

Argentiniens say Never Again

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By María Josefina Arce

"Never again" was the cry of thousands of people who took to the streets of Argentina this March 24, Day of Memory for Truth and Justice, to remember the victims of the last civil-military dictatorship that reigned in the South American country from 1976 to 1983.

A claim that has gained strength, in view of the denialist attitude of President Javier Milei about that sad stage of Argentine history, which established state terrorism and sowed horror and death in society.

The ultra-liberal has denied the existence of 30 thousand forced disappearances. Let us not forget that in the first TV debate during the electoral campaign he pointed out that in those days excesses were committed, but never a systematic extermination plan.

A position seconded by his vice-president Victoria Villarruel, daughter of military men, who has even pronounced herself on the possibility of dismantling the Museum of Memory, erected years ago in the former ESMA, the Navy Mechanics School, in Buenos Aires, the capital city.

ESMA was one of the largest clandestine detention and torture centers of the dictatorship. Not only were numerous people tortured, systematically murdered and forcibly disappeared there, but children were born in captivity and stolen from their mothers.

The Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo estimate that some 500 babies were born in captivity during the dictatorship and their identities were stolen. Thanks to the tireless search of this emblematic association, more than 130 of these stolen babies have been identified and given to families of military or dictatorship sympathizers.

Around 700 illegal detention centers were created during the civil-military dictatorship, the bloodiest in Argentine history.

This Sunday's march, which had its epicenter in Plaza de Mayo, also demanded the continuity of the judicial proceedings against those responsible for crimes against humanity committed during those years.

It was marked by the condemnation of the publications in social networks by Milei and his vice-president of contents that deny the horrors of those years and try to distort the facts.

It was the largest rally in recent years, because, as many expressed, there are 30 thousand reasons to reject hate speeches, to defend the homeland and the Argentines, who today are facing a critical situation due to the neoliberal package implemented by the government and which jeopardizes their most basic human rights.

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