

TOWARDS A BICENTENNIAL IN JUSTICE AND SOLIDARITY
2010-2016
WE AS CITIZENS, WE AS A PEOPLE¹

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" Christian love leads to denunciation, proposals
and a commitment to cultural and social projects;
it prompts positive activity that inspires all
who sincerely have the good of man
at heart to make their contribution."²

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Bicentennial: inheritance and inventory

This second centenary of the Homeland, is an unbeatable opportunity to reflect on ourselves, as citizens and as a People, and to commit ourselves to action.

Those men of two hundred years ago wanted to build an independent and sovereign Nation. That was their legacy for history.

During two hundred years, men and women who preceded us built, with successes and mistakes, an inheritance that belongs to us. We must take charge of all its achievements and all its imperfections because that is precisely the starting point from which we must make our contribution to the future.

History is built by generations within a marching People. For this reason, each effort, each stage of government that follows, and all of the historical events are parts of a whole complex and diverse interacting: A People who fight to live with dignity.

The Argentina of this second century is in a different condition from the first: we have democracy, we live in freedom, we have improved social rights, we live intense processes of political and

¹ The category Pueblo has a strong meaning in Argentinean and Latin-American Theology. Fr. Scannone sj., who was Bergoglio's professor said, "Often translated into "the people of God," the word pueblo in Spanish has a different meaning, one for which there is no direct equivalent in English. This contrast, according to Jesuit Father Juan Carlos Scannone, is at the heart of the "disconnect" between Francis and some English-speaking Catholics, who sometimes interpret the word to mean "populist."

The closest term in English would be "the peoples," but even this is inaccurate. The Spanish version of the word, as the priest explained, refers both to nations – the peoples of Germany, United States, Argentina, for instance – but also to the poor, those who live on the margins, on the outskirts, the populous sectors as opposed to a country's elites.

² **Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church.** Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2005. n° 6

social inclusion developed throughout the 20th century. In recent years integration processes have been deepening in our region of Latin America.

We also have wounds, unresolved issues, and debts to settle. History has marked us and, many times has left us breathless. We have had hard and difficult times. Chronic instability and confrontations, military dictatorships, a lost war, hyperinflations, are some of the big problems that we have confronted. We cannot ignore the consequences of the crisis and depression of 2001/2002, if we want to understand our reality today.

We have to start from what we have, from what we achieved, from the platform that we have built on to carry out a country project that allows us all to live with dignity.

"In our culture, fundamental values prevail, such as faith, friendship, and love of life. We always search for respect for the dignity of men and women. We celebrate the spirit of freedom, solidarity, and the claims before justice. The education of the children and the appreciation for the family are a key question in our culture. Love for our land and the sensitivity towards the environment are characteristics of our identity. These values have their origin in God and are solid foundations on which we can advance towards a new project of the Nation, which would make possible a just and solidary development of Argentina."

In this inventory, we cannot impose pessimistic visions, which perceive reality as the continuous degradation of a lost paradise. Nor do we need uncritical triumphalistic insights, which cannot recognize the problems that we still have to solve.

We need a calm, thoughtful, and deep analysis of where we are and where we intend to go.

1.2. Reconciliation and projection

The Argentina of this second centennial faces enormous challenges and also an extraordinary opportunity, which increases the responsibility of leaders and citizens. We cannot segment ourselves. We need to prioritize time to space; unity to conflict; the whole to the part, reality to the idea.

The democratic system is the framework and lifestyle that we have chosen to build. In it, we have to settle our differences and find consensus.

With democracy recovered, we thought that our country could finally achieve coexistence and a common project. We believed that we could resolve our internal tensions through the tools that politics provides. Politics is the "space of commitment and mission to overcome confrontations that impede the common good."³ However, it is still difficult for us to find points of union and to live in fraternity.

³ Hacia una cultura del encuentro: La política, mediadora del bien común. Democracia - Desarrollo – Justicia Social. DOCUMENTO DE TRABAJO, X Jornada de Pastoral Social, 15/09/2007. No 39.

In the Document "Iglesia y Comunidad Nacional" ("Church and National Community"), by the Argentine bishops of May 1981, there is a paragraph that characterizes us: "... each sector has exalted the values it represents and the interests it defends, excluding the others. Thus, in our history, political dialogue becomes difficult. This division and disagreement of the Argentines, who do not want to forgive each other, make it difficult to recognize mistakes and, therefore, arrive at a reconciliation. We cannot divide the country between the good and the bad, the just and the corrupt, patriotic and uninvolved way "⁴

We need to do more politics, understood in a broad sense as "the specific way to relate to each other in society. Politics is everyone's responsibility, even if we are not directly involved in political activities".⁵

This situation challenges those who are directly involved in political activity, those who are called to lead the different areas that have the most significant impact on reality.

It is time to assume our responsibility and notice that we leaders have not always taken up the challenges we have had to face.

The divorce between the leadership and the People was always present in our history. Even though this divorce was always present, we have forgotten. Very often, leadership is formed in perspectives alien to People's feelings. In addition to this, the leadership has been co-opted by the economic factor.

Politics has not always been at the service of the common good. It has become a tool of power serving only the individual and sectoral interests. It has failed to set limits on capitalism, and to eradicate inequality and poverty, which are the most severe scourges of the present time. The increase of inequity is a collective failure. It is not only the fault of the government or the opposition.

To run a country at a time of significant change, and in a complex global context, is always challenging for our leaders. We must stop pointing to others as responsible. Our lack of action has caused many brothers and sisters to live in exclusion.

We cannot settle for the idea of an unstable democracy. This instability is caused by the levels of poverty that we have. It is also caused by the lack of definition of a strategic project for development and international insertion. Democracy is also weakened when we cannot promote dialogue. These factors put coexistence, stability, governability, and the necessary tranquility of

⁴ Iglesia y Comunidad Nacional Documento de los obispos al término de la 42a Asamblea Plenaria de la Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. San Miguel 4 - 9 de mayo de 1981, no 31.

⁵ Hacia una cultura del encuentro: La política, mediadora del bien común. Democracia - Desarrollo – Justicia Social. DOCUMENTO DE TRABAJO, X Jornada de Pastoral Social, 15/09/2007. No 40.

life in democracy at serious risk. It also slows economic growth, employment increase, and poverty reduction.

Leadership plays a fundamental role in contributing to the development of participatory and social democracy.

2. WHY THE TITLE IS "AS CITIZENS AND AS A PEOPLE"?

2.1. Where is the primacy: with the individual or with the relational being?

In today's life, there is an increasing trend to exalt the individual.

The individual and his rights are higher than the community dimension. Individual opinion is more important than reality. The same is true for moral parameters, norms, and religious precepts.

This has been described as a new contemporary individualism. It can be traced and enrolled, genealogically, in the possessive individualism of nineteenth-century liberalism.

It can also respond to the psychological views of the early twentieth century that absolutized the unconscious as a source of explanation of human destiny. It can also be related genealogically to the consumerist individualism of post-war capitalism.

A friend, Alberto Methol Ferré, who recently died, said that it was a libertine, hedonistic, amoral, consumerist individualism that had no ethical or moral horizon. For him, individualism, was the new challenge for society and the Church in Latin America.

Therefore, when referring to current political-social commitments, we have to recover that individual dimension and connect it with the social aspect of community life.

This is the reason for the title of this document: "We as citizens, we as a People". As citizens within a People.

2.2. Social dimension and historical construction

Citizen is a logical category. People is a mythical and historical category. We easily understand that we are all citizens, and we live in society. To understand what is a People, we need another hermeneutic.

The challenge of being a citizen includes living and being explicit in the two categories of belonging: belonging to society and belonging to a People. You live in society, but you depend on a People.

Because we are a new People in history, our identity is not fully outlined and defined. Being part of the People is not natural for those who have lost all social and cultural ties with their compatriots, without a sense of belonging to a collective destiny. It is a process of becoming a People. It is slow and often painful work for which our society has struggled.

Latin America burst into universal history 500 years ago, bearing the heritage of the original Peoples and the miscegenation of the Baroque.

We are celebrating 200 years. Our roots sink into the Spanish-colonial period and the miscegenation. We have a particular identity marked by cultural diversity and faith. Later in our history, the immigrants arrived. Immigrants have shaped our current face.

That historical-cultural roots are difficult and painful to integrate between us.

We want to be a united People, but we find it difficult to reconcile our differences in all areas of social life. There are different traditions to interpret the causes of our confrontations.⁶

Our history is dramatic, full of contradictions, and often violent. We have to understand our past to overcome divisions, and we should not repeat confrontations that have hurt us.

3. CITIZENS AND PEOPLE

3.1. Called to the common good

It is necessary to recover our identity as a citizen, oriented towards the common good. The citizens are not only an individual, as it was presented by the classical liberals. The citizens are not a group of crowded people either, what in philosophy is called "the unit of accumulation". The citizens are people summoned towards a unit that tends to the common good.

To form a community, everyone has a "munus", a task, an obligation. This community mode, which comes from the historical-cultural heritage, has been forgotten. Self-centered "consumer individualism" does not concern itself with others.

3.2. Belonging to a People

To have a full identity as a citizen, it is not enough to belong to a society. We acquire identity as a citizen by belonging to a People. There is no identity without this belonging.

As I said before, in this belonging to a People, two types of categorizations converge: logical and historical-mythical. Both must be used.

⁶ Traditions: illustrated-popular; Understanding of our history: liberal-revisionist; Vision of the economy: agrarian or industrial; Political confrontations: unitary-federal; regime-cause of liberation; Peronists-anti-Peronists.

When we speak of citizens, we contrast it to a mass of people. There is a substantial and qualitative difference between a mass and a People. People are united citizens, committed to a common project.

3.3. The citizen and political vocation

The existential and ethical reflection on citizenship leads to a political vocation, that is, building a People-Nation with others. Being a People is to share life, values, history, customs, language, faith, and dreams.

The citizen is someone who is called to commit himself to the common good. In this sense, he is already doing politics. Politics is a high form of charity, according to the papal documents.

Being a citizen is, at the same time, an anthropological fact and a political action. We refer to the dynamism of goodness that unfolds towards social friendship. It is not an abstract idea of goodness, but the goodness in the person, that it expresses in attitudes. What makes you a citizen is the display of the dynamism of goodness towards social friendship. Kindness is one thing, and ethics is another. There can also be an ethos without goodness.

3.4. Dynamics of truth, with goodness and beauty

Many times, in our history, this dissociation between kindness and ethics, have generated serious conflicts and confrontations. Sometimes, theoretical formalism and moralism are more relevant than the reality itself.

An abstract reflection forgets that the objective of all human reflection is the real being. The human being is crossed by the transcendentals: truth, goodness, and beauty. The citizen must develop the dynamic of truth, with goodness and beauty. If any of these is missing, the being is idealized, and therefore not real. They have to go together, not tear apart.

Any distortion of the concept of citizen is rooted in this separation. In this way, the common good is reduced to private good. Kindness without truth and beauty becomes a good that only benefits me or my sector. It does not contribute to the common good, which is the good that as a citizen we must seek. The challenge for a citizen is to gather this goodness, this truth, this beauty in search of an experience of being a People.

Recovering the validity of the citizen attitude implies recovering the horizon of the unity of a community.

3.5. Citizens within a People

Transforming myself from inhabitant to citizen, as belonging to a People with its values, means to be a community. Being a community is a historical experience of being People.

For Alberdi, in the second half of the 19th century, we had to go from inhabitants to citizens. Inhabitants, exercising the civil rights outlined in the famous article 14 of the National Constitution of 1853. Citizens, exercising political rights after immigration transformed the pre-existing society. A Republic with abundant civil liberties was, for Alberdi, the "Possible Republic". The republic with political freedoms was the "True Republic". The real Republic was consolidated in the Saenz Peña law. In the Saenz Peña Law, that objective is met, although not in the line that Alberdi and elitist liberalism dreamed.

We need to become citizens within a People. We need to march towards a concept of integral citizenship.

Argentina came to constitute a society with ascending social mobility, quite homogeneous. We achieved extended social rights, full employment, and high consumption. The electoral political participation was almost total, and there was an active social mobilization. Today we are no longer on par with those projects.

3.6. What conspires against it?

What conspires to be citizens within a People is the primacy of individual or sector interest over everything and everyone. We are not talking about the effort that many families made to have a home, guarantee an education for their children, etc. The presence of this primacy has prevented the maturation of a collective project in the medium and long term.

The "present context" has turned as the only dimension of time. We prioritize what is happening now and here. The prioritization of the present context makes it challenging to have a strategic vision. In this perspective, the sole objective of political, social, and economic activity is to lead in the current situation.

This emphasis on the present time joins the desire for rapid profit that constitutes a tragic feature of the sectors of economic power. These dominant sectors dismiss sustained effort, detachment, and abstention from luxury consumption. The greed to win makes it challenging to create a more predictable and stable economic scenario.

The emergence of the "image civilization" through social media has been a fact for more than five decades. The reduction of politics to a spectacle is more recent. The media enables people without proposals or management capacity to face complex situations that today's society is experiencing. Much ephemeral leadership has been created around the world by the media.

Previously, I emphasized the role of leadership in formulating a project for the comprehensive and inclusive development of the country. The little freedom for political action and the lack of clear rules, which weaken the reconstruction of Argentine society, make it difficult to formulate a project for the country.

We cannot make agreements. We do not know how to generate medium and long-term development projects that could solve our social problems. We live in a confrontational political culture, where conflict is more important than the search for unity.

Our country deserves an integrating project. A project with values and specific objectives in different areas like the economy, politics, social context, and culture. An integral development project for everyone. That integrating project exceeds the times of a government because it needs to be long-term, and it requires continuity. To achieve this, the commitment of all political and social forces is necessary.

We wonder if:

- Is that integral project possible in Argentina 2010?
- Is it possible to dream that our children and grandchildren enjoy the fruit of our efforts to build a better country?
- Can we Argentines reach an agreement and respect it?
- Can we build a political culture of dialogue and not of confrontation?

Promoting dialogue and unity is our greatest challenge as an Argentine People on the bicentennial of the Nation.

4. PRINCIPLES TO ILLUMINATE OUR IDENTITY AS CITIZENS AND AS PEOPLE

I will state four fundamental principles: Time is superior to space; unity is superior to conflict; reality is superior to the idea; and the whole is superior to the part.

Building a project as a People means overcoming three bipolar tensions. If we overcome these tensions, we can become citizens and belong to a People. The three tensions are plenitude and limitation; idea and reality; globalization and localization.

4.1. First bipolar tension: the tension between plenitude and limitation.

Plenitude is fully achieving the common good. The limitation is everything that prevents us from reaching it. Plenitude is what mobilizes us to keep trying. A citizen necessarily has to live seeking the common good.

Utopia does not mean running away from reality. Sometimes we use the word like that. In this text, we use it in a positive sense, as a final cause, as "telos typo". Plenitude is the attraction that God places in our hearts so that we seek what makes us freer. The limit, on the other hand, pulls us back. We need to resolve this tension between plenitude and limitation. Neither of them should be denied. Living that continuous tension between plenitude and limitation helps us on the path to becoming citizens. The limitation can be expressed in the denial of the current context or in looking beyond what is happening today.

The citizen has to live in a tension between the current context and the search for the common good. The citizen can be imprisoned in neither of them because he is the guardian of this necessary tension.

Two principles emerge from this tension:

4.1.1. First principle: "Time is greater than space"

Time initiates processes, and space crystallizes them. When the mother of Zebedee's children says to Jesus, "Look, I want to ask you for a favor: that my two children be on the right and the other on the left," she is asking for space. The Lord responds by pointing out a necessary time: "Are you going to be able to get where I got, are you going to be able to suffer what I suffered?"⁷ Time is always greater than space. In civil, political, and social activities, it is time that governs the spaces, transforms stages of a process. So, time is superior to space. One of the sins that sometimes exist in socio-political activity is to prioritize the spaces of power over the times of the processes. Perhaps we Argentines need to initiate processes rather than seek spaces of power.

4.1.2. Second principle: "Unity is superior to the conflict."

If you stay in the conflictive, you lose the sense of unity. The conflict must be assumed. We can assume it in the manner of the priest and the scribe in front of the wounded man on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho⁸. That means to see the conflict and run away. Evading conflict prevents us from being citizens. The second way to assume the conflict is to get into the conflict and be imprisoned in it. This way of assuming it makes our contribution to the common good difficult. The third way to assume it is to face the conflict, resolve it, and transform it as the stage of a process.

So far, the two principles that help us to be citizens: "Time is superior to space" and "Unity is superior to the conflict".

4.2. Second bipolar tension: the tension between idea and reality

The reality is actual; the idea is only an elaboration. We build ideas to understand reality. There must be a dialogue between reality and the idea, which is the explanation we make of that reality. This dialogue constitutes another bipolar tension, which supposes that the idea is not autonomous. When the idea is dominant, idealism and nominalism are born. Nominalism does not invite to commit to the real. We can only commit to reality. The idea can help us understand reality and mobilize commitment.

⁷ Cf. Mc. 10, 35-40; Mt. 20, 20-23

⁸ Cf. Lc. 10, 31-32

Here the problem of aesthetics and rhetoric arises. In the world order, socio-political action has moved to the field of ideas. This displacement makes it difficult for us to grow as citizens. We live in the realm of the image, of the single word, of sophism. In international conventions or everyday life, sophistry is used as a resource for discussion. This resource annuls us as a citizen since it prevents us from understanding reality.

The use of sophistry is as old as the world. Plato, in Gorgias, says this: "rhetoric is to politics what the gourmet is to the doctor or cosmetics to the gym"⁹ He is speaking of the sophists, who had changed the real facts through the idea, supplying it with aesthetics and rhetoric. The idea stays imprisoned by sophistry instead of resorting to persuasion. It is then about seducing instead of persuading. Seducing, we lose our contribution as citizens. Persuading, we confront ideas and progress together.

4.2.1. Third principle: "Reality is superior to the idea"

"Reality is superior to the idea" is the third principle that helps the citizen to become aware of himself. This third principle is linked to the two already mentioned: "Time is superior to space", "Unity is superior to the conflict".

4.3. Third bipolar voltage: the tension between global and local

As citizens, we are also subject to the bipolar tension between the global and the local. The global helps us to broaden the vision of the context and does not allow us to look only at local problems. At the same time, it is necessary to assume the local, to put in place mechanisms of subsidiarity. To be a citizen, we do not have to live only at the global level, nor only locally. We do not want globalization that cancels the differences. Nor do we want to fall into a localism that closes us off from others. The model is not the sphere, where every point is at the same distance from the center, and where fragments are all the same. The model is the polyhedron. The polyhedron, which is the union of all the partialities that in the unit retain their originality. By polyhedron, we mean, for example, the association of the Peoples who, in the universal order, retain their peculiarity as a People.

The polyhedron model suggests that the citizen commits himself locally and maintains his peculiarity, but tries to contribute to the global. Working locally but looking to the global context means that each sector in the society contributes to the country's project from its place and in its way.

4.3.1. Fourth principle: "The whole is greater than the part."

In the polyhedron, the whole does not annul the parts, since they are different. In the sphere, all parts are equal and merge into the whole; there is no difference. To build citizenship, these four

⁹ Cf. "GORGIAS O LA RETORICA", Platón, edición Edimat, Madrid, España, 2003. T/P Francisco Márques, p69

principles must be assumed, referring to society and the category of People. As we have said, the four principles are: "Time is superior to space", "Unity is superior to the conflict", "Reality is superior to the idea", "The whole is superior to the part".

We must live these three principles amid the three bipolar tensions between "plenitude and limitation", "idea and reality", and "the globalization and the localization". Managing these tensions facilitates our walk as a People and as citizens.

Being a citizen means being called to a struggle to belong to a society and a People. Stop being one of the mass -- to start to be a person, to be a society, to be a People.

The fight has two enemies: indifference and complaint. Jesus said to the people of his time: They are like the boys who, when we play happy dances, do not dance, and when we play burial songs, they do not cry.¹⁰

5. FAVORABLE CONDITIONS FOR THE REALIZATION OF CITIZENSHIP IN A SIGNIFICANT EXPERIENCE OF BEING A PEOPLE IN THE BICENTENARY

5.1. Time to develop a project

We have a privileged scenario to reach a development agreement to build a more inclusive country. We have achieved democratic political stability. The Latin American region benefits from a trend of economic growth in the coming years.

As a People, we need to seek a definition of development that includes all people in all its dimensions. Time helps us if we take advantage of it to create new possibilities.

In these bicentennial times, we are called to commit to the realization of a comprehensive development project for all. This project must prioritize the fight against inequality and poverty.

We need to build a culture of encounter that prioritizes dialogue. We must facilitate the search for agreements and consensus.

To achieve a new country project, we must prioritize time to space, the whole to the part, reality to the idea, and unity to the conflict.

I reiterate: this time is a favorable occasion for the elaboration of a new historical project of the Nation. The objective is that we live as citizens in a more just and caring People, without exclusions or confrontations.

5.2. The People as subject

¹⁰ Cf. Mt. 11, 16-17; Lc. 7, 32.

The new country project must have as protagonist the People and its culture. The project must reflect strategic purposes, that is, what is possible to achieve and what the people vividly want.

“You cannot create a system without taking the human being into account and then force him or her to enter it. It would be vain to project in detail an organization whose purpose would not serve the perennial demands of human nature, nor gather the authentic features of man, historically incorporated into our nationality ”.¹¹

A project of the few and for the few is not useful. It must be an agreement to live together. The new plan needs the express will to want to be a nation-people. It is the experience of a People on the march with difficulties and setbacks, with joys and sorrows.

6. FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

In the CEA Document “Hacia un Bicentenario en Justicia y Solidaridad (2010-2016)” -which is programmatic- we pointed out some topics that I will summarize here:

6.1. Two priorities:

6.1.1. Eradication of poverty

Argentina, in 2010, has too many poor and excluded. But we must bear in mind that behind the statistics, there are people: men and women, the elderly, youth, and children.

It is not just an economic or statistical problem. "It is primarily a moral problem that affects us in our most essential dignity"¹². "People are the subject, beginning, and end of all political, economic and social activity"¹³. As Paul VI told us “Every person, each person, and all people” must be included.

The Puebla Document says, "this poverty is not a casual stage, but the product of economic, social and political situations and structures."¹⁴

Poverty and the structures that generate poverty are results of economic and political decisions. There are Argentines in a situation of poverty and exclusion. We must treat the poor as protagonists of their destiny because they are not only recipients of state assistance or the solidarity of society.

¹¹ Cf. Iglesia y Comunidad Nacional Documento de los obispos al término la 42a Asamblea Plenaria de la Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. San Miguel 4 - 9 de mayo de 1981, no 38.

¹² Hacia un Bicentenario en justicia y solidaridad (2010-2016). Documento de los obispos al término la 96a Asamblea Plenaria de la Conferencia Episcopal Argentina. Pilar, 14 de Noviembre de 2008. no 5.

¹³ Cf. Mater et Magistra. Carta encíclica de su santidad Juan XXIII, sobre el reciente desarrollo de la cuestión social a la luz de la doctrina cristiana no 219.

¹⁴ Documento de Puebla. III Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano. Documento Conclusivo, Puebla, 1979. no 29.

Defending human rights also implies a commitment to change these unjust structures, so that all Argentines have a decent life.

Men and women are historical subjects, that is, citizens and members of the people. The State and the Society must promote and protect their rights. People must achieve their own destiny.

We cannot admit that a dual society is consolidated. "Beyond the efforts that are made, we must recognize that we are an unjust and unsupportive society that has allowed a people, once with high levels of equity, to be today one of the most unequal and unfair in the region".¹⁵

Eliminating poverty requires the realization of social justice.

"Justice is the object and measure of all politics".¹⁶ "We must recover the fundamental mission of the State. This mission is to ensure justice and a just social order to guarantee each one his or her share in the common good. We need to respect the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity, what for John Paul II means "a firm and persevering determination for the common good, and it must be carried out through social and political participation".¹⁷

There is consensus in recognizing a more active presence of the State in the social question. The State and society must work together to make these transformations possible and solve the problems of inequality and distribution.

I invite you to "establish a culture of encounter." The invitation is to promote processes to reach consensus; make agreements that respect differences; promote the values of equity and freedom. Only in this way can we renew our confidence in ourselves and our leadership. We need to overcome individualism and the disregard for the social reality that increasingly challenges us.¹⁸

6.1.2. Comprehensive development of all.

A comprehensive development project must give everyone a chance. Redistribution of wealth is essential for this development. Due to inequality, there is a social debt in our country.

¹⁵ Hacia una cultura del encuentro: La política, mediadora del bien común. Democracia - Desarrollo – Justicia Social. DOCUMENTO DE TRABAJO, X Jornada de Pastoral Social, 15/09/2007. No 25.

¹⁶ DEUS CARITAS EST. Carta encíclica del sumo pontífice Benedicto XVI a los obispos a los presbíteros y diáconos a las personas consagradas y a todos los fieles laicos sobre el amor cristiano. No 28 a) 1.

¹⁷ Hacia una cultura del encuentro: La política, mediadora del bien común. Democracia - Desarrollo – Justicia Social. DOCUMENTO DE TRABAJO, X Jornada de Pastoral Social, 15/09/2007. No 84.

¹⁸ Hacia una cultura del encuentro: La política, mediadora del bien común. Democracia - Desarrollo – Justicia Social. DOCUMENTO DE TRABAJO, X Jornada de Pastoral Social, 15/09/2007. No 23.

Wealth distribution is a very complex issue and requires our full attention. Achieving a more equitable redistribution requires seeking consensus and promoting a common project for the country. The whole is superior to the part.

Both education and work, are vital to the development, to promote a fair distribution of goods, and to achieve social justice.

Work is a source of dignity. Working strengthens personal and social identity. Through work, people make a valuable contribution to the production process and the construction of the Nation.

Education contributes to the development of the subjectivity of the person; promotes the exercise of responsible citizenship; encourages employment; and forms a national identity open to the universal.

The State as the promoter of the common good, based on the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity, has a fundamental role in the search for integral development. The State must articulate the interests of the different sectors and social actors, and set the rules that promote social cohesion.

We propose a methodology of participation, dialogue, consensus, the definition of state public policies, and the definition of a country project.

Thinking of a national project for comprehensive development for the future involves the participation of all sectors of society.

Multiple factors contribute to the possibility of debating and reflecting on a new National Development project. Among these factors, we find a higher level of economic activity, an increase in export capacity, greater demand for food, diversification of production, democratic stability.

6.2. Bicentennial and future

The bicentennials of the May Revolution and Independence are an opportunity that the Lord gives us to project a future of greater unity and dialogue.

It is a privileged occasion, a *kairos*, which we should not miss.

The celebration of the bicentennial is an opportunity to solve our significant problems. It is urgent to eradicate poverty and inequality. It is also necessary to create opportunities for education and work for young people.

The bicentennial is an opportune time to define State policies on education, health, work, and security. We need to promote well-being and rebuild the unity of all Argentines.

This time is also an opportunity to define how we will participate in the world market.

The bicentennial invites us to strengthen our national identity, to seek new forms of insertion in the Latin American region, and to open ourselves to the global.

It is the opportunity to sustain a human rights policy that helps to build an identity based on memory, truth, and justice.

It is the opportunity to reread history with hope.

It is the opportunity to mobilize social energies around a more generous project. To project is to look to the future and build it day by day with decisions and actions. The project requires setting strategies to grow as a country.

7. CONCLUSION

The People, in which we are citizens, have wisdom, and have a soul. Because we can speak of the soul of a People, we can also speak of a hermeneutic, that is, of a way of interpreting reality. The Argentine people have a strong awareness of their dignity.

Our people know that the only way to grow as a country is with the commitment of all Argentines.

The Bicentennial is an opportunity to develop new styles of leadership focused on service to others and the Common Good.¹⁹

Leadership is an art that can be learned. It is also a science that can be studied. It is a job that requires dedication, effort, and tenacity. But it is, above all, a mystery because it cannot always be explained from logical rationality.

Service-focused leadership is the answer to the uncertainty of a country damaged by privileges. Many use their powerful position for their benefit. Many people with power demand incalculable sacrifices from the citizens while evading their social responsibility.

Authentic leadership requires an exemplary life and consistency. The true leader knows how to listen to and interpret the People, and represents them before society.

¹⁹ Hacia un Bicentenario en justicia y solidaridad (2010-2016). Documento de los obispos al término la 96a Asamblea Plenaria de la Conferencia Episcopal Argentina (CEA). Pilar, 14 de Noviembre de 2008, no 23-23.

We pray to our Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, in her dedication to Luján, patron saint of our country, that she accompanies us and encourage us as citizens and as a people in this celebration of the Bicentennial.