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## In Memoriam

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# Jorge Carrillo, the Worker-Minister Who Played the ‘LaRouche Card’

by Maximiliano Londoño Penilla

On March 20, the well-known Colombian trade union leader and former Labor Minister, Jorge Carrillo Rojas, died at the age of 69, while serving as director of the Peasant Family Compensation Fund, Comcaja, to which position he was named by President Alvaro Uribe. In all the various positions Carrillo held, from factory worker to Labor Minister to Ambassador to Guatemala, Carrillo was always the simple man we all knew, but deeply passionate and vigorous in defense of the legitimate interests of human beings everywhere: their inalienable right to dignified, stable, and well-paid employment. Carrillo responded quickly and effectively to the challenges of his time, embracing the banner of social justice of the Catholic Church, as expressed in particular in the teachings and works of Popes Leon XIII, John XXIII, Paul VI, and John Paul II. Carrillo’s commitment to this view of social change and progress for the people was made stronger, through the close friendship and collaboration he sustained during the past nearly 30 years with U.S. statesman Lyndon H. LaRouche, and with his wife, the German political leader Helga Zepp-LaRouche.

This author, in the privileged double role of being both a personal friend and collaborator of Carrillo’s, on the one hand, and LaRouche’s political representative in Colombia, on the other, for the past three decades, can affirm with cause that Carrillo played the “LaRouche card” to its ultimate consequences, despite the pressures and threats to which he was subjected on the part of various spokesmen for the current international financial cartel, which rules the world from Wall Street and the City of London.

In the book *Theses of a Worker-Minister on the Problem of Unemployment. Memoir 1985-1986*, published in April 1986 by the Colombian Labor Ministry, various of the most relevant speeches and documents of Carrillo’s term in office as Minister of Labor and Social Security are collected. Let’s look at these from the standpoint of universal history. How did Jorge Carrillo manage to become Labor Minister in the Belisario Betancur government, when that administration’s Finance Minister, Roberto Junguito, had spent the previous

three years executing the most orthodox and savage of the International Monetary Fund’s prescriptions? More to the point, how was it possible for Carrillo, who as labor leader with the Union of Colombian Workers (UTC) had been the loudest opponent of the IMF policy implemented by Junguito, to end up as part of the same Cabinet in which existed two totally antagonistic economic agendas? And finally, how is that Carrillo named Maximiliano Londoño Penilla, the public spokesman of LaRouche’s policies in Colombia, as his economic advisor at the ministry?

### Conflict With López Michelsen and The Drug Lords

In two of his books, former Colombian President and messenger of the drug cartels Alfonso López Michelsen referred with surprise to the appointment of Londoño to the ministerial advisory post, and indicated that he raised the issue with then President Belisario Betancur. In the book, *Parable of the Return*, in the context of trying to justify why he had met with the heads of the drug cartels in Panama scarcely one week after they had assassinated Colombian Justice Minister Rodrigo Lara Bonilla, López writes: “A few months later, one Maximiliano Londoño, whom I had never met before in my life, began to accuse me of drug trafficking, of having kidnapped his wife, and of having been an accomplice in the episodes related to the Banco de Colombia and the Grancolombiano Group. . . . It is the known tactic of U.S. politician LaRouche, who provides funds to the so-called ‘Andean Movement of the Antidrug Coalition’ . . . .”

López was referring to the kidnapping of my wife, Patricia [who was later freed—ed.], just two months after the active and courageous Justice Minister Lara Bonilla was murdered by the drug lords, the same ones with whom López had met with in Panama, supposedly to transmit their proposal that they were ready to sign an “honorable peace,” and even pay off Colombia’s foreign debt in exchange for not being extradited to the United States. With the assassination of Lara, the drug traffickers hoped to force the Betancur government to



*Jorge Carrillo and his friend and collaborator Pedro Rubio (center, with Carrillo on the right), at the third international conference of the Schiller Institute, Nov. 24, 1984. Standing to greet them is Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the institute's founder, and the wife of Lyndon LaRouche.*

its knees; but this backfired, because instead of weakening, the government's anti-drug policy became still tougher.

And again, in his book *Pending Words. Conversations with Enrique Santos Calderón*, published in April 2001, López insists on asking why Betancur permitted the naming of Londoño to the Labor Ministry. The fundamental issue is that, despite the kidnapping of my wife, with the intent of destroying LaRouche organizing activities in Colombia, activities which among others had contributed to the fact that López was thwarted in his efforts to regain the Presidency, since the LaRouche-associated Andean Labor Party had denounced López as "the chicken with eggs of coca," I repeat that the kidnapping of my wife received a response on the part of LaRouche, which López and the narcos never expected. LaRouche headed up an international campaign, in all the major capitals of the world, in which he denounced López's role in promoting a "peace process" with the Cali and Medellín drug cartels. LaRouche gave instructions that the very interview that López had given to the newspaper *El Tiempo*, after having met with the drug lords, would be publicized worldwide. In that interview, López declared himself the mafia's messenger, and demanded that the Colombian government submit to the interests of the drug traffickers.

Of course, imagine López's surprise when, just a few months after the mafia assassination of Lara Bonilla and the kidnapping of my wife, LaRouche's friend Jorge Carrillo, now Betancur's Labor Minister, named me as his economic advisor. In sum, in his defense of Colombia, LaRouche had achieved the following: 1) contributed decisively to prevent-

ing López Michelsen from returning to the Colombian Presidency; 2) destroyed the operation of López and the drug cartels, according to which the Colombian state would have to submit to the conditions dictated by force by the narcos; and 3) that his spokesman in Colombia was named economic advisor to Labor Minister Carrillo, who at the time was also the friend and collaborator of LaRouche.

### **Ibero-American Integration**

In 1982, LaRouche had published his strategic memorandum *Operation Juárez*, in which he detailed an alternative policy to the demented fiscal austerity policies of the IMF. LaRouche had met in May 1982 with then Mexican President José López Portillo, and the book *Operation Juárez* had come out of those discussions. In August 1982, President López Portillo, in defense of the legitimate and sovereign interest of his nation, had declared a moratorium on the foreign debt of Mexico, an action which was not at the time backed by Brazil and Argentina, but which caused widespread panic within the creditors' cartel, the would-be gods of Olympus who dominate the world. By September 1982, López Portillo had imposed exchange controls and nationalized the Mexican banking system, as well. López Portillo thus detonated the "debt bomb," and as a sequel to this process, LaRouche commissioned the preparation and publication of the book *Ibero-American Integration: One Hundred Million New Jobs by the Year 2000*. LaRouche wrote the prologue to this book in April 1986, in which he detailed the great infrastructure projects that needed to be undertaken in the region, if poverty and

unemployment were to be definitively eradicated. The book was published in both English and Spanish.

At the current time, the essence of that book's proposals continues to be the real agenda for the survival of the nations of Central and South America. The book details the railway corridors that should join together the continent; the great hydraulic projects to connect the Orinoco, Amazonas, and Paraná basins of South America; the hydraulic Plan of the Northeast, and the Hydraulic Plan of the Northwest Gulf, to bring water from the rivers of southern Mexico to the dry northern regions; the interoceanic canals to join the Pacific and the Atlantic; the great agricultural, mineral, and industrial projects for the region; the industrial use of nuclear energy, lasers, and high-intensity beam weapons; and the foundations to establish an Ibero-American Common Market—all projects that needed to be undertaken immediately to put an end to the bleeding of our nations through the growing and usurious servicing of the foreign debt.

The recent call for Ibero-American integration on the part of Presidents Luis Inácio Lula Da Silva of Brazil, Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, Alvaro Uribe of Colombia, and José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero of Spain (see article in *Economics*), can only be understood in its true dimensions if one understands the profound impact on the region and on the world by—as López Portillo stated—the “wise words of Lyndon H. LaRouche.”

In November 1984, during the third international conference of the Schiller Institute, held in Washington, D.C., the Trade Union Commission of the Schiller Institute was created, of which Jorge Carrillo was a founding member. In July 1985, in Mexico City, the First Continental Trade Union Conference, in which the Ibero-American Trade Union Commission was established, was held. Among the coordinators of this body was Pedro Rubio, friend and representative of Carrillo. On Sept. 2, 1985, Carrillo was sworn in as Colombia's Labor Minister. In August 1986, the book *Ibero-American Integration* was published, of which more than 50,000 copies circulated in just its first edition. In October 1987, the Wall Street crash that LaRouche had forecast, occurred on schedule. From that point onward, the density of banking, commercial, and industrial bankruptcies, and the bursting of numerous financial bubbles, has worsened.

Jorge Carrillo was a pioneer in this battle for the physical integration of our nations. His legacy is more in effect than ever; we shall miss him, but the guiding light of his courage and of his teachings will continue to light our way.

—Bogota, April 4, 2005

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## Jorge Carrillo: Leader For Social Justice

by Javier Almario

Social and economic justice, the general welfare, real economic progress, improvement in the living standards of the workers, the dignity of labor, and in general, the social doctrine of the Catholic Church and the harmony of interests between workers and businessmen, were constant themes in all of Jorge Carrillo Rojas's thoughts and actions, whether as a polemical trade union leader, as Labor Minister, as political activist, analyst, ambassador, or as administrative director of the Peasant Family Compensation Fund, the position he assumed in 2003, and which he held until his death on March 20, 2005.

Jorge Carrillo was going to be 70 years old on April 9, 2005. He was born in Bogota on April 9, 1935, although his family is from Boyaca, and he lived most of his childhood and youth in that province. When he was a boy, a friend of his father took him every Friday to hear the Colombian nationalist leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitan, who paradoxically died on one of his birthdays.

Because his school performance wasn't the best, his father decided that “this boy won't be a doctor, so he will have to learn a trade,” and he was sent to the School of Arts and Trades in Chiquinquirá. When Carrillo was 14 years old, his father died, which, as he told it, “forced me to crack the books.” He graduated as a mechanic and got a job as a lathe operator, third class, in the Paz del Río steel plant.

Later, he went to Bogota and worked in machine shops, holding various jobs until being employed by Cauchosol, which no longer exists. There, in 1955, he entered the union, and as a member of the union, he organized a series of sports competitions in which primarily the youth participated. There he met his wife-to-be, Maria Ramirez. Those same youth voted for him to become a member of the union's steering committee, as secretary general of the union. This union was affiliated to UTRACUN (the Workers Union of Cundinamarca) and the national UTC (Union of Colombian Workers).

Carrillo took various union courses given by the Jesuits at the Javeriana University, where they taught accounting, administration, leadership, economic solidarity, and the social doctrine of the Church. From very early on, he understood that although it was necessary to fight for the workers, the goal of trade unionism was not class warfare, but that there had to be a “harmony of interests” between workers and businessmen.