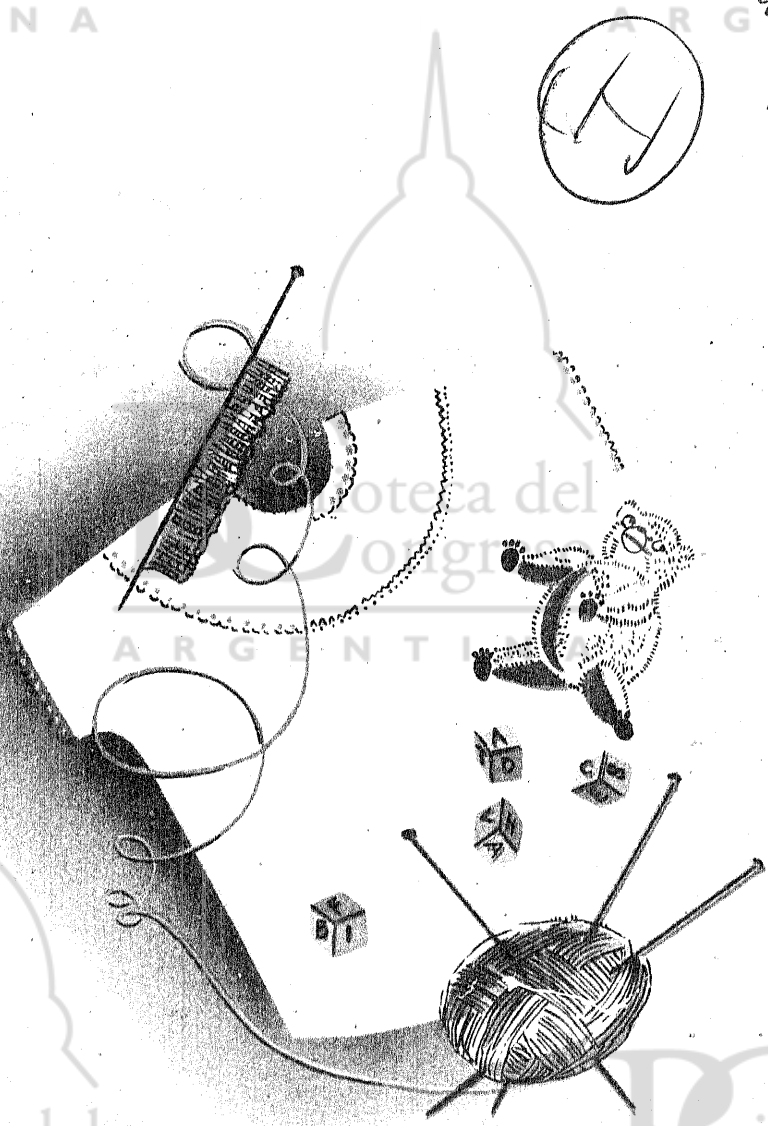


# THE PRIVILEGE OF INFANCY



  
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OF INFANCY



VICEPRESIDENCIA PROVISIONAL DE LA NACION  
RESOLUCION N°. 164



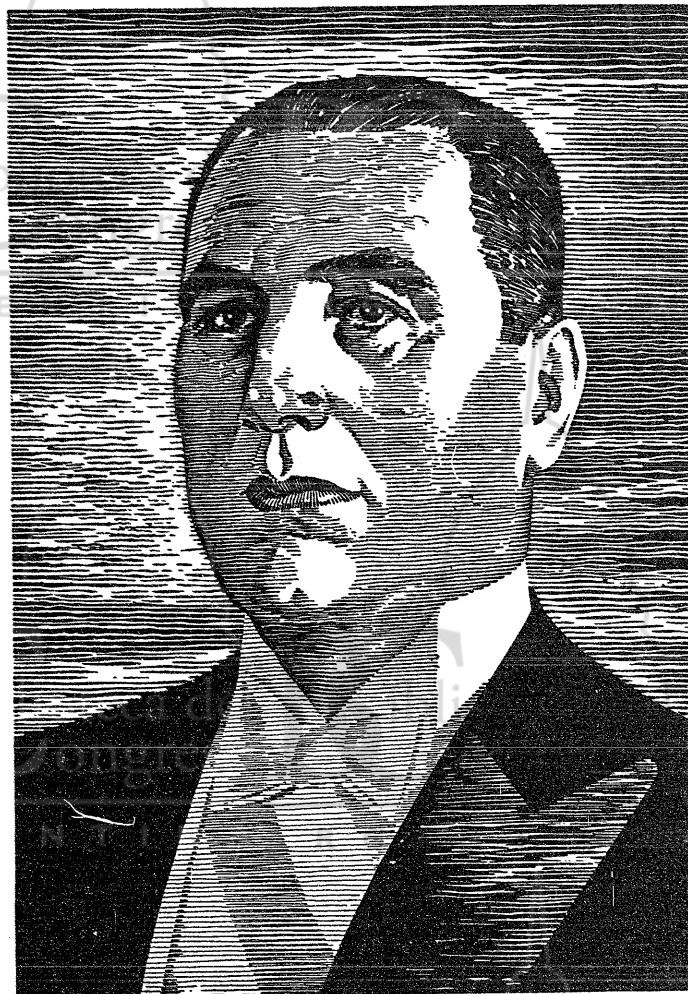
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CHAPTER I

IMPORTANCE OF HAPPY  
CHILDHOOD IN FUTURE LIFE

  
The country needs a happy  
and healthy population to  
work for the greatness of the  
Homeland. Anybody who has  
had a happy childhood is in  
a position to cope with the  
difficulties and responsibilities  
of the daily existence. Social  
organization seeks greater ad-  
vantages for children and  
mothers.

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**T**HE problem of the birth and education of children is an increasing concern for highly civilized nations. In order to have a healthy and strong population it is necessary to begin by the attainment of a happy and healthy childhood.

Numerous scientists have made profound studies on the spiritual and material requirements of children. As a result it has been clearly established that the human body must be cared for during the entire course of its evolution and right from the moment of birth.

It has been established that man socially does not act only in accordance with present conditions and his natural inheritance; external factors influence his attitude and these are often the consequence of impressions, commotions, affections and dislikes experienced during his early youth. Besides according to the latest scientific investigations the psychic life of the baby begins before it is born. Are we born then with moral problems and other preoccupations?

Therefore, if it is desired to care for the baby before birth as a logical consequence preferential



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attention must be given to the future mother. Since one of the major concerns of the State is the protection of society as a logical consequence it must adopt special measures for the care of pregnant women since their spiritual and physical health has an all important bearing on the future health of their children.

Special attention must be given to pregnant women and it must be continued even after their confinement is over and they have given birth to a baby. The medical attention which is given to the newly born babe must be extended to the mother. It is a well-known fact that anybody who has enjoyed a happy childhood is in a position on arriving to manhood to overcome successfully the difficulties and shoulder the responsibilities of the daily existence.

The care of women at childbirth and of the newly-born babies is the basis for the formation of a strong, healthy and free people. Success in life is to a great extent the result of a happy childhood.

In recent years the only privileged ones in Argentina are the children. This is a sound policy indeed if we consider that the Argentine people are marching on the road towards a complete reorganization of their social structure in order to ensure the future welfare of the labouring masses. The children of today are the citizens of tomorrow and if they have been brought up in accordance with Christian and moral principles they will be in a position to impose in the country new trends in civilization in keeping with lofty and humane principles.

There is nothing surprising in the fact that in recent statistical figures published by a technical department of the United Nations it is indicated that the general increase of the population has been considerable in Argentina in recent years. With regard to the rate of increase of the population Argentina now occupies tenth place compared with other nations in the world in the following order: the United States, Russia, Brazil, Japan, Indonesia, Mexico, Egypt, Siam and the Philippines. The same report showed that with regard to the birth-rate index Argentina that occupied seventh place in 1937 had advanced to fourth place in 1950 after Venezuela, Mexico and Chile. At the same time with regard to the mortality index the report showed that the figures for Argentina were 8,9 per mille, the fourth lowest in the world, being preceded only by Norway, Holland and Canada.

Finally the United Nations report pointed out the encouraging fact that Argentina is one of the seven countries in the world where a notable increase has been registered in the birth-rate index in recent years together with Germany, Canada, Austria, Holland, Norway and Costa Rica.

With regard to the mortality index in Argentina which was 8,9 per mille in 1950 the figures are totally encouraging since those corresponding to the year 1937 were 11,4 per mille.

Undoubtedly the present trend in Argentina shows that it is on the road to achieve even further improvements with regard to the figures published in the United Nations report. This is evidenced by a brief study of the high living



standards enjoyed by the people of all social classes in the country. At the same time there is no doubt concerning the fact that these achievements have been the result of a wise and sound government policy designed to correct all social deficiencies in a general sense. On the other hand, this policy has been particularly directed towards the provision of adequate medical care for pregnant women and newly-born babies in keeping with humane counsels, with the scientific progress made and the economic independence achieved.



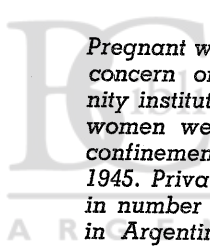
*The maternity homes of the New Argentina have been equipped with the most modern instruments created by science.*

  
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CHAPTER II

CARE OF FUTURE MOTHER  
AS PREREQUISITE TO CARE  
OF CHILDREN

  
*Pregnant women are the major concern of Argentine maternity institutions, Way in which women were attended during confinement before the year 1945. Private entities. Increase in number of maternity wards in Argentine hospitals and institutions.*



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**A** most interesting aspect of the work of the Revolution in this respect is the verification that such worthy social principles are no longer mere expressions of desires on the part of political, scientific and benevolent entities, they have now become tangible realities in the progressive march of the Argentine Republic.

Before the year 1945 little had been done in this respect. And in more distant times the arrival of a baby in the world constituted an irritating demonstration of social class differences.

While pregnant women of the middle and working classes had little or no medical attention, women of the wealthy class had every attention during confinement and child-birth and, although in a strictly commercial sense, they had at their disposal luxuriant and comfortable nursing homes where their babies were born and received adequate medical attention. A great number of young doctors had specialized in gynecology and obstetrics which they considered a promising career from a commercial point of view as monetary considerations were no obstacles for women of



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the wealthy class. At the same time midwives did all in their power to dedicate their professional capacity to the attention of rich women.

By contrast the women workers during their confinement and at the moment of child-birth were confronted with the natural difficulties arising from a permanent deficient economic situation. They were unable to satisfy the most essential requirements due to a complete lack of funds.

Right up to the year 1934 the abandonment of the pregnant women workers was complete. Due to the popular clamour over such a deplorable state of affairs the Argentine Congress that year was obliged to proclaim a law which contemplated — although merely in theory — the situation of pregnant women workers or employees for whom the giving birth to a baby was a heavy burden full of anxieties and responsibilities.

The law sanctioned in 1934 under number 11,933 was the first effort made by society with a spirit of solidarity to come to the aid of future mothers who had to earn their living as workers or employees.

In accordance with the stipulations of the law a Maternity Fund which was a branch of the Civilian Pensions Fund was established in 1934. Its history reveals that the aid given to such women was of an entirely precarious nature when the situation demanded an extensive and exhaustive co-operation.

Under Law number 11,933 all women who worked outside their homes under any employer were duly registered. Pregnant women were allowed to leave their jobs thirty days before child-birth and to resume work 45 days after giving

birth to a baby. Their jobs must be kept for them and the pertinent expenses were paid from the money of the Maternity Fund. The funds were collected from three sources:

1. The contribution of the women workers.
2. The contribution of employers.
3. The contribution of the State.

Each source contributed the same amount of money; thus we see that the wise proportional considerations were not taken into account in order to ensure the financing of the Maternity Fund. However, during the time of her absence the woman worker continued to collect her wages.

It is a lamentable fact that the history of the Fund was in no way creditable from the moment of its creation until 1945. In the first place the issuing of the corresponding regulations were unduly delayed and the registration of women workers was effected in a complete defective manner.

This first maternity law was theoretical rather than practical for three main reasons: In the first place women workers earned miserable wages at a time when there was no labour legislation in the country. In this way many women themselves requested not to have the discount made for payment to the Maternity Fund in order not further to reduce their meagre earnings. Consequently, they were not included in the benefits of Law number 11,933.

In the second place the oligarchic governments which succeeded one another until the year 1943 had absolutely no consideration for the members of the working class. The Maternity Fund became a bureaucratic institution and its



officials failed to adopt the necessary measures for the provision of urgent aid to women workers in accordance with the spirit of social solidarity that gave rise to the proclamation of the law.

And thirdly there was no support for the successful enactment of law number 11,933 on the part of the trade unions of the time which were both weak and anarchical. The trade unions thus had no authority to impose the stipulations of the law and obtain its enactment in a general sense. In this manner its existence was practically unknown by large sectors of the Argentine population.

However, this initial attempt to attend to the requirements of women workers in poor circumstances served to bring to the public notice the real social significance of the problem. In reality the Argentine working classes continued in the same state of abandonment in this fundamental and humane aspect of life until the year 1943. Pregnant women in poor circumstances had to depend upon the aid provided by benevolent societies created for the amusement of members of the wealthy class and upon the scanty help supplied by the State. And in neither case was efficient aid given.

The benevolent societies, in effect, were defective from the very moment of their creation. Work was conducted there not for the purpose of remedying defects created by capitalism but for mere ostentation. Therefore aid was only provided in extreme cases as if it was a source of satisfaction to exhibit the misery of the poor people while nothing was being done to remedy the original causes of poverty in the country. Practically these

institutions created by members of the "best society" did nothing to remedy the situation of pregnant women who had to work to earn a living. As was previously said aid was only forthcoming in extreme cases and the beneficiaries were made to shed bitter tears in payment for this scanty help.

With regard to the action of the State, the Ministry of Public Health which is an essential institution for the preservation of the health of the population was only created after the advent of the present Justicialist Government in the year 1946.

Before the coming of Justicialism the State action was reduced to the improvements obtained through the intervention of humanitarian doctors who evidenced concern for the health of the suffering people. The directors of hospitals, for example, always endeavoured to achieve improvements in the medical services and the building of new maternity wards in Argentina wherein medical attention would be given with the object of complying with the imperative social function of providing for the care of future mothers and their newly-born babies.

In this manner there were only 32 maternity wards in different hospitals in the whole country provided by the Argentine Government in the year 1943.

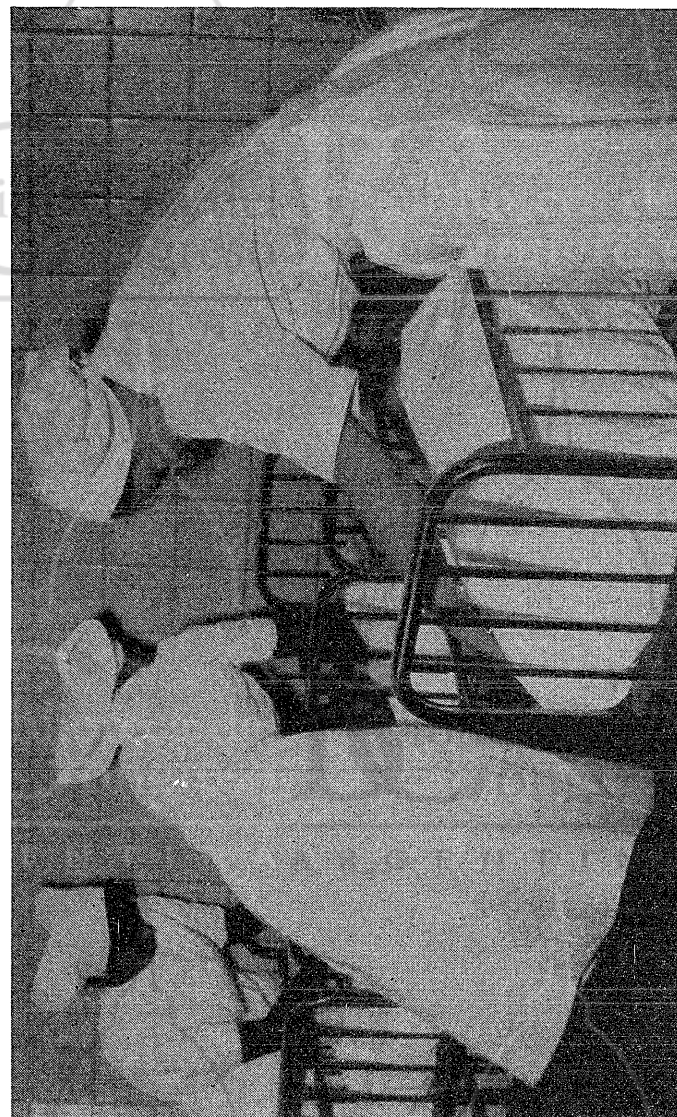
This was a truly derisive number in a country whose population is now estimated at twenty millions and in which the birth-rate index was never inferior but rather surpassed in a comparative sense the respective indices of several countries.

Therefore, it is highly encouraging to verify that the present Justicialist Government of the Argentine Republic, for which the will of the people is the supreme law, increased the number of maternity wards in the contry's hospitals to 96 by the end of 1952.

And in view of the fact that practically every day the present government builds new maternity wards it is reasonable to assume that in the next decade the social problem of motherhood in Argentina will have ceased to exist.

In effect, the present government not only builds new maternity wards but at the same time it provides them with the latest requirements for the care of pregnant women and the attention of the newborn babies according to the most exacting demands of the most modern social legislation.

The future of the Homeland with regard to the formation of new generations of strong and healthy citizens is undoubtedly assured in the Argentine Republic.



Newly-born babies are taken special care of in one of the modern polyclinics.





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CHAPTER III

MEDICAL ATTENTION  
FOR PREGNANT WOMEN



*Maternity and Children's Department. Maternity wards and nurseries established during the 1946-1952 period. Legislation for the protection of women workers.*

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**T**HE unpostponeable medico-social requirements which were daily evidenced brought about the creation towards the year 1946 of the Argentine Ministry of Public Health. After the creation of the Ministry which is a vital institution for all countries concerned over the health of the population the Maternity and Children's Department was established as one of its most important sections.

It is impossible to give an adequate idea of the extensive work carried out by this Department since its creation for the formation of future strong and healthy Argentine citizens. Its noble mission of caring for children from the moment of the mother's confinement until long after the baby is born has been and is effectively carried out in the social, scientific and humane aspects.

The first concern of the Department was to make a careful study of the infantile mortality index figures in the whole territory of the nation dedicating special attention to the periods from birth to the age of three months.



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This study gave the authorities a clear indication on the most urgent requirements in the country which were located mainly in the interior of the Republic.

Members of the wealthy class in Argentina, although they accumulated riches as a result of the agricultural and cattle-raising activities, did not live in the country. And in order to while away their many idle hours in the city they sought means of distraction.

The problem of providing medical attention and care to newborn babies was more acute in rural districts specially among the labouring masses. Therefore, the new authorities decided to extend the action of the Department to the most remote parts of the country as it was formerly limited to the most populated zones and the large cities.

Once the authorities of the Department had established the zones in the interior of the country where there was most urgent need of assistance they directed their efforts towards these objectives. Thus new maternity homes were created in the country and the initial figure of 32 in the year 1949 was rapidly surpassed.

As a result of the Department's action new maternity homes were created in San Antonio Oeste in the extreme north of Argentina and in Rio Gallegos in the extreme south. At the same time a School of Puericulture was created in Corrientes and maternity homes in Lago Buenos Aires and Bariloche in the south of the country.

Later scientific maternity centres were esta-

lished in each province and national territory. Finally, the Maternity and Children's Institution was built in the city of Avellaneda, near the Federal Capital, a district of workers. Its population, ninety per cent of whom are workers, was never previously heeded in spite of repeated clamours. In a single year under the new regime, in 1952, the 96 maternities which functioned in the country attended to the requirements of 30,000 pregnant women, 26,400 women were aided at child-birth, medical attention was given to another 1,825 patients and 18,000 analysis were made.

At the same time in the new institutions over 133,000 children underwent thorough medical examinations and 67,000 laboratory analysis were made while injections were given to 104,000 patients.

These figures in spite of their importance only serve to give an idea of the initial efforts in the sanitary campaign undertaken by the new authorities. At this rate of increase in the setting up of maternity institutions in the country it is safe to affirm that in a period of ten years the problem of giving medical attention to pregnant women and the care of infants will have been satisfactorily solved in the Justicialist New Argentina.

The action of the Government will be effectively completed by the great work in this respect which is being accomplished by the important Argentine labour organizations. Beautiful new polyclinics for workers have been built and they have special maternity wards attached for the care of pregnant women and infants. These wards



have been equipped with the most modern instruments and up-to-date improvements.

Thus in the Argentine maternity institutions pregnant women receive special medical attention from the moment in which they first seek medical aid. Special files are kept in which fundamental data related to the future mothers is entered, such as their state of health, the sanitary antecedents of their ancestors and their social position.

From the moment of entering the maternity institutions all future medical attention for pregnant women will be carried out in keeping with the social policy of the New Argentina. Women are attended anywhere with the greatest care and when possible at their own homes. Otherwise they are interned in the government institutions nearest to their homes. While interned future mothers receive special instruction imparted by specialists on all matters related to the care and bringing up of infants.

At the same time careful consideration is given to the economic situation of future mothers. If they are workers or employees they receive their salaries or wages in accordance with the stipulations of the new Argentine social labour legislation on the matter. Special subsidies are given on the other hand to women who due to any circumstances are not included in the clauses of the wise labour legislation.

Special attention is also dedicated to newly-born babes from the time of their birth. In this respect special records are prepared in which all data referring to the physical development of the



The state of health of babies reared by wet nurses is constantly checked in the nurseries of modern polyclinics.

babies is entered. Medical aid is most important at this period when opportune intervention can correct deficiencies which otherwise would become permanent.

The initial medical attention will be later completed by adequate social legislation designed to make of the youth of today and man of the future a useful member of society.

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CHAPTER IV

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PROTECTION FOR BABIES  
IN ARGENTINA

*Privileges of new-born babies.  
Their rights and manner in  
which they are exercised in  
Argentina. The State and the  
protection of mothers and  
babies.*

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**B**ESIDES the clauses which refer to the rights of the worker in Argentina, there is also a legislation which lays down the rights of the newborn. Such rights, inspired by the lofty idea of morality and the human dignity, should not be wanting, and are indispensable in the life of cultured, progressive and worthy nations. Those rights are absolutely necessary for the happy arrival of the child and are in accordance with the most elementary precepts of love and justice. They are the following:

- 1. The right to have a father and mother.** — Every child born in the Argentine Republic must have its legitimate name. It is necessary, therefore, that the parents should meditate on the responsibility of bringing a child into the world; they are obliged to recognize it as their own and care for it materially, especially during its childhood when the child is incapable of fending for itself.



**2. The right to be desired and received with joy.** — In the days in which our country is living no home becomes overburthened with the arrival of a new member, because even in the saddest of cases the State fills the wants which the family may not be able to supply.

**3. The right to receive the best food: the milk of its own mother.** — This is another object of attention in Argentine maternity homes. Every mother must take care of her organism, more from the point of view of the welfare of her future child than from the esthetic sense. Consequently, she gets every attention necessary before and after its birth.

**4. The right to be educated from its very birth.** — It is never too early to begin to educate the child. What are mere likes in the beginning, otherwise it will cry, soon become whims, and, finally, lead to an ungovernable and rebellious temperament.

**5. The right to have the cause of its crying investigated.** — Every mother should and can have a doctor to attend her child. If she has no private doctor, she will always find competent personnel in the maternity homes themselves to attend the child in case of any indisposition or illness. There is no excuse, then, for neglecting the little one when it cries or is restless.

**6. The right to light, sun and fresh air.** — The best means of bringing up the child should be borne in mind before the birth of the child. For that purpose, the State gives all kinds of loans destined to reform and enlarge the home so that the new-born may have all the light, sun and fresh air which its nature demands.

**7. The right to have clean and adequate clothing.** — In those cases in which families lack the means of insuring the most elementary cleanliness for the new-born, Argentine maternity homes are obliged to provide them with clean and adequate clothing.

**8. The right to sleep alone in its own cot.** — The child must be protected against accidents. It must sleep alone in its own cot. Argentine maternity homes will assure the child who has not got a cot the means of acquiring one, or failing that, of having one made by any means whatsoever.

**9. The right to hygiene.** — Child hygiene must be complete. The Argentine family has the right of demanding anything whatsoever which will insure hygiene in accordance with primary medical prescriptions.

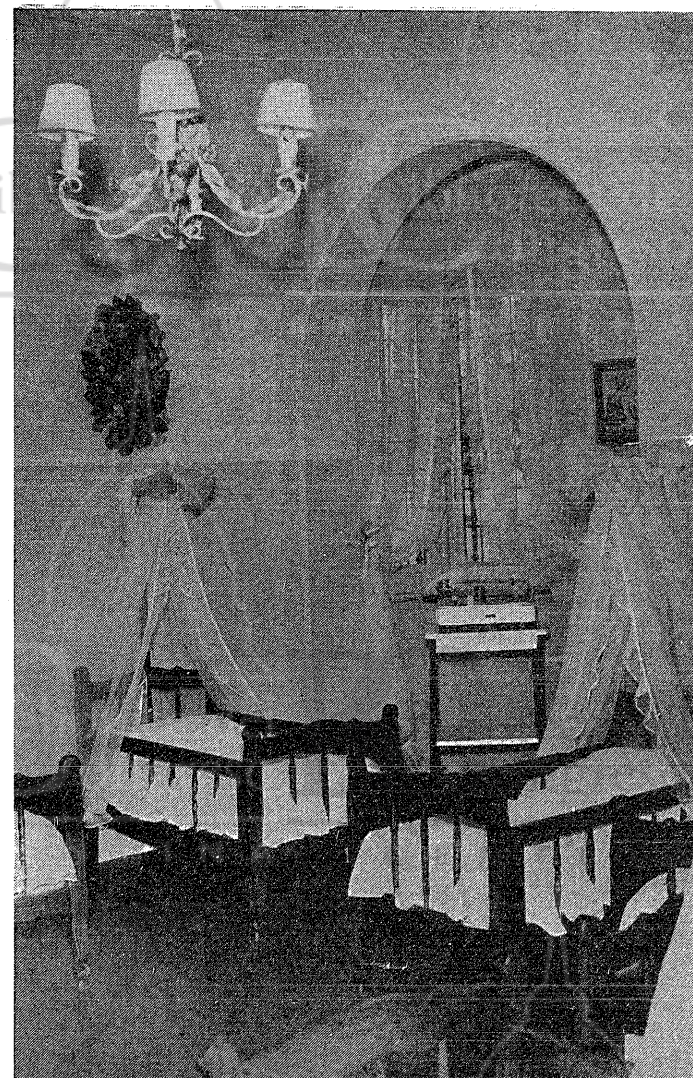
**10. The right to medical attention.** — Every Argentine child has the right to medical attention even before its birth.

11. It is indispensable to foment among parents a desire of knowing the best way of rearing the newly born.

12. The right not to be made a mere plaything of its elders. — This right is most important and to comply with it the study of the pertinent problems must be fostered amongst the elders who surround the infant.

The most advanced scientific and pedagogical principles are being practised in the Argentine Republic in fulfilment of the rights which have been enunciated. The State takes first place in their promotion. And without exaggerating the democratic forms of socially living together, it tries to fulfil faithfully by its work the postulates which make so much for freedom through happiness.

Preferential medical attention, intensification of the permanent enlargement of healthy and comfortable homes, uninterrupted economic security of the home, care for the development of a pure and happy pre-school child period, attention to a happy initiation when school age comes, special care in the instruction which leads in a noble manner to the first contacts with social activities; all these things are part of the life of the new Argentine citizen who is being trained with a view to obtaining the best representative of the human species.



*A partial view of a nursery for newly-born babies in one of the Travellers' Hostels of the Eva Perón Foundation.*





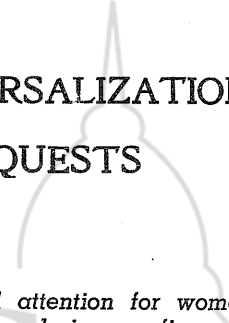
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CHAPTER V

TOWARDS THE UNIVERSALIZATION  
OF SOCIAL CONQUESTS



*Medical attention for women  
workers during confinement  
and child-birth. Legislation for  
the protection of women wor-  
kers in Argentina. Collabora-  
tion of the trade unions.*

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ARGENTINA is marching towards the universalization of social conquests. To the laws of protection which already exist for the future mother or employee must be added an almost infinite series of other conquests arising from the simple stabilization of a true social order.

The study of omissions in that respect was followed by an effort which embraced the scientific, economic and moral fields. The benefits of law II, 933 reached only those women who worked in industrial or commercial establishments; the majority of the latter, as has been already pointed out, were not registered so as to be able to check the fulfilment of their obligations. Not only was this work completed to the extent to which the law laid down; it exceeded those bounds, as it reached every corner where necessity existed.

Because every woman works in Argentina. In the homes of Argentine workers, the woman contributes her part to the activities of the country and city. An appreciable percentage of those who work do so at home. We must add that a system of the protection of the mother and child should



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always include the wives of workers affiliated to the pension system of the National Institute of Social Welfare in a manner which extends its protection to the widest sectors; this is in accordance with the principles of universality to which we have already made reference and which characterize social security in the present century.

That is the truth. A series of parallel laws, of concurrent conquests, surpass from day to day the (in its time) mechanism of law II, 933. A mother and child insurance system has already been put into practice. It lays down that women who work in commercial, industrial or civil, rural or urban activities, including home work, may not work for forty-five days before and forty-five days after the birth of a child, or during such time as they may be obliged to leave off work for reasons of health connected with child-birth. During these periods, employers must keep open the employment of the person insured, otherwise dismissal will be considered unjustified and will be subject to the pertinent laws. The same applies in cases of abortion and abnormal conception.

The financing of the protecting laws of the future working mother or employee is being surpassed by the reality or things. A series of subsidiary conquests surpass the day's work fixed by the old law II, 933. A curious aspect of same is the phenomenon of the revitalization of the wages of Argentine producers. When, in fact, economic conditions are favourable in a worker's home he tends of his own account to defray the expenses arising from child-birth; less and less recourse is had to the help established by the law.



*The State provides every facility so that none of the essential commodities will be missing in the homes of children.*

This has led to the unusual increase of the funds of the present Maternity Bank, whose figures at the end of 1952 rose to 62,000,000 pesos. The adequate increase of maternity institutes and the complete attention given by the Mother and Child Department of the Ministry of Public Health is another of the factors which has laid down that the aid given by law II, 933 has not been taken advantage of in all cases.

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CHAPTER VI

A BEAUTIFUL IDEAL:  
REPUBLIC OF HAPPY CHILDREN

*The only privileged ones in Argentina are the children. Achievements of the Justicialist Government for the welfare and happiness of children. The work of the Eva Perón Foundation.*



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**A** beautiful ideal has been set on foot: it is that of making Argentina the Republic of Happy children.

Is it necessary to reiterate all that has been done in the country leading to the permanent enjoyment of the children? Is it necessary to demonstrate that the only privileged ones in the Argentine Republic are the children?

The fecund work of the Justicialist Government of General Juan Perón has brought general welfare to all the inhabitants who live and work in Argentina; but from that work one cannot dissociate the profoundly humane efforts of Eva Perón who is sadly missed and has been called the Martyr to Work.

Eva Perón was above and beyond the law. Her work of love and charity extended to all the country — and the whole world; she gave unlimited help wherever it was necessary. Her exterior world was built round the social achievements that came in her country with the advent of Justicialism. Her interior or spiritual world, without limits or horizon, was concentrated on those ten-



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der, toddling little ones whose looks were as anxious as they were pure.

Those and many other reasons created the Peronista standard embellished with justice. Justicialism banished alms, misery and the asylum, and created instead institutions which were based on humane principles.

The Argentine child will no longer be born in a collective bed or on a hut floor.

The housing problem was solved by the multiple constructions realized in collaboration with the Eva Perón Foundaton, a rapid process made possible by the organization of technical teams and workers who set out to build all over the country.

To attend to the most pressing of cases, "Travellers' Hostels" sprang up for women and children of the most needy families, and for protecting and providing a solution to the situation of young mothers with children born out of wedlock.

Nobody feels poor in these establishments. There are no long tables, tin dinner sets, bare walls, grey depressing uniforms of the asylums which are now but an evil memory of the days of alms. Today there are individual tables and rooms agreeably set up and beautifully curtained; proper ware has replaced the old tin service, while there are pleasant pictures, and plants whose perfume permeates the surrounding. Here, indeed, mothers feel capable of giving their children all the affection they need. Many irregular marriages have been set right by the intervention of these homes.

This work is complemented by home schools which give shelter to children who lack a proper home.

The State has also made provisions for them by sanctioning in 1948 the adoption law, Nº 13,252.

Eva Perón, referring to the misery which today is banished from her country, and in direct opposition to the neglect of the rich and State of their humble collaborators, said:

"The floors of the shacks and tenement houses are usually made of pure earth.

The rain and cold come through the roof — it would be too poetic and romantic to say that only the light of the stars comes in!

Children are born there, and with them a problem which begins to grow bigger. The rich still believe that each child brings, according to an old proverb, its bread underneath its arm, and that where there is food for three there is enough for four. As may be seen they have never been in close contact with poverty!

Even all that is happiness whilst there is nobody ill in the family; when sickness comes, their calvary is bitter in the extreme.

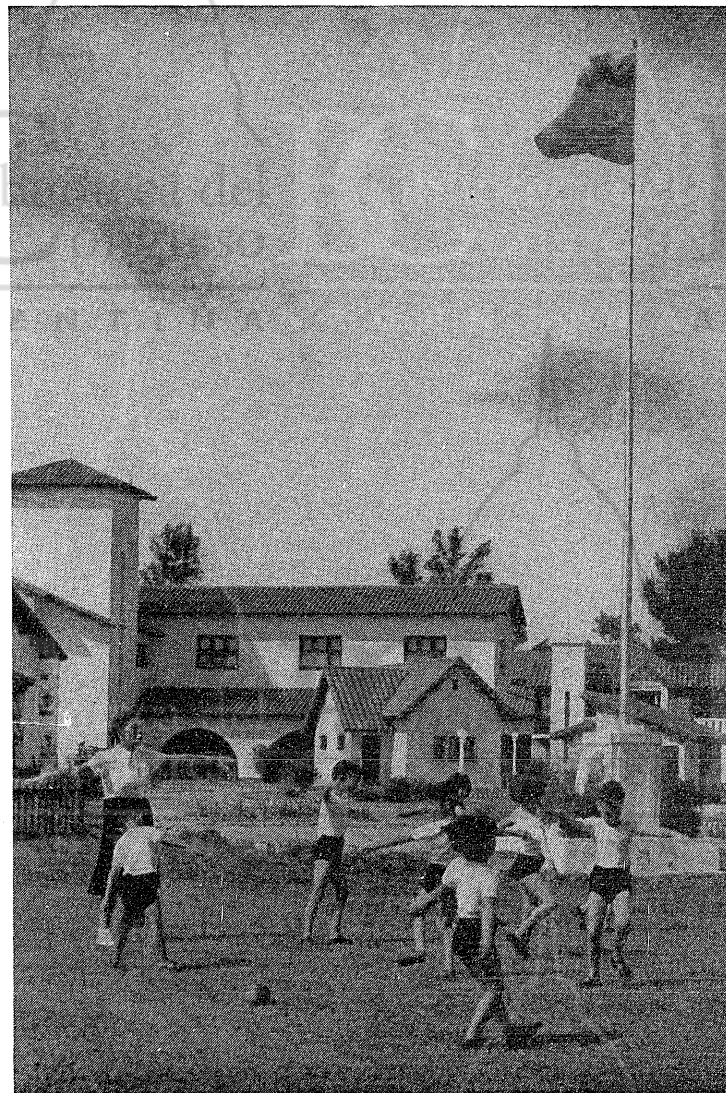
If their son, for example, is stricken down, the anguish of the parents has no limits.

I have seen parents with child in arms walk through the streets, looking for a doctor, chemist shop, hospital, anything...; because not even those of the public medical services dared to enter the labyrinths of slums which make up the "Picturesque" suburbs.

I have also them return home with the dead child in their arms, leave it on a table and set out again in search of a coffin as before they had desperately looked for a doctor and medicines."

Inspired by the noble feelings of Argentine citizens, she created for the adopted child legal ties with the adopting family, thus giving it a name and the rights and obligations of a legitimate child.

Nobody will feel a sense of isolation or of being marked out in that land of peace and work where the social conquests achieved since 1946 affirm the happiness of the people of the Republic of Argentina.



*A gymnastics class in the garden of the Children's City, another praiseworthy institution of the "Eva Perón" Foundation.*





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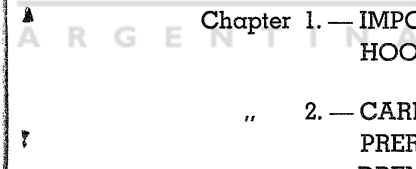


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