
Ibero-America

Venezuela poses real development strategy

by Gretchen Small

In the aftermath of the Malvinas war, profound changes in the inter-American system are now at the center of deliberations throughout the Western Hemisphere. Almost every government in the region has ordered a background review of where the inter-American system failed, what its goals should be, and the best means for reform. The multilateral and bilateral diplomacy to put together a unified agenda which the South American countries will present to the United States is extensive.

Haig's ignominious passage from the corridors of Washington merely meets the minimum requirement for discussions to resume between the United States and its southern neighbors after what was universally viewed as an American betrayal of its historic interests and its treaty obligations with Ibero-America when it decided to provide material and political support to Britain. It is just beginning to dawn on Washington, however, that statements of good will and perhaps a little money flowing here and there are not sufficient to restore good relations with South America. Fundamental policy changes are required.

Venezuela's Ambassador to the Organization of American States (OAS), Hilarion Cardozo, in a groundbreaking speech before that body on July 1, identified what is the central issue now on the agenda: the guarantee of sovereign economic development of every nation in the area, the issue which the United States must address. Cardozo outlined the role of international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund in imposing intolerable obstacles to economic development upon the majority of nations in the world, and warned that, as Alexander Haig himself wrote in his article on "NATO in the Decade of the 1980s", NATO "out of area" deployments are no defense of freedom, but the primary force today behind enforcement of the IMF's "conditionalities."

The set of proposals for economic self-defense outlined by Cardozo in his speech, excerpted below, pick up the recommendations of *EIR* founder Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., that Ibero-America establish a Common Market to coordinate regional development and force a rational reorganization of the foreign debts of the countries in the region. LaRouche circulated these proposals

at the end of May during a visit to Mexico City, and *EIR* Ibero-America Editor Dennis Small discussed them during his June visit to Argentina.

Cardozo proposed that the governments of the area decide upon four, five or six areas of major concern as issues to be negotiated jointly by the South American nations, not bilaterally. In the Ambassador's view, debts that block the rights of development would clearly be one of those areas.

As Cardozo has reiterated in a series of speeches in Washington in the past month, motion towards a unified Ibero-American bloc is not being carried out as an attack upon the United States, nor are most countries talking of splitting from the U.S.-dominated Organization of American States. Cardozo's suggestions for the establishment of some form of Ibero-American caucus within the OAS to develop a unified negotiating position within that organization seem to be the general point of agreement within the continent at this moment.

Cardozo delivered his speech at the inaugural session of his three-month term as presiding officer of the Permanent Council of the OAS, from which post, he made clear, he plans to lead the efforts to reconstruct the inter-American system. His speech is being circulated to member governments as a basic discussion document for those reforms, and the Ambassador himself urged the governments to study the proposals and prepare counter-proposals and back-up documents within the next two to three weeks, after which a meeting of foreign ministers or heads of state in Ibero-America may be convened.

A July 19 meeting of government representatives to SELA (the Latin American Economic System), an economic grouping of Ibero-American nations set up in 1975 to coordinate economic development planning in the area, could make an important contribution. SELA head Carlos Alzamora warned several weeks ago that Britain, the United States, and Europe are "playing with fire," if they continue to try to impose further austerity on developing nations "which owe them the astronomical sum of \$500 billion." A group of SELA's economists has prepared a policy document for the July 19 meeting which calls on the nations of the continent to "formulate and adopt a strategy to enable Latin America to defend its economic security and independence, thereby strengthening the potential for joint action and reciprocal support to deal with economic coercion by third countries."

Policy is being thrashed out on a more informal basis as well. Argentina has just sent a mission to Brazil, Venezuela and Mexico to coordinate strategy on the continuing state of war between Britain and Argentina, and Venezuelan government officials announced that President Herrera Campins will soon visit Argentina to meet personally with Argentine President Bignone.

Cardozo: 'We need unity against IMF'

Excerpts from a speech delivered by the Venezuelan Ambassador to the Organization of American States, Hilarion Cardozo, on July 1, upon assuming the presidency of the OAS Permanent Council:

We are prepared to unite all the forces of the West to defend liberty, we are prepared to unite all the forces of the West to defend the dignity of the human person, we are prepared to unite all the forces of the West to defend the basic principles of Christian civilization; but it disgusts us, and makes us indignant, to unite the forces of America to defend colonialism, oppression, or totalitarianism in any part of the world.

General Alexander Haig, in an article called "NATO in the decade of the 1980s" stated "... NATO is not just a military organization, but a political alliance. The current danger for economic security lies in the great dependence on energy from the volatile Persian Gulf zone. . ."

Doesn't this continent—whose countries today are asking for loans, not just for their development programs, but many of them also to pay foreign debt service—perhaps have to reflect on what the attitude of the European Community means, when it takes sanctions against a Latin American country [Argentina] in order to impose political decisions upon it? Will the sanctions applied in the case of the Malvinas be an isolated event, or will the decision of the European Community be a precedent which can be applied to other instances tomorrow?

If some country, declared in default, could not meet the requirement of its international commitments, would we once again return to witnessing the degrading spectacle of using gunboats to collect the debt? Will the force of cannon replace the force of sanctions, to stifle and destroy the possibility of development for the nations of the Third World? These are reflections our continent must make; because if the alliance of the North Atlantic is a military and political alliance, not only to defend itself from aggression, but one which, at any given moment, can unify itself to impose sanctions on any country which should rebel against its designs in political or economic areas, it becomes necessary for us to study what General Haig indicated for the Mideast, in its possible consequences for Latin America and the Third World, with special and urgent consideration to make the most viable political decisions. . . .

For this reason we must forge our own strategy, determine our own situation. . . . I am absolutely certain that the thinking of the other nations of the world regarding this continent would be different, if we were able to sit down at one table, all of us of the continent, and begin to say how much energy we have: this much. How much do we need: this much. Sell the surplus. How much do we have in grains: this much. How much do we consume: this much. Sell the surplus. The day that the nations of the world feel that we are capable of making our 30 weaknesses into one single unity of force and power, that day we will be able—as President [George] Washington said to his country—to make our neutrality respected and to be able to speak with our own voice on war and peace. . . .

In the economic sphere

We are dependent, and where this dependency most demeans us, and where it wounds us most, is in the economic sphere. There is no possibility of strengthening our democratic political systems, nor of strengthening our democratic social systems, nor of achieving autonomous and independent development, without a strong and powerful economy. His Holiness John Paul II has already said it: "What can be the liberty of nations whose existence, aspirations, and relations are conditioned by fear instead of mutual confidence, by oppression and the free search for the common good?"

Any effort to give Latin America a basis for development must be carried out in the context of strengthening each and every one of the economies of our countries. Because it is here that they tighten the noose when they want to hang us. It is here that our sovereignty comes under fire time after time. In every instance that the International Monetary Fund or any other international agency, obeying technical considerations, imposes measures on a government which eliminates social programs, it is introducing a choice between leaving the population without social attention, and possibly generating immense convulsions; or, on the other hand, breaking with the Fund and other agencies, and in consequence placing itself outside the system of cooperation and failing to receive credits and aid.

We always say, in a theoretical sense, that it falls to sovereign states to determine programs and their priorities. But how many states in our continent cannot do that, because in general they take their projects and ask for loans, they wear down the carpets of the international agencies asking for loans, and these agencies say to them: for this project, yes, for that one, no; for this I give something, for that, no. And at the end, what happens? The government cannot do what it wanted, but it has to launch those programs for which the

international agencies, controlled by the industrialized countries, have provided financing. Then come imposed conditions in the area of administration, and later the compulsory payment of debt.

Latin America and the Caribbean, or better, South America, must sit down to consider whether it is capable of generating, through the countries which have resources, some objective, real possibility of creating an autonomous capital market which is our own, to effectively develop it, and offer the small countries the possibility of not submitting to the domination of the agencies and countries which control the sources of financing; or will it continue as now, subjugated to models and the investment of industrialized countries which limit and distort their possibilities of development.

Obviously we need foreign capital, but we must demand a clear definition of international guidelines in terms of ethical and political conduct. Yes, we must give such capital security, and a fair return on investment. But we must eliminate its speculative character. I believe we have to confront this aspect immediately, just as we immediately must confront the problem of unity among ourselves.

My government believes that we can start to take the first steps. Which? Let us start by separating out from bilateral relations, four, five, six areas, and reserve them for multilateral treatment. Let us declare that in these areas Latin America will only negotiate multilaterally; possibly with its various voices, but with one single orientation, in search of the same goals, and guided by the continental interest. Thus we will begin to show some concrete unity.

I have heard U.S. pundits say that the Malvinas issue was not serious, that the current declarations are emotional questions, that they will pass quickly because economic exigencies will force Latin America to prostrate itself before the United States. I have rejected such assertions with indignation, as offensive and contrary to the dignity of our nations, and likewise I reject the assertion that Venezuela [in its defense of Argentina] is moved by its interest in its own border claim [on the Esequibo region of Guyana].

We have supported the Argentine Republic in its just claim, in the first place out of gratitude: because in 1902, when our coasts were threatened by European gunboats, our sister republic, despite its tradition of close links with England, found the force to oppose England and go with Venezuela in the reserves of its nationality. Thus the Drago Doctrine was established as a symbol of solidarity and dignity, enriching American international law. [It is] a debt which, in the passage of time, my country has wished to pay, and link with our unbreakable position of fighting without quarter against colonialism and oppression.

Indochina

Vietnam to withdraw Cambodian troops

by Daniel Sneider, Asia Editor

The three Indochinese states—Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos—concluded a foreign minister-level meeting in Ho Chi Minh City July 7 with the announcement that Vietnam will unilaterally withdraw some of the troops it has deployed in Cambodia since it intervened to overthrow the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime led by Pol Pot in January 1979. The partial withdrawal of Vietnamese troops is part of “an act of good will” aimed at overcoming the tensions in Southeast Asia created by China and its Khmer Rouge puppets—which it continues to deploy against Cambodian territory from camps on the border of Thailand and Cambodia.

The Indochinese states also proposed the establishment of a “safety zone” along the border patrolled solely by Cambodian and Thai troops. In response to the withdrawal of all Vietnamese troops from the Cambodian side of the “safety zone” the Pol Pot troops would have to be expelled from the Thai side. The Indochinese proposed “international supervision” of this zone.

The Indochinese states concluded their communiqué by affirming their proposal for an International Conference on Southeast Asia with the participation of the three Indochinese states, the five members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN—Thailand, Singapore, Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia), the United States; the Soviet Union, France, China, Great Britain, and India.

The new Khmer Rouge front

The proposals by the Indochinese states occurred two weeks after the formation of a “coalition government” of the three anti-Vietnamese Cambodian groups, ceremoniously announced immediately following a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN. The Malaysian Foreign Minister did the honors, introducing the leaders of the three groups—Khieu Samphan, representing the deposed Pol Pot regime which was responsible for murdering between two and three million Cambodians during its bloody four year reign of terror; Prince Sihanouk, who sat in Phnom Penh during all those years and has continued to play his role as a front