadership to Bismarck's, or, later, those claiming that Peronism was a stage in a national, popular process tending toward the establishment of Socialism. The most relevant interpretation to understand Peronism, however, is still, in my opinion, the view that identifies it with populist movements of Latin America.

Populism is one of the most nebulous concepts in the modern political lexicon, for two reasons. First, populist movements in the 19th and 20th centuries have worn different guises in different places. Second, "populism" has frequently been employed as a derogatory term that both right-wing and left-wing politicians use to accuse each other of conducting a policy in which considerations of short-term popularity outweigh those of "the good of the nation" or "the interests of the State." Manifestly left-leaning scholars have also tended to adopt simplistic definitions that contribute little to elucidate the phenomenon. According to Dale Johnson, for example, populism was barely the skillful demagoguery of bourgeois elites appealing to "certain non property holding sectors of the middle class, workers, and the enfranchised sectors of the urban mass who are able to control labor and popular organizations."¹³

The roots of Latin American populism, however, like the roots of fascism in Europe, can be related to "the same political, social, and cultural phenomenon recognized in respect to the entry of the masses into politics."¹⁴ In post-World War I Latin America, rapid urbanization, the development of import-substitution industries, the transportation and communication "revolutions" –all processes that had taken place earlier in Europe– began to create a new economic and social environment that provided fertile ground for the development of new ideas and new leadership. The lives of millions of people changed radically, giving rise to great

expectations of expanded political participation for the entire population, improved living conditions for the working class, and generating a less distorted distribution of national wealth.

In most Latin American countries at the beginning of the 1920s, however, the old oligarchies continued to rule, fostering, in cooperation with Britain or the U.S., an economy based on agriculture and raw materials for export, and in general refusing to relinquish their monopoly on political rule or the privileges they had enjoyed in one way or another since the Latin American republics had gained their political independence in the first quarter of the 19th century. Authoritarian regimes of various types were striving to defend oligarchic interests against the “dangers” of political democratization and social radicalization. The unfulfilled expectations of the masses began to give rise to social fermentation.¹⁵

Historian Michael Conniff divides the classic Latin American populist movements in two periods. Those that emerged between the two world wars primarily presented political demands and sought a legitimate, representative administration. These movements instituted a politics of the masses but did not raise any significant social issues. In Argentina, the prime example was the Radical party under the leadership of Hipólito Yrigoyen, who was elected president in 1916. The populist movements after World War II and until the 1960s, by contrast, faced different conditions, engendered by local industrialization processes and internal migration. These newer movements typically transferred their emphasis and resources from agriculture to industry, and sought to increase the working class’s share of the national income.¹⁶

The new populist leaders tended to embrace greater authoritarianism in their efforts to impose economic and social remedies necessary for national development. Using mass media, including radio and television, to mobilize the voting masses, they recognized the crucial importance of working-class support, and realized that improving economic conditions for workers was the necessary price. Populist movements of this second period, like earlier ones, crossed class lines, but most of their power derived from the support of the working class. The Argentine model was

the Peronist movement, a coalition including the part of the army that advocated industrialization to preserve national power, various sectors of the middle class, some of the national bourgeoisie, and most of the working class. Accordingly, Di Tella's working definition of populism still holds true with respect of the multiclass character of populist movements: "a political movement which enjoys the support of the mass urban working class and/or peasantry but which does not result from the autonomous organizational power of either of these sectors. It is also supported by non-working-class sectors upholding an anti-status quo ideology."¹⁷

Solving the "social problem" through social integration of the masses as a means of preventing revolutionary fermentation among them was the very core of Latin American populism in general, and of Peronism in particular. However, this did not yet constitute a real ideology. Populist doctrines were eclectic and sometimes contained contradictory elements. This ideological confusion stemmed, first of all, from the fact that they were broad coalitions representing a wide social spectrum, omitting only traditional elites and revolutionary opposition. As a populist movement, Peronism offered non-violent solutions to some of the main problems of Argentine urban society. It rejected oligarchy on one hand and socialist revolution on the other, proposing a reformist middle way that stressed statist values: government involvement in social and economic affairs in order to prevent gross distortions in national income distribution and ensure progress, but without infringing on capitalist private property.

At the same time, Peronism promised social solidarity –to contend with the alienation engendered in the working class by modern industrial capitalism– and particularly for migrants who poured into the big cities (primarily Buenos Aires) from the provinces. Peronism extolled work and workers (Perón himself rejoiced in the sobriquet of "First Worker," and customarily participated in mass assemblies in shirtsleeves), recognized trade unions and encouraged their expansion, and took steps towards rehabilitating various aspects of popular culture and folklore that

had previously been viewed with contempt by the European-oriented elites. For example, he deliberately used popular dialect and direct and indirect references to famous tango songs in his speeches.¹⁸ According to sociologist Alvarez Junco, “by convoking them as ‘a people’ and describing them as ‘the backbone of the country,’ the populist leader gives them a sense of community and a set of beliefs that protect them against the helplessness engendered by modern life, and against the annihilation of the religious view of the world and the traditional ties and ways of life.”¹⁹ In short, the working class’s great and enduring loyalty to Peronism can be attributed to this combination of material improvement in workers’ lives and the fostering of a strong sense that they were an important and inseparable part of the Argentine nation.

The Charismatic Bond: A Reconsideration

Like every populist movement, Peronism revolved around a charismatic leader.²⁰ Most of the academic research on “charisma” since World War II has been based on Max Weber’s ideas. Weber distinguished between three types of legitimate authority: one based on rational grounds, the second on traditional grounds, and the third on charismatic grounds. The concept of charisma is particularly elusive. According to Weber, charisma is a particular quality that sets its possessor aside from ordinary people who treat the charismatic individual as though he or she were endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least clearly exceptional attributes. These attributes cannot be attained by an ordinary person, and are considered to be divine or miraculous in origin. The person displaying these attributes is therefore treated as a leader.²¹

Charismatic authority is usually manifested at times of crisis, when people seek a leader who will lead them down a clearly defined path and provide solutions for their economic or social difficulties, or problems related to their collective identity.²² Charismatic leadership is not necessarily authoritarian. The

recognition of those subject to authority is a crucial factor in charismatic leadership,²³ which imparts a degree of democracy to any relationship between the leader and the masses. At least initially, the endowment of the charismatic leader with authority is a voluntary act. In Argentina's case, it is clear that once in power, Perón manipulated his authority in order to retain power and ensure his own political survival. Nevertheless, in his relationship with the people, the charismatic leader also depends on the masses; he is constantly goaded to new efforts and to produce new achievements in order to justify and perpetuate his charm.

This dynamic converges with another populist attribute of Peronism: its constant drive to renew its mandate from the people. Peronism was an electoral movement that encouraged citizens to participate in politics and sought to enlist new groups to participate in public life. During Perón's rule, the right to vote was extended to the entire population, a Peronist women's party was established, and in the presidential election of November 1951, women voted for the first time.²⁴ Adult schools, which operated in the evenings and taught basic skills, such as reading and writing, mobilized illiterates. Indoctrination in the schools facilitated the political socialization of children and young people as did UES (Unión de Estudiantes Secundarios.) Housing for single-parent families was built by the Eva Perón Foundation, and the elderly also received special attention. All these measures were designed to ensure a continued endorsement of Perón.

Nearly all research on charismatic authority emphasizes the direct relationship between the leader and the masses; but this approach is, in my view, inadequate, and should be reassessed with respect to Peronism. Madsen and Snow, for example, have written an important book that shifts the focus from the charismatic leader himself to the masses who support and empower him. They define the concept of charisma as:

an influence relationship marked by asymmetry, directness, and, for the follower, great passion. Asymmetry means that the leader has profound influence on attitudes and behavior of the following but that the opposite is not true; the following does

provide the all-important empowering responses..., but its other influence on the leader is muted. *Directness means the absence of significant mediation of the relationship, by either formal structures or informal networks* [my emphasis].²⁵

Edward Shils, in an earlier but no less important work, characterized populist movements as those “that recognize the supremacy of the people over every other standard and desire *a direct relationship between the people and their leader, unmediated by institutions* [my emphasis].²⁶

Most of the works that speak of a direct relationship between the leader and the masses also refer to the “lack of rationality” in the masses’ devotion to the charismatic leader. This irrationality is attributed to actors who “did not correctly see what their ‘true’ self-interests were, for reasons of emotionality or false consciousness” –as though the “true” interests of any particular social group could always be determined.²⁷

This issue, as it relates to the rise of Peronism, takes us back momentarily to the debate that Gino Germani’s research engendered concerning worker support for Perón. For a long time most historians tended to argue that Perón’s support came mainly from “new” workers –that is, those who had recently migrated to the capital from the provinces as a result of industrialization in the 1930s, particularly that of import substitutes, and urbanization. According to this argument, these workers held traditional views, were accustomed to paternalist authoritarianism, lacked class consciousness, and had little sympathy for revolutionary views. These uneducated masses, supposedly motivated by irrational considerations, were captivated by Perón’s charisma. The magic of mass rallies, in which individuals lose their sense of independent judgment, and the unending roar of slogans sufficed to ensure these workers’ support for Perón. Veteran workers, in contrast, being primarily European-born, better-educated, and possessed of a greater class consciousness, allegedly maintained their loyalty to left-wing parties.²⁸

Revisionist research in the last two decades has questioned the validity of this interpretation. Veteran trade union leaders took an

active part in the rise of Peronism. In contrast to the confederation of labor unions, Confederación General de Trabajadores –which a few months before the June 1943 revolution split into two groups (CGT-1 and CGT-2) as a result of ideological and personal differences– the working class itself was not divided (between “new” and “veteran” workers). The working class’s role in Perón’s rise to power, moreover, was not passive. Not only “new” and non-union workers, but also most of the organized labor movement gradually came to support Perón in 1943-1945 –but motivated by concern for their own interests, not Perón’s. Support for him came from all working sectors, and meshed with the reformist project that some labor leaders had begun to develop in previous years.²⁹

Just as the argument concerning the division of the working class does not help us understand the broad support Perón enjoyed in 1945-1946, in my view, the notion of a direct and unmediated relationship between the charismatic leader and the masses does not help us to understand the development of the Peronist movement and doctrine. My own research indicates that various historians studying Argentina have been captivated by the Peronist rhetoric concerning such a relationship, and have ignored almost completely the intermediary role of people from various social and political sectors who contributed, each in their own way, to mobilize support for Perón, to consolidate his leadership, and develop the justicialist doctrine. Although it is true that Perón did not use party and institutional channels to mobilize support and to carry messages to the masses in the years 1943-1946, it cannot be said that he did not require mediating agents and was able by himself to create a direct and sustained bond with the masses and rally them for his own purposes.

Although Madsen and Snow, like Shils and others, do envision a point at which relations between the charismatic leader and the masses are mediated, in their view this stage is reached only later, during the “routinization” of charisma: “routinization involves the gradual transformation of charisma from a direct, concentrated, and emotionally intense relationship to an indirect,

dispersed, and less passionate one.”³⁰ They argue that the first stage in this process involves the appearance of intermediary roles between the leader and his followers, Weber’s “charisma of office”:

The emergence of such intermediary roles... occurs gradually as the leader finds it more and more difficult to maintain frequent and direct ties with his or her following. It is a development which flows from success, from the need to deal with a large and scattered movement. With such a transformation, and especially if the charismatic leader becomes head of state, the ability of any such leader to maintain a direct tie with his or her following is very much diminished.

I contend, however, that these intermediary roles do not emerge *as a result of* success, for success is not possible without them. Accordingly, the view that the intermediaries and the way they built up power and prestige in their own right became a relevant issues only *after* Perón became president in June 1946 (and some claim only after his overthrow in September 1955) hinders any understanding of the process by which Peronism became a movement and a doctrine in the crucial stage of June 1943-June 1946.

Some scholars who see Perón in the guise of a nineteenth-century *caudillo*, perhaps as a result of propaganda disseminated by Perón’s enemies, have portrayed his as a new version of Juan Manuel de Rosas’ regime.³¹ The image of the nineteenth-century *caudillo*, however, cannot reasonably be transported to conditions of a society in the throes of post-World-War-II modernization. The direct relationship with the masses that was possible in a society before accelerated urbanization and industrialization began was no longer possible in 1940s Argentina.

For the masses to be moved by the charismatic leader’s rhetoric and thereby be induced to vote him into power, they had to first be prepared by intermediary agents, which in the case of Peronism were not the veteran parties, but rather a number of relatively new people and organizations in the period before his

rise to power and assorted government agencies afterwards. Historiography, which has devoted so many pages to Perón and Evita, has so far hardly mentioned the role played by the second line of Peronist leadership. Personalities such as Juan Atilio Bramuglia and Angel Borlenghi served as important liaisons in mobilizing working-class support and in defining the social content of Peronism; Colonel Domingo Mercante helped Perón maintain his hold on both the Argentine army and the working class; industrialist Miguel Miranda promoted Peronism among the national industrialist bourgeoisie; and the ideological background José Figuerola brought from Spain helped him strengthen the nationalist and corporatist orientations of justicialist doctrine.³²

As time passed, Perón himself fell for his own rhetoric and began to believe that he did not need any help to mobilize mass support. He gradually got rid of most of the people who had played important roles in his rise and the consolidation of his power, including Bramuglia, Mercante, Figuerola, and Miranda, and surrounded himself with yes-men who had no independent support bases or mobilizing ability of their own. This is what Guido Di Tella once described as the “very personalist, arbitrary practices that had cost him [Perón] so much... in terms of respectability and public acceptance... the inevitable characteristic of a charismatic leader who cannot tolerate any competition whatsoever.”³³

In my view, this probably contributed to a certain detachment on Perón’s part from what was taking place in society. But more importantly, it was one of the factors in the decline of Peronism and its conversion from reformist to authoritarian populism, leading ultimately to the overthrow of the regime. In this connection, a distinction should be made between two kinds of intermediary bureaucracy: representative bureaucracy, in which officials enjoy status and prestige in their own right and belong to different social sectors; and purely technocratic, functional bureaucracy, in which officials have no ties with different sectors or any real power of their own, but serve merely as the leader’s tools. In the second type of bureaucracy, the regime is cut off

from its original social base and the masses grow increasingly alienated.

One way to prove my argument concerning the prior existence of factors mediating between the charismatic leader and the masses is through a thorough research of the second line of Peronist leadership and its contribution to forming the Peronist coalition, which permitted Perón's victory in the elections of February 1946 and the establishment of the government, and to developing the justicialist doctrine.

Justicialist ideology was eclectic in nature, owing partly to the heterogeneity of the Peronist coalition and the need to respond to demands from different social sectors.³⁴ It was also a function of the various influences exercised by some of the major figures who were close to Perón in 1943-1946, especially in the National Department of Labor, which later became the Secretariat of Labor and Social Welfare. I will not argue that Perón did not have views of his own or that he was crucially influenced by those around him, but Carlos Fayt was not far off the mark when he wrote: "Endowed with an uncommon mental receptivity, [Perón] understood immediately what his advisors explained to him, and he had the sense to let things be done, signing the decrees that his advisors prepared..."³⁵

Historians have not yet responded adequately to the challenge of examining the ideological contribution and political role of these advisors. The following pages invite such an examination. Research on this subject will show that Peronism of the 1940s and 1950s was more heterogeneous and complex than its monolithic image would seem to suggest.

Juan Atilio Bramuglia: From Socialism to Peronism

Bramuglia was undoubtedly both the most talented and the most prominent of the ministers in Perón's first government. This assessment was shared by contemporary foreign and Argentine observers, both Peronists and anti-Peronists. U. S. ambassador George Messersmith characterized Bramuglia as one of the "two

most outstanding members of the Argentine cabinet.” British diplomats described him, with characteristic arrogance, as a “reasonably sensible man for an Argentine.” And Moshe Tov, the head of the Latin America division in the Israeli foreign ministry, wrote in his memoirs, “Bramuglia was an intelligent, studious man, skilled in conducting business, simple in manner, and discreet in his human relations.”³⁶

Bramuglia was a self-made man. The son of impoverished Italian anarchists who had immigrated to Argentina in the 1880s because of political problems, Bramuglia was born in 1903 in Chascomús, in the province of Buenos Aires. He was orphaned at an early age and forced to earn his own living from the age of 9, but continued his education, eventually earning a doctoral degree in law,³⁷ and specializing in labor law. In the early 1920s he joined the Socialist Party and some years later became a protégé of Mario Bravo.³⁸ He served as legal advisor for various unions, including the telephone, streetcar, and railroad workers’ unions, and was also a consultant to the Confederación Obrera Argentina and the Confederación General del Trabajo (CGT). Thus, at the beginning of the 1940s, Bramuglia was already a familiar and influential figure in organized labor.

In August 1943, the military government intervened in the railroad workers’ unions and the government-appointed *interventor* placed in the Unión Ferroviaria (UF) dismissed Bramuglia from his position as legal advisor. After Perón assumed responsibility for the National Department of Labor, which he rapidly converted into a government ministry for all intents and purposes, Bramuglia began to encourage a group of UF members, led by Luis Monzalvo, to join forces with Perón and to bring the union rank and file along with them.³⁹ He himself, having despaired some years earlier of the Argentine Socialist Party’s ability to effect social and political change and to mobilize the working class, cultivated his relations with Colonel Perón and joined the Labor Department, which soon became a workshop for the production of labor and welfare laws.

Bramuglia was named Director of Social Welfare.⁴⁰ His most important achievement in this office was to push through legislation expanding pension provisions to different sectors of the working class. He soon proved to Perón that he was loyal, industrious, and efficient not only in legislative matters, but also in mobilizing political support for Perón's leadership.

In December 1944, Perón had Bramuglia appointed *interventor* in the province of Buenos Aires, an area that was crucial to the success of his presidential campaign.⁴¹ Within a few months, working on several fronts, Bramuglia had managed to form a coalition of Perón supporters in the largest and most importance province. In addition to working to reinforce and expand the pool of workers supporting the Peronist project, he sought to attract middle-class supporters who realized that the institution of Peronism would guarantee a larger civil service, which would translate into more employment opportunities. To that end, he coaxed political figures from the Radical Party to join his state government,⁴² their job being to enlist middle-class support for Perón's presidential candidacy.

The same policy was followed at the national level when the Farrell government was reorganized in April 1945 under pressure from the Navy. Perón took advantage of this opportunity to arrange government portfolios for three men from the second and third ranks of the Radical Party leadership whom he had managed to attract to his cause: Hortensio Quijano was appointed minister of the interior; Armando Antille, minister of the treasury, and Juan Cooke, a former congressional deputy, became foreign minister. Although the Radical Party immediately expelled the three, they were proof of Perón's efforts to set up a broad and diversified political coalition that would ensure his victory over the Radical Party, which until then had been considered the largest and strongest party in the Argentine political system.

Bramuglia's success aroused concern in circles that took a dim view of Perón's presidential aspirations. He was forced to resign under pressure from Campo de Mayo military commanders, who had been drifting away from Perón towards the opposition. In the presidential elections, however, Bramuglia filled a strategic role

by heading the *Junta Nacional de la Coordinación de los Partidos Políticos Revolucionarios*, tirelessly negotiating compromises and maneuvering between Labor Party members, former Radicals, Conservatives, and other groups of Perón supporters.

As for his own political career, the Labor Party wanted him to be their candidate for the post of governor of Buenos Aires, the province he knew well. He did not receive this position, however, since Perón let the Labor Party know that he wanted Bramuglia to be a minister in his future government, and that they would have to pick another candidate.⁴³ Yet when Perón won the election, he did not give Bramuglia the labor portfolio he wanted over any other post, fearing that it would give him the opportunity to build a power base of his own. Instead, he decided to appoint him to the foreign ministry, where he could contribute to improving the regime's international image and strengthen Argentina's position without endangering Perón's position from within.

Still, Perón soon discovered that the position of number-one diplomat of Argentina allowed Bramuglia to accumulate sufficient prestige and power to put him almost at the same level as the president himself. Bramuglia was extremely successful in the foreign ministry—so much so, that he was dismissed in 1949.⁴⁴

José Figuerola and the National Council for Postwar Affairs

One reason for the lack of any real research on the second line of Peronist leadership and its political role and ideological contribution, is the dearth of documentation. In some cases—such as that of Angel Borlenghi, which will be examined further on—documents did not survive political upheavals, or simply vanished for there was no tradition of preserving such documents as part of national heritage. In other cases, as that of José Figuerola, many documents are apparently still in the hands of family members who are unwilling to allow researchers to gain access to them.⁴⁵ Unlike other figures mentioned here, Figuerola was not suited to serve as a link with any particular social or occupational sector; he

brought with him, however, valuable experience and he made an important contribution to the development of Peronist doctrine.

José Miguel Francisco Luis Figuerola y Tresols was born in Barcelona in 1897. At the age of 21, he already had a bachelor's degree and a doctorate in law, and took a strong interest in labor relations and the social order. During the 1920s, Figuerola served as bureau chief under Eduardo Aunós, the labor minister in the Spanish military dictatorship of General Primo de Rivera. That regime had the wisdom to cooperate with trade unions (*Unión General de Trabajadores*) affiliated with the Spanish Socialist Party, and to set up *comités paritarios*, government-sponsored mixed juries, to arbitrate labor disputes.⁴⁶

After the fall of the Spanish dictatorship, Figuerola emigrated to Argentina, where he joined the National Department of Labor. Although this department had existed since 1907, it had little power until Perón arrived in 1943. Figuerola, with his extensive training in management, statistics, and social and labor legislation, promptly won Perón's trust. The demographic figures he showed Perón persuaded him that the potential power of the urban working class was the key to political success, and Perón enlisted Figuerola to his social and labor programs. With the help of Figuerola and Bramuglia, Perón turned the Labor Department into a secretariat with the status of a government ministry, a center of influence that was to be his political springboard.

A report by the U. S. Embassy in Buenos Aires at the end of 1943 described Figuerola as a "highly competent statistician, his political beliefs are a curious mixture of nearly all types of authoritarianism."⁴⁷ In 1944, Perón appointed Figuerola as secretary general of the Consejo Nacional de Postguerra, which was supposed to devise Argentine policy in the period following World War II. This council served as a sort of temporary government anticipating the one elected in 1946. When Perón moved to the Casa Rosada, he appointed Figuerola as technical secretary to the presidency, a position in which he enjoyed the status of minister and was responsible for coordinating relations between government offices and all organizations connected to the federal government. In August 1946, U. S. Ambassador

Messersmith reported that perhaps no one else in the country was as close to Perón as Figuerola, who enjoyed the president's full trust.⁴⁸

Figuerola drafted many laws and decrees, wrote some of the Peronist Party documents and a number of important speeches for Perón, and was considered the architect of the 5-year development and modernization plan that was published in 1947. He believed in state intervention to achieve social harmony between employers and employees. In his books, he called for interclass cooperation under the aegis of the government, criticizing past employer inflexibility and trade-union extremism. The solution he suggested included state intervention through legislation, social policy, and arbitration of labor disputes.⁴⁹

When the project of reforming the national constitution came up –partly in order to permit Perón's re-election– Perón charged Figuerola with the task of composing the draft proposal for it, and this draft apparently provided the basis for the final version of the 1949 constitution. By then the influence of the “*gallego*” had already aroused a considerable amount of jealous hostility. A slight alteration in the wording of one of the clauses of the constitution established that only native Argentines could serve as ministers of the national executive power. It seems that this was partly the result of political machinations by Eva Perón, who wanted to move Figuerola out of the president's orbit. That provision forced Figuerola to leave his post.⁵⁰

Miguel Miranda and the New Industrialists

Miguel Miranda served as an important link with a group of new industrialists who saw Peronism as an opportunity for economic growth that would foster development and modernization along with handsome profits. During 1946-1948, Miranda was dubbed “the economic czar”. A native Argentine, he was the son of a Catalonian anarchist and an Aragonese mother who had emigrated to Argentina at the end of the 19th century.

Like Bramuglia, Miranda was forced to work for a living from a very early age. Intelligent, energetic, and confident, he slowly began to make his way, revealing an eye for economic opportunity and a talent for business administration. He was working for the Bunge y Born grain firm when he realized the opportunities inherent in the development of import-substitution industries in Argentina. He left his job and opened a business of his own, a small sheet-metal factory that was his first opportunity to accumulate capital. He reinvested that capital in various businesses, gradually diversifying his interests and assets until he had become a powerful, influential industrialist and financier. Miranda is an example of an industrialist who developed under the "protection" that the world economic depression and World War II provided for local producers. Miranda was admired by his colleagues as a "self-made man" who practically lived in his factory and maintained close contact with his workers.

On the eve of the June 1943 military coup, in addition to being a major entrepreneur in the sheet-metal sector, Miranda owned substantial interests in fishing concerns and the rapidly developing airline industry.⁵¹ Miranda was concerned about repercussions that the end of World War II was likely to have of Argentine industry, once the U. S. and European powers returned to their peacetime production lines; he feared that Argentine industry would fall back into the same decline it had suffered in the aftermath of World War I. His vision was an industrialized Argentina able to supply most of its own needs and to compete in world markets.

When Perón first rose to prominence in the military government, Miranda viewed him much as his colleagues in the Unión Industrial Argentina (UIA) did: with aversion, distrust, and disapproval.⁵² Miranda began to change his opinion, however, under the influence of his friend Rolando Lagomarisino (also a son of Spanish immigrants), a hat manufacturer who was one of the first industrialists to be persuaded of the importance of supporting Perón and his policies. Moreover, at the beginning of August 1943, the military government adopted a policy that favored industrialists, increasing credit by enacting the first

integral law of its kind for promoting industry, and declaring that it would protect the country's industries from the expected threats of the post-war era, and would establish an industrial credit bank.⁵³

In 1945, Miranda met Perón for the first time and was impressed by his personality and leadership ability. The open, direct style, common to both men, and their shared views on the economic road that Argentina should take, became the basis for frequent contact. This contact played an important role in the integration of businessmen and the new industrialists into the Peronist coalition that Perón was beginning to build.⁵⁴ While people like Bramuglia and Borlenghi served as bridgeheads to mobilize working class support in 1943-1946 and ensuring the continuation of that support afterwards, Miranda was expected to play the same role with respect to Argentine businessmen and industrialists.

Public figures like Miranda were supposed to convey a number of messages to middle-class sectors, including the idea that only Perón could fend off the danger of revolution by an increasingly radicalized working class and by trade unions⁵⁵ and that the interests of the national bourgeoisie would be well-served by an economic policy that promised to impose tariff barriers against certain imports, guarantee a labor movement willing to negotiate, institute fiscal and monetary measures that promoted growth, and offer particularly easy access to government credit under preferential conditions. Perón himself delivered a speech in October 1944 that sought to reassure businessmen and industrialists who were worried about his social policies. We do not support the worker against healthy capital, Colonel Perón said, nor the owners of monopolies against the working class. We encourage solutions that will equally benefit labor, trade, and industry, because our sole interest is the good of the State.⁵⁶

Even before Perón took office, economic reorganization began. August 1944 saw the establishment of the Consejo Nacional de Postguerra, to which José Figuerola provided the inspiration, and after Perón's electoral victory, the central bank was nationalized

and Miranda appointed its president (March 1946). Under Miranda's influence, controls were imposed on the exchange rate and the supply of credit. To prevent a distorted allocation of national income, assist weaker sectors, and expand the domestic market, Peronism saw a need for state intervention to regulate social and economic relations between different social classes. The regime therefore took steps early on (in May 1946) to institute a state monopoly in the export and import fields through the Instituto Argentino para la Promoción del Intercambio (IAPI),⁵⁷ also under Miranda's control. The IAPI bought local agricultural produce cheaply and sold it abroad at much higher prices, channeling the profits into industrial development and some of Perón's social policies. Thus, the entire industrial sector, employers and blue-collar workers, benefitted from this policy.

Until he became president, Perón did not manage to enlist any significant support among industrialists, many of whom made substantial contributions to the campaigns of rival candidates. In the UIA internal elections in April 1946, Miranda headed the pro-Perón faction, but the president-elect's opponents carried the day. A few months later, Miranda and Lagomarsino established the Asociación Argentina para la Industria y el Comercio as a competing industrialist union which cooperated with the new government. This organization gradually expanded until it was superseded by the Confederación General Económica in 1951.

Once Perón was in office, he appointed Miranda President of the Consejo Económico Nacional with the status of minister (Lagomarsino was appointed Secretary of industry and trade). In this capacity, Miranda oversaw the nationalization of public services—which had hitherto been controlled by foreign capital—negotiated bilateral economic agreements with various countries, and promoted industrialization.⁵⁸ Although rapid industrialization accelerated the rate of inflation, Miranda believed he would be able to control inflation and was reluctant to curb the pace of development. During those years, full employment was achieved and conditions of the working class improved; but economic problems soon set in, partly because of the depletion of dollar reserves and the problem of finding a satisfactory replacement for

the complementary economic relationship Argentina had traditionally enjoyed with Britain.

Miranda came under attack for his alleged neglect of heavy industry, irresponsible management practices, and inadequate economic planning; he was accused of relying too heavily on intuition and extemporaneous reactions to diverse pressures. He was among those who had gambled on the possibility that a third world war would break out between the Western powers and the Soviet Union and its allies, creating a situation that Argentina could exploit to give its economic development a further boost. But the Cold War did not develop into armed conflict and, even worse, from Argentina's point of view, the country was excluded from the Marshall Plan. The U.S. flooded Western Europe with cheap grain, while Miranda was faced with the sight of silos bursting with grain for which there was little demand overseas.

As the economic situation deteriorated, the government's first step was to reconsider its entire political-economic orientation. Even with a new economic plan, rapid action was essential to show the public both the seriousness of the situation and the government's firm resolve. Accordingly, the government found a scapegoat in the president of the Consejo Económico Nacional. Miranda was already dogged by defamation and rumors of corruption and shady practices, and the regime thought his ouster would be popular with the public. Dropped from the leadership and fearing imprisonment, Miranda fled to Uruguay with the assistance of the Spanish embassy.⁵⁹

Domingo Mercante and Military and Labor Support

Of all of Perón's advisers, Domingo Mercante is the only one who has been the subject of revived interest, as a result of a book published by his son.⁶⁰ Mercante, born in 1898, was the son of a railroad worker, a machinist affiliated with the La Fraternidad union, and was therefore familiar with labor issues from an early age. He attended first the Colegio Militar and subsequently the

Escuela Superior de Guerra. In 1924, he met Perón and contact between them over the next several years was casual and insignificant. It was not until 1940, when Mercante was transferred to the army base in Mendoza, that he established a strong friendship with Perón. The two men served together under Edelmiro Farrell's command. After the June 1943 coup, Farrell became Minister of War, and appointed Perón as secretary and Mercante as one of his aides in his ministry. Facing considerable difficulties, Mercante began to develop relations with labor leaders. The oppressive policies followed by President Pedro Pablo Ramírez did not inspire labor activists with much confidence, particularly since they were antagonistic to the military who considered them reactionary and pro-fascist. Mercante made use of his connections, including his brother Hugo, a railway man who worked in the port and was a member of the UF, to develop friendly ties with labor leaders, and especially railroad workers. This task became easier when he was appointed first Director General de Trabajo y Acción Social Directa and, in 1944, director of aid and social welfare for railroad workers, as well as *interventor* in La Fraternidad and the UF. Mercante became one of Perón's disciples and an important link with the working class.

When Perón was arrested on October 13, 1945, after having been forced to resign from all his posts under pressure from both the Campo de Mayo army base and civilian opposition, Mercante realized that the end of Perón's military and political career would also mean his own end. He therefore embarked on a round of meetings with labor leaders, encouraging them to take action. Subsequently he, too, was imprisoned in Campo de Mayo; he was released on October 17 by General Eduardo Avalos, who wanted to use him as a liaison with Perón. In the meantime, Perón had been transferred from Martín García Island to the military hospital as crowds of protesters gathered in Plaza de Mayo to demand his release. Mercante maneuvered efficiently through that dramatic day until Perón appeared on the balcony of the Casa Rosada, in the event that established Peronism as a movement. In the years

that followed, that day was commemorated as *Día de la Lealtad Popular*.

This event marked a turning-point for Argentina, and Perón officially declared his candidacy for the presidency. Mercante was appointed *Secretario de Trabajo y Previsión* and worked industriously through the nationwide branches of the secretariat to mobilize support for Perón's candidacy. According to Félix Luna, "the Secretariat of Labor and Welfare now began to prepare, in October 1945, to serve as the basic engine of the campaign that would carry him [Perón] to the Presidency... [the Secretariat] was a supercommittee that compensated, in the Peronist camp, for the lack of [sympathetic] press, the improvised political organization, and the shortage of money that plagued Perón's campaign."⁶¹

The Secretariat of Labor and Welfare also played a central role in the establishment of the *Partido Laborista*, the heads of which included leaders such as the syndicalist Luis Gay, head of the telephone workers' union, Cipriano Reyes, head of Buenos Aires province meat-packers, and Luis Monzalvo of the railroad workers' union.⁶² Understandably, the new party wanted Mercante as its candidate for vice-president. Perón, however, not wanting to rely too heavily on military men and equally reluctant to project a strongly pro-labor image, preferred to see some other part of his coalition represented on the presidential ticket. He chose Hortensio Quijano, an experienced politician from the second ranks of the Radical Party who had already linked his fortunes with the perpetrators of the 1943 coup. The leaders of the newly formed Labor Party now wanted to propose Mercante as a candidate for the governorship of the province of Buenos Aires.⁶³ An internal struggle ensued, but in the end, partly because of Eva Perón's support, Mercante received the job.

Mercante built himself a support base of one-time members of FORJA –the movement of Radical Party dissenters that had been established in mid-1935 and represented a nationalist, populist, and anti-imperialist viewpoint– *Laboristas*, and others. He served two terms as governor and was considered one of the most efficient administrators the province of Buenos Aires had ever

known; he generated a variety of public works and ensured stability and development.⁶⁴

In 1949, Mercante reached the pinnacle of his career when he served as president of the Constitutional Convention charged with reforming the Constitution of 1853. Once the new constitution was approved, and the possibility of Perón's reelection guaranteed, relations between the president and Mercante rapidly deteriorated. According to some rumors, Mercante had hoped to succeed Perón, but by the time he completed his second term as Buenos Aires provincial governor in 1952, he was *persona non grata* among the Peronists, and his successor, Carlos Aloé, accused him of a number of wrongdoings. A year later, Mercante was expelled from the governing party.

Angel Gabriel Borlenghi: The Sole Survivor

While most of the second line of Peronist leadership was gradually discarded, Angel Borlenghi somehow managed to retain his position from June 1946 to June 1955, weathering a number of economic and political crises. The secret of Borlenghi's political staying power lay perhaps in the fact that he himself never ventured to compete for the top position, and thus did not pose a challenge, or threat, to Perón gave him some immunity; or perhaps his absolute fidelity to a certain ideology and political leadership protected him. The answers are unclear, partly because of the conspicuous lack of documents relating to his political career. When the *Revolución Libertadora* began in September 1955, Borlenghi was out of the country. The security forces that burst into his house destroyed every document and according to his widow, who has done her best to emphasize Borlenghi's contribution to the Peronist movement, no documents survived.⁶⁵

Borlenghi was one of the most prominent leaders of the CGT until 1943, as well as Secretary General of the *Confederación de Empleados de Comercio* and a former member of the Socialist Party. His contribution to the mobilization of worker support for Perón is well known. He enlisted that support by using the trade

union he headed, his ties with other labor leaders, and subsequently the daily paper *El Líder*, which he controlled. He also did his best to attract Socialist Party activists to the Peronist camp, and to some extent succeeded.⁶⁶

Borlenghi's influence on Perón in the ideological sphere is less widely known. Although the absence of documentation makes it impossible to prove, people like Borlenghi seem to have constituted a conduit to the Peronist leadership for ideas and concepts that had been crystallizing in the Argentine left wing since the end of the 19th century. Historical research to date has emphasized the imprint left on Perón by his training as a soldier and officer, where he first learned the concepts of national power, leadership, and organization he would later transfer to the political field.⁶⁷ There has been a wide debate concerning the influence of the Catholic Church's social doctrine on some of his thoughts on social justice.⁶⁸ Some of the ideas of the extreme nationalist, Catholic right wing also found their way into Perón's thinking and policy.⁶⁹ Many researchers see the members of FORJA, a nationalist, populist, anti-imperialistic movement established in 1935, as the main harbingers of Peronist nationalism.⁷⁰

In contrast, other aspects of Perón's philosophy focused on people, identifying them with the nation, emphasizing social justice, criticizing the oligarchy and glorifying economic independence. These views were based, at least to a certain extent, on concepts that had been hammered out in the Argentine left in the course of various debates since the beginning of the century. The close proximity of people with a socialist background, such as Bramuglia and Borlenghi, to the "First Worker" proved an additional channel for the incorporation of these ideas into the ideological corpus that eventually became "the Peronist doctrine."⁷¹

Nevertheless, Borlenghi, too, lived under the threat of dismissal, even though he generally preferred to operate behind the scenes and largely eschewed public exposure in order not to endanger his position in Perón's government. A few years after he took up his duties, activists in a number of trade unions signed

a manifesto calling for Borlenghi's dismissal on the grounds that he was not sufficiently loyal to Peronism. During meetings with these activists, Perón displayed anger at their accusations, insisting that Borlenghi was above reproach. Only later did it become apparent that the initiative for the manifesto had in fact come from the Casa Rosada. Perón showed Borlenghi the document, promised not to use it, but told him he would keep it in his drawer.⁷² Ultimately, Borlenghi managed to hang on until shortly after the coup attempt of June 16, 1955, which took place in the context of Perón's ongoing confrontation with the Catholic Church.⁷³ In the aftermath of that abortive coup, Perón initially tried to take a conciliatory line with the opposition, to that end jettisoning those members of his government who were identified as anti-clerical, notably the education minister, Méndez San Martín, and "the Jew" Borlenghi.⁷⁴

To summarize, systematic research is needed on the second line of Peronist leadership, especially as to the role played by Bramuglia, Borlenghi, Figuerola, Mercante, and Miranda to improve our understanding of how the Peronist coalition was formed and the various inputs that helped create the justicialist doctrine. Such research will contribute to clarifying some aspects of the populist phenomenon that has left such a strong mark on 20th-century Argentine history, Peronism.

Notes

¹ Torcuato Luca de Tena et. al., *Yo, Juan Domingo Perón* (Barcelona, 1976), p. 88.

² Alberto Ciria, *Perón y el justicialismo* (Buenos Aires, 1971); Ricardo del Barco, *El régimen peronista 1946-1955* (Buenos Aires, 1983). For a systematic discussion of the characteristics of fascism, see Stanley G. Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945* (Madison, 1995).

³ G. Blanksten, *Perón's Argentina* (Chicago, 1953), p. 279.

⁴ C. S. Fayt et. al., *La naturaleza del peronismo* (Buenos Aires, 1967). For a more sophisticated presentation, see Paul H. Lewis, "Was Perón a Fascist? An Inquiry into the Nature of Fascism," *Journal of Politics* 42, No. 1 (1980): 242-256.

⁵ Seymour M. Lipset, *The Political Man* (London, 1965), pp. 170-173.

⁶ There is wide debate concerning the social bases of Peronism. This is not the place to delve into it, but some of the more prominent contributions to this discussion are: Manuel Mora y Araujo and Ignacio Llorente, eds., *El voto peronista* (Buenos Aires, 1980); P.H. Smith, "The Social Base of Peronism," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 52, No. 1 (1952): 55-73; E. Spencer Wellhofer, "Peronism in Argentina: The Social Base of the First Regime, 1946-1955," *The Journal of Developing Areas* 11, No. 3 (1977): 335-356; and Walter Little, "The Popular Origins of Peronism," in *Argentina in the Twentieth Century*, ed. D. Rock (London, 1975), pp. 162-178.

⁷ José Luis de Imaz, *Los que mandan* (Buenos Aires, 1977), p. 19.

⁸ Mónica Quijada, "El proyecto peronista de creación de un *Zollverein* sudamericano, 1946-1955," *Ciclos* 6 (1944): 145-172; and Juan Perón, *Tercera Posición y Unidad Latinoamericana* (Buenos Aires, 1985).

⁹ Opinions differ as to Evita's real power and whether it was independent of or even rivaled that of Perón. See, among others, Marysa Navarro, *Evita* (Buenos Aires, 1981); Alicia Dujovne Ortiz, *Eva Perón—la biografía*

²⁸ Germani, *Política y sociedad en una época de transición*; and Samuel L. Baily, *Labor Nationalism and Politics in Argentina* (New Brunswick, 1967).

²⁹ A pioneering contribution to this revisionist view can be found in Miguel Murmis and Juan Carlos Portantiero, *Estudios sobre los orígenes el peronismo* (Buenos Aires, 1971). More recent works include: David Tamarin, *The Argentine Labor Movement* (Albuquerque, 1985); Joel Horowitz, *Argentine Unions, the State & the Rise of Perón, 1930-1945* (Berkeley, 1990); Juan Carlos Torre, *La vieja guardia sindical y Perón: Sobre los orígenes del peronismo* (Buenos Aires, 1990).

³⁰ Madsen and Snow, *The Charismatic Bond*, p. 25; and E. Shils, "The Concentration and Dispersion of Charisma: Their Bearing on Economic Policy in Underdeveloped Countries," *World Politics II* (1958): 1-19.

³¹ See, for example, A. E. Van Niekerk, *Populism and Political Development in Latin America* (Rotterdam, 1974).

³² See R. Rein, *Peronismo, populismo y política*, Ch. 1. On Mercante, see Domingo Alfredo Mercante, *Mercante: el corazón de Perón* (Buenos Aires, 1995). I am currently working on a biography of Bramuglia.

³³ Guido Di Tella, *Perón-Perón, 1973-1976* (Buenos Aires, 1983), p. 108.

³⁴ Perón himself never denied this eclecticism: "In the first place, we are not sectarian... We obey facts... If there is something in communism we can take, we take it, names don't frighten us. If fascism, anarchism, or communism has something good, we take it..." Quoted in Cristián Buchrucker, *Nacionalismo y peronismo: La Argentina en la crisis ideológica mundial (1927-1955)* (Buenos Aires, 1987), p. 325. It should be recalled that the Peronist doctrine was developed at a relatively late stage, after Perón was already president, and even then it was never really put into any kind of systematic order. One of the first efforts to systematize the doctrine can be found in Raul A. Mende, *El justicialismo—doctrina y realidad peronista* (Buenos Aires, 1950).

³⁵ Fayt, *La naturaleza del peronismo*, p. 106

³⁶ George S. Messersmith Papers, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware (12 and 31 March 1947); C.A. MacDonald, "The U.S., Britain and Argentina in the Years Immediately after the Second World War," in *The Political Economy of Argentina, 1880-1946*, ed. Guido Di Tella and D.C. Platt (Oxford, 1986), p. 186; and Moshe A. Tov, *El murmullo de Israel—historial diplomático* (Jerusalem, 1983), p. 98.

³⁷ The biographical details on Bramuglia are based in part on my conversations with his nieces, Cristina Bramuglia (Buenos Aires, 15 April 1996) and María Graciela Bramuglia (Buenos Aires, 16 April 1996), and his son, Carlos A. Bramuglia (Buenos Aires, 22 June 1989), and on a letter Bramuglia sent to the editor of the nationalist daily *La Frontera* in October 1941, a letter in which he objected to being labeled as a communist, and presented his social and political credentials to disprove the label. See Bramuglia to Delfin Medina, 5 Oct. 1941, in Juan Atilio Bramuglia Papers, Hoover Institution, Stanford University (hereafter JAB Papers).

³⁸ Author's interview with Dardo Cúneo (Buenos Aires, 26 April 1996).

³⁹ Luis Monzalvo, *Testigo de la primera hora del peronismo* (Buenos Aires, 1974); interview with José Domenech, ex-president of the Unión Ferroviaria and former secretary-general of the CGT, in Proyecto de Historia Oral, Instituto Di Tella (Buenos Aires), II, p. 177; and Hugo del Campo, *Sindicalismo y peronismo: los comienzos de un vínculo perdurable* (Buenos Aires, 1983), part II.

⁴⁰ For Bramuglia's social views and ambition to institute pensions for the entire working class, see, among other sources, his own publications: *Jubilaciones ferroviarias: la influencia de la acción sindical de los trabajadores en la formación de las leyes* (Buenos Aires, 1941); *La previsión social argentina: principio de "no acumulación" o concepto de la incompatibilidad de las leyes* (Buenos Aires, 1942); and *El nuevo derecho social argentino* (La Plata, 1945). See also Bramuglia's recommendations to the board of directors of the UF, in which he called for expanding worker activities from the professional sphere to the cultural sphere (JAB Papers, 20 April 1937).

⁴¹ *El Día* (La Plata), 29 Dec. 1944.

⁴² On this subject see Raanan Rein, "Preparando el camino para el peronismo: Juan Atilio Bramuglia como Interventor Federal en la Provincia de Buenos Aires," *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 67 (Dec. 1999); and Pedro Molina, "La Renovación Radical en Buenos Aires (1941-1946)," *Desmemoria* 7 (1995): 44-56.

⁴³ Cipriano Reyes, *La farsa del peronismo* (Buenos Aires, 1987); and author's interviews with Reyes (Quilmes, 15 Sept. 1989; La Plata, 3 May 1996).

⁴⁴ See Raanan Rein, "El precio del éxito: Juan Atilio Bramuglia y la crisis de Berlín," Chap. 2 in *Peronismo, populismo y política* (Buenos Aires, 1998).

⁴⁵ Author's interview with Figuerola's son, Francisco José (Buenos Aires, 14 June 1989). On Figuerola, see Archivo del Instituto de Cultura Hispánica (Madrid), 1593/5245; José María de Areilza, *Así los he visto* (Barcelona, 1974), pp. 210-211; idem, *Memorias exteriores, 1947-1964* (Barcelona, 1984), pp. 28-30.

⁴⁶ On Primo de Rivera's socioeconomic policy, see Shlomo Ben-Ami, *Fascism from Above: The Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera in Spain, 1923-1930* (Oxford, 1983), especially chapters 7-8. On the Socialists' cooperation with the dictatorship, see Shlomo Ben-Ami, *The Origins of the Second Republic in Spain* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 110 ff.

⁴⁷ Joseph A. Page, *Perón—A Biography* (New York, 1983), p. 524 n.20. On Figuerola's evident sympathy for the Nationalists in the Spanish Civil War and for the Franco regime that was established subsequently, see Raanan Rein, *The Franco-Perón Alliance: Relations between Spain and Argentina, 1946-1955* (Pittsburgh, 1993), passim.

⁴⁸ Messersmith to Braden, 19 August 1946, in National Archives, Records of the Department of State [hereafter NA], Washington, D.C., 835.00/8-1946; Areilza to Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores [hereafter MAE], 18 February and 14 March 1949, in Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores [AMAE], Madrid, Leg. R.2627/101, R.2418/4.

⁴⁹ On Figuerola's ideas, see his book, *La colaboración social en hispanoamérica* (Buenos Aires, 1943).

⁵⁰ On Figuerola's departure, see Areilza to MAE, 18 Feb. and 14 March 1949, AMAE, Leg. R.2627/101, R.2418/4; and Areilza, *Memorias*, p. 72.

⁵¹ Miguel Angel Scenna, "Hombres de la política argentina," *Todo es historia* 101 (Oct. 1975): 87-88.

⁵² On the hostility shown by most prominent industrialists towards Perón in the years 1943-1945, see Dardo Cúneo, *Comportamiento y crisis de la clase empresaria* (Buenos Aires, 1967).

⁵³ Cristina Lucchini, *Apoyo industrial en los orígenes del peronismo* (Buenos Aires, 1990).

⁵⁴ Eldon Kenworthy, "Did the 'New Industrialists' Play a Significant Role in the Formation of Perón's Coalition, 1943-1946," in *New Perspectives on Modern Argentina*, ed. Alberto Ciria (Bloomington, 1972), pp. 15-28; Lucchini, *Apoyo industrial*; Joel Horowitz, "Industrialists and the Rise of Perón, 1943-1946: Some Implications for the Conceptualization of Populism," *The Americas* XLVII, No. 2 (Oct. 1990): 199-217; and James P. Brennan, "Industrialists and Bolicheros: Business and the Peronist Populist Alliance, 1943-1976," in *Peronism and Argentina*, ed. James P. Brennan (Wilmington, DE, 1998), pp. 79-123.

⁵⁵ On the contemporary image of "the dangerous working class," see Carlos H. Waisman, *Reversal of Development in Argentina: Postwar Counterrevolutionary Policies and their Structural Consequences* (Princeton, 1987), especially Chapter 7.

⁵⁶ Juan Perón, *Perón Expounds His Doctrine* (Buenos Aires, 1948), p. 20.

⁵⁷ See Susana Novick, *IAPI: auge y decadencia* (Buenos Aires, 1986).

⁵⁸ *Discurso pronunciado por el Sr. Presidente del Banco Central de la República don Miguel Miranda ante representantes de las fuerzas vivas* (Buenos Aires, 1946).

⁵⁹ On Miranda's dismissal, see Areilza to MAE, 12 Jan. and 7 Feb. 1949, AMAE, Leg. R.2418/4; and Areilza, *Memorias*, pp. 63-64.

⁶⁰ Domingo Alfredo Mercante, *Mercante: El corazón de Perón* (Buenos Aires, 1995).

⁶¹ Félix Luna, *El 45: Crónica de un año decisivo* (Buenos Aires, 1969), p. 403.

⁶² A great deal of information on the Labor Party is available from various sources. See, for example, Elena Susana Pont, *Partido Laborista: estado y sindicatos* (Buenos Aires, 1984), and author's interviews with Cipriano Reyes (Quilmes, 15 Sept. 1989, and La Plata, 3 May 1996).

⁶³ On the *Laboristas* and their demands that Mercante be appointed vice-president and, subsequently, as candidate for provincial governor, see Reyes, *La farsa del peronismo*.

⁶⁴ On some of Mercante's activities as governor, see, for example: Domingo A. Mercante, *Finanzas públicas de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, 1947* (Buenos Aires, 1947); idem, *Discurso inaugural del Consejo Superior de Política Económica del Coronel D. A. Mercante* (La Plata, 1947); idem, *Economía y acción social en Buenos Aires* (La Plata, 1948); idem, *Mensaje del Gobernador de la provincia de Buenos Aires a la Honorable Legislatura* (La Plata, 1950); and *Mercante: ejemplo de gobernante peronista* (La Plata, 1950).

⁶⁵ The following paragraphs are based largely on an interview I held with Carla Borlenghi (Buenos Aires, 9 Sept. 1997) in her office at the union of commercial employees, a union her husband had founded decades earlier.

⁶⁶ Borlenghi was partly responsible for the move to integrate Enrique Dickmann in the Peronist camp, and at his initiative Perón awarded Dickmann a medal for excellence for his university achievements, which Dickmann had earned years earlier but never received because he was Jewish.

⁶⁷ See Mario Ben Plotkin, "La 'ideología' de Perón: continuidades y rupturas," in *Perón del exilio al poder*, ed. Samuel Amaral and M. B. Plotkin (Buenos Aires, 1993), pp. 45-67.

⁶⁸ Alberto Ciria, *Perón y el justicialismo* (Buenos Aires, 1971).

⁶⁹ On this subject see David Rock, *Authoritarian Argentina: The Nationalist Movement, Its History and Its Impact* (Berkeley, 1993), pp. 138-183.

⁷⁰ Buchrucker, *Nacionalismo y peronismo*, pp. 308-310; Mark Falcoff, "Argentine Nationalism on the Eve of Perón: Force of Radical Orientation of Young Argentina and Its Rivals," Ph.D. diss. (Princeton University, 1970); idem, "Raul Scalabrini Ortiz: The Making of an Argentine Nationalist," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 52, No. 1 (1972): 74-101; and Arturo Jauretche, *Forja y la década infame* (Buenos Aires, 1962).

⁷¹ Idit Gil, "Argentine Leftist Intellectuals, Nationalism and Social Justice (1894-1947): The Origins of Peronism," Ph.D. diss. (Tel Aviv University, 1998). Some of Borlenghi's views during the time he was minister of the interior can be gleaned from the following: Angel G. Borlenghi, *La reforma constitucional* (Buenos Aires, 1948); idem, *Evolución del movimiento obrero* (Buenos Aires, 1950); and *La opinión de Perón sobre los empleados de comercio: las directivas de Borlenghi orientan al gremio* (Buenos Aires, 1954).

⁷² Author's interview with José Luis de Imaz (Buenos Aires, Sept. 1997).

⁷³ On this subject, see Rubén Jesús de Hoyos, "The Role of the Catholic Church in the Revolution against President Juan Perón," Ph.D. diss. (New York University, 1970); Lila M. Caimari, *Perón y la Iglesia Católica: Religión, Estado y sociedad en la Argentina (1943-1955)* (Buenos Aires, 1994), Part IV; Noreen Frances Stack, "Avoiding the Greater Evil: The Response of the Argentine Catholic Church to Juan Perón, 1943-55," Ph.D. diss. (Rutgers University, 1976), Ch. 6; and Michael A. Burdick, *For God and the Fatherland: Religion and Politics in Argentina* (Albany, N. Y., 1995), Ch. 2.

⁷⁴ Contrary to this image of Borlenghi, from my conversations with various Peronist figures it appeared that Borlenghi was in fact one of the Peronist leaders who most strongly disapproved of Perón's feud with the Catholic Church (author's interview with Miguel Unamuno, Buenos Aires, Sept. 1997). Borlenghi was not, of course, Jewish, but was portrayed as such by the Catholic nationalists. His wife was Jewish, and he appointed his brother-in-law, Avraham Krislavin, as his right-hand man at the Ministry of the Interior.

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