
International Intelligence

Colombian LYM Rejects Conflict With Ecuador

The Colombian LaRouche Youth Movement (LYM) hit the streets Jan. 2 with a press release posing the question to the population: "Colombia and Ecuador: Conflict or Integration?" The statement was spurred by the border dispute which erupted when Colombian crop eradication aimed at coca plants allegedly damaged legitimate Ecuadorian crops.

The LYM statement explains that it is the international financial oligarchy behind the Cheney-Bush Administration that is provoking wars and conflicts throughout the world. That oligarchy is terrified by the Democratic victory in the Nov. 7 elections, and the role played by Lyndon LaRouche and the LYM. The statement lambasts the genocidal policy of globalization which has forced Colombian farmers to produce narcotics instead of food.

The new political geometry throughout the Hemisphere has ushered in a President-elect of Ecuador, Rafael Correa, whose debt-restructuring proposals have induced extreme anxiety among the financial vultures.

This election has expanded the potential of collaboration with Colombia's neighbor, and the LYM is now opening up organizing avenues in Ecuador. The true alternative to these disastrous Wall-Street practices consists in converting the border between Ecuador and Colombia into a zone of agroindustrial development.

The statement concludes with an invitation to LaRouche's Jan. 11 webcast.

Lavrov Campaigns for Concert of Nations

In two year-end statements, a press conference and his traditional year-end interview in *Izvestia*, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov called for a "concert of leading nations" to address the world's gravest problems, including the need to overcome the premises of the Cold War.

In response to a question, Lavrov dis-

cussed the "Russia-U.S.A.-EU triangle," which he defined as being on a Eurasian scale, saying, "For us, it is of fundamental importance to establish practical cooperation in the area from Vancouver to Vladivostok [mapping it west to east, that is—ed.], the development of constructive, open and forward-looking relations in this region on the basis of a mutual understanding of the interests and principles of indivisibility of security and prosperity, which already have nothing in common with the former ideological schism of Europe and the whole world. Such cooperation would also provide a material guarantee for those who fear that Russia may want to 'drive a wedge' into relations between the U.S.A. and Western Europe. As for Russia, for us this would ensure a new reading of trans-Atlantic relations—as not excluding Russia and not being built at its expense.

"We believe that, in the future, the geopolitical 'triangle,' whose corners are Russia, the European Union, and the U.S.A., may become one of the mainstays in the collective leadership of leading world countries that is being formed, and make a great contribution to restoring manageability to world development in accord with other centers of power."

Lavrov went on to discuss the importance Russia gives to working in various configurations, including its strategic partnership with China, activity in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and various regional forums, as well as the United Nations.

Former Israeli Ambassador Wants Dialogue With Syria

Itamar Rabinovich, the former Israeli Ambassador to the United States and the current President of Tel Aviv University, penned an analysis in the daily *Ha'aretz* on Dec. 29, reviewing the prospects of Israeli peace with Syria. While taking note that the Bush Administration appears adamantly opposed to any peace agreement between Israel and Syria, Rabinovich argued that there is good reason to suspect that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is serious about striking a

deal with Israel, and such a deal would be good for Israel as well.

In light of the complexities of the current situation, Rabinovich proposed three policy guidelines. First, Israel should issue a "qualified yes" to Assad's offer to talk. He cautioned against putting any preconditions on the table. Second, he said Israel must tell the Bush Administration to accept bilateral talks. What could soften Washington's position, he said, is the prospect of "distancing Damascus from Tehran." Third, Rabinovich proposed a "discreet inquiry," like those which preceded Israel's agreements with Egypt, Jordan, and the Palestinians. "It would be pointless to embark on full, open negotiations with Syria before a discreet inquiry has been made," he stated.

Noting that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is torn between proceeding again with talks with the Palestinians or taking up the Syria track, and that, as the result, there is confusion and chaos in Israeli policy circles, Rabinovich argued that discreet inquiries with Syria would enable Olmert to quickly decide on whether the Syria track is viable.

Italy Calls for Worldwide Ban on Death Penalty

Italy hopes to rally the 85 member-nations of the UN, which signed a declaration in December against the death penalty, to push for a total worldwide ban on executions. The proposal, announced by Prime Minister Romano Prodi, follows protests and outrage expressed by all of Italy's political parties, at the way in which former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein was executed.

Prodi said he would push the UN for a "universal moratorium" on capital punishment. Italy has just taken up a temporary UN Security Council seat.

Former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi called Saddam's brutal execution, in which those present mocked and jeered at the former dictator, as the noose was placed around his neck, a "political and historic error." Videos of the hanging have been posted all over the Internet.