

FRONT PAGES FROM HISTORY

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Democracia, Buenos Aires - Sunday July 27, 1952

What is it about Evita that throughout the years her name, her life, her image has caught the imagination of the people?. Of course, the musical by Andrew Lloyd Weber, the movie with Madonna and Antonio Banderas and the song “Don’t cry for me Argentina” contributed to keeping the myth alive by making her a star in popular culture. But in her country of origin, Argentina, Eva María Ibarguren, or Eva María Duarte, as she was later known, was a living legend long before we heard of her. Actress, campaigner for the political rights of women in a country full of chauvinistic laws, defender of the plight of the workers and underprivileged classes, *los descamisados*, wife of another Argentinean myth, Perón, and a charismatic, frail woman whose passionate speeches made her in reality a populist figure; all these contributed to her aura of sainthood. But nothing did more to transform her into an icon as her early death by cancer in her

prime, at the age of 33.

For days after her death on July 26, 1952, the Argentinean newspapers were filled with nothing but stories about her. Her life, her pictures, her speeches, the outpouring of grief... but no newspaper captured the passion of the moment like this, “Democracia” with a single word that was a nation’s cry: Evita!.

“The people weep at their great pain”, said the paper announcing the “entry of Evita into immortality”.

The language of the articles in the newspaper is amazing: “All the tears are not enough to weep for her!. The motherland cries with unprecedented pain. Eva Perón is no more!. The infinite happiness of her fabulous exploits is turning into deep sorrow! She was the sacred fire of the motherland, her purest exploit, her heroine, her happiness, her triumphal march and her people. She was our pride, our faith, our strength, our virtue and our love. Let the shredded and distressed hearts cry... Eva Perón is no more”.

