

power" strategic doctrine and of the Lower Manhattan banking community's threats against Third World quests for debt moratoria. In a single sweep, he has also crippled a two-months-long destabilization campaign directed against his government ranging from provoked riots and terrorism to attempts to split Perez' party and foment a war environment with neighboring countries.

Perez therefore not only set an example for governments targeted for destabilization by Carter's Trilateral Commission Administration, but also succeeded in throwing a wrench into the Trilateral's "Linowitz Report" strategy toward Latin America, which hinges largely on close relations with Venezuela and the aura of Carter's alleged concern for human rights. A key element in this policy, as explicitly outlined by former Exxon executive Melvin Conant in Senate testimony last month, is to nail down Venezuela as a guaranteed source of oil for the U.S. and drive a wedge between the Caracas government and the Arab OPEC members. Branding Perez "CIA" was intended to cripple him domestically and internationally and prevent his government from leading a Latin American breakaway from the dollar. "No doubt about it," a source close to the National Security Council told NSIPS when asked about the effect

on Carter's Latin American policy of Perez' unexpected counteroffensive. "This is certainly going to be a problem. The effect will be long-range. U.S.-Venezuelan relations have been set back significantly."

Even before the publication of the *New York Times* accusation, Perez delivered a shock to Carter and his Wall Street backers. In response to Washington's insulting reception of Mexican President Lopez Portillo last week, Perez suddenly announced the cancellation of his visit to the U.S. planned for next month, due to "unforeseen" circumstances. Adding to the impact of the cancellation, Perez reported that in April he will travel to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Iran.

As soon as the *Times* "revelation" as published, Perez held an emergency cabinet meeting and immediately authorized U.N. Ambassador Simon Consalvi in New York to identify the accusation as "connected to the stupid campaign which is being carried out from the United States against the countries of OPEC." Referring to a similar charge last October aimed at preventing Perez from cooperating with the Cuban government in uncovering CIA connections to Cuban exile terrorists operating out of Caracas, Consalvi noted, "For the second time in a few months the *New York Times* has

Carter's Apology

The accusations against the Venezuelan chief of state have disturbed me deeply.

I want to express to you that I as well as my administration regret the problems that these press reports may have caused you, your government or the people of Venezuela.

I might add that as you know, I do not exercise control over the news media of our country and I cannot prevent these unfounded allegations concerning you. You will appreciate the concern that they have caused to this administration, which has

proposed with those nations in the world today that share our democratic values.

You, Mr. President, as a vigorous and independent defender of the interests of Venezuela, the countries of Latin America, the OPEC and of the Third World, are one of the most respected and formidable leaders of today's world. That you were elected President and that you govern an open society adds enormously to our respect for you and for your government.

I hope and trust that these malicious stories — which should not be dignified with a direct comment on them — will not cast a shadow over the future goals ((importe)) we will share.

CAP's Answer

It is with sincere satisfaction that I receive the reply, and I extend to you, in the name of Venezuela, of my government and myself, appreciation for the clear explanations and ideas contained in your letter. I find fully satisfactory the express and unequivocal recognition of respect and consideration for Venezuela, which I, as its President, merit, afforded by the United States.

Neither my country, nor I personally, expected any less than this frank and cordial reply, which you have offered. And, to use your words, in due time the authors of this twisted infamy will be left to the disgrace of their unspeakable falsehood.

This country and the United States share democratic values in way of living and in politics.

This is the powerful connection, more important than all material or purely economic considerations. And it must be above whatever differences of perspective that may arise between us at different moments over questions of an international political or economic nature.

As you know, Mr. President, Venezuela identifies with fundamental innovative goals, both domestically and in its view of universal problems. And we think that the efforts you make in your country, in the area of political democratic values, as well as those of international justice, will be seriously and vigorously stimulated by the dialogue and communication with Latin America and with the nations of the Third World in general.

I express to you my confidence that the incident to which we have just put an end with the expressive letter you have sent me will not mar our future.