

# Ibero-America in 1996: Now, everybody is a 'LaRouchista'

by Carlos Wesley

On Nov. 4, columnist José Neme Salum posed the following question in Mexico's daily *Excélsior*: "Why do all of them now want to be LaRouchistas?" Neme, the leading economic analyst of Mexico's premier newspaper, was referring to the fact that even people who stand on the opposite side of the divide from Lyndon LaRouche, ranging from policymakers in the City of London and Wall Street, to International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Michel Camdessus, are echoing the warnings of a worldwide financial collapse that LaRouche first issued in his 1994 "Ninth Forecast" (see *EIR*, June 24, 1994, "The Coming Disintegration of Financial Markets").

Indeed, over the course of 1996, LaRouche's policy proposals came under increasingly serious consideration by different forces on the continent. Lawmakers in Mexico and elsewhere have begun to consider the draft legislation for a bankruptcy reorganization of the economic and financial system, better known throughout Ibero-America as the "LaRouche Plan." The bill calls for declaring a moratorium on the foreign debt, imposing exchange controls, establishing a new international financial system to replace the IMF, and the elimination of autonomous central banks, to be replaced by national banks that would issue low-interest credit to build infrastructure and for the production of needed physical goods.

Although there is as yet no government ready to act on these measures, the proposals are available to be implemented at the moment the crisis erupts.

## Congressional hearings

On Dec. 4, Mexico's Congressional Committee on Population and Development held hearings in Mexicali, Baja California, at which a spokesman for the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement (MSIA), an organization of LaRouche co-thinkers, was invited to testify on the proposed legislation. The MSIA spokesman told the congressmen and others present, including Baja California state Gov. Héctor Terán, state legislators, and leaders of political parties, labor unions, and business organizations, that LaRouche has a track record that is unequalled in terms of accurate economic forecasts.

Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo is foolishly citing "macroeconomic indicators" to claim that there is an eco-

nomie recovery, when the truth is that the situation is getting worse. About 5% of Mexico's population is getting richer, while the other 95% is getting poorer. In mid-1996, *Forbes* magazine listed Mexico as the fifth-ranked country with the most *billionaires* in the world, with 15. At around the same time, the World Bank released a study showing that 85% of all Mexicans live below the poverty line, defined as having a daily income of \$5 or less.

In fact, the situation is worse, according to the Archdiocese of Mexico City, which found that 12 million households, that is, 60% of all households in the country, representing 57 million people, live on a daily income of \$2. This works out to about 44¢ per person per day, for food, clothing, lodging, and other necessities.

The MSIA spokesman reminded the lawmakers that the bill was first introduced to the Standing Committee of Mexico's Congress on Aug. 23, 1995, and was the subject of hearings in the Mexican Senate in May 1996. He read the proposed bill in its entirety to the assembly, and distributed copies of the same to everyone, including to Governor Terán, who had opened the meeting by stating that the Biblical injunction in *Genesis*, "be fruitful and multiply," is the basis of economic science—a formulation generally associated with LaRouche.

The same Congressional committee, as part of a "Consultation on Economic Development" that it is conducting throughout Mexico, held hearings on Dec. 11 in Guadalajara, Jalisco, at which the MSIA was also invited to testify, and earlier, on Oct. 30, in Celaya, Guanajuato. There, Arturo Hernández Fernández, president of the local chapter of the National Chamber of Commerce (Canaco), told the congressmen and the other assembled federal, state, and municipal officials, that the "LaRouche Plan" must be adopted.

Hernández also sent out letters to other state and local chapters of Mexico's Chamber of Commerce, calling on them to join in support of the "LaRouche Plan," which, he said, "is backed by several business, farm, civic, and debtor organizations in Mexico and Ibero-America," representing hundreds of thousands of people.

In Argentina, too, there was motion to rekindle the proposed bill, which was first introduced to the Argentine Congress in 1995 by Antonio Achem, Anibal O. Hardy, and Orlando Juan Gallo. During a tour of the country last fall, *EIR*

Ibero-American affairs editor Dennis Small spoke to some 200 students and faculty at La Matanza University, in Buenos Aires province. He also addressed a packed, \$100-per-person seminar on the subject, "There Is Life After the Death of the IMF," and gave a talk on the economic crisis and the "LaRouche Plan" in an auditorium of the National Congress of Argentina, in an event sponsored by a member of the Argentine House of Representatives.

These developments capped a year of intense activity, which also saw the publication of "The World Food Crisis: Famine as a Political Weapon," by the State Legislature of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. The 68-page "green book," prepared with the assistance of the MSIA in Brazil, is a compilation of articles taken from *EIR*, along with an introduction by the chairman of the agricultural committee, state legislator Giovanni Cherini.

Since it first appeared, to very favorable reviews, in June 1996, the book has gone through at least three printings, and it has circulated widely among government and other influential circles in Brazil and elsewhere. The Rio Grande do Sul representatives in Brazil's delegation to the recent UN Food and Agriculture Organization World Food Summit in Rome, reflected the widespread influence of the book when they attacked the "15 cartels that control the world's food supply," as reported by the Nov. 20 issue of the Pôrto Alegre daily *Correio do Povo*.

### **Continental mobilization**

Perhaps the highlights of the year were two forums held in Mexico in 1996, under the title "There Is Life After the Death of the IMF." The first took place March 8-9 in León, Guanajuato. There, the nearly 300 delegates in attendance heard Marivilia Carrasco, leader of the MSIA in Mexico, warn that unless the LaRouche Plan is adopted soon, millions of Mexicans will suffer the fate of the people of Somalia or Burundi, and Mexico will disintegrate under "narco-terrorist mercenaries, such as the Zapatista National Liberation Army, who are working for the British Crown to destroy the sovereign nation-state." Her remarks got extensive coverage in the media, as did all the forum's proceedings.

At the same meeting, the MSIA announced that it was launching a campaign to destroy the Mont Pelerin Society, the association of economists, politicians, and supposed theologians who unabashedly promote the extremist Satanic doctrines of Bernard de Mandeville, the pederast Jeremy Bentham, Ludwig von Mises, and Friedrich von Hayek that are behind the IMF's neo-liberal, i.e., free trade, economic prescriptions and the genocidal Gingrich-Gramm Conservative Revolution.

The second forum of 1996 took place on Columbus Day in Mexico City, and it capped a week-long mobilization that brought out scores of organizations, representing thousands of people—ranging from Colombian oil workers, to Argentine farm women, to Peruvian port workers, to Mexican farm-

ers, to Venezuelan labor unions. These and others held demonstrations against the IMF, from motorcades and tractorcades, to rallies and prayer services, throughout Ibero-America.

The mobilization was endorsed by, among others, Mexican Congressman Walter León Montoya and Argentine Congressman Alfredo Allende, as well as by Venezuelan intellectual Juan Lizcano, who is one of the founders of the Venezuelan nationalist movement Fundapatría, Panama's Gen. Manuel Noriega, and Domingo F. Maza Zavala, a director of Venezuela's Central Bank. The Movement for National Identity and Ibero-American Integration (Mineii), founded by Col. Mohamed Alí Seineldín, the jailed Argentine nationalist leader, joined as a co-convenor and sent a representative to the Mexico City forum, which was also attended by delegates from El Salvador, the United States, and elsewhere.

LaRouche videotaped a message for the mobilization, which is still shaking up the continent: Not only was it shown at conferences held from one end of the continent to the other last October, but it has been repeatedly shown across Ibero-America since then. After reviewing the miserable condition in which the nations of the continent now find themselves, LaRouche asks:

"So, what do you say to somebody who is a patriot of Mexico or Argentina? That there is hope, because the economic power, the authority of the institutions which have imposed these policies over the past 30 years, is crashing. This is the time you can intervene, because those in power are at their moment of greatest relative weakness. And, that's our opportunity."

### **British-instigated countergangs**

Typically, the British are seeking to take control of the resistance. At the beginning of December, Juan José Quirinos, national leader of El Barzón, the countergang established to disrupt the efforts of LaRouche's allies in Mexico to organize the farm and debtors movement, deployed to Argentina and Brazil, supposedly to organize a "continental debtors' movement." One of his first stops was in Pôrto Alegre, where LaRouche's friends in the MSIA have been working closely with the farm movement and the state legislature.

Since its inception, Quirinos's El Barzón has been promoted by the newspapers of the British Hollinger Corporation, particularly by *Sunday Telegraph* Washington correspondent Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, and by the *Wall Street Journal* and the London *Financial Times*, as the "real" rebellion in Mexico. El Barzón is openly integrated into the Zapatista machine, and promotes a plan to securitize debt arrears, which it had drafted by a Wall Street securities firm.

Despite British efforts to puff Quirinos up as the champion of the poor, downtrodden debtors, there is no erasing the fact that, at heart, Quirinos is a money changer, whose real business is in running the chain of exchange houses of which he is the proprietor.