

#### 40. Ingrid Barrios

Huh? Well, on that day, I was assigned, I mean, selected to be a polling station officer. I was in charge of the polling station, you know. And since it had been many years since we had last voted, it was a matter that required me to read all the documents on what needed to be done. So, I arrived with a clear goal: to be the president of the polling station. We were five officers, and you know that Chileans, by nature, don't openly express themselves. So, I said I would be the president. And everyone accepted. Everyone accepted. Why? Because I had seen that it was the easiest role, but I had to be attentive to everything. And I had confidence in myself, in my abilities, that I would be attentive to everything, ensuring no mistakes were made, you know. That no strange or crooked things occurred. We had already had a meeting before where I had noticed two people in favor of, I mean, there were three in favor of "No" and two in favor of "Yes." So, we were divided. Therefore, it was all the more reason for me to be the president because I had to oversee that things were done correctly, you know. That was it. Now, why did I vote "Yes"? Because we had enjoyed 17 years of tranquility after enduring three years in hell, and I didn't want that again. When it was the option that the country offered me, you know? The option was precisely to return to political maneuvering, to political parties, political ideologies, to extreme left-wing ideologies, Marxism, which had changed over the years in the world, but still. Yeah, it had changed, but at that moment, I still didn't know, you know, that communism had basically fallen all over the world. It was falling, on the verge of collapse. Well, I didn't know that, you know. But, therefore, we had fears that the situation we constantly saw in Cuba could happen again, you know, what Cuba was like. So, we had to protect, in essence, you know, to ensure that we didn't have that type of ideology again. And the military government had given me full guarantees of absolute tranquility, and there were no ideological persecutions of any kind, except for the extremist terrorists. Yes, I acknowledge that they were repressed, combated. That was their goal. But the rest of the people, I had a brother-in-law who was left-wing, socialist, and he continued working without any problems because he wasn't the type, he wasn't involved in armed struggle, and he didn't intend to disrupt or go against the stability that existed at that time, which was the military government.

I was in college, but I was already teaching. And well, throughout the military government, I lived peacefully. I got married, had a daughter. My life unfolded completely peacefully, without any fears about anything. On the contrary, absolute tranquility. There was economic development, you know. There were good opportunities for savings, for progress in various aspects. I also got divorced. Then I moved forward on my own without any issues, I mean, with all the peace, stability, and economic stability that existed. There was a setback around '82, '83, I think it was '82. But, in my case, it didn't profoundly or significantly affect me because there were no major problems where I worked. So, it depended on the environment in which one worked.

During the vote. Everything was calm. I mean, the military. On the day of the vote, the military took control of all the polling stations. Everything was calm, peaceful. There was a problem-free voting process. The counting took place until the end, you know. And I arrived home. I had to go and submit all the documents, but we already had a rough idea of who had won at the polling station. At the actual polling station. We arrived home, and well, it was the entire country, you know. It was a process that was almost new because it hadn't been done in so many years. So, well, we arrived, I started watching TV, and what happened? Who won, who didn't win?

I was also convinced that the "Yes" would win because it was evident everywhere. Although, as a colleague, you know, in a boys' school, I mean, there were left-wing teachers. What was happening with them? Well, they also felt repressed, unable to freely express their ideals. But we had to consider that it was a high school for boys. Therefore, neither was it a private school that had its regulations, that had its ideology. The Catholic school where no teacher could come either, and yes, if the school was Catholic, all the children were Catholic. Therefore, the parents demanded, right? that the Catholic Christian religious philosophy was respected and that the teachers did not come to speak to their children, except only about their subject and not about strange political ideologies on top of that. Because why are we with things, the Marxist ideology is alien to the country. It is not an ideology that was formed, that was formed within the Chilean idiosyncrasy since this kingdom was formed, the kingdom of Chile, is it not? Since colonial times, where there is a whole following and a tradition.

This country was formed militarily. It was called the Captaincy General of Chile, and the one in charge of the Captaincy General was a military officer. So, we have carried on from the colonial era with that war-oriented perspective, and all the subsequent presidents after independence were military officers. They went through military schools and then dedicated themselves to politics once they retired, you know? So, we had a military tradition in the country. In essence, in addition to the military tradition, it was something that was in our DNA. It was a matter of respect for the military. And the next one, well, I continued living well. I had a job, I had my things, I had a clear picture, you know. The only downside was dealing with all these politicians, political matters that I might not have liked. The photo I brought is from a later moment, during elections held to choose the next president once Pinochet stepped down. Actually, I never felt afraid. No fear, not at all. I knew that the Marxists wouldn't seize power again. And I'm telling you now, we will never become like Venezuela. It stops there.