

among perfectly sovereign nation-states is the framework in which mutually beneficial economic development tasks are jointly undertaken.

The Chávez Dossier

The essential evidence of Hugo Chávez's insanity is to be found in what masquerades as his "religious" or "theological" views. Typical were his heady remarks after his forces won 120 out of 130 seats for the Constituent Assembly in July 1999 elections:

"The victory of the patriots has been pulverizing! . . . You are either with God or the devil, and we're with God because the voice of the People is the voice of God. . . . Now Chávez is not Chávez; Chávez is the People, and the People cannot be stopped! We'll win with God's favor and the People."

Before Chávez ever ran for President of Venezuela, LaRouche identified the two years from 1992 to 1994—in which Chávez was jailed under horrendous conditions—as a critical period in turning Chávez from an ordinary fool, into a mental case, producing a "miraculous metamorphosis" in his world-view. The specific form of his insanity became the

textbook Romantic fascist dictum of *Vox Populi, Vox Dei*: "The Voice of the People is the Voice of God." The controlling sense of personal identity of victims of this outlook—such as Napoleon Bonaparte, or Adolf Hitler—is that of ethereal unity with "the People," and thus with "God." The victim thereby feels entitled to act like a Roman Caesar, displaying impunity and disdain towards other mere mortals.

Since assuming the Presidency in February 1999, at any point at which he has been challenged, Chávez has asserted that dictum, with increasing fervor, as justification for his decisions. When the courts overruled him, he asserted that he is bound by no law or institution, because he represents the People, and thus, by derivation, his is the Voice of God.

As the crisis has grown, Chávez's assertion of "*Vox Populi*" has taken on increasingly "religious" tones, as the Venezuelan population, too, has become increasingly overtaken by charismatic religious movements of various denominations. Each of these reports hearing divine "voices" telling them what they must do—and each coheres, to an uncanny degree, with the role which the international oligarchical elites would have them play within those elites' overall game-plan for Venezuela.

In April-May 2000, Chávez attempted to force the Catho-

Venezuela Facing Civil War

As the New Year opened, the existential crisis of Venezuela had reached a dramatic stage, and continued to escalate. The nation remained paralyzed by a general civic strike that began exactly one month earlier, on Dec. 2, as marches of hundreds of thousands were held in the capital, Caracas, two and three times a week right through Christmas and New Year's. Over the course of the strike, which has shut down the dominant oil industry, the opposition's demands have hardened, as they insist the strike will not end until the lunatic, terrorist-linked Jacobin President, Hugo Chávez, leaves office, and new elections are held.

The opposition, however, has offered no positive plan of government, and no vision for the future upon which to win over the primarily poor people who support Chávez out of anger and desperation. Rather, they have adopted an approach that would strengthen the terrorist element which has surrounded President Chávez. Worse, international forces associated with the war-mongering "Chicken-hawk" neo-conservative faction in the U.S. government, are heavily deployed with elements of the anti-

Chávez opposition in Venezuela to use that country's crisis to launch "anti-terrorist" supranational military action in Venezuela and elsewhere in Ibero-America. Such an approach would only succeed in igniting general right-vs.-left warfare across the continent.

Chávez, for his part, reiterated on Dec. 29, during his regular Sunday multi-hour television spectacular "Hello, President!" that "I'm never going to leave," because he's so "happy, very happy," in office. He then used his Jan. 1 message to the nation to rally the hard-core Jacobin apparatus which surrounds him, to prepare for battle in 2003, to defend their "revolution."

One of Chávez's closest military allies, Gen. Raúl Baduel, commander of the Army's 4th Armored Division and its special forces brigade, chose to give an interview on Dec. 29, defending the Chávez project, to one of the top people active in the terrorist support apparatus in the Americas, Heinz Dietrich Steffan. Baduel's interview was published by *Rebelión*, an Internet website which serves as a clearinghouse for the propaganda of every terrorist group in the Western Hemisphere. Next to the interview with Baduel, for example, *Rebelión* posted a communiqué from the Central Command of the Colombian-based FARC narco-terrorists.

The Baduel interview served to highlight the strategic alliance that Chávez has maintained with the FARC in recent years.

lic Church hierarchy to bow before him, arguing that “Christ was resurrected from the dead, to become the People”; since Chávez, in his own mind, represents the People, he threatened to unleash “legitimate violence” against those in the Church who opposed him. In so doing, he presented himself at the same time, as a dyed-in-the-wool Catholic.

Then in January 2002, Chávez announced he had become a born-again (Protestant) Evangelical Christian, only to retract the statement four days later. Meanwhile, Chávez’s disaffected wife, Marisabel Rodríguez, has shown up at born-again (Protestant) Christian rallies, to urge Chávez to mend his ways.

‘Hyperkinetic and Imprudent Man’

Chávez’s most recent public display of clinical dissociation came in a rambling, five-hour presentation on his national TV/radio show “Hello, President,” on Dec. 15, 2002. There Chávez ordered Army troops to ignore any rulings by the courts which were unfavorable to him, and to follow no one’s orders but his own. As for those calling for his resignation, he retorted:

“Chávez will leave only when God commands, because I am in the hands of Christ. . . . He is the commander, and when He speaks I obey, understood? And secondly, [I obey] the People. And I assume the voice of the People is the voice of God. I will not leave because of pressures from a group of businessmen, a group of coup-makers, a group of fascists.”

From this substratum, numerous secondary expressions of Chávez’s insanity are nourished, some of which have been noted in the public media. For example, *The New Yorker* magazine published a profile of Chávez in its Sept. 10, 2001 issue, written by Jon Lee Anderson, which contained a report on the author’s interview with Chávez’s psychiatrist, Dr. Edmundo Chirinos. Dr. Chirinos, who considers himself a supporter of the Venezuelan President, explained that Chávez “prefers to embrace dreams that seem impossible to achieve, rather than confronting the harsh realities of life.”

Anderson summarized Dr. Chirinos’ description of Chávez, as “a hyperkinetic and imprudent man, unpunctual, someone who overreacts to criticism, harbors grudges, is politically astute and manipulative, and possesses tremendous physical stamina, never sleeping more than two or three hours a night.”

Anderson also interviewed officials at the prison where Chávez was incarcerated in the early 1990s, including the secretary of the prison psychologist from that period. “Every morning, he [Chávez] sat in a chair in the open-air caged yard that had been built specially for him outside his cell,” they reported. “There was a plaster bust of Simón Bolívar there, and he would speak to it.” He would turn the head around to face him for the conversations, they reported.

Anderson also noted that Chávez’s aides today report that he is a “caffeine addict,” who used to drink 26 cups of espresso a day, until his staff managed to wean him down to “only” 16.

IMF Orders Closure of Colombia’s Symphony

by Javier Almario

To comply with budget cutbacks ordered by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and with a barely concealed zeal to suppress Classical music in Colombia, the government of President Alvaro Uribe Vélez is on the verge of shutting down the Symphony Orchestra of Colombia and the country’s National Band.

In protest, the National Band and the Orchestra decided to launch an unusual protest in the early weeks of December 2002. Through concerts before the media and in public plazas, the musicians have come out in defense of the institutions they work for, and one of the “weapons” they are using is Mozart’s well-known serenade, *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*.

The first announcement on public policy regarding these cultural institutions was made by Rudolf Hommes, former finance minister under then-Colombian President César Gaviria (1990-94), and the person responsible for having applied the infamous policy of “opening” to unrestricted imports and economic globalization, that left the economy—and the state’s revenues—in ruin. In an article appearing in the Nov. 26 edition of the daily *Portafolio*, Hommes stated that it was necessary to “resign ourselves to make the decision to allow the disappearance” of the Symphony Orchestra, since that institution “absorbs 20% of the lean operating budget of the Culture Ministry.”

A Culture of Usury Instead

Hommes is widely known as the “Rasputin” of President Alvaro Uribe, and was first proposed by Wall Street’s bankers as financial minister for Uribe’s government. However, his all-too-visible ties to Wall Street, and in particular with Violy Byorum & Partners—a company which has played a major role in orchestrating power-sharing negotiations with the narco-terrorist FARC—frustrated his aspirations. But Hommes has become a newspaper columnist and quite a show biz personality, and his interviews and commentaries in the press—ranging from defense of homosexuals’ “right” to marry, to threats against government officials, to simplistic advice on the economy—(“buy cheap and sell dear”)—appear in all the media.

Every time the Uribe government threatens to go outside the confines of IMF dictates, Hommes comes out as a kind of demolition club to prevent the slightest deviation. Uribe tried to defend Colombia’s agriculture with tariffs, and Hommes set his Wall Street contacts in motion to sink that initiative.



The Colombian Symphony Orchestra is one of only two in the entire country; yet it is threatened with disbandment in budget cuts demanded of Colombia by the IMF. By contrast, Germany still has 500 publicly supported orchestras.

Uribe announced that his government would promote the idea of children playing Classical musical instruments, and now Hommes comes out with the idea of smashing that musical genre. In his article, he shamelessly urged the Symphony Orchestra to finance itself by organizing “mariachi bands to serenade the girlfriends of Bogota’s yuppies.”

Culture Minister Adriana Mejía repeated Hommes’ argument, insisting that the Symphony Orchestra and National Band are “an onerous burden which annually costs the State \$1.2 million.” What neither Hommes nor the minister say is that the government is spending \$1.2 billion in bonds of the Financial Institutions Guaranty Fund to rescue the national banks (which are little more than branches of the international banks) from imminent bankruptcy; and more than 50% of the budget is dedicated to servicing the foreign and domestic debt. If the government were to stop paying that subsidy to the private national and international banks, Colombia would have a zero deficit.

The debate that Hommes began coincided with the visit to Colombia of IMF director Horst Köhler, who demanded that the government apply all the reforms designed by the Fund, among these a cutback in pensions and on health and education expenditures. The IMF wants the deficit reduced from nearly 5% of the GNP to 2%—without, of course, cutting payment on the debt. So what goes, instead, is the Colombian people’s health, education, pensions, and Classical culture.

If the Colombian people do not defend the Symphony Orchestra, the next assault will be against the music departments of the state universities, which have been described by the “experts” at the Finance Ministry as inefficient from a “cost-benefit” standpoint, because they give individual classes to instrumentalists—as compared to the presumed ef-

iciency of law classes, where one teacher has 100 students per class.

It would not be the first time that Hommes has “disappeared” an orchestra. When he was Finance Minister (1990-94), he forced the provinces of Colombia to carry out severe budget adjustments, and in the process, the symphony orchestras of Valle, Antioquia, Medellín, and the Orchestra of the Caribbean were all cut, reduced to unstable groups which, in order to survive, only come together when they are paid for a performance.

Cultural Optimism the Real Target

Added to Hommes’ neoliberal ideology is the “neo-Maoist” thinking which permeates not only Hommes’ arguments, but those of the Culture Ministry over the past few years. Mao Zedong, during the years of the so-called “Cultural Revolution” in China, decided to eliminate Classical music, with the argument that it was “Western” music which was perverse and bourgeois, and that the only valid music was Chinese folk music. Mao ordered the destruction and burning of all pianos, violins, cellos, and other symphonic instruments, as well as of recordings and scores of Classical music, in his zeal to preserve backwardness. Musicians and many other professionals were sent into forced labor, as part of a so-called “re-education” program. Three generations of Chinese suffered this brutal cultural repression.

By the same path, the Virgilio Barco government eliminated the Colcultura Chorus in 1986 because, according to Barco, the Colombian population had no right to listen to an opera chorus, since that wasn’t “our culture.” In late 2001, supposedly for budgetary reasons, the Santa Fé de Bogotá Chorus, the only professional chorus in all of Colombia, was eliminated.

The late culture minister Consuelo Araujo Noguera stated in 2000, during the Andrés Pastrana government, that it was absurd that the culture budget be spent in sponsoring “foreign music” like opera, or that the state universities were involved in teaching Classical music; instead, she directed, efforts should concentrate on the promotion of *vallenato* popular lamentations.

Current Minister Adriana Mejía stated that the symphonic genre “has no national representation,” and left it implicit that it was preferable to spend money on *papayera* bands in the different provinces, exclusively dedicated to dance music.

Hommes revealed the same neo-Maoist mentality when, upon leaving the Finance Ministry to take a post as dean of Los Andes University—which aspires to be the Harvard University of Colombia—he not only threw out all economics professors who opposed globalization, but also launched an attack on the Music Department. He failed to do away with the Department, but he did succeed in eliminating its music program for children.

Perhaps what Hommes really seeks to eliminate is any sense of optimism within the Colombian population, espe-

cially that which stems from Classical culture. A brutalized population will feel hopeless to oppose the enforcement of IMF policies, the same policies which have bankrupted the economies of nearly every nation on the planet.

Interview: Liz Angela García

'We Are the Nation's Real Educators'

Liz Angela García is the acting concertmistress of the Colombian Symphony Orchestra. She was interviewed for EIR by Javier Almario and Maximiliano Londoño.

EIR: Before being concert mistress of the orchestra, you studied in Germany. How many German orchestras are financed by the State, be it national, state, or municipal?

García: There are 300 state orchestras in Germany. There is at least one orchestra in every city. In Munich, where I studied, there are five orchestras, and of these five, two are immense: the Symphony Orchestra of Munich and the University Orchestra. They are very complete orchestras. In Berlin, there were seven orchestras. Of course, with the unification of East and West Germany, some fused; but in any case, there are still five orchestras in Berlin. As I said, there is at least one orchestra in each city, and all are financed by the state.

EIR: Are there private orchestras in Germany?

García: In Germany, the orchestras are all state-run, although I don't know if perhaps in the past two years, they may have created some private ones. I don't believe so.

EIR: I know it is disproportionate, but how would you compare Germany with Colombia in this regard?

García: In Colombia, there are only two orchestras, the Bogotá Philharmonic and the Colombian Symphony orchestras, which have survived with great difficulties. In reality, there are only these two.

EIR: And if there are only these two, why do they want to do away with them?

García: It is a policy that the State has adopted, following the absurd model of privatization and globalization.

EIR: The first to speak publicly about eliminating the Symphony Orchestra was Rudolf Hommes, former finance minister and adviser to Colombia's President Alvaro Uribe Vélez. What official information do you have on this?

García: Officially, nothing. What happened simply is that



Concertmistress Liz Angela García has become a spokesman for the orchestra, campaigning against its "disappearance."

after Hommes' article came out, some of the musicians of the Orchestra went to the Planning Ministry for information about the budget, and discovered that our budget had disappeared, and had been assigned to other activities. So, it was this information, plus other information we had received that there was a plan to wipe out the Orchestra, that led us to launch this campaign in defense of the Orchestra and culture in Colombia.

EIR: To paraphrase former Colombian President Ernesto Samper, at the most heated moment of the scandal of drug-money financing of his campaign, is this being done "behind the back" of President Uribe, or did he personally make this decision?

García: I'm afraid that the President personally approved this decision.

EIR: Isn't this contradictory, given that the President said he was going to promote the idea of children learning to play musical instruments, because a child who takes up an instrument is a child who will never take up a weapon for any terrorist group?

García: Completely contradictory. It is a problem of defining which way the country is going to go. It is absurd to encourage children to learn music and to play instruments, and at the same time, to close orchestras. The greatest aspiration of a music student is to belong to the Symphony or Philharmonic orchestras. It is very good that the conservatories, the music schools, and the academies generate interest in music, but they also have to produce music at a professional level.

We are 75 musicians, the majority very young, who, with the proper support and publicity, could reach many more people and participate more in the musical education of those children and youth who are training.

EIR: A recurring argument among those who, in the name

of the International Monetary Fund, want to eliminate the budget for Classical music, is that this is so-called “foreign music,” which is not part of our native culture. With that argument, then-President of Colombia Virgilio Barco eliminated the Colcultura Chorus and the Opera of Colombia, and eliminated state financing for opera. That same argument was used by the late minister Consuelo Araujo Noguera, who alleged that nearly all the culture budget was being used to promote “foreign music” like opera and Classical orchestras; and she encouraged the *vallenato* as cheaper, and our “own” music.

García: I think that all music has its place. And we aren’t talking just about the *vallenato*, but also all of our folkloric music: *bambucos*, *pasillos*, *llanero* music, and Indian music. But, in addition to this music, which we consider our own, it is necessary for everyone to discover universality, with the composers and music of other countries—especially music that has transcended to a universality.

Some think that the only thing that is authentically ours is Indian music. But there is also the influence of the population that came from Africa, that came from Spain, and the influence of the other European countries. Our culture is definitely European. In the final analysis, music is universal.

EIR: And the “Indian” music that has been preserved to our time was composed after the Spanish priests explained the diatonic scales, and taught the writing and reading of music, to the Indians. On the other hand, the accordion—so indispensable to the *vallenato*—was brought to the Caribbean by British and French pirates.

In Colombia, violins are produced, but accordions are all imported.

García: And what about the language? We speak and communicate in Spanish, and not in Indian dialects. Our cultural roots are European, with our own Colombian characteristics. The Symphony Orchestra is a Colombian expression of a universal culture, which took a lot of time and effort to come to fruition, and to take the form it has today. It is an effort that requires musicians with good training and very good discipline, who are chosen rigorously and carefully. The majority of the Orchestra musicians are Colombian. We have performed excellent Classical orchestral arrangements of Colombian music, we play for the Colombian people and we perform universal music for a Colombian public.

Nor can we say that the *vallenato* should be encouraged because a lot of people listen to it, and that relatively few people listen to us. We can’t concentrate solely on numbers. Quality also counts. That is what the Orchestra represents; with our quality, we are offering a great example to future generations. The music so popular today is more a phenomenon of the communications media than of musical training.

We are the real educators. With all due respect to Mr. Hommes, he doesn’t know what he’s talking about. Music, culture, and the education of a people are very important for

any nation and for its economy. There are many values that cannot be counted in numbers or in money. The areas of education and artistic expression cannot be closed to our country.

EIR: What do you think the Symphony Orchestra needs, to be able to function better?

García: There are many things that must be done, especially in the area of publicity. Because of such a reduced budget, there is no publicity so that the public knows what the Orchestra is doing. Only rarely are posters printed up to announce concerts and there is absolutely no coverage on radio or television. Another problem is that the Orchestra doesn’t have a home, so the people don’t know how to find us. We perform in one place one day, and in another the next. We are traveling musicians. The result is that we don’t have the public we would like to have. The people who go to our concerts do so because they hear a rumor that the Orchestra is playing somewhere.

EIR: Luis Biava, who was director of the Symphony Orchestra of Colombia, is now the director of the Philadelphia Orchestra, and wrote a letter in defense of the Symphony Orchestra. If the orchestra is shut down, do you think this will encourage a “brain drain”?

García: There already is a very large “brain drain” out of the country. I believe that some of the musicians will try to find jobs abroad, and that this will send a message to youth in training, to the effect that they will have no future in their profession in Colombia.

But I am optimistic, because the public is supporting us, and that public includes influential intellectuals. We are receiving innumerable letters of support. Also, we are going through the best musical period of the Orchestra, given that Maestro Irving Hoffman has done an excellent job.

EIR: You belonged to the Philharmonic Orchestra of Bogotá. Do you think the situation for the Philharmonic is better?

García: I don’t think so. In fact, when I was named assistant concertmistress of the Symphony Orchestra, the place that I left in the first violins [of the Philharmonic] was never filled.

EIR: How do you feel about going from your role as acting concertmistress to political spokesperson for the Orchestra?

García: A little strange. Well, I am not political spokesperson for the Orchestra, but I have had to publicly defend it with arguments, although I would much prefer to contribute to the country with my violin. We have all had to put aside our rather isolated roles as musicians, to talk with congressmen and journalists, improvising speeches and so forth. We have all become spokespersons for the Orchestra. The result of this crisis is that we have all gone through a very accelerated process of becoming more aware, which is a good thing, and I am optimistic that we are going to win this battle.