
José López Portillo

Time for ‘the world to listen to the wise words of Lyndon LaRouche’

José López Portillo, President of Mexico from 1976-82, made the following remarks, after the keynote address given by Helga Zepp-LaRouche before the Mexican Society of Geography and Statistics, on Dec. 1. The speech has been translated by EIR, and subheads have been added.

... I congratulate Doña Helga for these words, which impressed me, especially because first they trapped me in the Apocalypse, but then she showed me the staircase by which we can get to a promised land. Many thanks, Doña Helga.

Doña Helga—and here I wish to congratulate her husband, Lyndon LaRouche—is a kind of *Xihuacoatl*, of that economic thinker of modern days. *Xihuacoatl*, as you all know, was the female serpent who was a member of the Aztec government, which was based on duality, on *Omeyoca*, the second place. This is reflected in the government which had, also, as everyone knows, a *Tlatuani*, and parallel, a *Xihuacoatl*, who went out to fight when necessary, and it is now necessary for the world to listen to the wise words of Lyndon LaRouche. Now it is through the voice of his wife, that we have had the privilege of listening to him.

How important, that they enlighten us as to what is happening in the world, as to what will happen, and as to what can be corrected. How important, that someone dedicates their time, their generosity, and their enthusiasm to this endeavor.

The post-war economic system

For my part, I had a period of responsibility, and I can tell you personally, in a somewhat dramatic way, of what happens to national economies in an international financial order such as that which has ordered our affairs since Bretton Woods. Bretton Woods, as we all know, was organized as a body of the victorious powers, all capitalist: the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and in some way, GATT [the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade], to organize the world through control of currency, through financing of development and trade, through the force of the powerful, and in their image and likeness, which, of course, did not turn out to be ours. No one outside the powerful were taken into account. I can tell of what happened in my government, and perhaps it

is important that I repeat it here.

Mexico, with its Independence, wanted to organize itself as a modern nation-state, that state about which *La Señora* spoke, which in the 15th century, as Machiavelli realized, emerged then as a political novelty, together with the nationalities which emerged out of the Middle Ages. Mexico had a stormy existence, in trying to organize itself as a modern nation-state during the dark 19th century.

In this century, Mexico lived through a social revolution which gave it a number of national characteristics to define its destiny; this is the Revolution of 1910. It is the first social revolution of this century, not the last liberal revolution of the 19th century—the first social revolution. And according to its norms, the government which resulted from that revolution wanted to organize its economy around a value of harmony, not taken into account by the liberal world, by the world of free trade, by the world of competition. This value is called Social Justice, and carries within it a series of decisions which our governments, coming out of that revolution, tried to put into practice. But at the same time, for geopolitical reasons, we had to insert ourselves into the international world, into the situation which surrounded us, and enter, somehow, into the international bodies which ruled the world.

Where are the values of the Mexican Revolution?

But, what happened when the Mexican Revolution clashed with those powerful bodies, expressions of powerful countries, which have no reason to take into account the revolution of a developing country, which had lived through such a turbulent 19th century and which has so many social conflicts? Because we should remember that Mexico is a country of profound inequalities, as Baron von Humboldt himself observed in the 18th century. This is a country of inequalities, and as such, could be left neither to free competition, nor free trade, nor the values of liberalism, today called neo-liberalism.

As a result, when we went to the international bodies, they disdainfully refused to consider either our political or our social problems, and when the values of our Revolution were constantly rejected, we became accustomed to disdain-

ing them and even to forget them.

I do not mean to say with this, that the international bodies are the ones who are responsible for the fact that our Revolution is forgotten. What I am saying is, that the clash, the disdain for revolutionary values, made us Mexicans forget those values, because we couldn't invoke them. It was pointless to take our political problems to international bodies: "It's your problem." Our social problems: "You take care of them." And this is Mexico's drama, its social problems and therefore its political problems. And, also, as a result, over time we began to forget the Mexican Revolution, and began introducing in Mexico, bit by bit—I mean, insidiously—alien values, which came to predominate through the law of the survival of the fittest, because of the conviction that it was futile to raise other banners. And thus Mexico has forgotten its Revolution, and as a result, the national economy which we had wanted somehow to create.

For this reason, I have listened with special interest, and even enthusiasm, that someone is already thinking about to do this in this world—to reform the Bretton Woods agreements, such that the world economy might function to resolve human problems, with humanism, and not for the benefit of capital, forgetting or sacrificing the importance of labor.

I remember that in the time of my responsibilities, all of the prescriptions which the international bodies gave us, tended to depress demand—not to foster production, to depress demand: Pay less to your workers, your peasants, sacrifice employment. When, in our country, to govern is to create jobs. When what was needed, for example, was to create regional justice, which is also a form of inequality in Mexico—the different regions also need somehow to be developed, but for this, they require, for example, subsidies, privileges, to be able to do so. And they threatened us, "Watch out! That's encouraging dumping," and we inhibited ourselves, and this is how, little by little, we lost the spirit of the Mexican Revolution.

These brief words are the experience of our national economy, and thus the importance that someone in the world is thinking on behalf of everyone, and is opening doors. Let us hope, Doña Helga, that your husband can influence the government of the United States, so that the proposals which you so brilliantly have laid out to us, can, in some way, be realized, and with them, that peoples can express their uniqueness in the cultural realm, and in every possible aspect. Thank you.

From the question period

Two questions to López Portillo followed. The first questioner asked the former President what happened after 1982, after he implemented LaRouche's proposed Operation Juárez.

López Portillo: It was nothing specific, but simply circumstantial. The hard-headedness of the international bodies left us without any option, and as a consequence, we were trapped. We misbehaved with the international bodies, and we were punished. They accused us of being populists, etc. Other governments behaved themselves, and the result has been the same. This is what is dramatic: We push the rock to the top of the hill, and when we reach the top, it falls down on us. It is always the system, the environment which stubbornly refuses to understand revolutionary values, as I mentioned a moment ago. And perhaps the rejection has made us used to this, and we end up forgetting them; because we became used to this, to being disdained, to being put off, and we began to behave ourselves—and then "whammo," we get hit again. This is simply the result of the fact that the international system isn't set up for countries like ours. This is a concrete example of a specific national economy not fitting into that financial order, and hence the necessity for [that order] to be reformed. That is why I am so happy to hear that many people have begun to talk about reform, from which I was shut out. Thank you.

Q: You said that the values of the Revolution started to be relaxed at the same time that the international financial markets opened up, and our country's political needs were ignored. You even proclaimed yourself to be the last President of the Revolution, and [said] that the efforts of our revolutionary values were insufficient to break open the shell of the international agencies. . . .

What do you think, now that revolutionary values are really relaxed? . . . What future do you see for the country, now that "the values of the Revolution have been relaxed," now that there's no one who clamors for justice in our country? What future do you see for Mexico? Should we passively await the collapse, or take some action? I repeat this, knowing the difficulty of having a PRI government, but one whose revolutionary values are not so accentuated.

López Portillo: I think that dynamic countries like ours have new generations which naturally are willing to receive from history the change that will come. [Benito] Juárez said it: that the best prepared among us will assert those principles which somehow are still there. This is a matter of faith. I have faith that some Mexican, or some group of Mexicans, organized or not in a political party, but in any case organized, will assert those principles which I believe we have received from our Revolution. And this was a Revolution of which I said I was the last President, for one simple reason: because I continue to believe that statism and a mixed economy are necessary, and when one or another are pushed aside, then there the Revolution ends, because then there is no one left to assert those principles and values. I repeat, this is a matter of faith and, I can say, of hope, and I could even add, of charity, but that would be too theological. Thank you very much.