

Report from Rio by Silvia Palacios

A Malthusian offensive

The Brazilian government is divided between the Malthusians and those who still battle for development.

Two days before the creditor governments' cartel known as the Club of Paris approved a debt refinancing package for Brazil, the Brazilian government shifted toward a drastic program for reducing population growth. In a meeting of the cabinet Jan. 19, the Malthusian faction began debate on their proposal that President José Sarney decree a "family planning" program with strict demographic goals. While some Brazilian states have sweeping birth reduction programs, the federal government has never openly favored them.

Announcement of the plan raised a national storm of protest, since the new policy represents a complete break with Brazil's traditional anti-birth control—and therefore anti-Club of Rome—position, a position which Brazil defended during the U.N. population committee's Bucharest and Mexico City meetings at which the world genocide lobby held sway. The government itself is now totally divided between the genocidalists and those who are battling for development.

On the one side are the ministers of education and interior, Jorge Bornhausen and Rolando Costa Couto, respectively, and the highest-level official of the presidential office, Marco Maciel, all of whom are rallied in defense of the new population policy by echoing the population reduction plans elaborated under the Jimmy Carter government known as *Global 2000*, today propagandized by such groups

as the Trilateral Commission.

"It is impossible to reduce poverty without reducing population growth," affirms Bornhausen, while Costa Couto insists, "The immense majority of the poor—more than 60% of the population—do not utilize birth control," so that the amount of wealth produced by the country is inadequate to finance the birth of three million new Brazilians each year.

The counterattack to these Malthusian fallacies was not long in coming. The pro-growth federal congressman Carlos Santana, former health minister and currently president of the health commission of the House, charged that birth control—disguised or not—is an imposition of the creditor banks: "The World Bank, through the reports of its presidents, has always made its proselytizing for a rigid birth control policy explicit." He added, "It is no secret" that some foreign banks have imposed a policy of birth control as a basic condition for granting credits or making investments in Third World countries. In response to the sophism that claims that the country, and the world, is overpopulated, Santana said, "The world has 20 inhabitants per square kilometer; Brazil has less than 15." He also warned that Brazil's in fact falling drastically.

To give an example of this, it should suffice to note that, especially in the "Africanized" Brazilian northeast, the United Nations and the U.S.-

based Planned Parenthood International have been sterilizing millions of fertile women. In the case of Manaus, deep in the Amazon, 33% of the women have already been sterilized.

At the same time, the CGT and CUT labor federations explicitly view the proposed birth control policy as "imposed by the International Monetary Fund."

However, the real architect of the plan to reduce population growth in Brazil is the World Bank agent Helio Jaguaribe, a member of the Club of Rome, and the *éminence gris* behind the Sarney government.

Jaguaribe prepared a study called *Brazil, 2000*, which he presented to the government as a plan to combat "absolute misery." Jaguaribe's study has been widely accepted within the Foreign Relations Ministry, among other institutions.

Jaguaribe's proposal is a collection of World Bank recommendations designed to promote agricultural slave labor instead of productive industrial employment. Among the proposals that stand out in his plan, for example, are "taking necessary measures" so that the labor force does not grow by more than 2.5% a year. What of new workers? Jaguaribe suggests they be prevented from emerging at all by keeping the rest of the population buried in pick-and-shovel labor.

Upon commenting on the new birth control plan, Jaguaribe stated: "I received the news with great satisfaction, since there can be no doubt that high population growth rates make development more difficult."

Thus Brazil finds itself deeply divided, and not on a partisan basis, but on the fundamental question of development or zero-growth. In the faction of the first are elements of the military, church, political parties, and labor unions.