



Edilberto Berríos: crisis management expertise

BY CB STAFF

All crises generally share a similar profile. Normally, a crisis is a decisive moment and a turning point in a given situation. It takes a clear, firm and shrewd stewardship to lead in such times of turmoil and be able to attain a positive solution and optimum results. Berríos & Longo Law Offices, P.S.C., led by attorney Edilberto Berríos Pérez, has extensive experience and the ability to guide and lead its clients to recovery when confusion and instability strike.

The financial, industrial and commercial markets generate forces that continuously shape and reshape competition and commerce. "Maintaining strength and stability in such differing scenarios requires proper identification, in-depth study and the understanding of how those forces interact with other entities' rights and obligations," explained Berríos Pérez. With more than 30 years of experience in case and crisis management, Berríos Pérez and his team have developed comprehensive techniques to isolate the main causes and forces that may incite uncertainty and provoke harm to their clients in decisive moments.

"When confronted with critical situations, we question everything: the sources, resources, financial statements, the rights invoked, the facts, the motives, logistics and secondary agendas. Only after we have attained a reasonable overall picture can everything be seen in a proper perspective. Then, the rights, assets and obligations of our clients and opponents are placed in the dissecting table," explained Berríos Pérez.

A recent example that put the firm's abilities to the test has been the case of the Dairy Industry where the firm "was honored to represent the Dairy Farmers Association or Bureau. The degree of honesty, competence, self-control and hard work of the dairy farmers impacted us and further stimulated our work to project the inherent justice in their claim," stated Berríos Pérez.

According to Berríos Pérez, the case of the dairy farmers required long hours spent analyzing every aspect. Study included the facts, the Court's injunction, the statutory structure, the forces behind the scenario, the numbers, the accounting, the values, the services, the differences between the players, their treatment, the accounting principles in a regulated industry (which are different from GAAP), the world forces impacting milk and costs, constitutional issues and many others.

"The price at which farmers sell their surplus milk to Industria Lechera de Puerto Rico (Indulac) was the reason why both milk processing plants, Suiza Dairy and Tres Monjitas, initiated the case," he explained. Milk processing plants sustained it was unfair to buy raw milk from farmers at a



higher price than Indulac used to pay and were demanding to be treated equal to Indulac, without taking into account the differences between Indulac and the other plants. That argument moved the Court to issue a preliminary injunction which caused severe damage to the dairy farmers as they were being forced to work, serve, produce and sell their product substantially below their reasonable production costs.

The determination of the reasonable production costs of a quart of raw milk by the dairy farmers

was crucial for any recovery and stability for the industry. "The advice of pundits, experts, consultants and the centuries of accumulated experience of the farmers themselves enabled the management of the crisis for the benefit of the people of Puerto Rico," said Berríos Pérez.

The responsibility in said case was and is very high. The impact transcends the parties. The future of an industry, tens of thousands of jobs, hundreds of potential bankruptcies, billions of dollars in direct and indirect products are in the balance and at risk. Even though the case has not concluded, farmers have been able to successfully defend their cause, thanks to the group of professionals, including the legal

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services provided by Edilberto Berríos Pérez and law firm Berríos & Longo.

The Firm takes very seriously the social responsibility of their professional endeavor, as well as that of their clients. It is a duty that they cannot afford to lose. Above all, Berríos Pérez and his staff are devoted to serving the people of Puerto Rico. On a daily basis, they are entrusted with the most valuable asset known to mankind: the rights of individuals and of collectivities. "We are incisive, honest, aggressive and work at the edge of the developing law. However, we are passionate in our quest to defend our clients' rights. Our goal is to help our clients, defend their rights and assist them in complying with their obligations," declared Berríos-Pérez, whose bold and optimistic vision, shaped through the strength of knowledge, high ethical standards and experience, will continue to propel this law firm well into the future. ■

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