

LA BOLIVIA QUE SE VA... LA BOLIVIA QUE VIENE

Gonzalo Lema
entrevista a
Carlos Sánchez Berzaín

Introducción de
Carlos Alberto Montaner



Gonzalo Lema is a Bolivian writer and author of *The Bolivia that is Leaving, the Bolivia that is Coming* (Los Tiempos, La Prensa, 2011), a book of interviews with the most influential politicians regarding conditions in Bolivia.

The interview with Carlos Sánchez Berzaín forms part of this work.

The great importance that the interview of Carlos Sánchez Berzaín conducted by Gonzalo Lema for the newspaper *Los Tiempos of Cochabamba* is derived precisely from the vision that is shown by this Bolivian politician, diametrically opposed to the one held by Evo Morales in the same series of conversations with the journalist.

While Morales lays claim to a Bolivia founded on ethnicity and the corporatist division of the country (a sort of primitive pre-Hispanic fascism), Sánchez Berzaín highlights the confluence of all the nation's inhabitants subject to the same law without distinction or privileges.

When the ethnic, authoritarian and multi-nationality state imposed by Evo Morales, an ambiguous variant of the Castro-inspired collectivist socialism, fails, Bolivians will find themselves in need of re-defining their goals and the means to achieve them. When they come to that point, they will do well to remember this interview. Perhaps this is the basis for understanding what has happened in the past and for launching Bolivia once again toward a much better destiny than the one that it currently has.

But getting to know this text is useful not only for Bolivians. For those who are not, and especially for the leaders and those who must make decisions, it becomes required reading to the extent that an enormous amount of confusion exists about the real nature of government in Bolivia. While it had a democratic beginning, for years it has been an arbitrary collectivist autocracy, with extrajudicial executions, political prisoners and exiles, wasteful and in the economic domain, so very poorly managed that it will end up in total disaster. This is what Sánchez Berzaín foresees and predicts will happen to all nations who adhere to the delusional Castroite-Chavist project known as "socialism of the 21st century."



THE BOLIVIA THAT IS LEAVING... THE BOLIVIA THAT IS TO COME

GONZALO LEMA
interview with
CARLOS SÁNCHEZ BERZAÍN

**INTRODUCTION BY
CARLOS ALBERTO MONTANER**

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Gonzalo Lema (born 1959 in Tarija, Bolivia) took his baccalaureate in Humanities and Music from the Instituto Eduardo Laredo (1976) and his Masters degree in law and Politics from the Universidad Mayor San Simón in 1985.

He served as member of the Electoral Court for the Dementpartment of Cochabamba (1987-89), as its Vice-President (1990-91, 1995-96), and President (1996-2001), and member of the National Electoral Court (2001-03).

In the city of Cochabamba, he was a candidate for the office of mayor (2004) representing the Movement to Socialism (MAS), served as the City Council's Vice-President (2005), regular member (2006-09) and its President (January-May 2010).

A novelist, he received First Prize nationally for his work (1998). Earlier, he was a finalist in the Casa de las Américas (Cuba) Prize (1993), the Guttentag Prize (1983), and Honorable Mention in the Andrés Bello Prize (In the category of short stories, 1976).

He was listed as one the ten outstanding young men in Bolivia and earned the TOYP Prize from the Junio Chamber (1994).

Among his publications are the following novels: *La huella es el olvido* (The Clue is Forgetfulness), *La vida me duele sin vos*, (Life Hurts Without You), *Contra nadie en la batalla* (Against No One in the Battle), *el mar, el sol y MariSol* (The Sea, the Sun and MariSol) and the police series *Santiago Blanco* (short stories and novel).

"The Bolivia that is leaving is one with a constitution that divides instead of uniting, that threatens instead of protecting, the regulates instead of establishing principles, that is made for abuse and not to provide guarantees, the coca-producing Bolivia. This Bolivia, which is not really Bolivia, which they don't any longer wish to call Nation, is divided into 36 nationalities, and has been defined as a Plurinational State instead of a National State. It is a country forced into internal confrontations and intervened by a foreign project.

The one that is leaving is an authoritarian and coca-growing State created by Morales, which is not Bolivia because it has no freedom and only simulates democracy."

"The Bolivia that is to come, will come after a most intense crisis, the result of post-morality. It will be a Bolivia in which it will be essential to construct unity and consensus, baseline agreements to strengthen it, progress and security in the long run; it is urgent that we overcome the confrontational elements that have generated the crisis, to restore democracy and the Rule of Law. The Bolivia that is to come is modern, much closer to the successful countries of Latin America than to the failed and troubled ones. This is the Bolivia that we owe to the next generations."

Carlos Sánchez Berzain

INTRODUCTION

by Carlos Alberto Montaner

Carlos Sánchez Berzaín (b. 1959) is a lawyer and politician from Bolivia and professor of international and constitutional law who arrived as an exile in Miami almost a decade ago, together with the country's president, Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, who had been democratically elected in 2002. They were brought down in October 2003, according to the interview that follows this introduction, by a political maneuver led by Evo Morales and planned in Caracas and Havana with the complicity of several groups and individuals, among them Bolivia's vice-president, Carlos Mesa.

The apparent cause for that virtual coup d'état, legitimated by a lax interpretation of the national constitution, was the police repression against violent street disorders (not peaceful protests) that included significant infractions of the law such as holding people against their will and the sabotaging of water supplies to a couple of cities,

endangering the normal functions of hospitals and food distributors.

Unfortunately, these events, which took place over several weeks, produced armed encounters resulting in several dozen deaths in the Bolivian altiplano. Evo Morales, other political operatives and vice-president Mesa accused the government of being responsible for these events; the government, held together precariously by a fragile coalition, fell.

Mesa, sworn in as president after this dramatic event, was unable to complete Sánchez Losada's constitutional term of office and, similarly hounded by popular violence, resigned; power was then transferred to Eduardo Rodríguez, president of the Supreme Court. Finally, in January 2006, after all political forces were destroyed or weakened and in the midst of a protracted national fatigue, the coca-producing leader Evo Morales won the election with 54% of the vote and began — following the strategy of the Castro brothers and Hugo Chávez — the methodical dismantling of the democracy that Bolivians had enjoyed since the return to truly free elections in 1982.

The great importance that the interview of Carlos Sánchez Berzaín conducted by Gonzalo

Lema for the newspaper *Los Tiempos* of Cochabamba is derived precisely from the vision that is shown by this Bolivian politician, diametrically opposed to the one held by Evo Morales in the same series of conversations with the journalist. While Morales lays claim to a Bolivia founded on ethnicity and the corporatist division of the country (a sort of primitive pre-Hispanic fascism), Sánchez Berzaín highlights the confluence of all the nation's inhabitants subject to the same law without distinction or privileges.

Sánchez Berzaín believes in constitutional patriotism; Evo Morales believes in ethnic patriotism. Sánchez Berzaín is a republican who believes in the existence and protection of individual rights as the *raison d'être* of all states; Evo Morales believes that society needs to be subordinate to the goals of the State, the entity to which he assigns responsibility for managing in detail the lives of citizens, what each person should do and how is one to be rewarded. For Sánchez Berzaín, it is obvious that the State is dependent on society's efforts. For Evo Morales, the right thing is for the society to live off the State.

Somehow, the ideological encounter between these two men represents the encounter between the modernity that arises from the Enlightenment at the end of the 18th century and the statist

concepts that had existed in the ancien régime, and which were similar to the pre-Columbian autocracies in Incan Peru and in the Mexico of the Aztecs.

The truth is that history says that Sánchez Berzaín is right and Evo Morales is shown to be wrong. The thirty most prosperous and stable nations in the planet, the happiest ones, are governed in accordance with the universal vision and the judicial order of the State of Law that Sánchez Berzaín presents for Bolivians.

They can be presidentialist democracies, such as the ones in the United States and France, or they can be parliamentary democracies such as England or Holland, or parliamentary republics such as Israel, but they are all prosperous governments at peace and share three key elements: the submission of everyone to the rule of law; the division of powers to guarantee the existence of individual rights, and an economic system based on private producers.

When the ethnic, authoritarian and multi-nationality state imposed by Evo Morales, an ambiguous variant of the Castro-inspired collectivist socialism, fails — something that will inevitably happen because it is tremendously inefficient, generates injustices and violates human rights — Bolivians will find themselves in

need of re-defining their goals and the means to achieve them. When they come to that point, they will do well to remember this interview. Perhaps this is the basis for understanding what has happened in the past and for launching Bolivia once again toward a much better destiny than the one that it currently has.

But getting to know this text is useful not only for Bolivians. For those who are not, and especially for the leaders and those who must make decisions, it becomes required reading to the extent that an enormous amount of confusion exists about the real nature of government in Bolivia. While it had a democratic beginning, for years it has been an arbitrary collectivist autocracy, with extra-judicial executions, political prisoners and exiles, wasteful and in the economic domain, so very poorly managed that it will end up in total disaster. This is what Sánchez Berzaín foresees and predicts will happen to all nations who adhere to the delusional Castroite-Chavist project known as “socialism of the 21st century.”

According to its symptoms, perhaps it will not take long for that moment to arrive.

Carlos Alberto Montaner
Miami, April 2012



Carlos Seanezh Berzain Born in Cochabamba in September 1959, Berzain studied at the La Salle School in Cochabamba, Universidad Mayor de San Simón, and Florida International University, USA-FLACSO, Argentina.

Dr. Sánchez Berzain has been active on several fronts: lawyer with expertise in constitutional law, Master's in Political Science and Master's in Sociology. He is a Political Scientist and a founding member of the Ateneo Jurídico Boliviano and Professor in Constitutional Law and International Law. He has sponsored historic cases dealing with the defense of fundamental liberties and the sustainment of constitutionalism. Co-author of *Recursos constitucionales en Bolivia* Constitutional Resources in Bolivia, he is a public speaker and political analyst and Director of the Interamerican Institute for Democracy.

He has been Minister of State of the Republic of Bolivia five times; Minister to the Presidency of the Republic twice (1993-94 and 2002-03); Minister of Government twice (1994-96 and 1997); and Minister of Defence (2003) in the administrations of President Gonzalo Sánchez de

Lozada. He was a promoter and participant in the Constitutional Reform of 1994-95, reforms known as Capitalización Social [capital infusion program], Bonosol [pension fund], Participación Popular [decentralized budget-sharing], Reforma Educativa [educational reform], Seguro Universal Materno Infantil [universal insurance for mothers and infants], and others. As Minister of Government, he directed the struggle against drug traffickers in Bolivia for more than three years and promoted alternative modes of development. He was a candidate for the presidency of the MNR Party in 1996; was Representative in the national congress for the Department of Cochabamba from 1997 to 2002; and was Majority Leader and Minority Leader during the same period of time.

He was Executive Secretary of the Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario (MNR) from 1999 to 2003 and Executive Director and Chief Campaign Officer for the Department of Cochabamba and at the national level for the MNR (1997-2002).

He is the author of several publications, commentaries and articles dealing with the subjects of freedom, democracy and institutionalism in the Americas. He lives under political asylum in the United States.

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“Evo Morales has created his own legalism, which is neither legitimate nor legal.”

Carlos Sánchez Berzaín

Interview

**National Revolutionary Movement
(MNR)**

1. **Gonzalo Lema (GL):** At its start (in the 1940s), and as a result of the proposals it advocated, the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR) had as its social base the peasants, the workers and the miners. Decades later (in the 90s), under the leadership of Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, its postulates were so different that its social base now rested with the middle class and businessmen. The MNR had “come out” of the countryside to come to rest in the cities. Was this the start of its decline? Why did a popular revolt bring him down (2003) from the Palacio Quemado Government House.

Carlos Sánchez Berzaín (CSB): We can summarize the fundamental proposals of the MNR — at all times — as the “liberation of the Bolivian people through the alliance of classes on behalf of the construction of the Bolivian Nation and the National State.” The MNR has always sought through this project to transform the conditions of injustice, crisis and inequality so that the Bolivian people can form a nation of free men and women with equal opportunities.

At the start of the party, in the decade of the 1940s, the country's objective reality (70% rural) made it necessary to incorporate the peasantry into the program of political and civil rights and for that reason, the first measure undertaken by the National Revolution was UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE (political liberation). It was necessary to incorporate the peasantry into the system of property rights as an effective means to exercise their citizenship and, under the principle that "the land belongs to those who work it," the AGRARIAN REFORM became an objective (social and economic reform). It was imperative, for the sake of constructing the Bolivian Nation to prepare citizens, and for that reason EDUCATIONAL REFORM was undertaken, a fundamental measure so that all boys and girls of Bolivia would get educated in cities and in the countryside regarding values and national principles on an equal footing. The protection of the workers was necessary and the SOCIAL SECURITY law was enacted (social liberation). Within the framework of the world economy of the time — and the national situation — it was necessary to strengthen the State's economy, and therefore the NATIONALIZATION OF THE MINES was proposed and enacted. The first stage of the National Revolution transformed the country in a positive manner and

launched the process that, despite problems and interruptions, has not yet been halted.

When Dr. Victor Paz Estenssoro assumed the presidency in 1985, the world was different; it had changed and so, too, was Bolivia different, which, additionally, was plunged in the gravest hyperinflation and economic crisis of its history. In the face of this new condition, the President and Head of the MNR put in place the second stage of the National Revolution. President Estenssoro captured precisely the Bolivian situation when he said: "THE FATHERLAND IS DYING." The measures taken were the ones that were necessary and appropriate, but the principles and objectives did not change. Once again, it was necessary to liberate the Bolivian people, although this time, it meant liberation from the crisis, from the hyperinflation, and the misery they bring. This economic state of the liberation process was put in place with the NEW POLITICAL ECONOMY, through the Presidential Decree 21060, so frequently attacked but which remains in place today and which guarantees at the least the little bit of stability and seriousness left in the country.

In the administration of Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada (Goni) from 1993 to 1997, the MNR continued with the process of the National

Revolution by the CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM, and launched revolutionary measures such as POPULAR PARTICIPATION LAW, SOCIAL CAPITALIZATION LAW — thus providing funds to the BONOSOL, with its immediate social effects — THE NEW EDUCATIONAL REFORM LAW, the PENSION SYSTEM REFORM, the DECENTRALIZATION PROCESS, the regulatory system and others. All these measures form part of the nationalist and revolutionary agenda founded on the basis of a search for the liberation of the Bolivian people. At that historical point, new advances were made in the process of social, political and economic liberation of the Bolivian people, to lay the foundations by using training in the latest technologies and largescale economic investments for the purpose of growing and transforming the state enterprises that had been mired in corruption, lack of resources and deficient technologies. Greater political participation was provided, along with better distribution of public expenditure, greater authority in the hand of the people at the sites in which they lived, education that was conscious of our unity within our diversity, and many other positive changes.

Political meanness created the black legend that the country had been sold through capitalization programs when, in reality, that measure attracted capital, technologies and the advance-

ment by the country into the realm of modernity, which are today, once again, lacking. The demonization campaign was directed by economic interests belonging to political and union sectors which were affected upon becoming privatized and separated from sources of corruption and illegal profits from our state enterprises, and they managed to confuse national opinion, convincing an important segment of Bolivians of a sale that had never taken place, because — as we have always explained — the capitalization reform represented “an increase in capital while preserving the nation’s assets in the hand of the Bolivian people.”

This third stage of the National Revolution has created the foundation of a great economic movement which the first administration of Evo Morales has enjoyed and which has already been squandered. Morales has been fortunate in being able to reap the fruits that the MNR administration planted, but he has destroyed the project of the nation’s social and economic liberation. He has eaten the hen that had laid the golden eggs.

The stage of the National Revolution that was led by President Sánchez de Lozada was unfortunately interrupted in the year 1997 because of errors made within the party’s leadership, which prevented the successful conclusion of the inter-

nal elections in order to yield a presidential candidate that would come from a democratic decision taken by the members and sympathizers of the MNR. There were three internal candidates from different movements: Guillermo Bedregal, Juan Carlos Durán and Carlos Sánchez Berzaín. The internal electoral campaign began to generate a great deal of interest, and in the midst of it, the Party Chairman imposed an outside candidate, René Blatman. The argument in his favor was that he had stronger support in the polls, but the result was disastrous. We continue to pay for that error to this day because the party came to a halt, new leaders failed to come together, the selection by appointment replaced the party's internal democracy, and worse of all, we lost the elections which were seen as practically won had we opened the MNR through its internal elections. Any candidate who would have won the internal elections was in a position to win the national election. Juan Carlos Durán, who ended up as the replacement candidate, could not win because the party had been demobilized and divided, and the people had lowered their trust. We were all responsible: Sánchez de Lozada by his decision, and we, the party leaders, because in one fashion or another, ended up accepting it.

If the MNR had continued in the government from 1997 to 2002, the greatest beneficiary

would have been the Bolivian people, because the social investment generated by the capitalization process would have continued, and there would have been significant development in the exports of gas, human development and sustainable development to narrow inequalities (it's not that inequalities increase when a country does not have stability, but that they become more noticeable and thereby a central political subject). In fact, after coming in second place in the 1997 elections, we tried to form part of the Bánzer government but he did not accept the minimal and pragmatic condition that I have described, and in his animosity against Sánchez de Lozada, asked that the head of the MNR be excluded from any future agreement.

Having lost power, the measures of the third stage of the National Revolution were administered from 1997 to 2002 on the basis of the concerns of the State's politics. They were tentative measure and not fully developed; they became misshapen, mutilated, stopped and/or excessively complicated before having been fully accomplished. In some cases, they were stopped and distorted, such as the case of the measure of social capital infusion. In other cases, they were modified or changed in name, such as the case of

Bonosol. The educational reform and the popular participation measures were inadequately maintained. And so it was in each instance.

Our opposition strategy from within Parliament was able to prevent certain extreme damage in some cases, but could not contribute to making positive advances.

To respond to the second part of this question, one must explain that what occurred from 1952 to 1982 (from the National Revolution to the recuperation of democracy in Bolivia), and subsequently, until the end of the twentieth century, as is demonstrated in the census of the year 2001, is that Bolivia was transformed from a country that was two-thirds rural to a country in which more than 62% was urban, and that the MNR had to adapt and follow a similar process.

The country turned from rural to urban, from majority farmers to urban-dwelling, and the MNR did what was appropriate, although it experienced declines in support from sectors that eventually felt affected by measures taken by our governments. For example, we lost the support of mining unions with the relocation measures of 1985 [which provided employment to workers elsewhere who would otherwise be terminated] without which the country would not have been

able to come out of the economic crisis, but we gained support from the cooperative movement; we lost support in the rural zones of La Paz and grew in the rural areas of Oriente. Nonetheless, if one reviews the electoral results, the MNR always retained great support in rural zones and that is why we have the first Indian Vice-President (a real Indian, not someone dressed up as one) and a significant congressional representation from the farmers, unions and territorial delegations and sectors. The grave deterioration in support, not only for the MNR, but also for all political parties, came with the ouster of President Sánchez de Lozada and thereafter.

What occurred on October 17, 2003 was the overthrow of the constitutional president Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada and the coalition government of the MNR-MIR-NFR and UCS. It was the rupture of democracy resulting from a process deliberately planned and publicly announced. Conspiracy, sedition, treachery, willful violence, external intervention, a weak government, an uncoordinated coalition and a president excessively confident in his legitimacy: all these factors eradicated not only the government, but also democracy in Bolivia.

To call the events of 2003 a popular revolt that removed the government from the Palacio

Quemado is an oversimplification born out of the official rhetoric of the participants in the coup, who are now in the government, who are destroying democracy and the National State and who are in the process of eliminating the Bolivian Nation.

We should not forget in the slightest that:

1. Evo Morales publicly urged the “toppling of Sánchez de Lozada” on August 6, 2002, when the latter was sworn in as President of Bolivia in the National Congress.
2. An assassination attempt took place In February 2003, along with a coup, against President Sánchez de Lozada.
3. After toppling President Sánchez de Lozada, the first thing that “subversive and victorious traitors” sought was the protection of an “amnesty” signed by Mesa, and that amnesty means the “pardoning of crimes,” and that it does not forgive the innocent ones, but rather those who, signing and benefiting from such an amnesty, have publicly confessed to their crimes.
4. Evo Morales is the accuser in the so-called trial of responsibilities against President Sánchez de Lozada, his government team and

the Military High Command, and it is Morales's regime that impedes the shedding of light on these facts because Morales, his collaborators and accomplices should be the accused and not the accusers or witnesses.

- 5.-The current government prevents the shedding of light on — among other things — the conspiracy, the subversive planning, the foreign involvement, the deliberate crimes, the start of armed violence and the financing of the destabilizing and coup-producing processes.
- 6.-Political parties and their leaders, after October 17, 2003, believed that placing responsibilities for all wrongs would protect them, but now they have been trapped by the repressive machine of the Morales government and will be prosecuted, imprisoned, persecuted, exiled or, otherwise will be playing the government's game in order to remain free and/or to preserve their businesses and assets.
7. What Bolivia is experiences since the overthrow of the government in October 17, 2003 has been a permanent and growing process of coercion, intimidation, persecution, trials, massacres, murders, hidden political crimes,

violations of human rights, of individual liberties and freedom of the press that have converted the country into a non-democratic and intervened State.

2. GL: Some analysts have indicated that revolutionary nationalism (NR) is an ideology containing two doors: one to the right and the other to the left of political ideas. The MNR has navigated through both. It led the Revolution of '52 and has participated in coups d'état, sometimes against a leftist military man (Torres, 1971). This pragmatic behavior has given rise to an unlimited assortment of followers. Has this inconsistency been counterproductive? Who does the MNR represent now?

CSB: The revolutionary nationalism of the MNR is an ideology that initiates the defeat and dismemberment of the classical concept of the division between right and left movements, since, instead of the "class struggle" of Marxism — which was used as a strategy by the oligarchy — it presents instead the model of "CLASS ALLIANCE." Instead of confrontation, it envisions the Unity of the Bolivian people in order to achieve its liberation. In the face of needed liberation, the dogma of the Right and the Left for the MNR appears as a merely discursive position, a

historical anecdote. Now, in the 21st century, the categories of Right and Left are no longer useful, they have been upended and the situation requires an urgent redefinition as soon as possible, since, for example, if we see that some of the most solid democracies in South America are Chile, Brazil and Uruguay, and that they have achieved great economic development with governments labeled “of the Left” pushing for free markets, foreign investment, individual and economic liberties and institutionalism, and an economic model that could be called “neo-liberal,” we are talking of a different concept of Left, or better said, we can no longer speak of a Left.

To govern and make decisions according to the national and global realities was characterized as the “pragmatism” of Paz Estenssoro or the MNR, but in truth, it is the historical realism based on what the lifelong head of my party called “objective reality” searching for the goal that has not changed, which, I repeat, was and remains “THE LIBERATION OF THE BOLIVIAN PEOPLE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NATIONAL STATE ON THE BASIS OF THE BOLIVIAN NATION.”

The MNR advocates on behalf of an oppressed and subjugated Bolivian people, a people being led by the transnational political agenda of

Morales into a state of confrontation and division. The MNR must today represent the need for national unity in the face of the politics of divisiveness and racial, ethnic, social, regional, union and generational confrontations, among all the many others that Morales imposes to weaken the Bolivian national spirit. The MNR exists currently in every free citizen who wants change but with respect and order. The MNR represents, as always, the ideal of the Fatherland and of liberty and the project of unity so that the Bolivian people can keep this in their memory so we can recover freedom and democracy in Bolivia. The MNR is the strength of a revolutionary process that has been interrupted, defamed and distorted, but which lives in the hearts of Bolivian women and men who want a future based on freedom, progress and security for their children. There is a new era and a new challenge along the difficult path to the liberation of the Bolivian people.

2002 ELECTIONS

3. GL: In the year 2002, the electoral results showed that the MNR had fallen in the preferences shown by the citizens (its electoral victory was weak) and the Movement to Socialism (MAS) was emerging with immense backing. It pointed to a history-making future. What was the basis, exactly, behind the MNR's logic of governing at all costs? Was there no sense of the animosity on the part of that immense majority that did not vote in favor of Sánchez de Lozada? Even its "official" political allies had little sympathy for him. . . .

CSB: In the 2002 election, the MNR defeated the MAS, so that it cannot be said that there was "animosity on the part of the immense majority." According to that logic — anyone who does not vote for you is against you — MAS faced more resistance than the MNR, having come in second place. In the polls and in the electoral results, Evo Morales had more negatives than Sánchez de Lozada. The country was then in crisis, in a terrible economic crisis with a high level of unemployment which generated a great amount of

social discontent; in addition, it was a country with a weakened State and without authority, which was the legacy of the governments of Bánzer and Jorge Quiroga.

Another element of the 2002 election was the division among the political parties along the lines of personalities among the leaders and not on the basis of ideas or platforms. If we add the votes for the MNR with Sánchez de Lozada's 22.46%, the NFR with Reyes Villa's 20.91%, the MIR with Jaime Paz's

16.31%, and the UCS with Johnny Fernández's 5.51%, you have 65.49%, almost two-thirds of the total votes in comparison to MAS with its 20.94%. MAS represented only a fraction of the vote, without any support in many regions and under such condition, one cannot speak of immense support. If it had had immense support, it would have defeated us in the election.

As to "animosity," . . . An election is a competition seeking the popular vote and what there was with respect to Goni at that time was the natural electoral competition. Later on, we formed a coalition government that began a great national conversation which did not yield results because

of strictly economic reasons. There was no money at that moment to put in place the plan that combined “job-creation with infrastructural projects,” there was no international cooperation, only 150 million dollars were needed but the United States did not follow through, and the government’s economic team did not want to acquired resources by increasing the fiscal deficit. On the contrary, the economic cabinet insisted in increasing tax collection at a critical moment.

The failure of the national dialog between August and December of 2002 represented the victory of the conspirators over the democrats in the nation’s politics and of the economists over the politicians within the government, who opened the door — because of the economic crisis — to the call made by Morales on August 6, 2002 to “overthrow Goni” and its eventual success.

**POPULAR REVOLT AGAINST PRESIDENT
SÁNCHEZ DE LOAZADA**

4. **GL:** While it is true that President Sánchez de Lozada left the Palacio Quemado as a result of a population revolt, he still made the effort of transferring his government to the city of Santa Cruz. It was like saying: Occidente rejects me but Oriente shelters me. If that decision had been effective, it would have meant being on the verge of a fractured country. How much of the MNR supported this initiative? What were the arguments of those who insisted on resisting at any cost?

CSB: Once again, we need a fundamental historical detail: President Sánchez de Lozada left the country betrayed and defeated as a result of a conspiracy and a successful coup d'état which forced him to resign and leave for exile.

On October 17, 2003, democratic order is broken in Bolivia, as has already been explained, although this situation is disguised with formalities by the resignation which Sánchez de Lozada himself, in his letter, asks that it not be accepted. Let us read the so-called resignation letter:

Honorable Members of Congress:

Bolivia is living through critical hours. Democracy is under siege by corporatist interests, and by political and union groups that do not believe in it and that use it for their convenience. All this forms the basis of sedition which, with the pretext of the issue of exporting natural gas, has violated the essence of democracy, which is the respect for the choice made in the ballot box to elect those who govern. That banner has been used, refusing to dialog, to get me to resign, attributing to me not only responsibility for the current problems that confront the Republic, but also for the lack of solutions. If that were the case, my resignation, which I place today for the consideration of the Honorable National Congress, should be sufficient to solve the nation's problems. Although I deeply wish it, I am afraid that the solution is not that simple. The deep causes for this crisis require a fundamental reasoning that the passions now unleashed do not allow. Time will take care of doing so on our behalf, and I commend myself to the passage of time in

search for a serene and objective accounting which denied to us by today's circumstance. It has cost us Bolivians a lot of blood and a lot of pain to conquer and sustain democracy. We know today that democracy is a privilege which must be preserved to maintain the unity of the Bolivian Nation with freedom and dignity. The President of the Republic is a symbol of this unity in the midst of national diversity, diversity that ought to be a source of pride and not of conflict or violence. By placing my resignation for the consideration of the Honorable National Congress, I do so with the deep conviction that there is no room for accepting it since a democratically elected President cannot be removed by means of duress and violence that are beyond the law. This would be a disastrous precedent for Bolivian and continental democracy. Congress, according to the responsibilities contained in article 68, paragraph 4 of the State's Political Constitution, must decide whether to accept or reject it. If it accepts it, the Vice-President of the Republic must assume the Presidency and carry it out until the end of the constitutional period

according to article 93-II of the Constitution. This is a task that the Congress must face with the responsibility that the current hour demands. But it is my duty to warn you that dangers that loom over the Fatherland remain in place: national disintegration, corporatist and union authoritarianism, and fratricidal violence. These dangers will accumulate and, given the historical circumstances in which the foundations of democracy have now been questioned. Let us hope that, God willing, we are not forced to regret all this some day. Honorable Members of Congress: I have served Bolivia with commitment and boundless dedication. This is the greatest reward that I have been able to achieve throughout my life. I thank God for this privilege and I ask Him from the bottom of my heart to shed light and to bless all Bolivian women and men.

*Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada
Constitutional President of the Republic*

To the issue of the supposed attempt to move the government to Santa Cruz, that idea never took place nor was it even considered. The

Constitutional President, forced to step down, did so for the sake of national unity and in light of the country's situation. The overthrow had taken place and still there was no letter of resignation, and then the President received all types of pressure and agreed to sign a letter only for the sake of avoiding the suspension of international aid to Bolivia, when the Ambassador from the USA, along with other international officials, senators and representatives pressured him and explained that, without such a letter, all forms of cooperation would be immediately withdrawn. Although I was never in agreement with the President signing the resignation letter, I participated in modifying its text. The letter was edited and signed in the airport of Santa Cruz and it was requested THAT IT NOT BE ACCEPTED.

This letter is a document that demonstrates the defects of forced consent and is therefore null and void. It was signed by the President against his will and by extreme pressures deliberately created to force him and his government to surrender. In addition to the self-evident demonstration of the violence committed in order to obtain the resignation letter, this letter has also served to cloak a "coup d'etat" as a "resignation." By signing it under irresistible pressure, Goni's patriotism was shown to be more important than his own political safety.

BETRAYAL BY CARLOS MESA

5. **GL:** The strategy of “stepping aside” but not down [“PASO AL COSTADO”] on the part of the Cabinet (and maybe of the government) implemented by Vice-President Carlos Mesa, prior to the events of October, ended up saving the institutional forms of the presidential succession of our democracy. At the end of eight years, how do you assess what happened? Was it a good move on the part of Carlos Mesa?

CSB: The so-called “stepping aside” maneuver on the part of Carlos Mesa was nothing more than TREASON, which is a grave offense to loyalty and trust. Mesa wanted to be president at all costs. He had asked me at the start of the 2002 campaign — and he actually asked Goni — that he (Mesa) ought to be the presidential candidate. He placed onerous conditions to accept the Vice-Presidency, in effect, he sold himself for the candidacy to the point that on the same day as the candidates were announced, Mesa was still negotiating financial conditions and range of powers. I made the mistake of acceding to Mesa, we agreed to his demands and ended up paying the price.

In January 2003, with the National Dialog having failed, Mesa proposed to me the “orderly substitution of Goni” because he saw that he was

very “tired.” We held a discussion and asked him to help us to strengthen the government, and immediately informed President Sánchez de Lozada; meetings were held. Mesa denied everything, he reiterated his loyalty to the President and the President reiterated his trust, claiming in private that he could not dismiss the Vice-President; the result was an intense and indirect campaign, politically manipulated by Mesa against me, under a guideline implemented behind the scenes predicated on the basis that “in order to bring down Goni, Sánchez Berzain must first fall.”

Mesa wanted to be President of the Republic at all costs, and as I said in private and publicly on repeated occasions, he had the time to accomplish it, and I believe that he would have succeeded without having to resort to treachery or to the elimination of the patriotic project as he did because of his political and financial ambitions.

The announcement of the “PASO AL COSTADO” was an act of treason against Bolivia, the President and the government. It was an act that showed his hand in a game he had been playing secretly at first and later, openly.

Mesa knew everything that was going on, he approved and authorized policies because he had participated in all the meetings in which decisions were made and, additionally, all decisions were legal. Until his declaration of “PASO AL COSTADO,” Mesa insisted on being informed, proactive, supportive and interested in resolving conflicts. All this, he did in front of the

President. At the same time, he was the one who, in private, asked for aggressive actions and decisions.

Mesa had all the information regarding the government, but the President, in order to protect Mesa's image, had limited his public exposure on the issues dealing with the conflict, and Mesa, with his image intact, used the information to carry out his treachery by providing information to, and scheming with, Evo Morales and the operatives of the coup.

Proof of the treachery was the so-called "October agenda," the first act of Carlos Mesa's government, which established "amnesty for the coup participants, trial for Sánchez de Lozada and his collaborators, and a constitutional assembly," to which he added "a government without parties." Written and public proof of the act of treachery are the two amnesty decrees: DS No. 27234 of October 31, 2003 and DS No. 27237 of November 4, 2003. In these decrees, Carlos Diego Mesa, as President, pardons himself and pardons his operatives and partners of the crimes they committed that take him to the presidency.

The considerations included in the supreme decree 27234 state: "That the Political Constitution of the State, in its section 13 of Article 96 establishes that the President of the Republic has the right to decree amnesties for crimes committed against the security of the State; by virtue of the fact that crimes against the security of the state that occurred in the last pub-

lic protests are catalogued as political . . . which, according to penal doctrine, are defined not by objective criteria but instead by subjective ones that deal with the means by which they establish action within the context of the specific criminal type . . . that the events that occurred in the month of October can be formally interpreted as crimes of the type specified in the Law of the National System of Public Security , but considering the characteristic and precedents regarding the means used to promote these acts, it becomes evident that they did not reflect intent to commit a criminal act. . . .

The crimes specified in the Law of National System of Public Security subject to amnesty are: public incitement to break the law; evasion; making, trafficking or possessing lethal explosive or airborne substances, etc.; attempts against modes of transportation; attempts against the security of public services; extremely grave injuries; light and grave injuries; injuries causing death; theft; aggravated theft; and extortion. These are the types of crimes that come under the amnesty granted by Mesa because he decreed that “they do not reflect intent to commit a criminal act. . . (!)”

Finally, let’s not forget that the amnesty was decreed only for the criminals while he was laying out plans for the persecution and trials of those who, having formed part of the government, had defended the public order, democracy and the Rule of Law.

HISTORY OF TRANSFORMATIVE MEASURES BY THE MNR

6. GL: The MNR is no longer in the government. With the passing of time, one can see that Popular Participation (1994) was a revolutionary measure, the same as the Solidarity Bond (BONOSOL, 1997), which is actually a pension program for elderly farmers. Which revolutionary measures were not implemented? Although the last government (2002-03) looked to be simply worried about correcting the course of development of the Capital Infusion or CAPITALIZATION measure .

CSB: Let's make it clear that the Bonosol is not a pension program for elderly for farmers, it is a pension program for all elderly Bolivians, including those who have retirement income, since it comes from funds of the Bolivian people resulting from the capitalization initiatives. We have already mentioned that the Bolivia of the year 2001 is more urban than rural. Unfortunately, the Bonosol, in addition to changing its name to Bono Solidario, has been distorted and is unsustainable over time because they have turned it into a donation that will be depleted

along with other bonds when the State is left without resources to pay, and that situation is very close at hand.

The first thing that needed to be done in the agenda begun in August of 2002 was overcoming the economic crisis by creating employment. Because of the overthrow of October 17, 2003, the urgent need to generate employment to overcome the crisis was not addressed; that is how the great push for rural development with irrigation systems, new equipment, increased production for the internal market and for export; and rural electrification projects were all suspended. They were needed, and the need remains today, to convert the farmer into a productive citizen of the middle class: homes with connections to natural gas for all Bolivians, mass construction of housing projects, road construction such as the Victor Paz Estenssoro highway, the paved road from Cobija to Tarija, the east-west two-way road and others, which are needed to this day but have not been done.

Strategically, it was time to advance with social measures such as SUMI (Seguro Universal Materno Infantil/Universal Insurance for Mothers and Infants) in order to institutionalize them and

keep them sustainable over time; educational reform needs attention in order to make our children competent in technology and give them an education that will make them competitive in today's world; programs in health and education as strategies aimed at narrowing inequality. In the area of politics, we should strengthen Popular Participation [budget-sharing measures], engage in a new constitutional reform while preserving democracy and the Rule of Law. In the economic front, we must ensure a solid economy for Bolivia by establishing long-term markets for gas and increase productivity; the freeing up of the economy in order to guarantee and multiply earnings from gas exports, which, after the overthrow of 2003 and measures taken subsequently, have not been possible.

GL: The Bolivian people, almost in its entirety, does not like the privatization of our natural resources nor of our state enterprises. The MNR did so (1993-97), and that was perhaps the reason for its fall. What benefits did the privatization of Bolivian Oil bring us? Or, in another case, the privatization of Lloyd Aéreo Bolivia Airlines (LAB)? Or the sale of the national railways (ENFE)? That “epidemic” of privatization in Latin America looked like something only of the

moment because now it looks to be out of fashion in all contexts.

CSB: Natural resources were never privatized. Natural resources were kept, and are kept, as properties of the State (it is a requirement of the constitutional system created by the MNR since the start of the National Revolution). Only the method of concessions (which already existed) was improved with a modern regulatory system by creating the superintendencies.

Also, the process of capital infusion (CAPITALIZACIÓN) was not a sale. We must remember that the process entailed establishing the value of the national enterprise, and then the parties interested in investing in it had to provide a sum that was invested directly into it, leaving the value of the national corporation in the form of stock in the hands of the Bolivian people. It meant the preservation of the national heritage while infusing it with private capital, technology and administration in order to attack corruption. The State turned over its stock to the people of Bolivia, which received its returns through Bonosol; these activities were administered by a Capitalization Fund. Capitalization is technically an increase in the amount of capital through the

presence of a new partner and administrative contract. For political reasons already explained, they demonized the capitalization project and today Bolivia has returned to statism, with no capital, without leading-edge technology, with less production and much corruption.

The benefits of the process of capitalization have already been squandered by Evo Morales and his government. The capitalization of LAB was the most critical because of the political battle waged by its union leadership with mean-spirited interests and lack of wisdom to preserve its source of employment. This firm was liquidated by the determination and political pressure of the current government to undermine the process of capitalization. LAB had been flying more planes and routes, including Europe when, once again, with criminal trials and accusations initiated from within the government, they drove its chief executive out of the country. Today, they have created BOA and are trying to repeat what they did to LAB with Aerosur (to try criminally executives of private enterprises in order to bankrupt them or to take their companies away).

The capitalization of ENFE was done through two companies: the Oriental (Eastern Railway) Network and the Occidental (Western Railway)

Network; the Oriental Network functioned without any problems because it does not have the competition of a paved highway as is the case with the Occidental Network, which was reduced, by virtue of the highway, to transport minerals at a time when international prices made it impossible to export minerals from Bolivia. With a paved highway that covers the same routes and destinations as the Occidental Network, there is no way that passenger railway traffic or even non-mining cargo traffic could function without subsidies; for example, it was cheaper and faster to bring a container or a vehicle from Arica on a truck than by rail, and it is less expensive and faster to travel by bus from Cochabamba to Oruro, or to La Paz, or to Arica than by train or railway car. This affected the population centers along the routes with the expected disgruntlement resulting from the elimination of unprofitable routes and services, a situation that was politically exploited by the trade unions as part of the process of demonizing capitalization. In addition, in the case of ENFE, the process was further soiled by the corruption that remained in ENFE, that is, the part of ENFE that was not capitalized; this was disastrous because the executives and responsible personnel of management were tried and jailed.

EVO MORALES'S STATE APPROPRIATIONS AND GAS SALES

8. GL: The opposite of the process of capitalization are nationalizations, such as the ones being done by President Evo Morales, almost always on the first of May. From your distance (physical and as political opposition), how do you see the effects of this measure? Will we continue to explore in search of gas as with the foreign companies? What would be a good solution for the people and the State?

CSB: Nationalizing is not the same as state-ownership, and what Morales has done is to have the State take over, not nationalize. You cannot nationalize that which belongs to the nation, you can have private property be taken over by the state and that is what Morales does halfway.

The so-called nationalizations of Evo are only “state appropriations,” since the capitalized companies never stopped belonging to the nation, they were Bolivian enterprises, their registrations and operations were in Bolivia, 50% of their stocks belonged to Bolivians, they were traded in the Bolivian stock exchange, they were

subject to Bolivian laws, they generated employment and tax revenues in Bolivia, they continued to be Bolivian companies, but were not administered by the government in power and no longer represented loot for politicians and unions. Morales's state appropriations have only taken away from the Bolivian people its source of pensions and has expropriated the participation of foreign partners, subjecting the country to lawsuits in the millions, destroying Bolivia's credibility in matters of investment and forcing it to pay extraordinary prices and sometimes entering into negotiations that bring back political corruption to the sole benefit of Morales's government. The pseudo-nationalizations of Morales are pure state appropriations and centralism and it is not the same as being a nationalist.

The subject of gas is nearly finished for Bolivia. We are out of the market and out of time. The historical moment to become a gas-producing power has been lost. This has happened precisely because of the overthrow of October 2003, the statist policies and the actions and demagogic decisions on the part of Evo and his government.

Bolivia should be exporting gas to Mexico and California, and since this was the pretext for the

coup d'état of October 17, 2003, they eliminated the project. Peru has gone ahead of Bolivia in the production and export of gas. Bolivia has lowered its production for lack of exploration and diminished exploitation as a consequence of lack of investments and trust, the results of the state appropriations by Morales.

We should be selling more gas to Brazil and in the year 2004, they should have built a second gas pipeline of larger capacity (wider) to that country. They have managed to achieve the opposite: the current production is barely enough to satisfy Brazil and we have reduced the amounts to Argentina. Brazil and Argentina have found large gas reservoirs, which they are developing. Bolivia does not have the capital nor the technology for the intensive development of this resource. Chile does not want to purchase Bolivian gas, nor does Bolivia want to sell to the Chileans. There is even a shortage of gas within Bolivia, the pipeline network of natural gas to homes — which should already be able to cover the entire national territory — is very far behind schedule.

Bolivia will have to return sooner rather than later to the path of realism, and seek capital and

technology in the best way possible. The longer we delay, the farther behind and the poorer we will be.

COCA AND NARCO TRAFFICKING

9. GL: President Evo Morales wishes to make history by providing a definitive solution to the problem of the coca leaf. We already know that the surplus is converted into cocaine. At the same time, there is insistence that its daily and regular consumption is for medicinal purposes, but it is possible to have doubts about this. What should be done on this matter? What has been your experience? Because the government of Sánchez de Lozada also witnessed excess coca production and much narco-trafficking. . . .

CSB: Evo Morales continues to act as the national leader of illegal coca farmers. They have taken him to power and sustain him there, and that has a political cost, which is the increase of the production of illegal coca with the exclusive purpose of producing drugs. The increase in drug production that comes out of Bolivian coca forms part of the political needs of Evo Morales's government. The rest are fallacious arguments.

According to the law and to international agreements, only two types of coca production remain in Bolivia:

1. Legal cultivation, located basically in the Yungas of La Paz, with a maximum extension of 12,00 hectares (29,640 acres) for the purpose of traditional, medicinal and legal consumption.
2. Illegal cultivation, located in the tropics of Cochabamba, generically known as Chapare, which in the year 2003 occupied, more or less, 3,000 hectares (7,410 acres) (they had been reduced 15 times over 10 years). This coca is destined exclusively to narco-trafficking.

The question is whether Bolivia is already a narco-State, or how long will it be before it becomes one. To answer this question, you must comply with the laws and international agreements. But this is precisely what Evo Morales cannot do, because he would lose the political support and the mobilization capabilities of the illegal coca producers, and even worse: he would begin to have social conflicts and confrontations of the sort in which he has participated, promoted and led in the past. The reason why the coca growers today are not a problem for the government is because they are the government; they do whatever they wish with state support, they do not obey the laws, they increase cultivation and

have completed the integration of the circle of drug production, because now almost all coca paste is produced in the same sites as the illegal cultivation of coca and production of cocaine clorhydrate almost entirely within Bolivia.

The differences with our governments is that the MNR came to power with the support of the social sectors with which it had political commitments on governing measures that were legal, and that we governed on behalf of all Bolivians. Our contributions on behalf of reducing illegal coca was fundamental and it is the source of our confrontation with Evo Morales and the personal animosity and even death threats he has publicly expressed against me. In the fight against narco-trafficking, we implemented the best system possible with international cooperation, which Evo has dismembered in the name of coca-producing sovereignty but not national sovereignty.

The fight against narco-trafficking was, until October 17, 2003, STATE policy, then it became a government policy, and later still, the policy of a group of illegal coca producing unions which ended all international real cooperation against narco-trafficking. The production of coca and cocaine has increased under this government

and, unfortunately, so, too, has internal consumption. This situation leads to a regional and global issue that is increasingly persistent, which is whether Bolivia is a narco-State or is in the process of becoming one, governed, as it is — to put it minimally by illegal coca growers. The current and future states of this country, in the context of this issue, are very dangerous.

EVO MORALES AND 21ST CENTURY SOCIALISM

10. GL: The Bolivian population in general has begun to speculate about the possible candidacy of President Morales in the year 2014. Although there is still much time left, it is already possible to notice that at the center of the discussion is the contrast between two concepts: legality versus legitimacy. In the meantime, the Bolivian popular movement (Indians, workers, miners, coca growers) is concerned with the fact that the entire “process of change” rests on the shoulders of its leader. What is your opinion on this matter? What do you think will happen?

CSB: Morales and his government are not the results of a Bolivian political project. They form part of the socialism of the 21st century, also called the Bolivarian project or the Alba group (Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas), born out of the union between Caracas and Havana, which at the start of this century, re-created Castro’s foco strategy of the 60s and converted it into one of electoral foco, replacing in the end armed struggle with electoral manipulation. As a result of the alliance between Caracas and Havana,

Castro received money and oil, which saved him from suffering economic agony he was experiencing toward the end of the 90s, while Hugo Chávez obtained security, a political project and experience (“know how”) from the oldest and longest lasting dictatorship in the hemisphere to remain in power.

We, the Latin American democrats, were very late in perceiving this transnational, neo-imperialist and authoritarian project. Even today, many politicians, union members, businessmen, academics and citizens do not see the true nature of a regional political power that Cuba controls dictatorially and which, by destroying the democracies, is taking Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador and Nicaragua, which tried, and continues to try, to take over Honduras.

The socialism of the 21st century has a great deal of influence — through political agreements to provide Venezuelan oil — in other countries, such as those that comprise Petrocaribe, which is what has given it the majority of votes at the regional level and allows it to manipulate politically, almost at will, the Organization of American States (OAS), among other international organizations.

An essential characteristic of this political franchise of the 21st century is that it comes disguised as democracy, with a lot of money to act and mobilize politically, with a populist character and a discourse that pretends to eliminate exclusionary practices, poverty, racism, or any other element applicable to the reality of the country in which they operate. Its fundamental discourse (anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist and anti-United State) is cloaked in democracy until they take power. Its slogans and symbols continue being Castroite: "Fatherland or death . . . we will overcome!; To victory always!; its symbol is Che Guevara, its center of pilgrimage Havana; they have no political adversaries, they point to enemies. They present themselves wrapped in the anti-poverty flag when what they do is increase it.

Their politics are statist and centralized and they're only in search of the total concentration of power and the indefinite stay in it through constitutional reforms, under a model contracted out to pseudo-academics of a Spanish university who have designed the constitutions of Venezuela. Bolivia and Ecuador and with whom they have even entered into an agreement to give a doctorate in Constitutional Law in Havana.

Among the mechanisms they use are the following: a smear campaign against the political party system, looking for its elimination, the creation of, or taking advantage of, crises, the exacerbation of tensions and internal or external confrontations, such as Morales has done in Bolivia following scrupulously this agenda.

On the way to power, they aim to undermine democracy, the institutions and the leadership of social, entrepreneurial, political and regional groups. Once in power, they unleash the persecution of politicians, journalists, entrepreneurs, union leaders, civic leaders and every person who disagrees or carries influence. The objective is to frighten the citizenry through terror and to send a signal to the common citizen that he will be fine if he doesn't get in the way of the government or enter politics; nothing is possible against the president — a coca grower, in the case of Bolivia — who has concentrated all power and is giving the final touches to a single-party system. With nationalistic speeches, they take over companies, media and resources with the goal of eliminating economic freedom and freedom of expression, and of [material support] for democratic initiatives; the tools used include, among others, the politicization of the judiciary to per-

secute and neutralize opponents by inventing crimes and placing the judicial process in their own service or to be servile, criminalizing political activity including a free press.

These countries, controlled by the Venezuela-Cuban project, keep political prisoners, persecute and force into exile. They confiscate and otherwise commit acts of aggression against the news media and make attempts against the freedom of the press; they systematically violate human rights and ignore property rights in the name of a revolution they aim at making permanent despite their human, economic, social and political failures.

The process includes a new category of rich men, members of the political elites and their friends, aided by Venezuelan resources, corruption and other crimes accomplished under the auspices of their power. They are forming their own bourgeoisie ("bolibourgeoisie" in Venezuela), and they place in evidence the country's poverty while demonstrating the ostentation of the new goods and luxuries enjoyed by the political actors, their families, friends and dependents. They are creating more inequality, since the self-described revolutionaries of the

21st century have access to goods unavailable to common citizens. We have and increase in corruption, economic crisis, less employment, higher cost of living and an alarming lack of security. Narcotrafficking ends up becoming the lord of the realm , converting States — in various degrees — into semi-failures. These countries have regressed as a result of this process between 30 and 40 years in their democratic, social, institutional and economic standing. Unfortunately, the coca-producing country of Morales is one of these States which, by the application of the same formula, is realizing disastrous results at an even greater speed.

In Bolivia, they have managed to approve, through illegal and violent means, the constitution of Evo Morales, and he will be able to try to become reelected as many times as he wishes because he can amend the constitutional text with an ordinary law by his domination of the legislative branch, whose members have lost parliamentary immunity. There is no possibility of constitutionally controlling him because he has also appropriated the judicial branch, including the Constitutional Court. In addition, the judiciary has approved his repressive laws applicable to everyone, starting with politicians, through

the members of the press, and ending with the union leaders who had believed that he would carry them to power.

Morales has created his own legal system, which is neither legitimate nor legal, since it arises out of the systematic and repeated violation of the Political Constitution of the Bolivian State and its replacement. He has broken all the democratic institutional bases of Bolivia and has replaced them with spurious law in order to wield total power. Morales's constitution is constitutionally null and void, and the restoration of democracy in Bolivia will take place by leaving it without any effect, by ending with this semi-legality (which has been disguised as a Plurinational State along with other fallacies), by reverting the institutional bankruptcy and eliminating the formalization (not institutionalization) of mechanisms designed to violate freedom and fundamental rights. The problem Morales has in becoming re-elected is not a question of legality, not even of votes, because he also controls the electoral system and the voter registry and thus can commit all the fraud he wants. His problem rests with the results of his government, the economic crisis to which he has taken the country, and which will continue to aggravate;

the crisis of security for the citizenry linked to the growth of narco-trafficking in which he is a participant as promoter, interested party and responsible agent as its protector and national leader; the crisis of undelivered expectations and the labyrinth he has created; the prices, the poverty, the inequality which, instead of decreasing, has been on the rise. Morales knows this, and he knows it so well that he is now playing the card of vindicating Bolivia's right of access to the sea in order to recover popular support.

Morales's loss of prestige in the international arena is growing because the world has begun to see who he is and what he is doing. Allowing for the differences, "Morales could have been Mandela but preferred being Mugabe." He could have been a national leader but preferred destroying the nation and becoming a tyrant.

**THERE IS NO DEMOCRACY IN BOLIVIA:
PERSECUTION, PRISONERS AND
POLITICAL EXILE**

11. GL: From the start, the fight against corruption has been seen as mixed in with the political fight. Something is failing in the Law as in the administration of justice. Part of the opposition is found outside the country. But these are not news for Bolivians. As a result of this situation, will the MNR run for national elections with candidates without any complications? How are they planning on overcoming the actual risks and present an alternative set of candidates?

CSB: On the subject of the fight against corruption, the problem with Morales's government can be summarized in three ways:

1. The government of Evo Morales is more corrupt than any other.
2. Morales has converted the fight against corruption into an instrument of political repression against adversaries he may wish to punish or eliminate: civic leaders, businesses, unionists, journalists, citizens, and even the military.

3. Morales controls the entire system of prosecutors and judges in the service of his interests, he has criminalized politics and has converted repression into a judicial matter, such that the so-called fight against corruption by this government is, in itself, the greatest act of corruption and violation of human rights.

Today, parts of the opposition are political prisoners in Bolivia, others are being prosecuted and persecuted; there are political, civic and business leaders, judges, unionists and citizens who are persecuted abroad and are in exile because their lives in Bolivia are at risk with no means to defend themselves because there is no presumption of innocence, there is no due process, there are no impartial judges, there is no guarantee whatsoever, and, in general, they are accused by the very authors of the crimes they pretend to judge. Bolivia has a POLITICAL EXILE, and the exile is the product of POLITICAL PERSECUTION, and this is truly novel for Bolivian democracy since its recuperation in 1982, although not so in the context of the nation's history.

The novelty is even more grievous in that Bolivia has stopped being a democracy and has a

government that attained power through elections, but which is authoritarian and not democratic, because by its actions it failed to comply with the essential democratic elements articulated in Art. 3 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter of the OAS, which, in addition to being a viable international treaty, is also Bolivian law.

Art. 3 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter establishes that: "Essential elements of representative democracy are, among others, the respect for human rights and fundamental liberties; access to power and the exercise of power subject to the rule of law; the conduct of periodic elections that are free, fair and based on secret and universal suffrage as an expression of the will of the people; a pluralist system of parties and political organizations; and the separation and independence of branches of government."

An essential element is defined as that which represents the very nature of the entity, all that is permanent and invariable within it, the most important, something on which the very existence of the matter depends, which, in this case, is democracy. Thus, in the absence of any of the four elements transcribed above, democracy is no longer the same, it no longer exists.

In applying Art. 3 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter to the Plurinational State of Morales, we see that:

- 1.- There is no respect for human rights and fundamental liberties; that he has created his own “legal formalities” (not of law) that violate the fundamental rights of different groups of people, population sectors and regions;
- 2.- The electoral organizations are controlled and managed by the government and are no longer independent;
- 3.-The political party system has been destroyed and the leadership detained, prosecuted and/or in exile, or, alternatively, submissive to the government as it seeks to consolidate a single-party system, the MAS;
- 4.- The separation and independence of branches of government no longer exist because Morales controls the legislative branch, and prosecuted, removed from office, frightened, and forced members of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court of Justice to resign so that he could appoint through the executive branch his own people to control the

judicial branch through which he persecutes and criminalizes anyone he wants. He is now rigging an election of judges with the goal of creating his own legal system.

In this scenario of a country without democracy, elections are a farce, a subterfuge in which the parties and all the sectors that defend freedom in Bolivia must seek to form a united front, a project of national unity for the recuperation of democracy and the restoration of the Rule of Law.

There is only one political act that the MNR should try to lead or in which it should participate and it is this project of national unity to recuperate democracy. We have to configure a single ticket against authoritarianism and the restoration of democracy. This is a similar task to the one of the late 1970s then dealing with the military dictatorships, but more difficult because today's authoritarianism is disguised as democracy. The actual crux of Bolivia's historical contradiction lies in the perpetuation of authoritarianism and its replacement with freedom and democracy.

**THE BOLIVIA THAT IS LEAVING... AND
THE BOLIVIA THAT IS TO COME**

12. GL: We Bolivians aspire to an economic take-off, to form part of a new array of countries that can balance the capitalist marketplace with the best of socialism, to form a democratic society, to develop the rural dimension. . . . What is, in your judgment, the Bolivia that we will live over the next ten years?

CSB: In the short term, Bolivia is in crisis. It is already in crisis. There is a crisis of democracy, there is a crisis of freedom, there is an economic crisis, there is a safety crisis, there is an employment crisis, there is a crisis of confidence, corruption, foreign intervention . . . and it's just the beginning. Today, in

Bolivia, few people are making much money, there is an increase in construction, imports and contraband. There is apparent growth, construction, but the other face is a Bolivia of unemployment, with high cost of living, with lower purchasing power and income, with larger margins of social and economic inequalities, with increase in narcotics trafficking through increases in pro-

duction and consumption of the drug. There is a government that sees its fiscal deficit increase and that has to continue to subsidize fuel; which has floated a significant amount of bonds that it technically cannot repay. Legal exports indicate a rise in prices, not in volume or diversity; we have once again become a fundamentally mining country and exporter of raw materials. There is no serious foreign investment. There is a confluence of new partners such as Cuba, Venezuela, Iran and others that, even if they had sufficient capital, don't have the needed technology.

But the issue is not only an economic one. Social and political issues are more serious. The Bolivian society is confronting and has increasing rifts in this division. Not only has Morales managed to gin up class struggle, he has also successfully promoted and sustained ethnic and racial contentions, regional confrontations, generational, sectoral clashes including clashes within the work force. There are privileged sectors — such as the illegal coca growers — and marginalized sectors — such as the judiciary — for example. There are regions supportive of the government, such as El Alto and the Chapare, and regions made to submit by force, such as the eastern Bolivian departments, the Chaco and the valley regions.

I repeat that Bolivia is today a country of political prisoners, politically persecuted people, and political exiles. With people reduced to submission and forced to be quiet, who, as Pedro Domingo Murillo would say, is living a sort of internal exile within the Fatherland.

Before Morales finishes this period for which he has been re-elected, Bolivia will be feeling the effects of the crisis severely, aggravated by the exercise of totalitarian power.

13. GL: What would you say is the Bolivia that is leaving and the Bolivia that is to come?

CSB: The Bolivia that wishes to be known as neo-liberal and as a consensual democracy, that used to be the Bolivia of the recuperation and the construction of democracy and economic stability is already gone. It ended in 2005 after being in death's throes since the overthrow of Sánchez de Lozada.

The Bolivia that is leaving is one with a Constitution that divides instead of uniting, that threatens instead of protecting, that regulates instead of establishing principles, that is made for abuse and not to provide guarantees, the

coca-producing Bolivia . This Bolivia, which is not really Bolivia, which they don't any longer wish to call Nation, is divided into 36 nationalities, and has been defined as a Plurinational State instead of a National State. It is a country forced into internal confrontations and intervened by a foreign project.

The one that is leaving is an authoritarian and coca-growing State created by Morales, which is not Bolivia because it has no freedom and only simulates democracy. Leaving is the Bolivia that is subjugated to a political project and an economic experiment that it never wanted and did not deserve. Leaving is the country that lives and moves within a complete crisis, a crisis of the State, of government and of identity. It can take a while, but it is leaving because it is historically not possible nor viable, it is anti-national and unhistorical. Leaving is the attempt to lead the country against the grain of history, of a non-viable project.

The Bolivia that is to come, will come after a most intense crisis, the result of post-morality. It will be a Bolivia in which it will be essential to construct unity and consensus, baseline agreements to strengthen it, progress and security in

the long run; it is urgent that we overcome the confrontational elements that have generated the crisis, to restore democracy and the Rule of Law.

The Bolivia that is to come is modern, much closer to the successful countries of Latin America than to the failed and troubled ones. This is the Bolivia that we owe to the next generations.

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