

LaRouche Youth Bring *Ideas* to Mexican Presidential Campaign

by Gretchen Small

As the global financial crisis sends Mexico careening toward another debt blowout, LaRouche Youth Movement leader Ingrid Torres told the youth attending the LYM-sponsored debate between the LYM and the youth organizations of Mexico's main political parties, held May 31 at Mexico City's Legislative Assembly, that they must prepare themselves to assume the responsibility of governing. "Let us be historical political actors, not pragmatists," she exclaimed.

The LYM set out to organize a debate on the subject of "Mexico's Next 50 Years: What Is *Not* Being Discussed in the Presidential Elections," after absolutely nothing of relevance was said by any Mexican Presidential candidate in the first televised Presidential debate on April 26. With only weeks before the July 2 elections, the LYM decided that history required mobilizing young adults to take responsibility for the nation, and so they issued a challenge to the youth organizations of leading political parties, labor unions, and popular groups, to come debate Mexico's future, as the first of a series of policy interventions in the nation's capital.

The challenge to debate interested the other youth, and on the eve of the scheduled debate on May 30, the youth of the three major parties—the Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI), the National Action Party (PAN), and the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD)—had designated their speakers: a student from a free-market neo-liberal school was chosen by the PRI youth; the PRD chose a 28-year-old economist studying for a doctoral degree; and the factionalized Mexico City Youth Committee of the PAN settled their disputes by naming four representatives. The press was invited to attend what they were told could be an historic event, perhaps the most important of the electoral period, because Mexico's youth will determine their nation's future.

Two Worldviews

Come the hour of the debate, the PAN and PRI youth representatives apparently did not dare to show up. But the PRD debater came, as did 30 youth largely organized by the LYM, along with three PRI youth, and two young reporters.

With a young activist from the PRD party, Blanca Pérez, moderating, four pressing issues which, until then, had been largely ignored in the campaign were taken up, one by one, by Torres and PRD representative Irving Gómez Lara:

- the International Economic and Financial Crisis;

- Ibero-America's Place in World Policy: Mexico's Leadership in Ibero-America;
- Large-Scale Infrastructure Projects for the Next Generations (Transport, Water and Energy); and
- Financing of Long-Term Projects (25-50 years).

As the debate developed, it was clear that the two debaters were agreed, by and large, on several key points as to where the world had gone wrong: that the changes in the global financial crisis implemented under President Nixon, creating a service economy through which the technocrats and corporations like Dick Cheney's Halliburton had ruined things; that Mexico had turned its back on its historic role as a leading defender of national sovereignty, and that must be reversed; and that technological backwardness was crushing Mexico. The PRD's Gómez Lara, for example, argued the necessity for Mexico to develop an aerospace sector, which, in turn, would build up eight other productive sectors in the economy. How could it be, he asked, that 108 years after Ford's famous Model "T" came off the assembly line, Mexico had yet to manufacture its own internal combustion engine?

What became clear in the course of the debate, however, was that two differing worldviews as to how to approach what must be done were under discussion: one well-meaning but pragmatic, localist, and short-term; the other, Lyndon LaRouche's concept of how to change history. This difference emerged most starkly in the last exchange, on the question of financing for infrastructure projects.

The LYM's Torres set the stage for the last question, by constantly raising the discussion of the first three issues to a higher level, briefing people on the international realities of the crisis and what the LaRouche movement is doing about it, and addressing the underlying premises which had led to the state of crisis now engulfing the world. The cause of this crisis is the culture of the '68ers, with their post-industrial delusions, she said. Now, to restore Mexico's sovereignty, we must develop a culture which permits our people to discover humanity's most beautiful ideas from the past, in order to give new discoveries to future generations. That must be our moral commitment as a generation. We must change the system in which economies are treated like prostitutes, where morality does not matter, but only profit, she said. Our next President must join the efforts of the regional "Club of Presidents," understanding as Argentine President



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LYM leader Ingrid Torres performs in the Mexican LYM chorus during Lyndon LaRouche's visit to Monterrey in April 2006. Torres is the singer at the far right. In representing the LYM at the youth debate on May 31, she challenged those present to rise to the highest level of culture and science, in order to solve the problems facing the nation.

Néstor Kirchner has said, that we need a United States with which we can collaborate.

We must ask: What is infrastructure? It is not the urban blight of commercial centers and Wal-Marts, but investment by the state in the water, transportation, and energy projects required to sustain a modern agro-industrial economy. The function of infrastructure, Torres said, is not only to raise the physical conditions of the population; the employment of the most advanced technologies in these projects provokes knowledge of the creative nature of the human being.

Such is the case with nuclear energy, which must be addressed from the standpoint of LaRouche's concept of energy flux density, and Gottfried Leibniz's concept of power, she explained. Alternative energies do not provide the degree of efficiency of power required for the survival of a world population of more than 6 billion people. In developing this idea, Torres addressed the strategic importance of saving the U.S. machine-tool sector in its auto industry, in order to produce the machines required for these infrastructure projects.

Not Illusions, But Dreams Are Needed

By the time they came to the fourth topic, Gómez Lara was provoked. There are no philosophical systems behind economic policies, he declared as his opening shot in the discussion of how to secure financing for long-term projects. We must not fall into utopias; we should be pragmatic, he insisted, before launching into a defense of what his Presidential candidate, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, calls "republican austerity," a recipe for cutting the salaries of public employees and "excess" personnel, as the way to raise money to finance needed projects. Gómez Lara ended his intervention, however, by saying that he did not agree with everything his

candidate said, and he called on the youth to investigate the campaigns and proposals of all the candidates.

We have arrived at the hard issue, Torres replied, which stumps not only Mexican politicians, but economists and politicians around the world: "Where the devil is the money for this going to come from?" That is because people think of the economy like the housewife views the family finances, adjusting her budget by cutting what she can here, in order to buy what she needs there; she, and the others, believe that the economy is money. Under those parameters, there is no way to sustain a growing population, Torres said. The real issue is the concept of credit; the concept of the sovereign nation-state which creates what it needs to guarantee the general welfare.

Earlier in the debate, Gómez Lara himself had mocked Adam Smith's idea of the "invisible hand," of "market forces" being treated as if they are actual physical entities. But now, Torres told him, you are treating money as if it decides something on its own.

As for the idea that economic systems do not reflect any philosophical systems: If you rule out the human mind's understanding, we can understand something logically, but we cannot understand what caused it. As in the case of Hitler, for example: We can logically understand how the economy functioned under his regime, but we cannot answer the question, why did he do what he did? Remember the method of Johannes Kepler, who, instead of simply measuring effects, sought to discover *why* the universe works in such a way, and not another. This is the problem of economists, she said. They set out to measure effects, using the method of "Where is Wally?" to see where they can find the money. They concentrate on measuring variables, but not to discover what it is that organizes the variables in such a fashion.

There is a difference between an illusion, and a dream, she continued. An illusion is to think that voting on July 2 will fix everything; a dream is that which a sane person requires to develop him or herself, such as to understand the Solar System, or to learn a musical instrument, a new language, or about the physical economy. Like Kepler, who envisioned that man could leave the planet Earth, even though neither the technologies—nor the money!—existed in his day to do so. Dreams, therefore, are a precondition for sanity, although they are not the same thing as sexual fantasies, which are not healthy, she cautioned!

We must understand the historical causes which have brought us to this period of current history, she said, and called upon the youth present to not only investigate the candidates' campaigns and be pragmatic politicians, but to be political actors in changing history.

All the participants in the debate were pleased by the discussion, and agreed that more such debates among youth must be organized. The process of organizing the debate—including with those who did not show up—itself forced a discussion of the reality that it falls to this generation to address.