

Chapter Five

Guillermo Estevez Boero

Howard Richards: When I mentioned the name Guillermo Estevez Boero, Diana Sandoz, who is the Subsecretary for Production in the Municipal Government , exclaimed, “He was our teacher!” Everywhere you go in Rosario you see his picture on the wall.

Ines Bertero Estevez Boero: Guillermo had a calling to share his knowledge, his experience. And for many of his generation and younger generations he filled an historical vacuum.

Howard Richards: Why do you say “historical vacuum”?

Ines Bertero: Historical vacuum in the sense of an absence of teachers, of teachers in the true sense of the word, teachers whose lives incarnate their ideals. This absence was a result of coups d’etat, the military intervention of the universities, the flight of the intellectuals into exile. It was also the product of the cultural emptiness of Argentina as a consumer society, of the lack of national cultural identity in the face of the foreign models that were imposed by force and sold by advertising. Young people look for models of integrity, and for many Guillermo was that.

Juan Carlos Zabalza: Guillermo was first and foremost a builder, an organizer. He believed profoundly in the human being, and in the freedom of every citizen. He always put

his faith in the youth, and it was to them that he dedicated most of his life.

Howard Richards: In other circumstances would Guillermo have become a university professor ?

Ines Bertero: As a matter of fact his own mentor when he was a student in the Faculty of Law ...

Howard Richards ... who was Luis Jimenez de Asis...

Ines Bertero: ...Yes. His mentor was Luis Jimenez de Asis, who was the president of the Spanish Republic in exile, and who held the chair of Criminal Law in the Universidad del Litoral. Dr. Jimenez de Asis tried to interest Guillermo in an academic career in the field of criminal law.

Howard Richards: But was it not this same man, who was the president in exile of a Spain governed by Francisco Franco's military dictatorship, the person who introduced Guillermo to the ideals of democratic socialism ?

Ines Bertero: Yes, and that was his passion. His passion was to change social reality, to change Argentina. He read constantly, but he never wrote a single book. He considered that the historical task of the times was a different one.

Howard Richards: He never wrote a single book, but he wrote innumerable speeches and pamphlets. In one of his speeches he defines socialism as, "...a practical and daily resolution to serve the people. Not an abstract and ideal people, but the people who exist in reality, the product of so

many years of dependency, exploitation, and exclusion.”
(Estevez Boero, 1980)

Juan Carlos Zabalza: In his speeches and pamphlets he always emphasized two fundamental themes: One was the national theme, that Argentina be an independent and solidary nation. The other was democracy.

Howard Richards: Socialism has not always been identified with democracy.

Juan Carlos Zabalza: In the early history of socialism in Argentina, democracy was considered a means to achieve socialism. But for Guillermo it was not just a means but an end in itself. It was permanent evolution. In his speeches and pamphlets he developed the concept of democratic institutions perpetually subject to improvement through citizen participation.

Ines Bertero: That was our work as activists in the socialist movement, to gain a wider readership for ideas expressed in the party literature, which was written principally by Guillermo. Our slogan was, “Study, Organize, Spread the Word.” We met in small groups in private homes.

Howard Richards: To what years do you refer ?

Ines Bertero: Mainly to the years 1970 to 1983.

Howard Richards: In other words, up to the time when the military dictatorship fell and Argentina returned to representative democracy.

Ines Bertero: With the openings that democracy has given us, and with the responsibilities of government office here in the city of Rosario, we activists no longer have as much time to study as we used to have.

Howard Richards: Nevertheless, it seems to me that the custom of basing political action on study that Guillermo began is one that is still practiced. Recently I was with Elida Rasino in the modest office called Center for Municipal and Provincial Studies. It is housed in some rooms on the second floor of a commercial building. It is run entirely by volunteers, without any major funding from anybody. I had occasion to see some of the studies being done projecting a possible future socialist administration of the Province of Santa Fe. The medical doctors were studying health issues; the teachers were studying educational issues; agronomists were studying agricultural issues, and so on.

Ines Bertero: It was different under the dictatorships. We would read texts together, and then each one of us would select a book to read alone, and then report to the group about it.

Howard Richards: What books did you read?

Ines Bertero: We read all the socialist classics, and we read books about the social reality of Argentina.

Juan Carlos Zabalza: We also read histories of Argentina, economic history in general, and books about the different experiences with socialism in the world. And novels about

Latin American reality. Romulo Gallegos of Venezuela, the novels about the Mexican Revolution, Jorge Amado of Brazil, Jose Marti, La Patagonia Rebelde by Osvaldo Bayer. We read the narratives of oppression.

Ines Bertero: We dedicated ourselves to making plans. What was to be done ?

Howard Richards: When I came to Rosario for the first time, as a foreigner without much knowledge of the city, but with the desire to learn more, through the Secretariat of International Relations I was introduced to almost all the departments and programs of the city government. I was amazed by the quality of the city officials. It seemed to me extraordinary that the mayor, who at that time was Hermes Binner, had been able to find in one city so many people who were so well prepared and so well motivated. Now I have come to believe that what appeared to be a miracle was the direct and indirect result of the Guillermo's patient organizing and educating . The cadres were formed underground during the long years of turmoil and repression.

Ines Bertero: It is an exaggeration to say we were underground. We were engaged in activities that were forbidden by a dictatorship that had deprived us Argentines of all of our rights. They were activities that could be carried on only in private homes, and only with people we knew and trusted.

Juan Carlos Zabalza: Sometimes we met in the homes of friends who were not in the party but who let us use their houses.

Howard Richards: It has also struck me that there is an extraordinarily close connection between the municipal government and the universities, especially the Universidad Nacional de Rosario. The present mayor Miguel Lifschitz was formerly a university teacher in the exact sciences. The general secretary of the city government is Monica Bifarello, who simultaneously holds a chair in the Faculty of Political Science. And I could name six others who are both city officials and university professors. There seem to be countless partnerships between one or another academic institution and one or another government agency in connection with implementing one or another policy or program.

Juan Carlos Zabalza: People can arrange to work part time for the city and part time as academics. Combining a city office with any other kind of work is not approved.

Howard Richards: Although Guillermo himself never was a university teacher, he seems to have passed much of his life in university circles. When I try to explain why this particular city government has unusually close ties with the academy, I cannot leave Guillermo out of the equation.

Ines Bertero: Guillermo began his political career as a student leader. [Note: In the Argentine system of co-government of autonomous universities, both students and

faculty participate in electing university rectors and generally in governing academic institutions.]

He held many offices. In 1959 he was elected the national president of the FUA, the federation of Argentine university students.

Juan Carlos Zabalza: As a national student leader he traveled up and down back and forth across the country. I often went with him, visiting every part of the country.

Ines Bertero: He also traveled abroad, first as representative of the FUA at international congresses. He went to places that put him under a cloud of suspicion during the dictatorships, to Moscow, to Cuba, to China ...

Howard Richards: Is the FUA just an undergraduate organization, or does it include graduates ?

Ines Bertero: Just students, just undergraduates.

Howard Richards: Guillermo was born in 1930. In 1959 he must have been 29 years old. How could he be the president of a federation of undergraduate students ?

Ines Bertero: He was still a student at age 29. He could not graduate, because if he took his law degree, he would no longer be eligible to be a student leader. He had passed all his courses, but he left some details incomplete to avoid graduating.

Howard Richards; He was not in a hurry to open a law office.

Ines Bertero: He was not in a hurry. Later when he did open a law office, he represented his clients properly, but he did not have to practice law for a living. He was sometimes made fun of as a leisure class socialist because he did in fact have independent means.

Howard Richards: So at some point he finally did graduate.

Ines Bertero: Not only did he graduate, but the whole network of student leaders throughout Argentina that he was part of graduated. At that point we realized that it would be necessary to start another organization, the MAPA, to represent university graduates.

Juan Carlos Zabalza: Guillermo also founded the National Reformist Movement (MNR) to represent the young socialists in the universities. It was called "reformist" in order to identify with the reforms won by the student movement of 1918, which established principles of student and faculty participation in the government of autonomous universities devoted to service of the people and the nation. I myself met Guillermo for the first time through my membership in the MNR when I was a student in the Faculty of Biochemistry.

Howard Richards: What we have been saying portrays Argentine socialism as a middle class movement. Is it true to say that in Argentina socialism has to be a middle class movement because the working class is Peronist ?

Ines Bertero: No. Before the Peron era the workers movement in Argentina was socialist. Even after Peronismo took over the majority of the trade unions, there were still socialist unions, for example the railroad workers. Today in our province of Santa Fe there is a strong socialist presence in the union of the primary school teachers. We used to divide ourselves as activists into four categories, depending on where we did our political work:

1. Among the students.
2. Among the graduates.
3. In the trade unions.
4. In the neighborhoods (barrios)

Juan Carlos Zabalza: Guillermo always emphasized the necessity of working in the unions and in all the social organizations so that there would be voices speaking in favor of socialist positions on issues. We have had many failures. It is incredible but true, for example, that the petroleum workers union failed to take a stand against the privatization of the YPF. [Note: YPF, Yacimientos Petroliferos Fiscales, was the Argentine national oil company before it was privatized under the presidency of Carlos Menem.]

Howard Richards: You refer to one of the neoliberal privatizations under the presidency of Carlos Menem during the 1990s.

Juan Carlos Zabalza: Yes, and that same railroad workers union that Ines mentioned failed to take a stand against privatizing the railroads....

Howard Richards: ... which tends to show that the socialist party is weak at the national level.

Juan Carlos Zabalza: It is very weak. Socialism continues to be an exotic flower in Argentina, in spite of the 110 years of existence of the party. Here in Rosario the party is better known and more respected. It is respected by many people who are not socialists.

Howard Richards: How did Guillermo end up as the national leader of a heterogeneous party? His power base must have been among the students and the graduates.

Ines Bertero: The socialists split and reorganized several times, for various reasons. In 1955 the party split because one sector of it supported the coup d'état against Peron. Guillermo emerged as the student leader of the sector of the socialist party that refused to endorse political violence, even though the purpose of the coup, ousting Peron, was one of the party's goals.

Howard Richards: I have not found anything in any of his writings to suggest that he was ever tempted to support violence, either to work with a de facto government or to join the guerillas.

Juan Carlos Zabalza: Guillermo and all of us have always taken a clear position against any kind of terrorism. All of our political practice differentiates us from terror as a method.

Howard Richards: Did the socialists really resist the military repression during what was called the “dirty war”? I have met people who cite the fact that you all survived as evidence that you were collaborators.

Ines Bertero: Yes, we did. To confirm the fact it is enough to read the speeches and pamphlets that Guillermo wrote during that period. [They are available at www.fundestevezboero.com.ar]

Howard Richards: What I most want to understand is how it came to pass that today there exist the phenomena we see in Rosario. To that end I think it important to ask how the political culture of the city came to be what it is, and in that connection how it came to pass that the leadership of the Argentine socialist party fell into the hands of Guillermo Estevez Boero.

Ines Bertero: I do not want to say it was an historical accident, but it did come about due to contingent events that could not have been predicted. In 1972 and 1973 the military government refused to allow the return of Peron from exile in Spain. The dictatorship convened elections, but it imposed the condition that Peron could not be a candidate. The Peronists supported Hector Campora.

Howard Richards: Whom did the socialists support ?

Ines Bertero: To make a long story short, the party divided into groups. One group grew out of the historical struggles of the working class. A second group came from a background of university studies and was more oriented

toward forming a broad national consensus to restore representative democracy.

Howard Richards: And was that the moment when Guillermo became the leader of the socialists of Argentina?

Ines Bertero: Guillermo became the leader of the Partido Socialista Popular. Those who could not stomach making common cause with the Peronists for the purpose of restoring democracy formed their own party with a different name. Democracy did come back, but it only lasted until March of 1976. Guillermo's leadership lasted during the long night of the dictatorship, and then after the dictatorship fell he continued to be the party leader until his death on the 3d day of February, 2000. Fortunately, the factions later reunited. Today we have only one Socialist Party.

Howard Richards: So from a certain historical point of view, certain features of socialism in Rosario that strike a foreigner, such as a nonconfrontational style of politics that is always seeking alliances and building consensus, such as its close connection with the universities, such as its deep roots in middle-class neighborhoods as well as in working-class neighborhoods, are the consequence of certain accidents in the historical evolution of the party. Looked at from another point of view, what has happened has not been an accident, but the implementation of a rational concept, based on the analysis Guillermo made of the political reality of Argentina. I see it as a confirmation of his vision that in the municipal elections of October of 2005, the socialists won both in the richest and in the poorest barrios.

Juan Carlos Zabalza: Effectively, we have worked to achieve a broad consensus. We believe that the collective good should take priority over personal interest, that the public should have priority over the private. But we also believe in reaching consensus with the private sector. Rosario is a city where since the restoration of democracy all of the public policies have been generated by participatory processes in which all sectors of the population are consulted.

Howard Richards: We have not yet spoken of the neoliberalism of Carlos Menem.

Ines Bertero: From 1987 until his death Guillermo represented our province of Santa Fe in the federal congress. With his election in 1987 socialist ideas were again represented in the national legislature after an absence of 25 years.

Howard Richards: So it fell to him to be part of the federal government during the Menem era.

Ines Bertero: In the beginning of Menemismo Guillermo was almost alone. Even so he voted against all of Menem's neoliberal laws. Subsequently, Guillermo was joined by the famous group of legislators known as "the eight" led by Carlos "Chacho" Alvarez.

Juan Carlos Zabalza: Neoliberalism has been especially severe in our country. In Chile even the Pinochet dictatorship did not go so far as to hand over the copper mines to private foreign interests. In Brazil not even the military governments went so far as to hand over Brazil's

petroleum to private foreign interests. But Menem did the equivalent in Argentina...

Howard Richards: ... but that was not what Guillermo expected. According to the historical analyses of Argentina's national reality made by Guillermo in his speeches and pamphlets, the working and middle classes always lost ground when the military ruled. He argued that the inability of the middle class and the working class to work together allowed military officers allied with a small upper crust and allied with foreign interests to loot the country over and over again. Let me quote a line from a speech Guillermo gave in 1980, during the last dictatorship, at a time before Carlos Menem was even imagined: "...the basic problem is the division of the national income, first between those inside the country and those outside the country, and then within the country between those who work and those who do not work." (Estevez Boero, 1980) Guillermo expected democracy to favor working Argentines, as indeed it had in previous epochs. But under Carlos Menem, who was not a military dictator, but a constitutional president, those inside the country lost ground to foreign interests, while those who worked lost ground to those who did not work.

Juan Carlos Zabalza: And not just because of neoliberalism, but also because of outright corruption.

Ines Bertero: Guillermo did not just say no to neoliberalism. He proposed concrete alternatives to Menem's program. He proposed a more participatory kind of democracy, a democracy that extended to the economic sphere. He

proposed institutions designed to facilitate reaching social consensus ...

Howard Richards: ... Are you referring to his role as an elected delegate to the constitutional convention of 1994? There he proposed a constitutional provision for an Economic and Social Council to be charged with planning a cooperative economy...

Ines Bertero: Yes, I am referring to that but not only to that. Also in the congress he proposed measures for democratizing the economy.

Juan Carlos Zabalza: It can be said that in his last years Guillermo Estevez Boero deepened the faith in democracy that he had always had. He realized more and more the inadequacy of representative democracy alone, and insisted more and more that its necessary complements were participatory democracy and active citizenship.

Ines Bertero is the widow of Guillermo Estevez Boero, and the president of the Estevez Boero Foundation.

Juan Carlos Zabalza is Rosario's Secretary of Government, its second highest ranking municipal official.

Guillermo Estevez Boero Remembered by a Grassroots Activist

“In 1983 I first met Guillermo. I started going to his talks on citizen participation. I remember that he used to say that we have to participate as neighbors even in the acts that seem most trivial. We have to be in the neighborhood councils, in the school cooperatives of our children, in the administrative council of the building we live in, in the community center of our neighborhood, in the neighborhood sports club, in the union where we work, and in every organization where we can fit participation into our schedules. This participation will permit us to develop our opinions and our feelings, and will some time make us able to generate change, change in all the spaces where we are present, with humility, sacrifice, and transparency, and not because we are out after deals and seeking our personal interest. This participation in different sectors will make us grow conceptually from the grassroots up as citizens and will help us to attain an integral vision of our city, our province, and our country. From that moment on, and even without realizing it, we are becoming prepared to carry out functions of management and administration. We have to have faith in the creative capacities of ordinary people, whether or not they are academics or professionals, the ordinary people with all their defects and mistakes are those who do the real work of society. They will find the solutions that are the most practical and efficient. The solutions to society’s problems will come from the people if they just have the legal rights to make their contributions, naturally,

transparently, simply, and without hidden motives.” --Juan Garcia

Speech Given by Hermes Binner on February 3, 2006 on the Occasion of the Sixth Anniversary of the Death of Guillermo Estevez Boero

The presence of all of you here today in this multitudinous ceremony speaks in itself of the person we are remembering.

Six years after his departure, his ideas, his advice, his orientations, and why not say it his gift of being a good person, are still adding to what he contributed to the culture of our country.

Therefore, to speak in memory of Guillermo is a supremely difficult task. He is a man who lived through a half century of Argentine politics, and who lived always with the idea of serving his neighbor, with the idea of solidarity as the fundamental basis of political action, always working for equality, always giving the collective priority over the individual.

I want to recall certain themes that seem to me supremely applicable today, after so many years.

One of them is the concept he had of culture, affirming that the cultured person is not the one who has read many books, nor the one who has grasped all the themes of an author, nor the one who has learned different languages. All of this is dedication, study, memory, but culture is

something much deeper, and has to do with knowing where we are, with knowing where we are going, and the why of things. We have to think if we want to continue going forward, because the other choice is to go backward.

And, culture is knowing that we stand before an economic and social model that is exhausted, and that therefore it is necessary that we reformulate the country, a country that wants to continue forward, a country that needs to be reformulated culturally. And in this has a lot to do with those of us who have had the extraordinary opportunity to go to college. We can explain to the people why there is inflation; explain to the people why the things that happen every day happen, the reasons behind social problems. Then, if we prepare Argentines to understand these problems, we will move forward culturally.

He said that we have to know and understand where we come from, what is our history as a society, that history did not begin with Menem, that history began with the pre-Colombian civilizations, with the Mayan civilization, with the Aztecs, with the Incas, who today have a great predominance in our America. There were attempts to hide and marginalize those civilizations, but in the end they flowered and bloomed, as happened in the case of Evo Morales, who coming from an indigenous culture represents 62.5% of the population of Bolivia, and who through a democratic election became that nation's president.

This is what Guillermo taught us always. And we have to hold onto this guiding thread, we have to look for it in the strength of the past that projects itself into the present,

toward the future, in this forward movement we all desire to be part of, toward a country that is independent, pluralistic, and solidary.

To this end we need this culture shift that validates our national and popular values. He rescued the value of the Nation. He said that socialists believe profoundly in the Nation because we believe that in every woman and man of Argentina there is the real possibility of moving forward liberating the forces accumulated in the hearts and minds of the Argentines --that is where the Nation is. But the Nation cannot be recreated -Guillermo used to say - without creating new institutions, because in this reality that we live, that we suffer, with institutions which establish a system of privileges and with them poverty, which fragment us and distance us over and over again from the necessary spirit of equality that has always been a value of the Argentine nation.

For this reason he said that to carry out this creation of new institutions we had to democratize the State, because democracy legitimates a representative government. But democracy is not just holding elections. It is also participation. It is this participation that makes it possible for us to transform our reality, as we have seen so many times throughout our history. For this reason the consolidation of democracy requires a rhythm that goes from political democracy to social democracy.

He used a word that was always included in his message, and that was the word change. Change consists in building consensus, in constructing a new political and

social consensus, and it is necessary to create the institutional context of this change. This is the alliance (concertacion). To cite his words, the social alliance serves to generate consensus, and with it the legitimacy of the State.

He also said that the alliance operates as a synthesis of the institutional mediation between the society and the State, strengthening the representativeness of the institutions. It coordinates the political organization expressed in the political parties with the sectoral representation of interests, which is expressed in organized social groups. We should understand that the alliance is not just a mechanism for economic and social regulation. It is not just a mechanism for resolving conflicts and making adjustments. It must have an essentially political dimension, which is the dimension of valuing and achieving basic agreements about how to live together (convivencia). Therefore consensus is something more than a theoretical agreement about certain questions. Consensus is equivalent to a common life. The struggle to achieve shared values marches arm in arm with the struggle for social justice.

Guillermo used to say that what has predominated has been the tendency of the political parties to justify their activity as the representation of the political position that was endorsed by the voters who elected them, even if they won by a single vote. They justify their exclusive right to institutional participation with the decrepit liberal formula that he who wins governs and he who loses criticizes. He said that it is necessary to incorporate into the political culture of the Argentines, into their political parties and

social organizations, the basic idea of the institutionalization of alliance and consensus.

He said that new, modern socialism in our country must assume responsibility for its own achievements and errors of the past, but it must be convinced that it cannot grow if it does not think in terms of the Nation. The Nation cannot succeed without incarnating the values of justice, equality, and solidarity.

Outside the Nation --Guillermo said twenty years ago-- there is no possibility of success for any Argentine. Outside the Nation there are no rights for its inhabitants. Our political project is one of an independent and solidary nation, forged in democratic practices and in participation. We have grown up educated to think first of our country, and when we think first of our country our country grows. This permanent idea of Nation and socialism, socialism and Nation, for socialists expresses two words that go indestructibly together.

We should insert ourselves in real life as a party, and generate a movement of public opinion together with the social movements. We need to be part, he said, of the social and political movement that today is absent in the country. If we do not occupy the space of that absence others will. No space will remain empty. People will go to one side or another seeking an alternative. This project means work. It means modifying the methodologies of being a vanguard, and going to work with the people, where they are, in the trade union or in the student center, in the neighborhood or

in the cooperative, and relating to the problems of the people.

In 1992, referring to Santa Fe, Guillermo said to us that our banners are not the only ones that can offer solutions. Santa Fe needs all its people to open a new time. In the barrio, in the sewer, our children cannot thrive. Our hopes have no future. We have to create a new time with opportunities for everyone. We will state our point of view, but after we have worked with others to open a new time. This is our call to come together (convocatoria). It is not a call to come together to support us socialists. We have too many decades of experience of social work to be so childish, uneducated, and brutish.

First we have to get out of the desert, lay the foundations, and then we will see if we build the house round, square, or rectangular, if we build it more or less socialist or more or less conservative. But first we have to get Santa Fe out of the desert. To build the foundations we must all work together because we all have work to do in this reconstruction.

Finally, he said, to create an alternative way we have to think in broad terms. The identity of the socialist party is not in question. The identity of the socialist party is in our studies, in the deepening of our understanding, and in our activism. We socialists should join together with the world and with the people. We should be in dialogue with people who do not think as we do, with people who have a different existence, different motivations. We should listen to what they say and what they think. We should try to

understand them. Because they are the country. They are our country. We have to understand our country if we are going to have any chance of changing it. If we give priority to conversations with the comrades who are in agreement with us, and if we draw our conclusions from our own codes and premises, then we will not achieve anything other than marginalizing ourselves from reality. Afterwards we will say that reality defeated us. But we will have only ourselves to blame, because we did not insert ourselves in that reality.

The theme of youth is one Guillermo spoke of often. He said that young people need to locate themselves in space and in time in order to comprehend their history and that of this continent. We have to give priority to the formation of young people. Neoliberalism has submerged youth in an ahistoric present, in “don’t get involved,” and in “live for the moment.” Thus neoliberalism achieves its objective: the social disintegration of youth. We have to generate participation and solidarity, go to paint school buildings, advance in the combination of intellectual teaching and manual labor. Guillermo wrote very extensively about youth.

There is a lot for us to remember about him. I had the opportunity and the fortune to accompany him through many stages of life, of his life, of our life, and I have heard and seen the ways of a man profoundly human, sensitive, and humble.

I remember some stories about him, old stories. One that I heard said that when the Center of Law Students of Santa Fe was doing publicity for a dance they would have

one student paint his face black and put on black eyeglasses in the style of Al Jolson. "Al Jolson" would run out through the streets of Santa Fe pursued by other students dressed as police, making noise and throwing things. Wherever they found women they would throw the black man on the ground and shout "Stop him! Tie him up! Where are you going?" The black man would answer, "I am going to the law students dance!" That black man was Guillermo, imitating Al Jolson to attract attention. Some people also called him, "The nut." I don't know why.

He had traits of deep social sensibility. Sometimes traveling town by town through the interior, he made detailed notes on people who told them that they needed some particular medicine, and then he would return to be sure they had obtained it. This speaks of him more than words.

I want to say to you that at six years after his death, at six years of his physical absence, his life continues. His life continues in the work of the Estevez Boero Foundation, headed by Ines. The foundation is bringing together his books and his ideas. He is alive in his books, with their marginal notes, with their underlining in colors, with his summaries. He had a methodology for studying which, obviously, we have never had. But I think that there, today, is the great teaching of Guillermo, the great teaching for understanding the reality of our country, for understanding the reality of socialism and the Nation, and to continue thinking that it is possible to construct a country with rights for all the Argentines.

For this we continue forward and the party continues forward. The party is growing, now without his physical presence, but under the presidency of comrade Ruben. There is a space that socialism occupies, and it is a space that is growing. Going forward with my thoughts I would say that first we have to keep alive the ideas of Guillermo. Second we have to think of the Nation. Without the Nation there are no rights. Third we have to improve democracy. Democracy is an imperfect organization. We have to work to perfect it. It is hard work to develop solidarity.

But Argentina is a country where the ideal of solidarity has deep roots. Socialism is fundamentally solidarity. Working to add more Argentines to our proposal for change, our proposal for getting out of the logic of liberalism, is also a way to remember Guillermo.

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