
Interview: Ecuadoran Vice-President León Roldos

'There is no greater problem than the population not existing at all'

The following are excerpts from an interview conducted with Ecuadoran Vice-President León Roldos by EIR President Fernando Quijano, August 31, 1983.

Quijano: Mr. Vice-President, what is your industrialization plan for your country?

Roldos: I believe that Ecuador has the agricultural wealth fundamental for its development, both in terms of internal consumption, food for Ecuadorans, as well as for exportation.

Further, Ecuador has been, since before it exported oil, a country whose foreign exchange was generated primarily by agricultural exports; we're speaking of 95-96 percent. With petroleum the figures vary significantly, given that petroleum has become our leading export product more or less since the 1970s. . . . Ecuador is an agricultural country with a very badly managed agriculture. There has not been adequate infrastructure for agricultural production. . . .

This means that Ecuador remained at a very low level of productivity because there was not adequate infrastructural work done on the croplands to raise yields. . . . Why do I answer your question on industry that way? Because I believe that it is in the agricultural sector that the source of industrial development can be found.

We also believe that Ecuador's oil and mining hold great promise. . . . We believe that in the 1980s we will be able to advance in mining. If Ecuador has the same Andean [geological] formation as Colombia, Peru, and Chile, then it would not be logical for those countries to have great mineral wealth and Ecuador not to. . . .

Thus I think that Ecuador should develop its industry based on agriculture, oil, mining, gas, and fishing. Industry is clearly the stage which allows better social and economic organization of societies. In other words, we do not believe that our country should continue to be an exporter of primary products.

Quijano: Would you say that the future development of Ecuador and of the Ibero-american countries lies in integration which has not been seen until now? And that this would also be the future of the industrial development of Ibero-America?

Roldos: I believe that without taking the pressure off the

developed countries, the developing sector countries—and especially Latin America—must improve their integration and not fall into the errors they have made in the past of wanting to turn integration into some sort of super-legislation for the developing nations.

There are problems unique to each country, because there are situations internal to each country that cannot fall under one legislation or common norms of the region. Integration has to rest upon specific, concrete points—take the case of food (I think that there are international norms for trade, for interchange, for payment of imports and exports carried out by our countries). I believe that integration must be based upon very specific issues. To the extent that integration becomes a generalization of the policies of our countries into mere paper agreements, what we are doing is wasting integration. What we are doing is preventing integration, because we are not even carrying out the most essential points.

Quijano: Mr. Vice-President, there has been much talk of a debtors' club. Would you see this integration as part of the formation of a debtors' club?

Roldos: I do not believe in a debtors' club, because I believe that there are problems unique to our countries which cannot possibly be acted upon jointly in negotiations of this sort. On the debt, I think there should be an overall reference framework so that all renegotiations and all credit policy are decided from the perspective of development rather than in terms of trying to pay previous debts.

Quijano: There have been many proposals in the advanced sector, especially that of the Club of Rome and various other neo-Malthusian groups, that there are limits to growth and that there should be no growth in the underdeveloped sector, in this case Ibero-America. What would you say about these proposals?

Roldos: I believe that Malthusianism and related doctrines clearly hope to prevent the growth of social problems and to limit society. This is wrong. What is important is to find solutions of economic and social development. To the extent that actions and policies are oriented in this way, the result will be a rationalization of the population growth of our countries. But there can be no greater problem than the pop-

ulation not existing at all. And here is the error of their proposal.

Now the problem has gone beyond the social and become political. I believe that Central America, for example, has right now gone way beyond the political. The problem of Central America is neither the guerrilla, nor who is financing him. The problem is the tremendous social and economic injustice that causes violence. To the extent that we want to end the violence only by political means or worse, by military means, then we will be providing no solution to the problem.

Central America and the Caribbean are terribly economically depressed sectors. . . . Therefore it is essential for those, like ourselves, who want to see some prospect of solutions in Central America, to understand that any political solution—which there clearly must be—must carry with it policies of action in the social and economic arena. If these are not forthcoming, the political solution will not last and violence will arise once again. This is fundamental; we don't believe in an armed solution. Armed solutions could have very serious repercussions for all of Latin America and for humanity.

Quijano: In few words, then, Ecuador supports Contadora?

Roldos: We support Contadora, but we feel that it must go much further.

Foreign Minister Luis Valencia

'Integration to end vulnerability'

The following are excerpts of an interview conducted with Ecuadoran Foreign Minister Luis Valencia Rodríguez on Sept. 1, 1983 by EIR President Fernando Quijano.

Quijano: Mr. Foreign Minister, President Hurtado will be visiting the United Nations around September 29. Can you tell us what Ecuador's policy will be before the United Nations?

Valencia: President Hurtado has received an invitation from the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Gandhi, in fulfillment of a recommendation adopted during the Seventh Summit Meeting of Chiefs of States and Governments [of the Non-Aligned Movement] . . . which proposed that various leaders of the Third World be invited to meet in New York for the next General Assembly of the United Nations to discuss the general problems of the world and not only the problems of the

United Nations but principally those aspects which most concern the developing nations. . . . What will be most interesting will be the contact made among the chiefs of state that will be present for the General Assembly to discuss the most difficult problems facing the Third World, such as the serious international economic crisis, the implications of that crisis for the less developed countries, the possibility of South-South cooperation to prevent these consequences, the urgent necessity to establish a better North-South dialogue toward establishing a New International Economic Order, to avoid—or at least to lessen—world tensions which are those which most worry the developing countries.

Quijano: Recently it has been said in the United States by the Council of the Americas and also by economist Alan Greenspan, that the Third World resources should be turned into equity property of creditors as a means of solving the current crisis. What answer would the Group of Santo Domingo have to this type of proposal?

Valencia: In Santo Domingo we studied a document prepared by the SELA-ECLA [Latin American Economic System/U.N. Commission on Latin America] in response to President Hurtado's call for establishing solid initiatives or proposals to overcome the economic crisis in Latin America. Among the more fundamental aspects of those proposals is the need to end Latin America's vulnerability in the economic arena. At the same time, it also determined that encouraging integration and cooperation was a categorical imperative. If cooperation and integration could be developed in the future, I believe that this would be the most effective answer that Latin America could give. One cannot return to old, historically outmoded schemes, but [must employ] effective cooperation among the nations of the world, and principally among those nations whose economies are complementary, so that the hopes of the Third World for a New International Economic Order can be fulfilled. Without this genuine and effective cooperation, every program will fail. I do not believe that this is the historic moment to return to schemes or situations that have already been superseded.

Quijano: The Minister of Foreign Relations of El Salvador was here recently. We would like to know Ecuador's position on the Central American conflict and the Contadora group, and what other efforts could be taken by the Contadora group or by your country to resolve that conflict?

Valencia: . . . Ecuador has declared its position: that the Central American problem is fundamentally a response to the great socio-economic inequalities among the countries of the region. Therefore, if one seeks a permanent solution to that crisis, it is necessary to confront these problems of socio-economic inequality. On the other hand, the basic principle of inter-American coexistence—that is, mutual respect among states, non-intervention, peaceful solutions to controversies, non-use of force in international relations and the principal