
Interview: Alejandro Peña Esclusa



'We have achieved a political miracle in Venezuela'

Alejandro Peña Esclusa, general secretary and presidential candidate of the Venezuelan Labor Party (PLV) in the Dec. 4 election, was interviewed by telephone by EIR's Lucía Méndez and Carlos Méndez on Nov. 16.

EIR: We've seen that the Venezuelan press, in particular in the provinces, has been playing up a debate between yourself and Congressman Walter Márquez as front-page news. What's it all about?

Peña: I denounced Walter Márquez, who is bishop of the Gnostic Universal Christian Church, because he attacked the Venezuelan military and because he is protecting the Colombian narco-terrorists who cross the border to kidnap Venezuelan cattlemen. Our armed forces are deployed on the border precisely to fight the guerrillas and drug traffickers.

At the end of October, the Venezuelan security forces killed 16 persons in a clash near El Amparo on the Colombian border. According to investigations, some of the dead men were members of or closely tied to the Colombian FARC guerrilla umbrella organization, the Patriotic Union which is the political arm of the FARC, or the M-19 terrorist gang. Even though the official inquiry was not finished, Walter Márquez leaped to the conclusion that the victims were innocent fishermen who had nothing to do with subversion, and that it was just murder committed by the Venezuelan security forces. Márquez's statements came at the same time as those of social democratic presidential candidate Carlos Andrés Pérez, who repeated that the victims were Venezuelan fishermen completely alien to subversion.

Márquez, who is an independent congressman for the MAS (Movement to Socialism) party headed by ex-guerrilla Teodoro Petkoff, has personal ties to Pérez.

It's no surprise that Márquez covers up for terrorists. The Universal Christian Gnostic Church of which he is a bishop protects the Colombian drug terrorists, as the late M-19 leader Jaime Bateman admitted in November 1983 in an interview. So the Venezuelan Labor Party has denounced Márquez for quite a while for this. Walter answered that I attacked him because he is a Christian. It's not true. I don't attack him for religious reasons, but for covering for narco-terrorism. As to the Gnostic Church, suffice it to say that its guru, Samael Aun Weor, says that Hitler was one of the greatest

men of all time, attacks the Jews, and maintains racist beliefs, among many other aberrations proposed by him in his books.

EIR: What impact do you think your small party—running for the first time for national office—can have on the political situation in Venezuela?

Peña: The Venezuelan electoral campaign, until the legalization of the Venezuelan Labor Party, has been a circus. A circus characterized by two parties, the social democratic Acción Democrática and the Christian Democratic COPEI, neither of which is offering any solution. Their campaigns are based on billions of bolívares worth of commercials, just as if they were selling detergents. These two parties have been able to manipulate or buy the rest of the small parties. So we could say that, with the exception of the PLV and few individual leaders, Venezuela's major parties are not interested in resolving the problems our country is facing; they have become instruments of the international bankers and international communism.

The two candidates that have the most chance of winning are Carlos Andrés Pérez, known as CAP, and Eduardo Fernández, nicknamed *El Tigre* (The Tiger). Both have the same program, based mainly on liberal capitalism, which was roundly attacked by Pope John Paul II in his last encyclical.

Their programs are so much alike that "El Tigre" complains that CAP copied his program, and they both call for using 90% of the national budget to pay foreign debt and salaries for the various government officials, and only 10% for projects that can generate new jobs. With 16 million people—2 million of them unemployed or underemployed—this is really a tragedy, because this country had at least \$200 billion, which is a lot of money for Venezuela, during the last 15 or 20 years, but none of it was spent for development.

We have documented in our program how these two parties let the Wall Street banks steal \$67 billion during the last 15 years from Venezuela. They've done that by increasing the interest rates, flight capital, and other tricks. So the real problem we have in Venezuela is that there is no nationalism in the leadership. These two parties do not represent the interests of Venezuela; they just represent the interests of Wall Street's banks.

measures. One of them is to make sure that *Operation Juárez*, the plan for debt relief for Ibero-America, written by Lyndon LaRouche, is implemented as soon as possible. The second is stopping capital flight by imposing exchange controls. The third, is to generate long-term, low-interest credit, exactly as Alexander Hamilton, the Treasury Secretary of George Washington, did. If we follow these three simple measures, and also if we do our part for Ibero-American integration, we will be able not only to solve the problem of the debt and turn this continent into a great industrial power, but we will surely stop the advance of the guerrillas and narco-terrorism.

Even though we arrived very late in the electoral campaign, only nine weeks ago, we have made a political miracle. We are late because we were fighting for three years with the Supreme Electoral Court, which did not legalize the PLV until nine weeks ago, just because we were helping to distribute the book *Narcotráfico, SA*, known in English as *Dope, Inc.*, which denounces the drug traffic and the Soviet operation that is being manipulated by the big banks, and here in Venezuela there are certain families that are puppets of Rockefeller and were mentioned in this book.

We are friends of Lyndon LaRouche, and our party belongs to the same political current that Mr. LaRouche belongs to in the United States. These two reasons were enough for us to be victims of a prosecution to try to stop our legalization, even though we submitted 40,000 signatures of Venezuelans who support our legalization.

So we had to sue the Supreme Electoral Court and finally in the Supreme Court of Justice we won the case nine weeks ago. What the Venezuelan Labor Party has presented is the program to make Venezuela an industrial power by the year 2015, with 30 years of hard work. In a certain sense this broke up the electoral circus.

EIR: How has the program been received?

Peña: With extraordinary interest. It is the first time any political party offered citizens a detailed plan for how to develop the country, what resources, what zones, etc. We put out a pamphlet of nearly 59 pages, with charts and maps. It was first published on Nov. 6 as a supplement to the Sunday edition of the paper *El Informador* in the city of Barquisimeto, with a press run of 40,000. Today we received the first run of the pamphlet version of the program, 50,000 copies.

I was able to run through the whole program in a two-hour television interview on the Maracaibo television station. The station got almost 100 phone calls. It's worth noting that the interview was broadcast live the day after Carlos Andrés Pérez released his presidential campaign platform, in the same city of Maracaibo.

We think that, unless we are victims of a large fraud, we should win two or three seats in the Congress. From there we'll continue the fight for the creation of a national movement to make Venezuela a great country, and reverse the decline Venezuela has suffered in the last 15 years.

PLO throws the ball into Israel's court

by Thierry Lalevée

Whether it is too little too late, is ultimately not relevant to the series of diplomatic initiatives taken by the Palestine National Council during its recent conference in Algiers on Nov 12-15. During the three days of heated discussions, and indeed, after months if not years of hard bargaining, the parliamentary body of the PLO decided to recognize the U.N. Resolution 242, while calling for the creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel according to the 1947 U.N. Resolution 181.

As the final communiqué underlined, the precise borders of that state will remain to be negotiated and defined as part of an International Peace Conference to be sponsored by the United Nations within the terms of the 242 and 338 resolutions.

Obviously, this is a far cry from other steps which could have been taken, such as the creation of a Palestinian government-in-exile, and an explicit and official recognition of the state of Israel. Yet, it is the underlining spirit which matters: the deliberate choice to play the card of peace negotiations, and not the card of military and terror-related confrontation.

As such, these moves have been greeted favorably by most moderate Muslim countries, with Turkey being probably the most significant country to recognize the newly declared "State of Palestine."

Doubtless, had such decisions been taken prior to the Nov. 1 Israeli parliamentary elections, they would have influenced the results, if not in favor of the more moderate Labour, at least of those candidates notwithstanding party affiliation who have campaigned for peace negotiations. As it turned out, the right-wing hardliners have come out the winners. The PLO resolutions must now be negotiated with hawks.

Moscow's game

Ultimately, that simple issue underlines the dilemma and the limits of the PLO decisions. It is known that Arafat decided to postpone the meeting of the Palestine National Council—originally scheduled for the end of August, then for September, and then for October—at the explicit request of the Soviet Union. Moscow's direct interest was and re-