

Report from Rio by Silvia Palacios

Anti-military campaign escalates

The Anglo-American establishment would "reduce" the Brazilian Armed Forces out of existence altogether.

Since the end of the Persian Gulf slaughter, there has been a notable escalation in the drive to dismantle the armed forces of Ibero-America, with special focus on Brazil. The guidelines for this campaign were already laid out in the State Department-sponsored study issued in 1990, entitled *The Military and Democracy: The Future of Civil-Military Relations in Latin America*. That volume, designed to encourage so-called "pluralist democracy" in Ibero-America on the ruins of the continent's sovereign military institutions, was reviewed in the Jan. 11 issue of *EIR*.

An article published in the Feb. 27 issue of the magazine *Veja* served as the green light for this latest "turn of the screw." Under the pretext of discussing the military situation in the aftermath of the Gulf war, the article, written by *Veja* director Elio Gaspari, asks, "What are the Brazilian Armed Forces good for? The Brazilian forces are out in the streets because they are fatter than King Momo [the name given to the obese king of Rio's yearly Carnival debauchery]. They appear to be inefficient because they are poorly equipped, but the truth is that they are poorly equipped because their chiefs have become inefficient."

Not accidentally, one of the owners of *Veja*, Roberto Civita, is also a member of the Inter-American Dialogue, made up of leading representatives of the Anglo-American establishment. In its 1986 report, drafted with the assistance of former U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, the Dialogue proposed the creation of a "democratic network" on

the continent to oppose "the military and communists."

Under *Veja's* banner, various commentaries in that vein have been penned by the same species of social democratic intellectual which overpopulates the U.S. State Department. For example, in a March 10 issue of the daily *Estado de Minas*, a report is published by one Clovis Brigagão, currently an adviser to the International Association of Peace Research. Brigagão endorses the Anglo-American offensive against Iraq, insisting that "Brazil needs to have a more mature foreign policy, and not to have relations with such adventurous partners as Iraq." Then, Brigagão attacks the military institution itself: "All salaries are low in Brazil. The unproductive Armed Forces need to provide more service."

Col. Geraldo Cavangari (ret.), director of the Campinas University Center of Strategy Studies, went even further, attacking the nuclear technology projects developed by Brazil's Navy, as well as proposing that "the Armed Forces should be cut, reducing their troops from 300,000 to 100,000."

The Army Ministry retaliated at once, ordering the publication of a paid ad that appeared March 8 in several newspapers: "It is lamentable that there are Brazilians who don't seem to understand the serious state of national life at this moment. . . . These are individuals who, believing themselves to possess enviable efficiency and to be above all suspicion, sit and criticize—not in a positive sense, but with the intention of denigrating the

institution. . . . Perhaps dazzled by the technological magnificence of the war machine used in the Persian Gulf . . . they attack the Armed Forces for their apparent fragility."

The ad reminds the nation of the indispensable role the Armed Forces have played in Brazilian history: "The configuration of the Armed Forces is a direct function not merely of possible armed aggression, but particularly of the levels of socio-economic and technological development of the nation."

During the past two months, high-level representatives of the Anglo-American alliance have paraded through Brazil, with the message that all national institutions which, like the Armed Forces, pose the slightest resistance to Bush's "new world order," will be broken. For example, Elliott "Iran-Contra" Abrams, former Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, arrived on Jan. 29. Abrams is renowned for having made explicit Project Democracy's intention of destroying the most crucial pillars of Ibero-American society: the Church and the military.

Another visitor was Francis Fukuyama, the State Department and Rand Corp.'s newest acquisition. Fukuyama arrived in Rio de Janeiro at the invitation of the Getulio Vargas Foundation, and was sponsored by Citibank and Coca-Cola Co. On a supposed crusade for "democracy," Fukuyama insisted that the worst enemies are those countries which, like Iraq, aspire to sovereign technological development, and whose armed forces have played a central role in such achievements. "Those countries will continue to fight for power and for resources at the expense of others, and will measure forces basically in terms of military capacity." Now, said Fukuyama, "dictators like Saddam Hussein are going to think twice before they act."