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From Institutional Demolition to the Shock Doctrine

Why did Lasso let organized crime consolidate and expand its control over territories?



Sources: Rebellion

It must be said clearly and forcefully, there is no war. It is a pure invention of the government to get out of a political impasse generated by its own mistakes. Of course, there is violence from organized crime groups, but it is violence that is functional to power and created and sustained from power.

The Decree of Internal Armed Conflict (Executive Decree No. 111) which was issued on 09-01-24, actually sets up a strategy that is directly inscribed in the Shock Doctrine as condition of possibility for economic adjustment.

While it is true that the country He was experiencing a wave of violence that had turned him, in a few months, into a one of the most violent countries in the world, it is also true that both the Guillermo Lasso's government, as well as Daniel Noboa's government, never did Nothing to control the crisis of citizen security.

Despite having the possibilities, the human and financial resources, and the institutional frameworks to monitor the Organized crime groups' increasing control over the territories and exert violence on citizens, in fact, they never did the slightest attempt to stop that violence.

Why the government of Guillermo Lasso? (2021-2023), allowed organized crime groups to consolidate and expand their control over the territories? Why did he resign not only territories but also public policies for the benefit of criminal groups Organized? Why did he subject society to an intensive program of fiscal austerity when it knew that the cutting and elimination of programs Were the social problems going to directly favor organized crime groups?

There are some elements that support and confirm the presence of the narco-state or lumpen-accumulation in the government by Guillermo Lasso. One of those elements is in the law that Lasso sent to the National Assembly on October 28, 2021 and which was approved a month later then with votes, curiously, from the progressive Revolution movement Citizen. This is the *Organic Law for Economic Development and Fiscal Sustainability after the Covid-19 Pandemic*.

The second chapter of this law contains: the mechanisms for the regularization of assets abroad that allow the money laundering (*Voluntary, single and temporary, for the regularization of assets abroad*). This law, not Not only did it allow washing and bleaching, but it also allowed those capital to participate in the privatization processes that the Lasso government I was planning to go ahead.

The enactment of this law by Guillermo Lasso sanctioned something that, in society, was beginning to become A certainty: the convergence between political power and organized crime and drug trafficking to allow them to use the monetary system of dollarization, for money laundering.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the violence of these criminal groups explode the following year when they occur wars for control of territories by these groups of organized crime. Faced with the vacuum of the state, these groups take over vast territories and generate their own system of taxation which they call "vaccines" and configure an extortion system that has as its heuristic the murder, violence and torture.

Thus, from humble street vendors, small entrepreneurs, small traders, even agro-export companies, and industrialists, all of them were integrated, under the complicit gaze of the State, to this vast extortion scheme. Those who refused to Paying extortion was systematically eliminated and a cloak of impunity covered those excesses.

During 2022, the Attorney General's Office of the State, which is the institution in charge of the investigation processes pre-trial and criminal procedure, he devoted himself rather to persecuting opponents of the government of Guillermo Lasso, and left in impunity the majority of hired killers and murders against the population.

In the same period, the U.S. Embassy announces to the country the existence of "narco-generals" in the National Police, which that shows that organized crime had co-opted the main institutions and bodies responsible for the protection of citizens.

If the violence of organized crime began to take shape right after the Covid-19 pandemic, it was because the organized crime groups were beginning their dispute processes and conflicts and their co-optation into the political system, the judicial system and the State.

These conflicts will intensify in the coming years. 2022 and 2023 when the different groups will have to compete for markets and chains logistics in the shipment of drugs and in the control of territories and their co-optation of the state. The year 2022 is evidence of the consolidation of the power of the organized crime. In fact, the country will be able to verify this when a year later next, in 2023, an investigation by the National Police itself, which tried to be circumvented by the Attorney General's Office and the high command *The Lion of Troy* demonstrated the direct relationship between the two people. Danilo Carrera, political and economic mentor, as well as a direct family member of Guillermo Lasso and one of the most notable members of the country's oligarchy, with the Albanian mafia and drug trafficking.

Not only that, but the police report and the denunciations of investigative journalism linked Danilo Carrera and Guillermo Lasso's staff, who went from working at Banco de Guayaquil to manage the State, in a web of corruption in the management of companies Public.

To enable the administration and control of corruption in public companies, Guillermo Lasso violated the law and promulgated an Executive Decree by virtue of which he handed over the conduct of public companies to one of the characters who will be denounced by both the police as well as investigative journalism as the axis, along with Danilo Carrera, from a major corruption network.

Faced with this scenario, the National Assembly decided to impeach Guillermo Lasso, precisely, for corruption. The major right-wing political parties with the support of the mainstream media, tried to have that impeachment fail, but in the face of the strength of the evidence and in the face of the imminent dismissal and probable trial criminal investigation for corruption, then-President Guillermo Lasso Mendoza opted for the death of the cross and anticipating the elections.

Even in the context of cross-death, Lasso tried to pass privatization laws to transfer infrastructure to those capitals that had been protected by the regularization of assets and whose provenance was never determined. The Constitutional Court prevented him from doing so.

However, the social and economic scenario of the country was aggravated because the government of Guillermo Lasso took it to the extreme compliance with the adjustment measures required by the IMF and thus reduced the public spending on investment that led to the collapse of the company oil prices that, for the first time in a long time, reduced its operational capacity, as well as the electrical infrastructure that led the country to have, for the first time in decades, blackouts and buy energy to its neighboring countries.

In border regions such as the province of Esmeraldas, the government was radically absent. By virtue of the fact that it is a border and coastal region, drug trafficking has ports and conditions which, in order to function, need to be emptied by the State and that's exactly what Lasso provoked. For this reason, this province, together with Guayas, became a no-man's land and where the Organized crime was able to establish itself without major problems.

Economic adjustment, lumpen accumulation, narco-state, corruption, impunity, were the conditions that allowed Organized crime becomes the master of the country. In this context, the The Public Prosecutor's Office and the judiciary were viciously persecuting the political opponents of Guillermo Lasso, as well as leaders and leaders and generated a kind of statute of impunity and limbo for crime organized.

Despite the fact that in 2022 There were several prison massacres, no state institution carried out any Advance a strategy or policy to protect private citizens to investigate what happened, to punish those responsible, to generate Reparation and prevention policies. On the contrary, the ministry of further reduced the budgets of the entire system of care and all social programs related to this system are Eliminated.

The media became in a kind of sounding board of the Lasso government and, except for a few of They did not warn of the maelstrom of violence that the country was experiencing.

For them, the Those responsible for the violence were, at bottom, the political enemies of Guillermo Lasso. In this way, they were complicit in covering up drug trafficking and organized crime.

Therefore, the Crusader death did not change the coordinates of violence because it did not put the recovery of the State as a precondition and essential for the protection of the poor citizens from the violence of organized crime and drug trafficking. That It could be seen in the presidential campaign that defined the transition in death crusade.

The various candidates did not offer, but that penal populism and open repression, no security policy. Some right-wing candidates, such as Jan Topic, for example, displayed a fascist discourse as a policy of citizen security, but almost none of the Right-wing candidates prioritized a security agenda citizen.

This security agenda involved the recovery of the State and its institutions. But none of the right-wing candidates wanted to take back the state because that would put them in a confrontation with the IMF, with the American embassy and with his own ideology.

In this way, society did not have the opportunity to put one of the most important aspects on the political agenda. that of the recovery of the State as a shield of protection for its citizenry. The center-left candidates tried, but they had in mind against a media campaign of demonization that prevented the society to be able to freely debate on those issues that were priorities.

Due to different circumstances, the voters leaned towards one of the youngest candidates and who came directly from the of the most oligarchic and conservative sectors of the country, Daniel Noboa, Jr. banana magnate Álvaro Noboa (who also tried to become president of the country on several occasions) and nephew of Isabel Noboa, the leader of one of the the most important economic groups, the Nobis group.

For Daniel Noboa, there is nothing on his agenda there is no possibility of recovering the State and its institutions in order to confront the security crisis because it shares neoliberal positions of the minimal State. Therefore, his first priority as president in office was to send an urgent economic bill, to prevent his father from paying tens of millions of dollars in tax debts, and for his aunt to enjoy the refund of Value Added Tax on your projects Real estate.

Not only that, but it favored the interests of the Nobis group by allowing a broad regime of exemptions tax and fiscal measures to the free zones. It should be clarified that the Nobis group It has one of the most important free zones in the country, the port of Posorja. In

fact, in the midst of the negotiation process of this law, the shipping companies that have decided to transfer their activities to the Free Trade Zone of Posorja.

While this law was being debated in the National Assembly, the levels of hired killers and crimes reached limits never before seen in the country. This shows that criminal groups read Noboa politically and knew that, perhaps under other names, but, in reality, it was the continuation of Guillermo Lasso's government.

As a result, they increased their actions and They decided to control even more territories, and subdued more companies, this time directly to those engaged in agro-exports, to their extortion and violence, that's when they go from crime to terrorism.

That is why it is paradoxical, to say the least, less than, in his first weeks in office, Noboa, in the face of this criticism the situation of violence in the country, has decided to abolish the Secretariat of Security attached to the Presidency of the Republic and which was the in charge of coordinating security tasks between the institutions of the State.

It was clear, therefore, that the new The government would do nothing to change the situation in the country and its profound deinstitutionalization. It was also clear that corruption was continuing and which, this time, took on the character of state policy. Despite the fact that the law called *the Organic Law of Economic Efficiency and Job Creation*, expressed the corruption of the new government by legislate in a targeted way according to the needs of groups the Assembly decided to approve it. Noboa was able to confirm that he had no political opposition and that it had ample room for manoeuvre for the privatisation of the state and the radicalisation of austerity policies.

However, the government had to evidence, previously, that he had the Legislature under his control; Thus, the President Noboa sent a new urgent economic bill, this time for the privatization of the electricity sector, the *Organic Law on Competitiveness Energetic*. Unsurprisingly, the National Assembly also approved, Almost unanimously his proposal. Noboa was definitely unopposed politics.

However, on Noboa's agenda, one of the The nerve center of austerity was the elimination of subsidies to fuels, in fact, a key and necessary point for a new rapprochement and a new credit program with the IMF. That point was strategic because it was opposed by the only real nucleus of resistance of the country, the indigenous movement. The question, for Noboa, therefore, was how Break the resistance and opposition of the indigenous movement?

The tense atmosphere of insecurity had him the government because it had managed, in just two months, to important structural reforms, but it lacked the approval of the core of

the most important of all: the elimination of fuel subsidies, the increase in VAT, labour flexibility and privatisation of the social security and overcoming indigenous resistance.

How to achieve this? It is in this context that the The crisis of citizen security is presented to Noboa as the ideal argument to build the necessary social support for these new reforms Structural. The wave of violence, in fact, was on the rise because there was no there was a state that would limit it. On the contrary, with Noboa the State was he had reduced even more than with Lasso. The lack of institutionality that existed for Coordinating Security, as already indicated, had been dismantled by Noboa in his early days.

But that security crisis could be become a powerful argument to unite the society behind the government. There is nothing like a war to build the necessary consensus for the political domination. And that, precisely, is what the government invents, a war.

But this is a war that, in order for you to It is not just a metaphor for power, it must meet formal requirements and It must also be part of the existing legal system. Is That's exactly what Noboa does.

Faced with insecurity, the government decrees the 08-09-24, the state of emergency and establishes the curfew from 23h00 until 5:00 a.m. the next day. It prohibits all types of public gatherings and It allows for the violation of domicile and correspondence. These are harsh measures that the population somehow accepts because, until that moment, they are the the only measures that have been taken to address the security crisis.

The decree of the State of Emergency is the The government's response to the escape of one of the country's most dangerous criminals of the penitentiary rehabilitation center of the city of Guayaquil. That leak reveals Noboa's government has no security agenda and that it is not a priority.

Concomitant with the decree of the State of Exception: the escape from another prison of another dangerous criminal allegedly related to the assassination of the presidential candidate, Fernando Villavicencio. These escapes are accompanied by mutinies in almost all parts of the country. all rehabilitation centers in the country and the taking of prison guides as hostages by the mutineers.

The government's strategy, such as Evidently, it was leaking everywhere. It is in this context, when the of the escapes of these dangerous criminals and the riots In prisons, a strange event occurs that calls the attention: the attack in the city of Guayaquil by a group of criminals on a public television station and was broadcast live throughout the country.

So far, no one knows what goal I had that seizure; Nor is it known who of the criminal groups organized, he ordered it. It is there, in this context, that the Noboa government

suddenly reinvents itself and manages to regain its political capital in a matter of hours. Without the circumstances warranting it, and without the slightest mediation process of legal and constitutional justification and outside of everything else that establishes international humanitarian law, i.e. the right to During the war, President Noboa issues the first decree of war in existence. news in the country at least since the return to democracy. The Executive Decree on Armed Conflict Internally, it has nothing to do with the situation of insecurity and violence that the country lives, but as a last resort resort to recover capital in the face of a security crisis for which no one had been foreseen. response or action.

According to the legal interpretation of this Decree of Internal Armed Conflict, recognizes criminal groups their status as a belligerent force, and are consequently granted a political status that they did not have before. Thus, these criminal groups must now be dealt with in accordance with humanitarian law which is an aberration in every sense.

But it is the ideal argument to cohere society, recover lost political capital and move forward in the neoliberal radicalization. Thanks to this move, the Noboa government has now It has the possibility of imposing a series of economic adjustment measures without that society can react at all. It's the shock doctrine in Pure state.

In effect, Noboa's government militarizes the country, moves public and educational activities to the online format and It causes uneasiness, anguish and fear in society. When issuing the Decree of war, chaos ensues in the country and the population literally runs to the country. shelter in place. Ecuador becomes front-page news at world-class level. The Scenario of Organized Crime Violence Is Transformed suddenly on the political and geopolitical stage. Some countries aligned with The U.S. offers military aid to the country. But it must be said clearly and forcefully, there is no war. It is a pure invention of the government to get out of a political *impasse* generated by its own mistakes. Of course, there is violence from organized crime groups, but it is violence that is functional to power and created and sustained from power. But there is a very long distance between the violence of these organized crime groups and the declaration of war, which is regulated and specified by international humanitarian law.

The Decree of Internal Armed Conflict It has a political logic and must be interpreted in its tenor. It's a strategy policy that brings returns and that expands the political space for the government in a A moment of attrition and mistakes. Who Can Oppose a Defensive War And that you're going to protect your population from a real threat? How can you questioning something that is obvious, and that is the conversion of organized crime and

the crime in terrorism and that threatens everyone without exception? If I don't know
Declare war on terrorism, so how do you fight it?

Threats to citizen security can be resolved without the necessity of declaring a state of war
and without the The need to turn narco-terrorism into political subjects. With the existing
resources can be solved, but this requires the political will to recover the State and its
institutionality, that is, get it out of the hole into which it was led by the fiscal
consolidation programs, and structural reform of the IMF and the World Bank.

The realization that there is no war and that it was all just an argument created by those in
power to open up the the political space and situate the economic policies of fiscal
adjustment in it of the IMF, it was given by President Daniel Noboa himself when he said
that the war It involves economic costs and, precisely for this reason, it sends to the
National Assembly a new urgent economic bill, called: *Organic Law for Confronting the
Internal Armed Conflict, the Social and Economic Crisis*, sent on 11-01-24 and which
increases the value added tax (VAT) of the 12% to 15% and which, in addition, prevents
this new increase from being redistributed to decentralized self-governments and
universities, as required by law.

To call an urgent economic law as A law to *deal with the internal armed conflict* is to put
the war as a vector within the logic of economic adjustment. It's confessing that you wants
to impose neoliberal adjustment to the letter and without any consideration for the law and
international law.

In this way, Noboa uses the the Shock Doctrine to impose the reforms requested by the
IMF. Yes If you get this urgent economic law passed, then you have the doors IMF Open
Funds for New Credit and a New Consolidation Program fiscal. The only thing pending is
the elimination of subsidies to labour reforms, and the privatization of social security.
Thus, in just a few months, it will have advanced the neoliberal agenda much further than
it had ever done. which at the time Lenin Moreno and Guillermo Lasso tried to do.

But to do so, he will have to overcome the resistance of the most powerful social
movement in the country, the indigenous. If Noboa went to the extreme of inventing a war
that doesn't exist for radicalize neoliberal adjustment and protect corporate interests and
oligarchs, it is worth asking what will be invented now to subdue and defeat to the
indigenous movement, at the moment the only opposition to his government?

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