

EIR: What are, in your view, the most important developments at UNCTAD VII so far? What especially do you think about the speech of French President Mitterrand in which he talked about hosting a Paris conference on development, the stabilization of the monetary system, and the necessity to start infrastructure projects in the developing countries in the same way that France and Great Britain started to build the cross-Channel tunnel, or “Chunnel”?

Suazo: Of course, I appreciate his speech. But I also would like to say that it depends whether the speech was given by the *statesman* or the *politician*. If it was given by the *statesman*, then not only my country, the Dominican Republic, but I think the majority of the Latin American countries would be very happy to see these kinds of policies applied. Let me add, that such policies will be very much appreciated, not only if they come from France, but from any other industrialized nation.

EIR: Speaking about other industrialized countries, what is your comment on the fact, that the government of the United States has decided to downgrade its delegation to UNCTAD VII to the level of a “senior deputy assistant secretary” of the State Department?

Suazo: It is very sad to see such an attitude from the United States of America. There are even times when the seats reserved for the delegation of the United States are empty in the assembly while representatives of other nations are giving their speeches. That is not what we would wish to see from a country with such a history as the United States.

We would like to see, that this country returns to the moral standards it had long ago. The last time we saw the United States of America show a sincere intent to help developing countries in Latin America on a wide, large scale was during the presidency of John F. Kennedy, when he initiated his famous program, “Alliance for Progress.” With all its errors and misinterpretations, this was a good program to aid the development of Third World nations.

EIR: The only presidential candidate in the U.S. so far who has proposed to get out of the economic depression by giving new long-term, low-interest credits directed specifically to great projects in the developing sector, is Lyndon LaRouche. Is this the kind of program you are talking about?

Suazo: These policies, as I indicated in my speech, are certainly the kind of policies that we in the developing countries need in order to solve our financial crisis. Whoever adopts such policies, which are the ones that we want and need to see, is welcome.

The Baker Plan and Senator Bradley’s initiatives are also policies that we have hopes for. Unfortunately, we have seen they have not been fully developed.

EIR: Does that mean you support Lyndon LaRouche?

Suazo: I don’t know him enough to support his political

views, but certainly I would very much like to see these economic views gain more influence inside the United States.

Bernard Chidzero

‘There must be a reasonable limit’

Bernard Chidzero, the minister of finance, economic planning, and development of Zimbabwe, has been elected president of UNCTAD VII in Geneva. He was interviewed on July 16.

EIR: There is no doubt, that the problem of the foreign debt is one of the biggest obstacles for development. Does the fact that Peru has been elected as the spokesman of the entire developing sector at UNCTAD VII as far as the debt problem is concerned mean, that their “10% solution” will spread to other countries too and couldn’t the Peruvian principle be the common basis for an understanding between “North” and “South”?

Chidzero: Surely, that is what it means. The fact that Peru has been elected or appointed spokesman of the “Group of 77” on this issue, does not necessarily mean that there is unanimity or that there is a fixed position which is identical to that one which Peru has taken. There are different forms of the same principle applied by different countries: Peru has limited its debt service payment to 10% of its export earnings; recently Zambia has taken similar measures, they are going to pay about 5% of their export earnings; Brazil has postponed the payment of its interest; recently Ivory Coast has taken similar measures; Zaire has been doing it and some countries have just silently stopped paying.

What does this mean? Peru has recognized as Zambia, as Ivory Coast and even Brazil that they have an obligation to pay back, they do not repudiate the debt service as such. But they want to change the conditions. You cannot expect people to commit suicide in order to meet an obligation, as they say in Latin “Primo vivere, secundo philosophare,” first you must eat, before you philosophize.

It is absolutely essential that the debt service payments should not exhaust the financial resources of any country to the point that there is no money for education or health, let alone for investments in agriculture, mining, transportation, etc., which is the very basis to secure its future so they can

meet further obligations. In other words, what is driven home is that there must be a reasonable limit. How do we measure it? Whether it is a percentage of the GDP, of the export earnings, or of the total revenue coming from various sources, there always must be a *net* flowback into the economy, that is the gist of the argument.

Abdul Munim

Bangladesh needs infrastructure

Abdul Munim, Commerce Minister of Bangladesh, headed his country's delegation to UNCTAD VII, where EIR interviewed him in Geneva on July 15.

EIR: Mr. Minister, several speakers have not only stated the fact that UNCTAD is the only forum where the "North-South" dialogue still takes place, but have even said, that this seventh session may be the last chance to find solutions to the great problems the developing sector is facing. What does your country expect from this conference?

Munim: Well, I would not call it the last chance. Definitely UNCTAD VII offers a chance for dialogue and cooperation that can steer the world economy into the right direction. My government feels, and I think most of the developing countries feel, that it is in the interest of the world economy as a

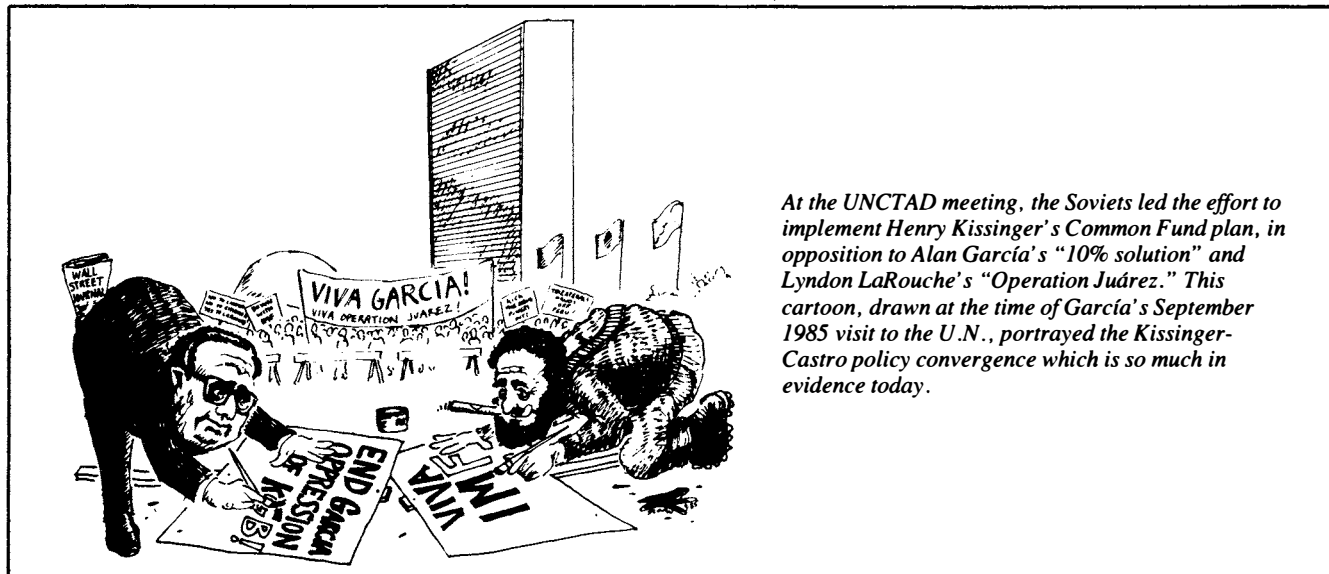
whole to correct certain things, imbalances for instance, without harming any of the long-term interests of the developed countries, because what we need is a broader cooperation, not unilateral declarations. We think that particularly Bangladesh has been helped by the Western world to a large extent. In fact, when our country gained independence, the Western world made a tremendous contribution and gave whole-hearted support. Of course, then we were in a very bad condition, as you know; Bangladesh is a country of 52,000 square miles, and with a population of 100 million people—85 million at that time—it has the highest population density in the world.

EIR: Can you tell us a bit more about this?

Munim: Ours are very peculiar circumstances, compared to other developing countries. My personal belief is that Bangladesh is a country with great potentialities. The problem is that for a long time we had considerable mismanagement of this potential; but the main problem was, that we never had been in control of our destiny.

But since we became independent in 1972, we are in control of our destiny. We would like to go forward, and I feel that we can and make a contribution to the world. But for that we need help, not charity. We are not beggars; if we take something, we will return it. Of course we cannot pay the interest rates in the commercial market and things like that, but although we have immense problems, we have been paying back the money we owe. We have not defaulted so far.

EIR: Undoubtedly the biggest issue which will be discussed during this conference is the debt issue. The proposal of the developing sector on the table of UNCTAD VII calls for debt relief, a new monetary system and a new, just world economic order. It seems that French President Mitterrand in his



At the UNCTAD meeting, the Soviets led the effort to implement Henry Kissinger's Common Fund plan, in opposition to Alan García's "10% solution" and Lyndon LaRouche's "Operation Juárez." This cartoon, drawn at the time of García's September 1985 visit to the U.N., portrayed the Kissinger-Castro policy convergence which is so much in evidence today.