

EIR Operation Juárez

Building new cities, new urban services

Part 21

Ibero-American integration

Infrastructure is not an industry that produces wealth directly, but it "produces" something more important: productivity. To become an economic superpower, Ibero-America will need 200,000 kilometers of new railroads, as well as ports, canals, hydraulic projects, nuclear energy, and a second inter-oceanic canal.

This installment concludes Chapter 6 of our exclusive English-language serialization of the Schiller Institute's book, *Ibero-American Integration: 100 Million New Jobs by the Year 2000!* The book was published last September in Spanish. It was prepared by an international team of experts elaborating Lyndon LaRouche's proposal to free the continent of economic dependency and spark a worldwide economic recovery, "Operation Juárez."

Numbering of the figures, tables, and maps follows that of the book.



Urban infrastructure

The construction and provision of services to cities is properly viewed as a component of overall infrastructure investments. Its relation to the core production process is analogous to transportation, hydraulic, and energy investments. These raise the general productivity of the overall economic process. Urban infrastructure raises the productivity of labor and of the general population. Good urban *housing*, for example, allows school-age children to have, optimally, their own room in which to study, or, at least, to live in a house or apartment large enough that they can escape the distraction of the rest of the household, and in that way improve their educational performance. It also permits the introduction of the labor-saving appliances and devices that permit a major portion of the female population to enter the productive workforce. Modern urban *transportation* reduces time lost traveling to and from work and other activities. And urban *electrification, sewerage, potable water supply, and medical services* are all essential to maintaining a healthy, productive workforce.

Perhaps the most dramatic problem facing Ibero-America in this regard today is the vast increase in urban populations living in sprawling ghettos and shantytowns where the quality of housing is atrocious. Official figures may indicate that there has been a very significant increase in the percent of urban dwellers who now have some form of potable water supply (see **Table 6-12**), but it must be emphasized that even when there is some form of indoor running water, it is often a thin trickle, or lacks hot water, and hence requires substantial further development before it could be called adequate for normal household use.



A Mexican family without running water in their house, is forced to do the laundry outdoors.

NSIFP/Carlos de Hoyos

The situation with respect to sewerage is worse, creating a very real public health hazard. Brazil is in particularly bad shape, but no country claims more than two-thirds coverage of its urban populations. As for electricity use, the figures indicate that most urban populations are served, with the exception of Peru, since it has been an area of substantial improvement over the last decade (Table 6-12).

Behind the official figures, as is well known, lies a much uglier truth. Every country has seen its major cities swell uncontrollably over the past 15 years with impoverished immigrants from the rural areas, and it is no secret that urban infrastructure has not kept up with the needs of this population. Rio's *favelas*, Caracas's *ranchos*, Lima's *pueblos jóvenes* are all testimony to this fact.

The situation regarding adequate water supply is particularly grave. Table 6-13 shows the death rate of infants from enteritis, a water-borne disease, which is very high. In most countries, water-borne diseases are the major killers of children under 4 years of age, and also one of the major killers of people of all ages.

The need for urban infrastructure to solve these crises will grow particularly rapidly over the next 30 years. Ibero-America's total population will almost double by 2015, rising to 786 million from about 400 million in 1985, but the percentage of the total population living in urban centers will rise simultaneously, from 69% today to 80% in 2015 (see Figure 6-6). The number of urban dwellers will therefore grow from 276 to 629 million in this period, a 125% increase, which is to say 353 million new urban dwellers must be given decent new housing, electricity, water, sewerage, and other services.

Solving the problem of urban infrastructure has two aspects: the provision of adequate services to existing cities; and the building of entirely new cities, both in presently underpopulated areas, and near existing overcrowded cities to siphon off the existing population.

This second aspect merits special attention, as the cost of trying to "catch up" by providing water, sewerage, electricity, decent streets, and transportation to already-existing anarchic urban sprawl, much less the cost of tearing down the existing substandard housing and rebuilding it, if calculated for the totality of the urban areas that require it, is unmanageable. Much better to simply build entirely new cities, from the ground up.

These projects should begin two stories *underground*. There, a honeycombed base is built to allow for subways, utilities, sewerage, and other purposes. On top of this, residential, commercial, and industrial zones are laid out and built, linked by modern mass transit, dramatically reducing the need for personal cars. Proper planning of parks, nurseries, schools, museums, libraries, and cultural centers ensures a healthful and beautiful environment for social activities. All of this would be designed in modular form, to allow for needed expansion. The general design would locate such cities adjacent to large industrial parks energized, when possible, by nuclear power—nuplexes.

Where to build such cities? A large number of new cities will be called for by the opening up of the interior of Ibero-America by the railroads, waterways, and roads, especially at transport junctions (where only small towns, or nothing, now exist), and at major mining, energy, or agricultural centers. New ports are also primary target zones.

TABLE 6-12
Urban infrastructure in Ibero-America 1980

	Urban population (% of total)	% of urban population		
		With potable water	With sewerage	With electricity
Argentina	83	65	36	90*
Brazil	73	80	31	89
Colombia	75	78	61	96
Chile	83	92	68	93
Mexico	69	66	68	75*
Peru	67	68	58	39*
Venezuela	85	84	65	83*
Ibero-America 1980	69	75	46	78*
Ibero-America 1970	60	56	36	30*

* Percentage of total population
Sources: IDB, ECLA.

TABLE 6-13

Deaths from gastroenteritis and other diarrheic illnesses in Ibero-America

Country	Less than 1 year		From 1 to 4 years	
	Deaths per 100,000 live births	% of total deaths	Deaths per 100,000 inhabitants	% of total deaths
Argentina (1978)	394	9.7	20	9.0
Colombia (1977)	881	22.3	99	22.0
Chile (1979)	275	7.5	11	8.7
Guatemala (1978)	1,345	18.6	409	31.2
Mexico (1976)	1,370	24.0	119	24.5
Paraguay (1978)	2,433	26.6	199	40.1
Peru (1978)	1,028	20.4	134	26.0
Venezuela (1978)	570	16.8	37	15.0

Source: ECLA.

Second, new cities must be constructed in the general vicinity of the existing overcrowded and misbuilt cities. Since the major portion of the new industry will still be concentrated in the existing area of densest population for some time to come, the ideal policy, when land availability makes it feasible, is to locate most of the new industry in industrial nuplex parks away from the existing cities, but adjacent to new city-sites, such that the proximity of industrial employment, and the prospect of decent housing, will be the magnets to draw people out of substandard regions of the old cities. This will also allow for the eventual rebuilding, from the ground up, of large portions of existing cities.

Map 6-8 shows several exemplary city-sites that are not now major urban centers but that are expected to become key agro-industrial and transportation hubs in the future. All of the cities marked have access to water transport, and most will also be connected by railroad and roadways to other cities.

It is poetic justice that a number of the new cities will be established in zones now under the virtual control of the drug mafia. This is the case with Manaus in Brazil, Iquitos in Peru, and Santa Cruz in Bolivia.

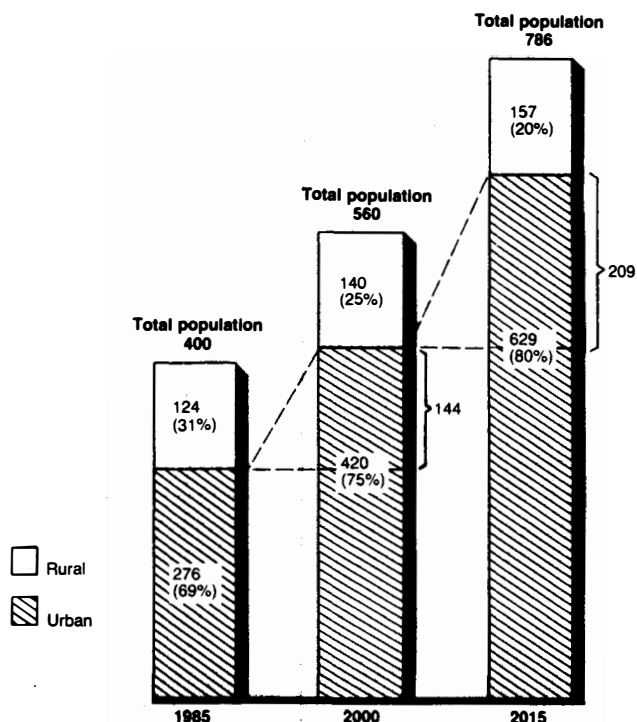
It is impossible to estimate costs for the required urban construction at this time. The closest one can come is to apply known costs for certain types of housing, and use that as a very rough approximation of the limits of probable cost. At the present time, for an average of decently constructed dwellings, including a mix of single-family homes and multiple-apartment units, somewhere between \$5,000 and \$10,000 per person housed would define the probable range of construction costs. This would place the total cost at between \$1.75 trillion and \$3.5 trillion, which is consistent with the total 30-year investment requirements and availabil-

ity of funds outlined in Chapter 5 [installments 12-15 of this series].

FIGURE 6-6

Projection of urban and rural population in Ibero-America 1985-2015

(millions and percentage of total)



MAP 6-8

New large cities in Ibero-America

