
Interview: Antonio Navarro Wolff

Antonio Navarro Wolff, presidential candidate of the Colombian M-19 Democratic Alliance, was interviewed on April 16 by Cynthia and Peter Rush.

EIR: Would you favor legalization of the drug trade as the best way to solve Colombia's problem?

Navarro Wolff: I think that the change in U.S. policy on the drug issue which appears to be taking place in this new administration is good, first because it no longer considers drug trafficking the U.S.'s top priority—which it is not. Secondly, it looks as though [the Clinton administration] is leaning toward putting more emphasis on the problem of internal consumption, and not just production. Decriminalization of consumption is a problem for the First World. We would gain nothing by decriminalizing in Colombia. So let's see if this occurs in the First World. . . .

I would say that a more balanced approach in the international framework, where the possibility of decriminalization is considered, is far better than the policy to date, based on combatting production in the Third World.

EIR: What about the recent proposal made by Colombia's ambassador in Spain, Samper Pizano, who explicitly called for drug legalization in Colombia?

Navarro Wolff: This [legalization] would have no effect whatsoever inside Colombia . . . because it is not Colombia's consumption which produces the problem of drug money, but the First World's consumption. This would be the only justification for decriminalization—stop the flow of illegal drug money.

EIR: Do you think that if the Colombian government were to step back from its all-out war on the Medellín and Cali cartels, would that bring peace?

Navarro Wolff: It's not that easy. I think you've heard of the policy of "plea bargaining" . . . which we support, as long as it's applied responsibly.

Of course I support the policy of a negotiated solution to the problem of the Colombian guerrillas, because I'm a "son" of that dialogue and our movement is a product of that dialogue. We believe in it because it's worked for us.

EIR: Do you think that the El Salvador model of dialogue could work in Colombia?

Navarro Wolff: The correlation of forces is different . . . but I think that the El Salvador model of negotiations is possible to help consolidate the peace process. . . .

EIR: Would the United Nations have a role in Colombia?

Navarro Wolff: Yes, the United Nations could have a role

in Colombia perhaps in a later phase. I think right now a mixed mediation, national and international, is needed; probably in a first phase, the U.N. wouldn't be involved, but later, once these efforts were under way, then the participation of an agency such as the U.N. would be required.

Interview: Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas

Peter Rush interviewed Mexican presidential candidate Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas of the Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD) on April 16.

EIR: Since free trade has created this \$20 billion trade deficit, why do you conditionally support the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), or do you not?

Cárdenas: I am not supporting this agreement. We think a different agreement is necessary.

EIR: What would the changes be that would make it operate differently than this one does?

Cárdenas: In the first place, not a free trade agreement but a development agreement that establishes a different view of the problem; that starts by the recognition of existing differences and the will to eliminate those differences. That means using not only free trade but other economic tools: investments that could be directed to sensitive sectors, economically or socially, renegotiation of the foreign debt, and other tools.

EIR: Under your idea, would NAFTA allow Mexico to reimpose high tariffs on new industries that are needed to develop, that required protection until they get started?

Cárdenas: No, we are not talking about protection.

EIR: How would a new industry get started in Mexico that had to compete, and would need protection for a few years?

Cárdenas: We have to talk with the United States, and see the timing, see the investments, see what industries or important sectors that could be treated in a different way.

EIR: Then how would your proposal eliminate this imbalance of imports over exports which is now over \$100 billion?

Cárdenas: That takes time.

EIR: But how would that be addressed by your proposal?

Cárdenas: Mostly through investment in Mexico, creation of jobs, strengthening of our economic development.

EIR: How can domestic Mexican industries ever be revived if you don't maintain some ability to keep out imports?

Cárdenas: We'll have to see case by case.