

EIR unmask oligarchs' operations in Roraima

by Nilder Costa

Testimony given by *EIR* correspondent Lorenzo Carrasco before the Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry (CPI) on Land in Boa Vista, Roraima, the state's capital, on Oct. 14, provided the state representatives a crucial overview of the broader international environmental apparatus operating in the Amazon which seeks to obstruct legitimate economic development, under the insidious pretexts of environmentalism and indigenism.

The state of Roraima is located in the northern-most part of Brazil, and borders Venezuela and Guyana. Carrasco's testimony represented the last stage of the work of the CPI, which was set up by the Roraima Legislative Assembly to investigate the operations of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the state. Carrasco focussed his fire on the so-called "Guyana Shield Initiative," whose alleged objective is the "protection" of the flora and fauna of the so-called Guyanese Shield.

The Guyanese Shield is a geological entity which encompasses the area known as the "Guyana Island," the area delimited by the Orinoco, Casicare, Negro, and Amazon rivers, at whose center lies Roraima (**Figure 1**). Historically, this area has been the geopolitical target of the Anglo-French-Dutch oligarchy, as the preferred entry-point for establishing a foothold in the Amazon, an objective partially achieved with the establishment of their respective colonies—the French, Dutch, and British Guyanas.

The Guyana Shield Initiative program is financed and controlled by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and its sister organization, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), with resources also kicked in by NGOs of lesser importance, as well as the World Bank. The European Working Group on Amazonia (EWGA), an ad hoc body made up of environmental NGOs and representatives of the governments of the Amazon countries, coordinates the Guyana Shield Initiative's activities. The president of the EWGA is Wouter Veening, from the Dutch chapter of the IUCN. At the last meeting of the group, on May 28, Christopher Clark, president of the Amazonia Association, complained that the government of Roraima was attacking his NGO. His association controls 174,000 hectares of "conservation land" in the state, and was one of the principal targets of the CPI's investigations.

Carrasco demonstrated that the current segregation of

44% of the territory of the state of Roraima into either Indian reserves or nature conservation areas, is not a coincidence, resulting from separate efforts by several national and international NGOs. Nor are these NGOs genuinely concerned about the conservation of the environment, or Indian peoples. Nor does this shocking state of affairs correspond to any national interest. Rather, it stems from a deliberate attempt to stop any rational development of the state, to the purpose of expelling any activity aimed at civilizing these large territories, which are extremely rich in natural resources.

Carrasco's presentation received significant advance publicity (two articles announcing his testimony were published in the state paper, *Folha de Boa Vista*), and some 100 people were present for the testimony, including press and military representatives and state officials and legislators. *Folha de Boa Vista* reported on the final session in its Sunday, Oct. 17 edition under the headline: "Lorenzo Carrasco: 'Amazon Alliance' Is Tied to Anglo-Dutch Oligarchy."

British pirates, then and now

Recent research by *EIR* in Brazil has uncovered that the so-called "Indian card" had already been astutely used by colonial British military intelligence, and before that, by the British West Indies Company whose agent was that famous pirate, Sir Walter Raleigh. Raleigh was a leading promoter of the idea that the area later known as the "Guyana Island" was the paradise of El Dorado.

British intelligence operations during the last century to conquer the "Guyana Island" led to the loss of Brazilian territory, to what became the Crown colony of British Guyana. That operation was planned and run by Lord Palmerston, who, in 1837, deployed his agent, Robert Schomburgk, to Guyana, under the auspices of the Royal Geographic Society, a body created and run by British military intelligence. Schomburgk did the field work so that the territories inhabited by "independent tribes" could first be "neutralized," and then "assimilated."

Schomburgk's work provides a thoroughly documented historical precedent for what is happening today. As a consequence, Brazil lost 15,000 square kilometers of territory, to England's benefit, fulfilling, in part, the dream of the pirate Raleigh. Raleigh and the German Schomburgk were knighted for their services to the British Crown.

When British anthropologist Robin Hanbury-Tenison carried out his explorations of Roraima in 1971, few could perceive that his mission was to pull together the information on the local Indian tribes required for the reactivation of that old British geopolitical scheme for the region, exactly as had his colleague Schomburgk 134 years before, in 1837. The result was the creation of the gigantic Yanomami reserve, personally decided upon by Prince Philip himself, after receiving a report at Buckingham Palace on the travels of Hanbury-Tenison.

FIGURE 1
London's 'Guyana Island' Project in South America



'Foreign greed' covets the Amazon

Military and civilian leaders in Brazil have launched a campaign to mobilize an active national defense of the territorial integrity of the nation. Largely unreported in the Brazilian and international media, an important shift is occurring in the state of mind of the Brazilian officer corps and nationalist civilians, as revealed in their decision to "name the names" of the principal foreign enemies of Brazil—with a special emphasis on the British Crown—and expose the intentions of those enemies. Nilder Costa filed this report on the presentation of Gen. Luis Gonzaga Lessa, the head of the Amazon Military Command, who has since been named head of the Army's Eastern Command, headquartered in Rio de Janeiro. The speeches on the Senate floor which follow, have been translated by EIR from the official Senate record.

General Lessa maps the enemy operation

In a three-hour presentation on Oct. 13 at Rio de Janeiro's Clube Militar, one of Brazil's most influential military institutions, Gen. Luiz Gonzaga Schröder Lessa laid out a strategic overview of the battle to defend the Amazon. Present were more than 200 people, including commanders of other military regions, former military officers of the highest rank, and the press.

General Lessa reviewed the geography and history of the region, citing various foreign efforts over the last 450 years to grab control of the Amazon, first from Portugal, and later, from Brazil, as evidence that the area has been coveted by "foreign greed" for centuries. He developed how more recently, these foreign efforts have employed indigenism and environmentalism to achieve their goal. Enormous pressure has been brought to bear by foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs), demanding the creation of nature parks and Indian reserves. Lessa presented a map of the Amazon region, with three overlays: the areas sought for so-called "ecological corridors" joining the numerous nature parks in the region; the Indian reserves (existing and planned); and deposits of key minerals. The overlap of these three areas is no coincidence, he suggested, but follows a carefully thought-out logic.

Traditionally, he noted, Brazil had a policy of integrating the nation's Indian citizens into society, but today that is being replaced by a policy of segregation, disguised as maintaining indigenous cultures.

Is "foreign greed" for the Amazon a myth, or reality? Lessa made clear that it is the working assumption of the Brazilian military that it is a reality. He cited various state-

ments, including by U.S. Vice President Al Gore, Britain's Tory former Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher and John Major, and Russian former President Mikhail Gorbachov, which confirm these foreign intentions vis-à-vis the Amazon.

The Brazilian Armed Forces are aware that they could not repel an international invasion of the region by conventional methods, he said. Therefore, they are training highly specialized jungle combat troops, prepared to survive on their own, and engage in decentralized actions, using guerrilla tactics which take advantage of their knowledge of the terrain. Lessa showed a film of the preparation of these troops at Brazil's jungle training center in Manaus, and he said that the center is considered the best of its kind in the world.

Lessa also discussed the Armed Forces' concerns about Brazil's borders and drug trafficking, particularly along the border with Colombia. That border has "calmed down" somewhat, he reported, since a large joint-forces exercise was carried out a year ago along the Colombian border, during which local leaders of the narco-terrorist FARC were sent the message: If they invade Brazilian territory or destabilize the area, the Brazilian military will hit them, *wherever they are*. A similar maneuver will be held at the end of October, he announced (see article, p. 45).

Mestrinho: Investigate the NGOs!

On Nov. 5, Sen. Gilberto Mestrinho, representing the state of Amazonas (PMDB party), gave the following speech, referencing an ongoing discussion of Amazon policy, in which a number of Senators have been involved:

. . . Not long ago, Sen. Mozarildo Cavalcanti made reference to the fact that the federal government is abdicating its functions, willfully yielding to international pressure. . . . The government is transferring its obligations to the so-called non-governmental organizations, which only survive because they receive help from the government. . . . They are non-governmental, but they want the help of the government; they want the government's money.

Many of them live off of this in this country. Your Excellency referenced, for example, Dr. Claudia Andujar, a Swedish woman who imposed on the Brazilian government the way in which the demarcation of the Yanomami area would be carried out. The government of Jose Sarney, in an agreement with the Tuxauas-Yanomamis, had conceived of 150 "islands"—non-continuous areas—for demarcation. That would total 1.95 million hectares. Dr. Andujar drew up a blueprint of all the mineral areas of the region, and the Brazilian government, under pressure from the British government—Dr. Andujar is Swedish, but it is the British government which controls that country's environmental policy, which rules that country—demanded annulment of government decrees and a continuous demarcation of the 9.2 million hectares, which today form the Yanomami Reserve.

This process of . . . emptying of the Amazon has predominated. The country has no policy for the region. The country

receives the policy for the region from abroad, a policy dictated by foreign countries.

If we observe the map, we find that today our entire border [of the state of Amazonas] is made up of Indian reserves, such as the Yanomami Reserve, the Tucano Reserve, the Javari Reserve. We know that 22% of the state of Amazonas, which is 150 million hectares in size, that is, 33 million hectares, are occupied by a half-dozen Indians. But this is not all: After the Indian reservations, look at the ecological reserves, the national parks. There is a real “balkanization” of the region, while monitors are trained abroad to lead these future nations which would be set up in the country.

This situation worries us, because we can count on only one ally. The only ally which the Amazon has in this country is the Armed Forces, which have bravely resisted this policy of internationalization, which is shamelessly preached and debated, and which unhappily has the connivance of the Brazilian authorities. These authorities prefer to be called “good guys,” to participate in international events, and be honored, rather than to defend national territory. This is the painful reality. . . .

While the world worries about drug trafficking, worries about the consequences of the poison which, spread throughout the world, decimates youth, and creates problems difficult to resolve, the Amazon is left exposed. Exposed, it can be captured tomorrow. And it is our youth, our Indians, who could be used to create a center of production for the world. We have to be, and we are paying attention to this. . . .

Here . . . we can at least protest, raise our voices, denounce this, and show that, should we continue this way, we will have to set up a Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry . . . into the NGOs which operate in Brazil. If we find out how many NGOs defend children in Brazil, we are going to be astonished; how many NGOs defend Indians, we are going to be astonished, because there are more NGOs defending Indians in Brazil than there are Indians. There are, for example, 320 NGOs which defend the Amazon. Only what is not known, is where this comes from. This is the painful reality. . . .

Senator Cabral airs military view

The debate continued on Nov. 8. Sen. Bernardo Cabral, also from the state of Amazonas (PFL party), called the Senate’s attention to General Lessa’s Clube Militar presentation, citing a report on his speech in the Nov. 1 Tribuna da Imprensa. Cabral said:

The headline on the front page of *Tribuna da Imprensa* reads: “Amazon Command Denounces the ‘Foreign Appetite for the Region.’ ” This is the text:

“The military commander of the Amazon, Gen. Luiz Gonzaga Schröder Lessa, and the vice president of the Brazilian Strategic Studies Center (Cebres), Col. Amerino Raposo Filho, denounced in Rio the abandonment of the ‘Calha Norte Project’ [a national project initiated in 1986, along the border region] to occupy and develop the Amazon, making clear their concerns about the Colombian guerrillas, and requesting

greater action against the ‘foreign appetite for the region.’ ”

The article continues with the words of General Lessa: “The establishment of peripheral population centers is urgent, to avoid harmful influences in those unoccupied areas of the border.”

And, after continuing, now from an Admiral, it reports: “It is low cost, and the Navy flotilla could be expanded, financed by the federal budget, the Health Ministry, and the Federal Police, in order to intensify the patrolling and defense of sovereign areas of the country. Much more money is spent aiding failed banks and rich bankers.” That is what Adm. Roberto Gama e Silva says, one of the founders of the Calha Norte Project. . . .

Then, continuing with this same article: “Col. Amerino Raposo Filho, vice-president of Cebres, . . . maintains that ‘today the situation is devastating, with a risk of a loss of sovereignty, territorial invasion, and the internationalization of border areas to satisfy foreign interests; we need rapid action by the government, and a direct statement in response to the accusations made against the country by multinational bodies. It seems that the government opts for the foreign NGOs, especially the British ones.’ ”

The Colonel continues, saying: “Various government leaders from outside Brazil want to impose the concept of limited sovereignty on the Amazon region. This is a disaster.” . . .

Mestrinho names Prince Philip

Senator Cabral ends his speech, with a report on the stunning military operation in Cabeça do Cachorro, led by General Lessa. Senator Mestrinho then rejoins the debate:

. . . Sen. Bernardo Cabral is taking up a subject which stirs up, along with those of us from the Amazon, particularly those Brazilians who want a great, free, and developed nation. I have, for a long time, throughout my public life, always raised the alarm on this matter. I am fought, not understood, and considered polemical by some, because I know and follow this plot against the nation, which has its official headquarters in Grandson, Switzerland, but the intellectual author is in London. Initially, Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Consort, ally of the former Nazi, Prince Bernard of Holland, who, after the scandal of the airplanes [the Lockheed bribery scandal] left the group—

Senator Cabral: In fact, he was the president of the NGO—

Senator Mestrinho: He left the group, and today serves in the 1001 Club. This plot against the Amazon has existed for a long time, from the time in which the Guiana Shield was disputed. Your Excellencies will remember that [the state of] Amapá itself was invaded, and the Portuguese were thrown out of Brazilian territory. That Guiana Shield—which includes French Guyana, Surinam, and the old British Guyana, today the Republic of Guyana, part of Venezuela, which is the region contested between Venezuela and Colombia, today the State of Roraima—awakens the appetite of that conglom-

Malthusianism is 'garbage,' says Mestrinho

Sen. Gilberto Mestrinho was interviewed by EIR on Dec. 25, 1992, in Manaus, Amazonas, when he was governor of the state of Amazonas. He counterposed the racist and anti-human frauds of "indigenism" and ecology, to a Christian, human view of Man, whose "capacity for creation is fantastic." In the interview, in the Jan. 22, 1993 issue of EIR, Mestrinho outlined how the Amazon could be a home to 50 million people, if scientific flood plain agriculture were employed. Excerpts follow.

. . . These issues are raised periodically by people who don't even know what Indians are, don't consult them, and defend their alleged rights when the Indians don't even want them. From what I know, and I have extensive contact with Indians here in the Amazon, the state has the largest number of Indians (approximately 84,000) and maintains them in a good co-existence with non-Indians, and with me, the governor. The Indians seek integration; they don't want to maintain their pseudo-culture—I don't know how to characterize Indian culture, because it is really very

backward—but they also want to improve their quality of life. They want to become integrated with society, they want to study in the schools, graduate, and to exploit natural resources; they want to live in harmony with non-Indians, fraternally, just as they are in fact doing here. . . .

I always say that I'm the best example of the integration of the non-Indian with the Indian. My grandmother was an Indian, and this is my third term as governor of Amazonas. If those protectors of the Indians had existed at that time, I never would have become governor. . . .

[As for ecology], this is a fascist, anti-Christian sentiment, because the human being is more important than nature. The most important thing in nature is man; he is the beginning and the end of everything, and all of society's actions are geared toward benefitting man; he is superior to everything, and in fact, only he is capable of protecting the other animals, the forests, and not the other way around. Man is capable of making artificial forests and generating animals through genetic engineering, but no animal, no bird, can create man. So we must take care of man. . . .

My ecological standpoint is a profoundly Christian one, because I learned as a child, and this is in the Bible, that Christ came to save man—I don't recall any chapter or verse which says that He came to save the trees and the crocodiles. . . .

erate of bankers and controllers of oil and the timber market which has dominated the world for so long (above all, when it comes to the mining companies), and makes this constant assault over the Amazon through the publication of false news stories.

Not long ago, an important newspaper in the south of Brazil which deals with the economy, said that "40 million cubic meters of lumber are extracted a year, illegally, from the Amazon." Now, 40 million cubic meters of lumber is equivalent to 8,000 ships of 5,000 cubic meters capacity each—in other words, big ships. Or, 666 ships per month, or 22.2 per day, or 2.3 per hour. In that case, not even transit guards would let boats enter the Amazon region, if this fact were true. Many times these news stories are circulated, with the participation of even national interests, seeking funds from the Group of Seven. Whenever there is going to be a meeting outside of Brazil, in which possible aid to these national beggars will be discussed, alarming information on the Amazon is pumped out, alleging that it is being destroyed. . . .

A new system, a new strategy was developed to conquer the Amazon, primarily through emptying the region, beginning with the fight against the waterways, by the NGOs. This is because the waterways will give us a flow of low-cost freight, making our grains competitive on the international market, by being at least \$20 to \$30 cheaper a ton. Likewise,

there is the battle over indigenist policy, with extensive areas, immense. . . . After this, the government launched the national parks. Then, the ecological parks, the environmental reserves. This is how the Amazon is being emptied. Now they want to create ecological corridors 140 kilometers long, and they do not check that the Amazon has five corridors, which from north to south alone add up to a little less than 800 kilometers. In this way, the Amazon is going to be completely locked up. Why are they doing this? Emptying it, it will be easier to dominate, and we needed, effectively, a General, shall we say in the vernacular, a *macho*, to make the decision to take measures and carry out an operation which was of great importance, that is, to demonstrate the Brazilian presence in the region, the Cabeça do Cachorro, the nerve center of the Colombian guerrilla problem, and the instrument used as a strategy for the future invasion of our sovereignty. . . .

Senator Cabral: Finally, I wish, starting now, to forecast that, for certain, news articles and commentaries will appear, criticizing the actions of the Armed Forces, alleging that Brazil is militarizing the Amazon, contributing to the devastation of the flora and even sacrificing Indians, by incorporating them as soldiers in their ranks. We are expecting the reaction of those known "policemen" of the occupation of the Amazon by Brazilians, in their effort to keep the region as an untouchable sanctuary, and indigenous inhabitants as rare and backward species to serve the fancies of dreamy researchers.