10-27-1989

Nicaragua: Interview With Isidro Tellez, President Of Map-ml (popular Action Movement-marxist Leninist)

Deborah Tyroler

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/noticen

Recommended Citation

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Latin America Digital Beat (LADB) at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in NotiCen by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact amywinter@unm.edu.
Nicaragua: Interview With Isidro Tellez, President Of Map-ml (popular Action Movement-marxist Leninist)

by Deborah Tyroler
Category/Department: General
Published: Friday, October 27, 1989

The MAP-ML participated in the 1984 elections, with Tellez as its presidential candidate. For the 1990 elections, the party is fielding its own presidential slate. The interview below, which took place prior to the last week in September, was distributed by the Nicaraguan Embassy, Netherlands (The Hague, Netherlands), via GeoNet, a commercial computer network. One of the GeoNet systems ("GEO2"), employed by users in the United Kingdom and members of international non-governmental organizations, routed the interview on 10/17/89 to Peacenet, a non-profit computer network based in San Francisco, Calif.

Q.: What is the role of the Resistance after the Tela Accords?
Tellez: The contra has been weakened by the accords, but that doesn't mean the threat it represents has disappeared. After all, the contras were organized by the US government and the fact that its main leaders have asked for political asylum in the US can produce a negative psychological effect among the troops. They can become vandals and can organize themselves into apolitical mercenaries. We believe elections won't solve this problem. The war may have stopped for now, but the future depends on the results of the elections: favorable to the right, emergence of a political pact, or reactivation of the military option.

Q.: Was the National Dialogue important? Why?
Tellez: Its purpose was to reach an accord so that the Sandinista government would have more bargaining power at Tela. Most of the concessions granted were for the sake of the electoral process. We believed electoral issues were secondary and wanted to solve the peasants' and workers' problems, since they are the ones who have suffered the most. Even if those demands were not met, such were our political objectives. We presented our democratic demands, like free trade union associations and a revision of the state salary policy, among others. The poverty of the people of Nicaragua was not discussed. The discussion was focused on the electoral process for the most part.

Q.: Will you participate in the elections alone or in an alliance with other parties?
Tellez: We would like to keep the seats in parliament we have won, so we don't think a united left-wing opposition front is possible.

Q.: Why the proliferation of political parties?
Tellez: There are lots of trends of thought here, but the majority of the 21 political parties are similar.

Q.: What is your view regarding foreign assistance to the contras or to the political parties?
Tellez: We are against any kind of interference from any foreign government.

Q.: What about the economic embargo?
Tellez: We are against it. Our relationship with the US should be without any economic pressures. The US thinks that Central America is its hacienda, but things are changing here. The people are beginning to fight for their rights and it will have to change its policy.

Q.: Have you had any problems in exercising your right to organize your party for political action?
Tellez: In one factory our trade union association was expelled. Those things happen because it is difficult to legalize our trade unions, the Labor Ministry hampers the procedures. That kind of sectarian attitude has diminished but it is still there.

Q.: What other demands does your party have that were not resolved at the National Dialogue?
Tellez: Most of our demands could be resolved during that type of meeting. We will continue fighting for the vindication of the rights of the workers.

Q.: Do you believe the basic conditions for a free and fair electoral process exist?
Tellez: Our demands have to do with the workers' rights to have access to their democratic rights.

Q.: What is then your party's goal?
Tellez: To strengthen the organization.
of the workers' movement. Q.: How would your party deal with the economic crisis? Tellez: The country's resources are exhausted. A new economic policy that will be beneficial to the masses, to the workers that have carried the biggest burden, should be implemented. The rights of the bureaucracy should be diminished. A better housing and health policy should be established. We believe the army should be reorganized with the popular militia. We proposed the suspension of the military draft for activists and electoral candidates, but the rightwing imposed its own proposal.

Q.: Which political viewpoints are promoted in La Prensa? Tellez: It manipulates the news to fit their own rightwing interests. It represents the most reactionary sectors of the society, those who follow the US Embassy's designs. Q.: What is the FSLN's popularity margin? Tellez: Even though its popularity has diminished, I think it is more popular than the rightwing opposition.

Q.: What is the long-term solution to Nicaragua's problems? Tellez: The proletarian revolution. It is happening not only in Central America but also in Latin America. Q.: What electoral results do you anticipate? Tellez: It's difficult to say, but I think the FSLN will win and perhaps it will have to come to an agreement with the rightwing opposition...

Q.: If the FSLN wins, do you think the US should normalize relations with Nicaragua? Tellez: I think so, as long as the US learns to respect Nicaragua's right of self-determination.

-- End --