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ARGENTINA: THE PERSISTENCE OF PERONISM

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On 23 October 2011, Argentina's Peronist president Cristina Fernández de Kirchner of the Justicialist Party (PJ) overcame a bumpy first term and comfortably won reelection. She garnered an outright majority of 54.1 percent of the popular vote in the first round, besting her 2007 showing by roughly 9 percentage points and avoiding a runoff. Although most observers had expected her to win, the sweeping scale of her victory exceeded the expectations of both her administration and the fragmented opposition. In the most lopsided presidential result since 1928,¹ she carried 23 of Argentina's 24 provinces while her leading rival Hermes Binner, the Socialist governor of Santa Fe Province, collected only 16.8 percent of the national vote. Riding on her coattails, her Front for Victory (FPV) coalition easily took three-quarters of the governorships and both houses of Congress, winning 135 of 257 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 38 of 72 seats in the Senate.

The election served as a reminder of the remarkable durability and ideologically flexible appeal of the Peronist "brand" in Argentine politics. It also showed the ability of what we might call the Kirchnerist center-left sub-brand of Peronism to dominate at the polls given a divided set of rivals, a national economy buoyed by a commodities boom, and a wave of personal sympathy for a recently widowed incumbent. Indeed, the result should probably not have seemed as surprising as it did, as it had been telegraphed. The president's coalition had scored important victories in provincial elections that had been held earlier in the year. Then, on August 14, she had cruised through a compulsory, nationwide open primary with just over 50 percent of the

vote—a massive 38 points higher than runner-up Ricardo Alfonsín of the Radical Civic Union (UCR), the son of the late President Raul R. Alfonsín (1983–89).

That compulsory open primary, held simultaneously for all parties, was one of the 2011 electoral cycle's most important new wrinkles. Enacted into law in 2010, after a campaign spearheaded by Cristina Fernández de Kirchner's husband, former president Néstor Kirchner (2003–2007), it is an institution unique in Latin America. It includes legislative as well as presidential candidates, and is justified as a means of deepening Argentine democracy by requiring that all parties allow voters to select party candidates. On the tactical level, and with an eye on the presidential race, it is fair to say that the Kirchners also hoped that the primary would force dissident Peronist candidates to face the choice of running against Kirchner as rivals for the PJ nomination, or walking away from the PJ label altogether. The new electoral law drew other supporters, including UCR leaders who anticipated benefits from new campaign-finance rules and a threshold requirement that was expected to drive opposition votes toward the UCR by mandating that only parties receiving at least 1.5 percent of the overall primary vote could appear on the general-election ballot.

By March 2011, after Néstor Kirchner's death the previous October from a heart ailment and with the economy growing at a healthy pace, support for his successor (and now widow) had shot upward. Opposition candidates, including those who stood for strains of Peronism rival to the Kirchners' center-left brand, were weighing their options and deciding that rather than challenge the president for the PJ label, their best bet would be to run separate presidential tickets instead. Because each coalition presented a single presidential candidate, the primaries became a test run for the general election instead of a mechanism for selecting ticket members through intraparty competition.

The administration treated the August nationwide primary as a launching pad for its campaign and a test of the president's popularity. The opposition viewed the vote as a device for gauging the relative strengths of the various nominees, useful for giving voters a sense of which candidate would be most competitive in a possible general-election runoff against the incumbent. When the four main opposition candidates wound up more or less tied in a distant second place, however, the primaries failed to signal a clear frontrunner as an alternative to Kirchner.

A disappointing 12.2 percent primary showing by the pairing of Alfonsín and former Central Bank president Javier González Fraga led to a public squabble with Francisco de Narváez of Buenos Aires Province, an unlikely right-of-center Peronist ally whom Alfonsín had recruited. Despite the threshold's expected effect of herding votes toward the UCR by barring smaller parties, the Alfonsín-Fraga ticket

**TABLE—VOTE TOTALS IN ARGENTINA’S 2011
PRIMARY AND GENERAL ELECTIONS**

Candidates	% Votes (Primaries)	Candidates	% Votes (General)
Kirchner-Boudou (FPV)	50.2	Kirchner-Boudou (FPV)	54
Alfonsín-González Fraga (UCR/UCDES)	12.2	Binner-Morandini (FAP)	16.8
Duhalde-Das Neves (AFP)	12.1	Alfonsín-González Fraga (UCR/UCDES)	11.2
Binner-Morandini (FAP)	10.2	Rodríguez Saá-Vernet (ACF)	8.0
Rodríguez Saá-Vernet (ACF)	8.2	Duhalde-Das Neves (AFP)	5.9
Carrió-Pérez (CC)	3.2	Altamira-Castillo (FIT)	2.3
Altamira-Castillo (FIT)	2.5	Carrió-Pérez (CC)	1.8
Others	1.4	-	-

Source: <http://www.elecciones2011.gov.ar/paginas/paginas/dat99/DPR99999A.htm>

actually did a percentage point worse in the general election. Finishing just behind Alfonsín in the primary had been former Peronist president Eduardo Duhalde, who had served as a congressionally appointed caretaker from January 2002 to May 2003, after President Fernando de la Rúa resigned in the midst of an economic and political crisis marked by serious public disorders.

Duhalde’s 2011 campaign went into a tailspin, and in October he saw his vote share fall by more than half to just under 6 percent. Only Binner did better in the general than in the primary, benefiting from a surprisingly strong primary performance and a sense that he would make a viable opposition candidate come 2015, when a new president will be chosen (Argentina amended its constitution in 1994 to limit presidents to two consecutive terms). As the general election approached, voters and politicians alike began making plans on the well-grounded assumption that another term for the incumbent was in the cards.

The certainty that Kirchner would stroll to an easy victory had led opposition governors to follow the practice (now common in Argentine politics) of holding provincial-level elections early in order to avoid having to cope with the president’s coattails effect. With the exception of the province of San Luis in central Argentina, which was running a favorite son (Alberto Rodríguez Saá) for president and did all its voting on October 23, the Kirchner allies’ only electoral defeats occurred in provinces where gubernatorial elections were held well in advance of the presidential balloting. Three of the biggest opposition wins came in July and August. All opposition victories returned incumbent governors or successors from the same party, while only in the provinces of Catamarca (in March) and Río Negro (in October) did the incumbent party (in both cases it was the UCR) go down to defeat.

Overall, Kirchner should be counted as only one among the sea of incumbents rewarded by voters in 2011.

It's Still the Economy

Comparing the 2011 presidential returns with those from four years earlier, we see that the president upped her vote share in both the city and province of Buenos Aires as well as the provinces of Catamarca, Chaco, Córdoba, Corrientes, Neuquén, and San Luis. Buenos Aires Province and Chaco aside, none had a Kirchnerista governor. In keeping with the tradition of strong Peronist showings among low-income voters, Kirchner also won by larger than expected vote margins in the poorest electoral districts. Yet her strong showing in comparatively wealthy places such as Buenos Aires City, Córdoba, and Santa Fe—all areas that the opposition carried in 2009—shows that she attracted many middle-class voters too. The results are all the more remarkable given that in 2011 Kirchner dropped the *transversalidad* strategy of trying to coopt UCR leaders.² She jettisoned her Radical vice-president, former Mendoza Province governor Julio César Cleto Cobos, and picked an administration insider, former finance minister Amado Boudou, as her new running mate.

The 2011 race confirmed the broad support that the Kirchners had amassed beginning in 2003. Middle-class voters, having seen the worst economic crisis in Argentine history spiral into rioting and topple a president in late 2001, rewarded them for good economic times. Lower-income voters rewarded them for their redistributive policies. Among these were the Universal Child Subsidy,³ a conditional cash-transfer program (enacted in 2009) that covers 30 percent of those under 18, as well as the 2007 inclusion of an additional 2.5 million older Argentines in the pension system.

Taking advantage of a boom in commodity prices, Argentine exports grew dramatically in value and volume, boosting economic activity and consumption under both Kirchners. Between 2003 and 2010, Argentina experienced its highest growth in a century, with rates above 8 percent every year except for 2008 and 2009, when the impact of the global economic downturn was felt. Unemployment dropped almost 20 points, to 7.3 percent, while real salaries in the formal sector recovered to their precrisis levels in 2005 and (except for a small decline in 2008) continued to grow until 2010.⁴ Real wages also benefited from a resurgence of collective bargaining aided by support from the government. This, together with tighter labor markets, reduced the share of the workforce employed in the informal sector from 50 percent in 2003 to 35 percent in 2010.⁵ Moreover, the government enacted real formal-sector wage increases by decree.⁶ Economic activity was fostered by heavy spending on public works; by a favorable exchange rate that boosted export-

MAP—ARGENTINA'S PROVINCES



led industrial production; and by a battery of public subsidies covering food, energy, and transport. Industry benefited from direct subsidies, import restrictions, and subsidies for the purchase of domestically produced consumer durables. Hence, the traditional Peronist coalition of industrialists and workers was back in place.

The Kirchnerist coalition also found support in the informal sector of

the economy. The mobilization of informal workers and the unemployed (coordinated by groups of jobless protestors known as *piqueteros* or by Peronist territorial brokers) was instrumental to the president's reelection. By creating or increasing pension benefits and family allowances, the administration substantially boosted its vote among lower-income Argentines. Both the establishment of noncontributory pensions and the Universal Child Subsidy extended to informal workers and their families benefits that traditionally had gone only to formal-sector workers, with a dramatic income boost among the poorest voters.⁷

Kirchner was able to attract support from middle-class voters in spite of having shed her UCR vice-president and led a campaign that made heavy use of Peronist symbolism. As the economy grew, the middle class benefited from a consumption boom and widespread subsidies for transport and energy. Center-left middle-class voters also felt sympathetic to the president's positions favoring the prosecution of former military-regime members and the legalization of gay marriage (in 2010, Argentina became the first Latin American country to adopt legalization).

These middle-class voters, however, were also more likely to defect from the government coalition in response to governance and corruption issues as well as the widespread use of clientelism by Peronist brokers. The 2009 midterm elections highlighted this volatility, as middle-class voters pulled their support from the FPV in numbers large enough to deprive it of its absolute majorities in both houses of Congress.

The Farmers' Rebellion

What really brought the middle class's governance worries to a head came the year before the midterms. That was when a dispute broke out between the administration and agricultural producers in Argentina's breadbasket, the flat, temperate, and fertile area where the "Pampas provinces" of Buenos Aires, Córdoba, and Santa Fe come together to form one of the world's richest crop-growing and livestock-raising regions. The years since the fixed exchange rate was abandoned in 2002 had seen the Argentine currency depreciate and exports—particularly agricultural items such as grain, meat, and soybeans—grow by leaps and bounds in both volume and value as global demand for such commodities surged.

The Argentine grain belt, where median incomes are high and small and medium-sized agricultural units are common, was an especially dramatic beneficiary of this reversal of economic fortunes after a decade of woes. The agro-export boom was a potential bonanza for the administration as well, since it offered the national executive the prospect of access to a steady resource stream not governed by revenue-sharing laws that mandated a federal-provincial split of tax revenues. Agricultural-export

fees (known as *retenciones*⁸) fueled generous federal social spending, and explain how the Kirchners were able to pay for the cash transfers and pension-benefit hikes described earlier.

On 10 March 2008, with world prices for Argentina's main agricultural exports skyrocketing, President Kirchner used her executive powers—in the form of a resolution issued by the finance minister—to enact a new price-adjusted schedule of *retenciones* that varied with the type and price of the commodity being exported and in some prominent cases (regarding soybeans, for instance) were quite steep. Debate rages to this day over the true goal behind this move. The president and her advisors claimed that they were trying to prevent an excessive shift to soybean cultivation, to support the production of commodities (such as dairy products) needed for domestic consumption, and also to boost revenues to pay for social spending. Whatever the policy makers' intent may have been, the growers' reaction was swift and intensely negative. Within days, lockouts and roadblocks had spread across large swaths of countryside, threatening to cause urban food shortages like those that had resulted in riots during the hyperinflation of the late 1980s. The president's lengthy conflict with angry farmers would define the first two years of her administration.

Road pickets or blockades had become a common protest strategy in the mid-1990s, used by public-sector unions and the unemployed. The use of *piquetero* tactics by farmers and townspeople in the grain belt surprised officials and opposition figures alike. The protests brought to the forefront of political debate an unlikely group of leaders, including large and small rural producers who had traditionally been at odds with one another but made common cause against the higher new taxes. Dealing with these agricultural activists would prove a major challenge for Kirchner.

As authorities reacted aggressively to the protests and refused to negotiate, support for the protesters rose among urban middle-class voters. Given the political unpalatability of direct repression—both Kirchners had tolerated similar protests by their own allies as well as nonallied *piquetero* groups—the administration sought to gain legitimacy for its higher export fees by rallying unions, the unemployed, and influential FPV figures behind a proposal to have Congress enact the fees into law. As rural organizations, provincial leaders, and middle-class voters began applying more pressure to stop the bill, some agricultural-province lawmakers who had been administration allies began to break ranks. The bill made it through the Chamber of Deputies but lost in the Senate when then-Vice-President Cobos cast a tie-breaking vote against it on 16 July 2008. Export fees returned to their March 9 levels.

The rise of middle-class opposition to this bid for a tax hike on key agricultural exports during hard economic times goes a long way toward explaining both the FPV's poor showing at the polls in 2009 and the

electoral reforms adopted in 2010. The 15-point vote-share drop that the FPV suffered between 2007 and 2009 warned the president that her reelection strategy was in jeopardy. In the latter year, administration allies received only 31.2 percent of the vote in the lower-house elections. Close behind were candidates from the Civic and Social Accord (an alliance of Radicals, Socialists, and center-left independents that won 29 percent), with dissident Peronists in third with 18.7 percent. The pro-administration bloc in the Chamber dwindled to less than 35 percent, as deputies from Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Santa Fe, and Mendoza defected or lost their seats at the polls. For the first time ever, an Argentine administration lost control of key committee chairs. With them went control of the legislative agenda.

As its support in Congress dipped, the administration started a fight with the Clarín newsgroup, Argentina's largest and most powerful media conglomerate. Not caring for Clarín's coverage of the farm controversy, the administration began directing official advertising away from critical media outlets and giving it instead to ones that favored the government line.⁹ In response, the *Clarín* and *La Nación* newspapers—Argentina's two biggest dailies—heightened their critical coverage. This pattern remained unchanged even after the Supreme Court ruled in the Editorial Perfil case that the government should adopt a more even distribution of official advertising—a ruling that the executive has ignored.¹⁰

The economic mood and her conflict with the farmers drove Kirchner's approval rating down from 64 percent in January 2008 to 27 percent in June. In 2009, as the global slowdown cooled commodity prices and with them the Argentine economy, her support hovered around 35 percent. It remained weak through much of 2010 despite higher spending to cushion the downturn's effects and political coups such as the passage of the gay-marriage law in July 2010.

Political momentum, however, would shift quickly with Néstor Kirchner's death at age 60 that October. A wave of popular sympathy for his bereaved widow quickly translated into renewed political support. Normally, such an outpouring might be expected to prove ephemeral, but in this case it coincided with a resumption of economic growth. The politically crucial middle class, once so critical of the administration's performance, swung back toward favorability and pushed the president's support up to 60 percent. The economy continued to do well throughout 2011, and the stage was set for Cristina Kirchner's reelection.

Opposition Fragmentation and Peronist Stability

The president's success in her bid for a second term also owed much to opposition disarray. The 54 percent that Kirchner won in 2011 is only 2 to 6 points higher than what other successful presidential candidates

have garnered since democracy returned in 1983. In order to explain the sweeping nature of her victory, then, one must consider the highly fragmented character of her opposition. The fragmentation, it turns out, flows from the dramatic decline of the UCR, the main alternative to the Peronists ever since Juan Perón was first elected president in 1946.

Since 1983, Argentina has had two Radical presidents: Raul Alfonsín and Fernando de la Rúa (the latter elected in an alliance with a center-left party). Each had to leave office before the end of his term amid deep economic crisis. By comparison with the Radicals, then, it would seem that Peronist presidents have collected a “governability” or competence bonus. The relatively wide geographic distribution of Peronist voters promotes their legislative and gubernatorial predominance in a federal country, and Peronist ties to unions and *piqueteros* add an impressive popular-mobilization capacity.¹¹ In an interesting side effect, fragmentation can also be seen *within* Peronist ranks: As voters have become wary of voting for non-Peronists (who have trouble coming together behind a single presidential contender anyway), Peronist politicians have begun fighting each other. Two of Kirchner’s 2011 opponents were Peronist dissidents.

The UCR vote has declined steadily since democratization in 1983, in stark contrast with predictable performances by the PJ. In effect, Peronists have been able to maintain a loyal core of voters, and have consistently amassed close to 40 percent in each of the last twelve general elections. Since Fernando de la Rúa ungracefully left the presidency after the 2001 economic debacle, however, the UCR’s traditional middle-class constituencies have become “orphans” with no party to represent them.¹²

The Radicals have thus seen a more dramatic decline in their vote share since 2003, even though they retain control over a substantial number of provincial and municipal governments and have an extensive network of activists. Given the national-level decline of their party, crippled as it has become by association with a pair of presidents seen as having ruled over economic catastrophes, Radical mayors and governors have often made the best of things by becoming allied with Kirchnerismo in order to maintain access to federal resources.

As the UCR has faded, no single opposition alternative has arisen to take its place. Since 2003, a large number of parties have claimed small but significant shares of the popular vote. Once Kirchner’s approval ratings recovered, potential rivals such as the mayor of Buenos Aires decided to sit things out. With no single opposition candidate strong enough to “rise above the rest” and reshape the race into a two-candidate affair, undecided voters came to understand the alternatives as “reelect the president or risk economic collapse.”

In a classic 1980 study on the electoral geography of the Peronist vote, Ignacio Llorente noted that the territorial distribution of the Justi-

cialist Party's voters provided resilience against political shocks.¹³ Over the three decades since Llorente wrote, Peronism has consolidated its electoral strength in the industrial belts near key cities such as Rosario, Córdoba, and especially Buenos Aires, as well as in the more rural districts of the relatively conservative interior provinces. Edward L. Gibson described this as a case of a two-headed party with a progressive urban and a more conservative rural base. Gibson particularly highlighted how the pact that Juan Perón made with the conservative Concordancia alliance in the late 1940s brought him votes from the relatively poor interior provinces.¹⁴ The evidence from a dozen elections over thirty years shows how impressively stable this twin base has been. Whether running on a conservative platform, as Carlos Menem did in 1995, or on a progressive one, as Kirchner did in 2011, Peronism remains a coalition that can count on support from the same classes and areas year after year.

The 2011 results are consistent with this. As in years past, the most lopsided Peronist victories (often topping 60 percent) were won in the warmer northern provinces of Catamarca, Chaco, Corrientes, Jujuy, La Rioja, Misiones, Salta, San Juan, Santiago del Estero, and Tucumán. In the poorest and most rural sections of these provinces, Kirchner's vote share went as high as 90 percent, far exceeding the best that Menem could do in 1995.

The president also performed exceptionally well in the industrial belts and squatter settlements near major cities. Across Buenos Aires Province as a whole, she tracked her nationwide showing by winning 53 percent. In the densely populated portion of the province that forms the industrial belt south of the City of Buenos Aires, she comfortably exceeded 60 percent. In some neighborhoods, her total climbed even higher. These included Florencio Varela (73.7 percent), Guernica (68 percent), and Ezeiza (66.7 percent). Lomas de Zamora, home to former Peronist president Eduardo Duhalde, gave Kirchner 60.8 percent. In the squatter settlement of Retiro in the City of Buenos Aires, she won 72.8 percent, while less than half a mile away in the wealthy neighborhood of Recoleta, her total was a mere 14.1 percent.

The Challenge of Commodity Dependence

Officials, Peronists, and the president herself have interpreted the 2011 results as a ringing endorsement of her policies. She has publicly declared her intention to deepen the redistributionist policies that her husband began in 2003, even as a fiscal and economic reckoning looms. Fiscal imbalances, inflation, and concerns about how vulnerable Argentina is to the ups and downs of world commodity prices are driving the government to scale back its extensive subsidies to public utilities, despite how beneficial (and hence beloved) these sub-

sidies are to middle-class consumers. These concerns also explain the new currency-exchange controls, cuts in public-utility subsidies for the middle classes, fiscal belt-tightening agreements with indebted provinces, and more aggressive tax-collection efforts.

If Argentina's economic performance declines, voters may also begin attaching more weight to problems—among them corruption, poor governance, and public-sector inefficiency—that had previously eroded the president's popularity.

As the president began her new term, her evocations of old achievements alternated with new demands for larger “contributions” by better-off voters, with the stated purpose of using them to ensure economic growth as the international economic environment deteriorates. In her inaugural address, she demanded cooperation from financial actors blamed for a recent run against the peso as well as from labor unions that have taken more combative positions.

The continued success of this Kirchnerista political strategy, however, depends heavily on restoring fiscal balance after years of intense political maneuvers relying on higher public spending. The administration has been in full campaign mode since the farmers rose up in early 2008. Its social spending has been financed by loans from the National Bank, the Central Bank, and the social-security administration, all headed by Kirchnerista officials following the president's dictum. A run against the peso shortly after the 2011 election signaled that investors and voters alike were well aware of the country's current fiscal woes.

The fiscal stresses imposed by Kirchnerismo, combined with Brazil's devaluation of its currency, will in all likelihood keep the Argentine peso under pressure. Although Central Bank reserves and currency-exchange controls contained the last run against the peso, fears of a renewed run led the administration to make cuts not only in energy subsidies but in pensioners' and public-sector employees' year-end bonuses as well. Cabinet moves suggest that tighter controls are to be imposed on imports and exports. Finally, Congress moved swiftly and by huge majorities to renew the Economic Emergency Law (which delegates legislative powers to the president) and to reinforce fiscal centralization while also increasing government control over industries such as paper milling (a step that opposition newspapers had, not surprisingly, strongly criticized).

Inflation is looming as a likely key issue. In 2007, as it began to pick up, the administration intervened in the traditionally autonomous national statistics office, fired the technicians in charge of gauging the consumer-price index, and began to tamper with inflation measure-

ments. Investors and voters now consider them highly suspect. In a context of economic uncertainty and declining subsidies, voter worries over inflation are likely to grow. The official response, as Kirchner's inaugural address indicated, has involved asking unions to scale back calls for higher wages and to stage fewer strikes. Union leaders, well aware of their status as key members of the Peronist coalition, have repudiated this speech and rejected the president's harsh criticism of her labor allies. The next act in the drama will probably be a struggle to decide who is going to succeed the highly assertive Hugo Moyano as head of the General Confederation of Labor. The administration is trying to install one of its allies in his place, but Moyano is resisting and causing labor unrest in the process.¹⁵

Just as unions will no longer be able to count on government backing for their wage demands, so provincial governors will also have to adjust to a more stringent fiscal environment. In the last eight years, the share of revenue disbursed to the provinces has declined as the result of regained monetary independence after the abandonment of the fixed exchange rate and the rise in importance of export taxes, since both these circumstances have brought the federal government resources that are not included in its revenue-sharing deal with the provinces. These federal resources can be used to reward allies or punish defectors, providing the administration in Buenos Aires with leverage that it lacked under the old exchange-rate regime. As the budget deteriorates, however, relations among powerful provincial governors—and between those governors and the center—may grow increasingly fraught. As 2011 came to an end, new agreements to deal with election-year provincial debts seemed to be in the making.

As the electoral cycle moves into a lull, the levels of tension and conflict with unions and provincial governments will likely depend on the rate of inflation, the health of the primary federal budget, and the stability of commodity prices. If commodity prices drop or the primary budget goes into the red, economic growth will dip and force a sharper retraction of public spending in the provinces. Such a shock would make the president less popular and perhaps even threaten the stability of her governing coalition. If Argentina's economic performance declines, voters may also begin attaching more weight to problems—among them corruption, poor governance, and public-sector inefficiency—that had previously eroded the president's popularity.

As Kirchner embarks on her second and last term, the struggle over the FPV's future will intensify. With no clear successor to the Kirchners on hand, the ruling coalition is poorly equipped to deal with popular challengers such as Peronist and former Santa Fe governor Carlos Reutemann, his fellow former Santa Fe governor Hermes Binner, or Buenos Aires provincial governor Daniel Scioli. The 2015 race, in short, may involve a wide-open field and a second round.

Peronism has a history of ruthlessly discarding leaders, having gone through major shake-ups at the top from 1985 through 1989, and again from 2001 through 2005.¹⁶ The UCR, by contrast, maintained the same core group of leaders from 1983 until recently. With opposition parties so weak, numerous Peronists (and some ambitious non-Peronists) will think that they see a path to the presidency, and will strain the governing coalition in their efforts to get ahead on that road. Just as Néstor Kirchner built up his own position and authority by attacking Menem's legacy, one or more Peronist challengers will be ready to compete with any successor whom Kirchner cares to designate in advance of the next election. As she begins her second term, the slow rumbling of campaign 2015 is already making itself heard from just over the horizon.

NOTES

1. The 37.3-point margin that separated Kirchner from Binner is larger than the 34.6 points that separated Juan Perón from Ricardo Balbín in the presidential election of September 1973. Only Marcelo T. de Alvear in 1922 and Hipólito Yrigoyen in 1928 won by larger margins in free and competitive elections.

2. The Spanish term *transversalidad*, like the mathematical term “transversality” in English, describes the area where two sets intersect. In this case, the sets are the Kirchnerist Peronists on the one hand, and the Radicals on the other.

3. Created in 2009, this program delivers a monthly stipend to low-income citizens so long as they register and furnish proof that their children are vaccinated and enrolled in school.

4. Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo Argentino, *La anatomía del nuevo patrón de crecimiento y la encrucijada actual* (Buenos Aires: Atuel, 2010), 24–25.

5. Sebastián Etchemendy and Ruth Berins Collier, “Down but Not Out: Union Resurgence and Segmented Neocorporatism in Argentina (2003–2007),” *Politics and Society* 35 (September 2007): 363–401. Permanent Household Survey, National Statistics Office (INDEC), 2010.

6. Sebastian Etchemendy, “La ‘doble alianza’ gobierno-sindicatos en el kirchnerismo (2003–2011): Orígenes, evidencias y perspectivas,” unpubl. ms., Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Buenos Aires, 2011.

7. Sebastian Etchemendy and Candelaria Garay “Between Moderation and Defiance: Argentina’s Left Populism in Comparative Perspective (2003–2009),” in Steven Levitsky and Kenneth Roberts, eds., *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011).

8. There is significant debate in Argentina on the constitutional nature of the *retenciones*. Because they are legally considered fees rather than taxes, they can be changed by decree and the revenues that they yield need not be shared with the provincial governments.

9. On the relationship between the government and the media, see Taylor Boas, “Mass Media and Politics in Latin America” in Jorge I. Domínguez and Michael Shifter, eds., *Constructing Democratic Governance in Latin America*, 4th ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012). During its conflict with the Clarín conglomerate, the administration added a new level of bitterness by backing the claim of some human-rights groups that the adopted children of the media group’s owner had been turned over to her by the

military dictatorship after it had murdered their parents. The kidnapping by authorities of children belonging to “the disappeared” had indeed been a common practice under the junta, but genetic testing found no evidence to support the charge in this case.

10. Roberto Gargarella, “Notas sobre el Kirchnerismo y la Justicia, 2003–2011,” in Andrés Malamud and Miguel De Luca, eds., *La política en tiempos de los Kirchner* (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 2011). On the Perfil case, see “Argentine Highest Court Blasts CFK Government for Arbitrary Distribution of State Advertising,” MercoPress South Atlantic News Agency, 9 March 2011.

11. Ernesto Calvo and M. Victoria Murillo, “The New Iron Law of Argentine Politics? Partisanship, Clientelism and Governability in Contemporary Argentina,” in Steven Levitsky and M. Victoria Murillo, eds., *Argentine Democracy: The Politics of Institutional Weakness* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005).

12. Juan Carlos Torre, “Citizens Versus the Political Class,” in Levitsky and Murillo, *Argentine Democracy*.

13. Ignacio Llorente, “La composición social del movimiento Peronista hasta 1954,” in M. Mora y Araujo and Ignacio Llorente, eds., *El voto Peronista: Ensayos de sociología electoral argentina* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1980).

14. Edward Gibson, “The Populist Road to Market Refoms: Policy and Electoral Coalitions in Argentina and Mexico,” *World Politics* 49 (April 1997): 339–70.

15. After the election, the administration also changed the regulation of union-run health funds in a way that deprived unions of their claim on a large pot of payroll taxes. Congress also passed a law trimming the power that the rural workers’ union could exert over the supply of rural labor.

16. In the late 1980s, the Renovadores faction replaced the Peronist old guard after Italo A. Luder lost the 1983 presidential race. Carlos Menem capped the process by defeating rival Renovador leader Antonio Cafiero in the 1989 primaries. With the defeat of Carlos Menem in 2003 and Eduardo Duhalde’s wife in 2005, the Kirchners led a new Peronist leadership turnover.